

## Bible Tuesday for Easter Sunday, 2019

Acts 10:34-43

<sup>34</sup> Then Peter began to speak to them: "I truly understand that God shows no partiality, <sup>35</sup> but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. <sup>36</sup> You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. <sup>37</sup> That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: <sup>38</sup> how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. <sup>39</sup> We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; <sup>40</sup> but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, <sup>41</sup> not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. <sup>42</sup> He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. <sup>43</sup> All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

Peter was raised as a Jew in a Jewish culture struggling under the thumb of the Roman Empire. Jews of Peter's day firmly believed they had favored status in God's eyes, God's chosen people. God named the Jews his chosen people in order that they might spread God's love and the worship of God to the rest of the world. However, God's chosen people status perverted into haughtiness and isolationism over the centuries.

Jesus challenged that perversion in his ministry. In dining with lepers, speaking with and curing Samaritans and Romans, and showing healing compassion to all comers, Jesus pushed his disciples and apostles to see people not as Jew or Gentile, clean or unclean, but as loved and valued.

Peter did not absorb these lessons until well after Jesus had ascended to heaven. In an episode of life, Peter encounters a Roman centurion and his family and household, who believe in Yahweh. Much to his reluctance, God sends Peter to this family to proclaim to gospel of Jesus Christ. Not only does the family receive the gospel, but requests baptism, where upon they receive the Holy Spirit and start speaking in tongues. Peter is so astounded that God would convey the Holy Spirit upon Gentiles that he makes the above speech.

Peter weaves basic Jewish theology and new Christian theology into this speech. Anointed as a prophet, baptized to begin his ministry...basic itinerate rabbi stuff. Jesus crucified and raised from the dead, ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead...basic Christian stuff. Finally, belief in Jesus as Lord and Christ/Messiah, Son of God/Son of Man, grants the believer forgiveness of sins...the core of the Gospel.

Psalms 118:1-2, 14-24

<sup>1</sup> O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;  
his steadfast love endures forever!

<sup>2</sup> Let Israel say,  
 "His steadfast love endures forever."  
<sup>3</sup> Let the house of Aaron say,  
 "His steadfast love endures forever."  
<sup>4</sup> Let those who fear the Lord say,  
 "His steadfast love endures forever."  
 The Lord is my strength and my might;  
 he has become my salvation.  
<sup>15</sup> There are glad songs of victory in the tents of the righteous:  
 "The right hand of the Lord does valiantly;  
<sup>16</sup> the right hand of the Lord is exalted;  
 the right hand of the Lord does valiantly."  
<sup>17</sup> I shall not die, but I shall live,  
 and recount the deeds of the Lord.  
<sup>18</sup> The Lord has punished me severely,  
 but he did not give me over to death.  
<sup>19</sup> Open to me the gates of righteousness,  
 that I may enter through them  
 and give thanks to the Lord.  
<sup>20</sup> This is the gate of the Lord;  
 the righteous shall enter through it.  
<sup>21</sup> I thank you that you have answered me  
 and have become my salvation.  
<sup>22</sup> The stone that the builders rejected  
 has become the chief cornerstone.  
<sup>23</sup> This is the Lord's doing;  
 it is marvelous in our eyes.  
<sup>24</sup> This is the day that the Lord has made;  
 let us rejoice and be glad in it.

This psalm is another anthological psalm, combing elements of other psalms into one. The opening verses sound liturgical. That, combined with the confession/vindication aspects of the psalm lead scholars to believe this was a victory psalm that may have been reworked to fit return from exile themes.

Many of the verses ring familiar in our ears, but not necessarily in an entire psalm.

Verse 19 inspires the hymn, "Open Now, thy Gates of Beauty. Zion, Let Me Enter In."

Verse 22 is quoted in the New Testament to refer to Jesus.

Verse 23 supposed Elizabeth I stated upon learning the news that her relative had died and she is now queen of England.

Verse 24 stands alone as a mantra for life with God. And Linda Balbac's personal favorite, sustaining her through many a hard time.

1 Corinthians 15:19-26

<sup>19</sup> If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.

<sup>20</sup> But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died. <sup>[a]</sup> <sup>21</sup> For since death came through a human being, the resurrection of the dead has also come through a human being; <sup>22</sup> for as all die in Adam, so all will be made alive in Christ. <sup>23</sup> But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. <sup>24</sup> Then comes the end, <sup>[b]</sup> when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father, after he has destroyed every ruler and every authority and power. <sup>25</sup> For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. <sup>26</sup> The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

Many a Christian sees faith in Jesus as a sort of insurance policy against an afterlife of oblivion, or worse yet, hell. For these, a faithful life means baptism and an occasional prayer out of fear, desperation, or momentary piety.

In the above pericope, St. Paul is addressing the opposite issue, faith in Christ is thought to be a change of life right now that has nothing to do with resurrection. That sounds preposterous to us, but in Paul's day, a whole faction of the Jewish community did not believe in an afterlife. The Sadducees believed that death was the end of human existence. Those Sadducees who believed in Jesus as messiah believed that by following him, they pleased God and good things would come to them in this life.

In this section of the first letters from Paul to the congregation in Corinth, Paul tries to persuade all readers that there is, indeed, life after death because God desires it and Jesus makes it possible. Jesus is the first one to be raised from the dead, and in this state is able to conquer all evil and ultimately death [itself cv](#)

Luke 24:1-12

But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb, taking the spices that they had prepared.

"They" at the end of the previous chapter of Luke, the reader is told that "The women who had come with [Jesus] from Galilee followed and they saw the tomb and how his body was laid. Then they returned and prepared spices and ointments. On the sabbath they rested according to the commandment." In Luke 8:2-3, the reader is told these are the women: "Mary called Magdalene from whom seven demons had gone out, and Joanna the wife of Herod's steward Chuza, and Susanna, and many others, who provided for them out of their own resources." These women underwrote Jesus' ministry with the disciples and apostles. After witnessing Jesus' crucifixion, they bought and prepared the spices to anoint Jesus' body properly for burial. However, Jesus was laid in the tomb as the sun was setting on Friday, the beginning of the sabbath, on which Jews may do no work. Anointing a body for burial counted as work, so the women rested on the sabbath from sundown Friday through sundown Saturday and headed to the tomb first thing in the morning Sunday to anoint Jesus' body.

<sup>2</sup> They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, <sup>3</sup> but when they went in, they did not find the body.

The gospel of Matthew tells us that the Jewish authorities feared that Jesus' disciples might steal his body and then claim that he was resurrected so they requested Pilate put guards at the tomb to prevent this. Luke merely mentions that the women head to the tomb at first light.

<sup>4</sup> While they were perplexed about this, suddenly two men in dazzling clothes stood beside them.

Notice that Luke does not use the term "angel" but instead men, who are dazzling just as Jesus was during his transfiguration. The term "angel" means "messenger". These dazzling men don't have a message so much as ask the women questions. Perhaps this is why they do not receive the title of "angel".

<sup>5</sup> The women <sup>[b]</sup> were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, but the men <sup>[c]</sup> said to them, "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen. <sup>[d]</sup><sup>6</sup> Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, <sup>7</sup> that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again." <sup>8</sup> Then they remembered his words, <sup>9</sup> and returning from the tomb, they told all this to the eleven and to all the rest.

These women are dumbfounded but also recollect the truth in what the dazzling men saw. They run to tell the eleven and all the others.

<sup>10</sup> Now it was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them who told this to the apostles. <sup>11</sup> But these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them.

These women, these first evangelists proclaim the best news ever, but they are not believed. Fortunately Peter is inspired by their word to go check it out and finds what they have said to be true.

<sup>12</sup> But Peter got up and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; then he went home, amazed at what had happened.

Christ is RISEN! Christ is RISEN INDEED! Alleluia!