

Immanuel (Augsburg) Lutheran Church
Shobonier, Illinois
Easter 3B
April 14, 2024
Luke 24:36-49

Thus It Is Written, Fulfilled, and Proclaimed

Then [Jesus] opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, 46 and said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, 47 and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.” (Luke 24:45-47 ESV)

In the Name of Jesus, the only Savior of the world.

Alleluia! Christ is risen! [He is risen indeed! Alleluia!]

Jesus’s resurrection from the dead is so vitally important that God gives us more than one account of what happened. Last week’s Gospel from John told about Jesus appearing to the disciples behind locked doors the evening after His rising from the dead and again a week later. Today’s Gospel reading is Luke’s account of Jesus’ appearance to the disciples on Easter evening. The disciples from Emmaus had returned and told the others that they had seen the risen Christ. They undoubtedly told about Jesus opening the Scriptures to them on the way and “how He was known to them in the breaking of the bread.” (Luke 24:35). Thus, we see over and over again that the entire Bible is all about Jesus and His death and resurrection in order to save sinners. That’s why the Church emphasizes that in her preaching.

Today we hear that when Jesus appeared to His disciples that Easter night, “they were startled and frightened and thought they saw a spirit.” Even His greeting, “Peace to you!”, hadn’t seemed to help. Then, He showed them His hands and feet, inviting them to touch Him since spirits do not have flesh and bones as Jesus did. And then, to further show He was not a spirit, He asked them for something to eat, and they gave Him a piece of broiled fish and He ate it before them. This really was Jesus in the flesh, risen from the dead.

Then He reminded them what He had taught them before He was crucified, that “everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.” By referencing the three main divisions of the Hebrew Bible, Jesus tells them that the whole Old Testament is about Him. He is the Christ, the Messiah, the one prophesied throughout the Hebrew Scriptures.

To see how this is so, think of the first promise of a deliverer, given by God right after man’s fall into sin: the seed of the woman who would strike the serpent’s head, even as the

serpent strikes His heel. Or think of the promise to Abraham, that in his seed all the families of the earth would be blessed. The seed of the woman, the seed of Abraham – that’s Jesus. Then there are the types of Jesus found in Israel’s history, those who prefigured His ministry: Moses, who led the children of Israel out of bondage. Joshua, Moses’ successor, who led them into the Promised Land. Aaron, the High Priest, who offered up sacrifices by which the people’s sins were forgiven. David, the King, to whom it was promised that one of his sons would be the great King, the Messiah, who would have an everlasting kingdom. The Scriptures of the Old Testament are full of promises, prophecies, types – persons, institutions, and events – that all pointed ahead to what would finally be embodied in the person of Jesus Christ.

It was all there in the Scriptures that the disciples had, it was right there under their nose, but still they didn’t get it, they didn’t put it all together – until after the resurrection, when Jesus meets with them and opens their minds to understand the Scriptures. And that’s why Jesus gives his “Thus it is written” statement, as a short summary of what it all boils down to if anyone is going to understand the Bible aright. He sums it up as follows: “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.” Jesus is saying this is what the Bible is about, what it’s aiming at. If you don’t understand the Bible this way, you don’t understand it. And you can’t understand it this way unless Jesus opens your mind and heart.

Thus, the summary of the contents of the Bible is that the Christ should suffer, that he should rise on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness should be preached in His name. Now, having heard of the Suffering Servant prophecy of Isaiah 53 on Good Friday, the Servant of the Lord who would be “wounded for our transgressions” and “with whose stripes we are healed” – this is the outstanding example of what Jesus says is written concerning the Christ’s suffering.

But where is the resurrection? Well, Psalm 16, is a prime example: “For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption.” And, of course, there’s the account of Jonah being spewed from the belly of the fish after three days, which Jesus says is about Him rising from the belly of the earth in resurrection.

Even at that, it’s not only about the past. There’s also the preaching to the nations. “The word of the Lord shall go out from Jerusalem” (Is. 2:3, Micah 4:2), and “nations shall come to your light.” (Is. 60:3). The suffering and death of the Christ, His bodily resurrection to life, and the preaching that will go out in His name is all written in the Scriptures.

Since this is what is written, this is what Jesus came to fulfill. Jesus came as the Christ to suffer and to rise for our salvation, so that there would be forgiveness of sins for the Church to proclaim. This He did, the eternal Son of God coming in the flesh to suffer and die and rise again

on our behalf. In the four Gospels, after establishing His person, who Jesus is, namely, the Christ, God's Son in the flesh, the focus is on His sacrificial suffering and death. And that's because that's where the salvation lies. Jesus came to be the one who delivers all of sinful mankind from the bondage of sin and the curse of death – to deliver you and me by means of His atoning death on the cross. Only that would get the job done, to free us from the impossible death-trap we had gotten ourselves into. So that's where the emphasis lies, in the gospels, in the Creed, and in accord with the summary that Jesus gives right here, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer."

"And on the third day rise from the dead." Jesus came to fulfill that, too. The resurrection from the dead is the proof that what Jesus suffered was sufficient to take the sting out of death and give us life, eternal life, in its place. This is what we celebrate during the Easter season – Christ's resurrection. For that's the guarantee of life not only for Him but for us as well. Christ shares His resurrection life with us, all who trust in Him and are baptized in His name. This too is what is written in Scripture and fulfilled in Christ.

Thus it is written. Thus it is fulfilled. Thus it is proclaimed. The Church's preaching, what it should be about so naturally follows. "And that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations." Repentance is the realization that you are stuck in your sin apart from God's grace, that you have no hope in yourself, that you are damned and doomed and rightfully so. Repentance is struggling against the lawlessness of sin, and when the weight of your sin comes crashing down on you, and you cry out to God, "Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner." The Law has to do its work on your heart if you are to see your need. But then the preaching doesn't stop there. Then comes the Gospel, the forgiveness of sins. This is what Jesus has won for you, and He wants you to receive, to have, to know. And it is through the foolishness of preaching that the gifts get delivered to your door. The Word of God is alive and active, and as the forgiveness is proclaimed in Jesus' name, that same Word delivers the goods and gives you what it says.

As Peter so preached in today's first reading (Acts 4:11-21), so I proclaim to you: Jesus Christ died for you. It was your sins He was bearing on that cross. You have no hope in yourself; your sins would condemn you. Death and God's judgment is all you would face. But Christ died for you. He took your sins and carried them away, paid for them in full by His death on the cross. God is merciful, and He forgives you your sins for Jesus' sake. Your Savior now is risen – Hallelujah! – and you will rise with Him. New life now, and an even better, eternal life after that – glorified bodies, restored creation, no more sin, perfect fellowship with God and with all His people – this is what is in store for you and all who trust in Him. And I preach this now to you in Jesus' name. You can take it to the bank. This is the sure hope you have in Christ.

Thus it is written. Thus it is fulfilled. Thus it is proclaimed. Thus it is believed. God is quickening this faith in your heart right now. Give Him thanks that you know that your Redeemer lives. And because He lives, you shall live also. Thus it is, and thus it will be. Amen.

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Rev. Timothy J. Landskroener
Pastor

Immanuel Lutheran Church of Augsburg
1297 E 900 Ave.
Shobonier, IL 62885
church: (618) 846-8383
personal cell: 330-204-4180