

Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> April 2018

## The Third Sunday of Easter

White



### Collect

Almighty Father, who in your great mercy gladdened the disciples with the sight of the risen Lord: give us such knowledge of his presence with us, that we may be strengthened and sustained by his risen life and serve you continually in righteousness and truth; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

### Acts 3:12-19 English Standard Version (ESV)

3<sup>12</sup> When Peter saw it he addressed the people: “Men of Israel, why do you wonder at this, or why do you stare at us, as though by our own power or piety we have made him walk? <sup>13</sup> The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified his servant<sup>[a]</sup> Jesus, whom you delivered over and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he had decided to release him. <sup>14</sup> But you denied the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, <sup>15</sup> and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses. <sup>16</sup> And his name—by faith in his name—has made this man strong whom you see and know, and the faith that is through Jesus<sup>[b]</sup> has given the man this perfect health in the presence of you all. <sup>17</sup> “And now, brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers. <sup>18</sup> But what God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ would suffer, he thus fulfilled. <sup>19</sup> Repent therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out.

**Footnotes:** a. Or *child*; also verse 26. b. Greek *him*.

**COMMENT:** This preaching of Peter, was in reaction to a healing done by Peter in the name of Jesus, where a lame man was healed. Peter proclaimed the same testimony that all the Apostles preached. Essentially this was known as the kerygma, from the Greek word for preaching or teaching. The outline was discovered by the British and German scholars, Charles Harold Dodd and Rudolph Bultmann, circa 1930. Thus all the sermons in Acts contain essentially the same elements. As throughout the New Testament,

this passage interprets Jesus as fulfilling a prophecy of a suffering Messiah. The Apostolic Church interpreted Old Testament passages, particularly Isaiah 52:13-53:12, in the light of the crucifixion and resurrection. Many biblical scholars, particularly in the British theological tradition, believe that this interpretation came from Jesus himself. Although his own people rejected him, the resurrection of Jesus proved that he is the promised Messiah. Through repentance and faith in him all sin is forgiven and sinners are restored in a good relationship with God.

## **Luke 24:36b-48** English Standard Version (ESV)

### **Jesus Appears to His Disciples**

24<sup>36b</sup> Jesus himself stood among them, and said to them, “Peace to you!”<sup>37</sup> But they were startled and frightened and thought they saw a spirit.<sup>38</sup> And he said to them, “Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts?”<sup>39</sup> See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me, and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.”<sup>40</sup> And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet.<sup>41</sup> And while they still disbelieved for joy and were marveling, he said to them, “Have you anything here to eat?”<sup>42</sup> They gave him a piece of broiled fish,<sup>[a]</sup><sup>43</sup> and he took it and ate before them.<sup>44</sup> Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.”<sup>45</sup> Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures,<sup>46</sup> and said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead,<sup>47</sup> and that repentance and<sup>[b]</sup> forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.<sup>48</sup> You are witnesses of these things.

**Footnotes:** a. Some manuscripts add *and some honeycomb*. b. Some manuscripts *for*.

**COMMENT:** The post-resurrection appearances of Jesus recorded in the four gospels have a common purpose: to prepare the faithful for life in the world as witnesses to the resurrection and representatives of the continuing presence of Jesus, their Lord. Luke’s closing narrative tells how Jesus revealed himself to his disciples to prove to them that he really was alive and not just a ghostly apparition. Scepticism came naturally to people in those days as it does to us. Appealing to their ordinary human senses, Luke tells how Jesus urged the disciples to touch the wounds in his hands and feet, and then asked for something to eat (vss. 39-43). Luke included this detail to make sure that his audience, five decades removed from the actual event,

really understood the true nature of the resurrection. It was no mere fantasy or hallucination; it was a return from the dead, as incredible as it may have seemed, then and now. Luke also wished to show that Jesus himself had initiated the early Christian belief that the Old Testament prophecies of the Messiah had now been fulfilled. The church could now proclaim that repentance and forgiveness of sin, i.e. the moral and spiritual power to live a whole new life, were now available through faith in Jesus. Joyful worship of the apostolic community ends the Gospel; but continually gathering in the temple also emphasises the fundamentally Jewish character of the community. We can never minimize the historical fact that the Christian Church has its origins within Judaism and adopted for itself, albeit with a new interpretation, all the scriptures of the Jewish tradition.

### **Psalm 4** *Cum invocarem* Grail Psalter

#### **℟️ Lift up the light of your face on us, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup> *For the Choirmaster. With stringed instruments. A Psalm of David*

<sup>2</sup> When I call, answer me, O God of justice;  
from anguish you released me, have mercy and hear me! ℟️

<sup>3</sup> O men, how long will your hearts be closed,  
will you love what is futile and seek what is false? ℟️

<sup>4</sup> It is the Lord who grants favors to those whom he loves;  
the Lord hears me whenever I call him. ℟️

<sup>5</sup> Fear him; do not sin: ponder on your bed and be still

<sup>6</sup> Make justice your sacrifice, and trust in the Lord. ℟️

<sup>7</sup> “What can bring us happiness?” many say.  
Lift up the light of your face on us, O Lord. ℟️

<sup>8</sup> You have put into my heart a greater joy  
than they have from abundance of corn and new wine. ℟️

<sup>9</sup> I will lie down in peace and sleep comes at once  
for you alone, Lord, make me dwell in safety. ℟️

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit,  
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,  
world without end. Amen.**

**COMMENT:** An attitude of confident trust in God permeates this psalm. Accordingly it does not become a bitter lament, as one might expect from someone suffering great distress, but a song of faith and trust. The psalmist's anguish has been subdued by his confidence in God's blessing because of his continued dependence on God. The closing lines in verse 9 could indicate that this as a psalm for the end of the day. Whatever the difficulties each day brings, the psalmist's faith gives him the confidence to rest in the security that all is well under God's control. The text includes two other notable features: the superscription reference to "the choirmaster: with stringed instruments" and the strange word *Selah* (end of verses 3 and 5 – not reproduced in the text above). Best scholarly guesses believe that the former caption refers to musical accompaniment when used in temple worship. *Selah* appears seventy times in the Psalter and three times in another psalm in the Book of Habakkuk 3:3, 9, 13. It would appear to be some kind of direction to the musicians, the exact significance of which remains hidden. Some scholars hypothesize that it indicated the point at which a special musical chord would be struck, possibly by a loud clash of cymbals. In some Christian traditions, the liturgy for Holy Communion or Mass includes a similar sounding of bells at the consecration of the sacramental elements.

### **Short Preface**

But chiefly are we bound to praise you because you raised him gloriously from the dead. For he is the true paschal lamb who was offered for us, and has taken away the sin of the world. By his death he has destroyed death, and by his rising to life again he has restored to us everlasting life.

### **Post Communion**

Living God, your Son made himself known to his disciples in the breaking of bread: open the eyes of our faith, that we may see him in all his redeeming work; who is alive and reigns, now and for ever.

**Amen**

### **Blessing**

The God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the eternal covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among *you*, and remain with *you* always. **Amen.**