

#1799

Cf. #149 #260 #361 #1717 #1542

Acts 2:22-32¹
Death & decay
could not hold Christ Jesus.
23rd Sunday after Pentecost
Supplementary Lectionary
Series "B," Epistles

Pastor A. J. Kunde
Grace WELS Durand MI
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Baptism: Melody Marie McVey
Potluck
Quarterly Voters
WSC & LWMS

WHO IS THIS JESUS?
I. JESUS OF NAZARETH
II. THE SON OF DAVID
III. THE CHRIST
IV. THE HOLY ONE OF GOD

In the Name of Jesus, our crucified and risen Savior, Dear Fellow-Redeemed,

It was the Day of Pentecost. Pentecost was an Old Testament celebration of the Jews that gave thanks for the harvest of grain with which the LORD God blessed them. On this particular Pentecost, however, there was a new and different kind of harvest – it was the harvest of souls.

Pentecost, which means fifty, occurred fifty days after Jesus' resurrection from the dead on Easter Sunday morning. Ten days before this particular Pentecost celebration, Jesus' disciples, believers, witnessed Jesus' ascension into heaven. Now it was the Day of Pentecost, and the believers, as was their custom, were gathered together in one particular place in the Temple in Jerusalem. Suddenly there was a sound like a mighty, rushing wind – like the wind of a tornado or hurricane. When they heard this sound, the crowd, who had gathered in the Temple to celebrate the Old Testament Pentecost, ran to where the believers were assembled. There were on the heads of the believers tongues of fire, and the believers were speaking in tongues – understandable languages – which they had never studied or spoken before. They were proclaiming the wonders of God – especially the resurrection from the dead of Jesus. On this occasion, Peter stepped forward and became the spokesperson of the believers. A portion of what he said make up the words of our text this morning.

²² "Men! Israel! Listen to these Words: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. ²³ This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. ²⁴ But God

¹ *The New International Version*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House) 1984. All Scripture references are taken from this translation unless noted otherwise.

raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him. ²⁵ David said about him:

***"I saw the LORD always before me.
Because he is at my right hand,
I will not be shaken.***

***²⁶ Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices;
my body also will live in hope,***

***²⁷ because you will not abandon me to the grave,
nor will you let your Holy One see decay.***

***²⁸ You have made known to me the paths of life;
you will fill me with joy in your presence'***

(cf. Psalm 16:8-11).

²⁹ "Brothers, I tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. ³⁰ But he was a Prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place One of his descendants on his Throne (cf. 2 Samuel 7:10b-16). ³¹ Seeing what was ahead, he spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to the grave, nor did his body see decay. ³² God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact.

Thus Peter answers the question: WHO IS THIS JESUS? WHO IS THIS JESUS? ... I. JESUS OF NAZARETH; II. THE SON OF DAVID; III. THE CHRIST; and, IV. THE HOLY ONE OF GOD

WHO IS THIS JESUS? I. JESUS OF NAZARETH

Jesus' mother Mary and his stepfather Joseph were from the town of Nazareth in Galilee. After Jesus was born in Bethlehem, and after a brief stay in Egypt, Joseph and Mary returned to Palestine. They did not return to Bethlehem, however. They felt it was too dangerous because of the rulers who might try to kill Jesus. They moved to Nazareth; and, Nazareth became Jesus' hometown.

APPROPRIATION

All of us have a hometown. I, for example, was born in Hammond, Indiana; spent my early life in Lake Hills, Indiana; spent a short time in Highland, Indiana; but my parents finally moved to Lansing, Illinois (on the Indiana – Illinois border, near the Torrance Avenue exit off of I-80). Lansing, Illinois, is my hometown. So, where is your hometown?

For some of you, Durand may be your hometown, regardless of where you were born. Others of you may have a hometown in one of the villages around Durand. But by faith in Jesus, we all have a shared hometown.

The Apostle Paul tells us about where our hometown is now located. Paul wrote to the Ephesians,

¹⁹ Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's Household, ²⁰ built on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone (Ephesians 2:19&20).

By faith in Jesus, you and I have a new hometown. It is a place where we are "fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's Household." Jesus was saying the same thing when he told his disciples,

² In my Father's House are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am (John 14:2&3).

The heavenly Father's House in heaven is our new hometown. We are residents and citizens of that hometown by faith alone in Jesus – Jesus of Nazareth.

But the Bible also refers to Jesus as the Son of David.

WHO IS THIS JESUS? II. THE SON OF DAVID

Mary and Joseph were from the town of Nazareth, but they traced their lineage – their family tree – back to King David. The Old Testament records that King David would have a special descendant. God the LORD spoke to David through the Prophet Nathan:

^{11b} "The LORD declares to you [David] that the LORD himself will establish a House for you: ¹² When your days are over and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up your Offspring [seed, descendant] to succeed you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his Kingdom. ¹³ He is the One who will build a House for my Name, and I will establish the Throne of his Kingdom forever. ¹⁴ I will be his Father, and he will be my Son.... ¹⁵ But my love will never be taken away from him ¹⁶ Your House and your Kingdom will endure forever before me; your Throne will be established forever" (cf. 2 Samuel 7:11b-16).

The Apostle Paul states the fact that Jesus is this promised seed, offspring or descendant of King David. Jesus is the Son of David. Paul refers to Jesus, on the one hand, as God's Son, but, on the other hand, "who as to his human nature was a descendant of David" (Romans 1:3). This was also in the announcement that the angel Gabriel gave to the virgin Mary, when he told her that she would be the mother of the Savior.

Gabriel said,

³⁰ ... the angel said to [Mary], “Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God. ³¹ You will be with Child and give birth to a Son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The LORD God will give him the Throne of his father David, ³³ and he will reign over the House of Jacob forever; his Kingdom will never end” (Luke 1:30-33).

The angel’s announcement to Mary includes many of the words and phrases that the LORD God spoke to King David through the Prophet Nathan. The Prophet Micah also testified to the fact that the Savior would be a descendant of King David and born in the town of David, Bethlehem.

Micah prophesied,

**² “But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah,
though you are small
among the clans of Judah,
out of you will come for me
one who will be Ruler over Israel,
whose origins are from of old,
from ancient times.”**

**³ Therefore Israel will be abandoned
until the time when she
who is in labor gives birth
and the rest of his brothers return
to join the Israelites.**

**⁴ He will stand and shepherd his flock
in the strength of the LORD,
in the Majesty of the Name
of the LORD his God.
And they will live securely,
for then his greatness
will reach to the ends of the earth.**

⁵ And he will be their peace (Micah 5:2-5a).

Jesus was born in the town of Bethlehem (cf. Luke 2), and is of the House and Line of David

APPROPRIATION

Jesus is the Son of David, a descendant of David. Jesus is a true human being like us. That means that Jesus understands the troubles, turmoils, tribulations, and temptations through which we go. Jesus went through those things too. The writer to the Hebrews

states referring to Jesus, “We do not have a High Priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have One who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin” (Hebrews 4:15). The writer to the Hebrews also states, “Because [Jesus] himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted” (Hebrews 2:18).

Jesus understands what we are going through, because he went through the same thing. Jesus sympathizes with us. Jesus has compassion on us. Jesus helps us in time of trouble. So Jesus encourages us in the words of the Psalmist, “Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you will honor [glorify] me” (Psalm 50:15).

Jesus is from Nazareth and is the Son of David, compassionate and gracious to us. Jesus is also the Christ.

WHO IS THIS JESUS? III. THE CHRIST

Peter quotes from King David’s Psalm 16 concerning the Christ. King David said about the Christ,

**²⁵ ... *”I saw the LORD always before me.
Because he is at my right hand,
I will not be shaken.
²⁶ Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices;
my body also will live in hope,
²⁷ because you will not abandon me to the grave,
nor will you let your Holy One see decay.
²⁸ You have made known to me the paths of life;
you will fill me with joy in your presence’***
(2:25-28; cf. Psalm 16:8-11).

Later, Peter explains what David was stating.

Peter says,

²⁹ *“Brothers, I tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. ³⁰ But he was a Prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place One of his descendants on his Throne (cf. 2 Samuel 7:10b-16). ³¹ Seeing what was ahead, he spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to the grave, nor did his body see decay. ³² God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact (2:29-32).*

Peter says that King David was speaking about “the Christ” – the Messiah, the Anointed One. The Old Testament revealed that the Savior would be “the Christ” – Prophet, Priest and King.

Peter speaks more specifically about Jesus as the Christ’s work as the Great High Priest. Peter told the Jews, “This man [Jesus] was handed over to you by God’s set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross” (2:23). Peter does not draw back from stating that the Jews were guilty of Jesus’ crucifixion. It was the Jews, stirred up by their Leaders, who cried out to Pontius Pilate the Roman Governor regarding Jesus: “Crucify him! Crucify him!” (Luke 20:21; John 19:6&15; cf. Matthew 27:22&23; Mark 15:13&14). It was the Jews who stated to Pontius Pilate concerning Jesus: “Let his blood be on us and on our children!” (Matthew 27:25). Old Testament High Priests offered up sacrifices for the people. Jesus offered up himself on the cross as the one perfect sacrifice for all.

APPROPRIATION

There is no other sacrifice that we need or can give to take away our sin – to take away the punishment we deserve for our sin. Jesus is the Lamb of God who has taken away the sins of the world (cf. John 1:29b&36b). Jesus is the Atoning Sacrifice for the sins of the world (cf. 1 John 2:2). You and I cannot present to God anything to take away our sin or guilt or punishment – but Jesus has done all that by taking upon himself our sin, guilt and punishment and suffering for it on the cross. Now by faith in Jesus, we have the benefit. There is, however, a warning in all of this.

Once again we listen to the writer to the Hebrews who says,

²⁶ If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, ²⁷ but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God. ²⁸ Anyone who rejected the Law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. ²⁹ How much more severely do you think a man deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God under foot, who has treated as an unholy thing the Blood of the Covenant that sanctified him, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace? ³⁰ For we know him who said, “It is mine to avenge; I will repay,” and again, “The LORD will judge his people.” ³¹ It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God (Hebrews 10:26-31).

Yes, Jesus has taken away our sins. Jesus has suffered the punishment that our sins deserve. But woe to us if we take that for granted and indulge our sinful nature, thinking that we can always repent later or that we are still covered by Christ’s forgiveness. Jude spoke of that in his short Epistle right before the Book of Revelation. Jude referred to “godless men, who change the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and LORD” (Jude 4b). For such as these, it is indeed, “a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”

Finally, Peter in his Pentecost sermon calls to our attention the fact that Jesus is the Holy One of God.

WHO IS THIS JESUS?
IV. THE HOLY ONE OF GOD

In King David's Psalm 16 which Peter quotes, David said,

***"I saw the LORD always before me.
Because he is at my right hand,
I will not be shaken.
26 Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices;
my body also will live in hope,
27 because you will not abandon me to the grave,
nor will you let your Holy One see decay.
28 You have made known to me the paths of life;
you will fill me with joy in your presence'
(cf. Psalm 16:8-11).***

The angel Gabriel referred to Jesus with these same words. When Mary asked how it was possible for her, a virgin, to become pregnant and give birth to a Son, Gabriel replied: "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the Holy One to be born will be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35). Jesus is the Holy One; Jesus is the Son of God.

Jesus' many miracles testify to the fact that he is the Son of God. Peter says,

22 "Men! Israel! Listen to these Words: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know" (2:22).

The miracles, which God did through his Son Jesus, testified to the fact that the preaching and teaching Jesus was doing was valid and true. Moreover, Jesus had God his Father at his right hand; so Jesus says through King David, that he will not be shaken, that he rejoices and proclaims his joy, that his Father would not leave him in the grave but raise him from the dead. Peter says the same thing: "God raised [Jesus] from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him" (2:24); and later Peter adds, "God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact" (2:32). Now, there is another way in which Jesus is The Holy One of God.

To be "holy" means to be perfect, without sin, without defect. Jesus was and is that. Jesus never sinned. On two occasions, Jesus' baptism and his transfiguration, the heavenly Father proclaimed, "This is my beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased" (cf. Matthew 3:17; Mark 1:11; Luke 3:22b; Matthew 17:5b; Mark 9:7b; Luke 9:35). The heavenly

Father would not have been satisfied or delighted with his Son, if his Son had been less than perfect – just like his Father.

Jesus is holy and perfect. Moreover, Jesus' holiness, perfection and righteousness have been credited to all. It is by faith in Jesus alone that a person benefits from Jesus perfect life and his all-atoning death.

APPROPRIATION

Here is our assurance, yours and mine, that we have the forgiveness of sins and that Jesus' righteousness, holiness and perfection covers us. Jesus' suffering and death on the cross has taken away the sins of the world. Jesus' holiness, righteousness and perfection has covered over the sins of the world. Since this is true, then Jesus has also covered over our sins and taken them away. You and I are assured of this through the Gospel or Good News about Jesus.

The Gospel in Word and Sacraments – Holy Baptism and Holy Communion – assure us that we have this forgiveness of sins personally – for our benefit. We are all children of God through faith in Jesus, for all of us who were baptized into Christ have been clothed with Christ (cf. Galatians 3:26&27). As children of God, we are heirs – co-heirs with Christ of the Kingdom of Heaven – all this by faith alone in Jesus.

CONCLUSION

The Apostle Peter's Pentecost proclamation continues for us today. That Pentecost message points to Jesus. Jesus is the God-man. Jesus is the Son of David – the great descendant of King David. Jesus is the Holy One of God – the Christ, the Messiah, the Anointed One. Jesus has taken away our sin and covered us with his holiness and righteousness. Jesus is our Savior and Redeemer. Amen.