**Luke 24:1-12 (ESV)**

1. But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices they had prepared. **2** And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, **3** but when they went in they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. **4** While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men stood by them in dazzling apparel. **5** And as they were frightened and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, “Why do you seek the living among the dead? **6** He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, **7**  that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and on the third day rise.” **8** And they remembered his words, **9** and returning from the tomb they told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. **10** Now it was Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James and the other women with them who told these things to the apostles, **11** but these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. **12** But Peter rose and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; and he went home marveling at what had happened.

**“The Lion’s Roar Is Good News”**

In the Name of our risen and glorious Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, Amen. The party is over! Sin, death, and the Devil have done their worst. God has let His judgment take its course by the cross. Pilate, Herod, and the other Gentiles slept in without concern. The Jewish leaders kept things comfortable for the people with a lawful Sabbath rest. And as with any party, someone was now stuck having to clean up the mess. This is what we discover on Easter morning with the women. A remnant returns to the tomb, but it is far from anything glorious.

The prophet Amos, who we looked at over Lent, also promised a remnant among Israel after judgment. They would also have to come and clean up the mess. Yet, everything stood upon what God had said, “In that day I will raise up the booth of David that is fallen and repair its breaches, and raise up its ruins, and rebuild it as in the days of old” (9:11). Death would give way to a new life. Sorrow would become shouts of praise. The broken would have their hearts lifted up. God’s promise would work to raise up the tabernacle of David.

On this day of Easter, Jesus the true tabernacle of God has given victory finally for all in every time, place, and person. The Father’s Son made the sacrifice for a sinful world. An older name for Easter is Pascha, which in Greek means “Passover.” This is exactly what happened for Jesus, “was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification” (Romans 4:25). Jesus has swallowed up all darkness, judgment, death, and the Devil. The Lord’s resurrection is good news because the roar of His cross for our sins is triumphant forever.

The resurrection puts a spin on life none can grasp. When the women came to the tomb, it was not even on the radar. Sure, they had believed in an end time resurrection, but nothing real for the present. Their comfort was in knowing as much as thing change they remain the same, even if it be the Law. So, they came to the tomb of the crucified Jesus to care for Him, only He cared enough to change everything for them. “And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus.” What they came seeking, they did not find. The resurrection was present for their good, but they did not see it that way.

More than ignorance, unbelief is what troubled these women with Jesus. Maybe their pious Jewish upbringing got in the way of what was really at work for them. Maybe their suffering before the cross was just too much to see anything else. Maybe it was just a wild guess like gambling and they lost. Whatever the reason, it comes back to unbelief not merely in Jesus, but His Word. He told them, “It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life” (John 6:63). His Word made the promise that the party was just getting started.

We too, face an empty tomb like the women and the resurrection puts a spin on our life. Easter brings with it we who bear burdens of unbelief, sin, fear, and sadness. The devil, world, and our own sinful nature keep putting up a fight against God’s faithfulness for sinners. Scripture is alive with Christ. It gives Christ, but how easy it is to turn to self. As if, my life has greater glory than the work of Christ. As if, sin reigns more than the risen Lord and Savior. As if, death is no less “natural” than life. The resurrection of Jesus lifts up our eyes for His cross paid the price. Ignorance is not the problem, but to believe in the promise of God’s Word. His party is putting to shame sin, death, the Devil and it is for our life.

The roar of good news comes by the Word of Jesus for us on Easter. There was no Savior at the tomb, but the angels present were unafraid to speak. They said, “Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and on the third day rise.” Just like at His birth with Shepherds, so angels came at the birth of Christ’s Kingdom by His resurrection. These angels had great joy to speak. Jesus was not in the tomb because He had already taken a victory lap. Our Lutheran Fathers declare, “…after the burial the entire person, God and man, descended into hell, conquered the devil, destroyed hell’s power, and took from the devil all his might” (Tappert 610:2). The angels did not go into these details because the greater glory for these women was to remember His Word.

The women remembered not merely the facts. A person rising from the dead was not of primary importance. Such a thing already happened with Lazarus. Instead, it was the authority of Jesus’ Word, which gave faith in Him. As St. Paul says, “Faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ” (Romans 10:17). All they suffered and saw was actually a miracle of salvation. If He must be crucified but now lives, it must mean God cares to bear our sin and be the Savior. This is what drove them away from the tomb to be messengers of His Word. St. Augustine takes note, “Just as the fall of humankind came through a woman, so now the restoration is first proclaimed by women” (ACC). The response by the men was far from successful, but victory rested alone with Jesus. If His Word was not good enough, nothing else would roar with good news. The “idle tale” would arise to talk with Peter and the other apostles later.

Jesus still gives Easter glory by His Word. It does not come from the world because the devil and sin have made a mess of it. It cannot be seen so well in our life because sadness and unbelief often get in the way. It will not be felt all the time because family members still die during designated holidays. Easter rests all on Jesus just like at the empty tomb. His death and resurrection is the eternal party for all people. It might sound like idle words, an irrelevant message for modern day ears. St. Paul responds, “If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied. But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.” The Lord sends out His messengers. His Word and Sacrament are the good news delivered. Jesus stands up against sin to forgive them as Savior. He lives so rather than fearing death, we receive faith in His body and blood for our life.

Worse than pride on Good Friday, is to have despair on Easter. God does love us. He is at work. To remember His Word goes beyond the resurrection, but to the faithfulness of Jesus. It might be a mess at the present but His party has already started the eternal celebration. He processes with victory over death by the cross. He denies sin dominion by His sacrifice. He holds the devil captive by His resurrection. While we wait for the coming Christ the Word still tells us, “But be glad and rejoice forever in that which I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem to be a joy, and her people to be a gladness.” The Lord’s resurrection is good news because the roar of His cross for our sins is triumphant forever. Amen. Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia! Amen.