

## **Acts of the Apostles Bible Study-week 2 Year A – Easter Season**

### **May 8, 2011 – Third Sunday of Easter – Acts 2:14, 22-33**

Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice, and proclaimed: “You who are Jews, indeed all of you staying in Jerusalem. Let this be known to you, and listen to my words. You who are Israelites, hear these words. Jesus the Nazarene was a man commended to you by God with mighty deeds, wonders, and signs, which God worked through him in your midst, as you yourselves know. This man, delivered up by the set plan and foreknowledge of God, you killed, using lawless men to crucify him. But God raised him up, releasing him from the throes of death, because it was impossible for him to be held by it. For David says of him: *I saw the Lord ever before me, with him at my right hand I shall not be disturbed. Therefore my heart has been glad and my tongue has exulted; my flesh, too, will dwell in hope, because you will not abandon my soul to the netherworld, nor will you suffer your holy one to see corruption. You have made known to me the paths of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence.* “My brothers, one can confidently say to you about the patriarch David that he died and was buried, and his tomb is in our midst to this day. But since he was a prophet and knew that God had sworn an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants upon his throne, he foresaw and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that neither was he abandoned to the netherworld nor did his flesh see corruption. God raised this Jesus; of this we are all witnesses. Exalted at the right hand of God, he received the promise of the Holy Spirit from the Father and poured him forth, as you see and hear.”

### **Peter’s Speech**

Here is a passage full of the essence of what the early disciples thought and taught.

1. The Cross was no accident. It was part of the eternal plan of God. (Acts states this several times - 3:18; 4:28; 13:29). It’s as if the Cross was a window in time through which we could see the suffering love that is eternally in the heart of God.
2. This foreknowledge, however, in no way lessens the crime of those who crucified Jesus. The crucifixion shows supremely how horrifyingly sin can behave.
3. The suffering and death of Jesus were the fulfillment of prophecy. The early preachers had to prove that because to the Jew the idea of a crucified Messiah was incredible. Their law said: “A hanged man is

cursed by God.” The preachers’ answers to these ideas were: If you had only read your Scriptures rightly you would see that all was foretold.” Yes, the Messiah would suffer and die, but the netherworld would not hold him.

4. The Resurrection is the final proof that Jesus was indeed God’s Chosen One. It was the experience of seeing the resurrected Jesus that turned broken, bewildered, and cowardly men into heroes – for a Christian never forgets that he lives and walks with a Risen Lord and that every Sunday is a Resurrection Day.

In the Eastern Church on Easter Day, when two people meet, one says: “The Lord is risen!” and the other answers: “He is risen indeed!” Let that be *our* thought this Easter season and every Sunday throughout the year.