

■ No. 132 Invitation to Live by the Word Explanation and Meditation

● First Reading: Acts 10:34, 37-43

On Easter Sunday, the first reading is taken from the Acts of the Apostles. In this passage, Peter is invited to the house of Cornelius a Roman centurion, a Gentile, and a God-fearing man and delivers a sermon about Jesus (cf. Isaiah 61:1). The public ministry of Jesus began after His baptism by John the Baptist, marking the start of the history of salvation, which spread throughout all Judea. His doing good refers to helping those who were suffering from illness and spiritual bondage, those oppressed by the devil. Jesus, anointed with the Holy Spirit and power and appointed by God, went about doing good and healing... These works of healing were possible because God was with Him. His words and actions were the works of God, and the disciples were witnesses who directly saw His life. Jesus' crucifixion was the acceptance of the death of one who is cursed (Deuteronomy 21:23), through which He atoned for the sins of humanity.

The fulfillment of God's plan of salvation was accomplished three days after His death, in accordance with prophecy (Hosea 6:2; Jonah 1:17). After His resurrection, Jesus appeared to witnesses chosen by God:

They were given the mission to be witnesses of His resurrection (Acts 10:41; Acts 1:8).

The plan for worldwide mission through them had already been established (Luke 24:46-48).

Those living at the end of the age and those who have already died will stand before Jesus, and He will be the judge in the personal judgment (John 5:22-23; Luke 16:19-31).

The Lord commands His disciples to proclaim this, and the prophets of the Old Testament also testify about the salvation through Jesus (Isaiah 53). The core of the Gospel is this: everyone who believes in Jesus and entrusts themselves to this salvation (His death and resurrection) receives forgiveness of sins.

● Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 5:6-8

This passage teaches three main points:

Even a small amount of leaven (sin) can corrupt the whole.

One must break away from the old life of leaven (sin) and live anew.

Those who believe in Jesus should live in sincerity (heart) and truth (action).

In the Corinthian church, sin was being tolerated. Paul warns that if it is left unaddressed, it will negatively affect not only individuals but the entire church community (Galatians 5:9; Matthew 16:6). Leaven (yeast?symbolizing sin or falsehood) influences the whole even in small amounts.

In the Old Testament Passover, unleavened bread symbolizes purity without sin and is eaten accordingly. The sacrificial lamb that saved the Israelites during the Exodus prefigures Jesus, and through His shed blood humanity has been cleansed. Therefore, believers are urged to remove the old leaven (Exodus 12; John 1:29).

Practically, removing sin involves repentance and similar actions. As for the life of believers:

Those who believe in the Lord are already made new; they must cast away the old leaven (sin) and live a new life following the Lord.

They must put away malice and wickedness, and live in both sincerity and truth (Ephesians 4:22-24; Colossians 3:8-10), which together align with God.

Thus, believers are called to live in a manner worthy of those who have been saved.

● Gospel Reading: John 20:1-9

On the first day of the week, Sunday, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early. The reasons include: Jesus had cast out evil spirits from her (Luke 8:2); she witnessed His death (Mark 15:40) and knew His burial place (Matthew 27:61), while the disciples feared persecution (John 20:19).

There had been insufficient time for burial preparations (John 19:42), so she went to anoint His body with spices (Mark 16:1).

She became the first witness of the resurrection, and the mission to proclaim it was given to women (John 20:17-18). The stone at the entrance of the tomb was moved by an angel of the Lord (Matthew 28:2). Mary did not yet understand the resurrection and assumed the body had been taken.

Peter and the disciple whom Jesus loved (John) ran to the tomb. John arrived first, but out of consideration for Peter, he did not enter and waited at the entrance. When Peter entered, he saw that the body had not been stolen?the linen cloths were lying there (cf. John 11:44). The cloth that had covered Jesus' head was rolled up separately, indicating that this was not a theft.

When John saw the empty tomb, he began to believe that Jesus had risen. In this way, the resurrection is not a fabricated story but a historically witnessed event.

The Old Testament had foretold that Jesus would rise from the dead (Psalm 16:10; Jonah 2:1). However, this event was not understood instantly. Like the coming of dawn, understanding grew gradually: seeing the empty tomb, the linen cloths, hearing the testimony of angels, and encountering the Lord. Through these stages, the disciples came to understand.

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