

Easter Sunday and the Art of Remembering Words – *Luke 24:1-8*

Introduction – This is really a continuation of last week's Palm Sunday message. There, we made the case that the Old Testament is not only a collection of biographies, but also and maybe primarily, it is a single biography – of Jesus Christ. If a person were to read through just the Old Testament and come to the end of Malachi, it would be obvious that this could not be the end of the story. The Old Testament doesn't end as a tragedy, but with a whimper. There was an intermission of several centuries, but it was not the end.

Resurrection Sunday – When the women come to find the tomb empty, two men (angels) meet them and remind them of Jesus' words (vv4, 6-7). And so "they remembered His words" (v8). Luke goes on to give us two more instances where Jesus' words are remembered, expounded, and understood (v27, 45).

Repeated Failures of the Types – Last week, we emphasized the typology of the Old Testament, seeing the snapshots of Jesus in people, in objects, in places, and in actions recorded in Genesis-Malachi. What we must also notice is the repeated failure of all of these types. Moses could not write the law on men's hearts. Judges were brought up to deliver the people, but there was a constant return to rebellion and idolatry. The sacrificial system could not make those who approached perfect; the people were brought near but there was still a veil separating the holy of holies. After David and Solomon, the Davidic line went into a slow downfall and by the time of the New Testament, there is no Davidic king. Exile was followed with a return and a rebuilding of the temple and the wall of Jerusalem, and yet the promised glory, splendor and majesty of a kingdom were far from present.

A Final Answer – The story, as we come to the times of Jesus, requires a Character who will not fail. It was time for the best, the antitype, to finally come. The Old Testament promised that God would not fail, that Israel would be saved, that the problem of sin would be taken care of. And this is what the angels said and Luke recorded vv5-8. God's Word required that this death and resurrection must happen. Remember God's Words...

God Identified Himself with Israel in His Name – Throughout the OT, God called Himself by name, "*the God of Israel*," and "*the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*" (i.e. Ex 3:14-15). God had promised Abraham that all of the nations would be blessed through him (Gen 12:2-3), and so His reputation and His very name was at stake. It was for His name's sake that He brought Israel through the Red Sea (Psalm 106:7-8). Samuel promised that the Lord would not forsake Israel because of His great name's sake (1 Sam 12:22). God had promised salvation because His name was bound up in it (Ezek 39:25).

God Promised to be With Us – Throughout Scripture and within man's heart is this subject of drawing near to God. Every since we were put out of the Garden of Eden, there had been a chasm between God and man that man could not breach. But God had promised and foreshadowed that He would breach that chasm, that God would be with us (Isaiah 7:14) which became Jesus' name, Immanuel (Matt 1:23). God does this by condescending to us, by taking on flesh and dwelling with us (John 1:14). And so God does not solve the problem and save His people by pushing buttons, flipping switches, or writing a check. Very Personally, He comes and dwells with His people, near them, working in and among them. As much as we were admitted beyond the veil, He has also come out from behind the veil so that in seeing Jesus, we are told we see the Father (John 14:9).

God both Suffered Over and Suffered With His People – Time and again throughout the Old Testament story God would lament over His people's rejection of Him like a rejected Husband or a spurned Lover (Num 12:11-12, Isaiah 65:1-2, Jer 3:20). God promised to lay Israel to waste, and yet He lamented over them as well (Jer 9:7-11), as a father over his rebellious son (Jer 31:20).

Remembering the Words – How could God be just (rightly bringing judgment upon sinners) and be the One who justifies (declares the sinners as righteous)? He became a man, an Israelite, a son of David. Jesus became the new Israel, bearing the name of God. Rather than abandoning His people, He came even nearer, taking upon Himself humanity, even more "God with us". And then He not only lamented over us, but He brought about His promised retribution for our sin while saving us from our sin by taking that sin upon Himself, dying on the cross. This is what "*he had to do*," as the angels said to the women at the tomb.

Death and Resurrection – The name of God was on and in the people of God and so we take on His name in our baptism. His Spirit is poured out upon us, bringing forth His new creature in us by whom we live with "God with us." And in our lives, God walks with us all of our days, making us more and more like Jesus, until the day we go to be with Him forever. Paul said it so well – "*I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me*" (Gal 2:20-21).