

Saint Peter's

Maundy Thursday 2024

Surely this man was God's Son



From beginning to end, the Bible is all about the power of God overcoming the forces of evil.

The book of Genesis reports that the forces of evil have been there since before the foundation of the world. So that in the very first paragraph of the Bible we read that:

‘In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void, and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters’. Then God said, ‘Let there be light’; and there was light’.

There is no duality here. No equality within the metaphysical world. No yin and yan within the Jewish, or the Christian religion. Evil is named. It is real. It is there. But it has no real power. That power, belongs to God. Witness the ease with which, against the forces of evil, God created the world. With a puff of his breath. With His simple utterance of a Word. The power of God, revealed to the world. So that no man may boast.

Similarly, the book of Revelation reports that the forces of evil, will have their day, at the hands of the Messiah. That, in the end, the forces of evil, and all who listen to them, all who engage in false worship, all who take an idol for themselves, whether individuals, nations, or empires, all who follow after falsehood, will be judged. Leaving humanity, in perfect praise of God. Leaving God, in perfect rule in and over creation. In what Jesus called, the kingdom of God.

In Jesus Christ, the kingdom of God has dawned upon the world.

In Jesus Christ, the new day, has drawn near to us.

All who repent and believe in the good news, through baptism, and faith, discover themselves already now, living in the kingdom of God. Living already now, in the dawn light of a new day.

Jesus came in the midst of history, as the end of history. Jesus came in the midst of history, as the fulfilment of history.

The kingdom of God is the fulfilment of history. The taking up of history, into eternal life. The taking up of history, into the kingdom of God.

Jesus is the Word of God. By Him, and by the Spirit of God, God the Father is making all things new.

This is the message of the Gospel of John. 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it'.

In the New Testament, too, there is no duality, between evil, and good. Again, evil is named. Human evil, and the spiritual forces of evil, behind it. Both are real. Both are there. Neither have any real power. The only real power, is with God.

Once again, we witness the power of God, the Sovereignty of God, win the decisive victory over evil, human evil, and the dark spiritual forces of evil behind them.

More powerful than human beings, witness the power of God to win the decisive victory over them, once, for all people, in the cross of Jesus Christ, the Christus Victor. In the utterance of His Word, Jesus Christ, crucified. With a puff of his breath, the Spirit of Christ. The power, and the sovereignty of God, is revealed to the world. For all the world to see.

‘Now is the judgment of this world,’ Jesus said of his cross. ‘Now the ruler of this world will be driven out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself...Now the Son of God will be glorified, and God will be glorified in Him’.

Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah of God, on the cross. The Word of God, in his crucifixion, is the judgment of God upon the world, once, for all people.

In the just judgment, of God himself, God has pronounced His ‘No!’ upon all human falsehood. God has condemned in the flesh all false worship, every false judgment, every false human being. And God has pronounced His Word of forgiveness, to all who repent, and believe, in the good news of God. To all who turn to him in righteousness, to all who turn their life around. To all who come to him now in right worship, right judgment, right human being.

In the cross, God has won the victory over the Devil. The Satan. The deceiver of the world. The ruler of this world, is driven out.

Jesus is the Christus Victor, the victorious Son of God. In His crucifixion he did battle with the enemy, the Devil.

Prevailing there, he won the victory, once, for us, and for the world.

So that all people now may come to him, lifted up from the earth on the cross, in repentance and faith. He is drawing all people to himself.

‘It is finished!’

Jesus declared.

And he gave up his spirit.

The Victorious Christ, the Word of God, 'Surely this man was God's Son.'
