

Acts 5. ²⁹⁻³²

²⁹Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, “We ought to obey God rather than men. ³⁰The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. ³¹Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give [to gift, endow, grant] repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. ³²And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.

Today’s is the 2nd reading for Lent/ Easter 2025

After being hauled into prison and then miraculously rescued from that same prison, Peter was forced to appear before the Jewish Council and explain why, after it had “straitly command[ed] you that ye should not teach in this [Jesus’] name,” he was found again preaching the good news about Jesus in the temple (See Acts 5.²⁸). Today’s reading contains Peter’s reply to the council’s mystified and indignant inquest.

1. Peter makes an assertion—one that is repeated often in Acts—that God, the Father “raised up Jesus.”
 - ? We often say that Jesus had power in himself to raise himself from the dead. So, how do you understand Peter’s assertion?
 - ? If we assume that Peter meant to say that Father gave Jesus the power to raise himself, why did he not say it that way?
 - ? What other role might Father have played in Jesus’ rising from the dead other than simply bestowing power to raise himself?
 - ? The Psalmist tells of a time when he was rescued from Sh^eol, which is death/ hell. How might it relate to today’s reading?

“The LORD also thundered in the heavens,
and the Highest gave his voice;
hail stones and coals of fire.
Yea, he sent out his arrows, and scattered them;
and he shot out lightnings, and discomfited them.
Then the channels of waters were seen,
and the foundations of the world were discovered
at thy rebuke, O LORD,
at the blast of the breath of thy nostrils.
He sent from above, he took me,
he drew me out of many waters.
He delivered me from my strong enemy,
and from them which hated me:
for they were too strong for me” (18.¹³⁻¹⁷).

2. Peter says that God “exalted” Jesus in order to “give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.” Here, to “give” means to “gift” or “grant,” or “endow.” We often speak of Jesus “giving” or “granting” forgiveness of sins. We see it as a gift bestowed.
 - ? But what do you think and feel when you consider that even the ability to repent is not something we “invent” but was “gifted” to us by God?
 - ? What does this truth do to our occasional pride at having pulled ourselves up by the bootstraps to repent?

Amulek teaches that Jesus “bringeth about means unto men that they may have faith unto repentance” (Alma 34.¹⁵).

- ? What do you think and feel when you consider that without Jesus’ Atonement, even if you were inclined to repent you would be unable to muster the faith to do so?
- ? What, do you suppose, are the chances that you would want to repent if Jesus had not come to earth to reveal his Atonement?
- ? In the final analysis, who is it that is the initiator of repentance... God or us? Why do you answer as you do?
- ? What does knowing that God is the initiator of repentance impact the way you think of repentance?
- ? We ask, again, what does the truth that Amulek reveals do to our occasional pride at having been “insightful enough to repent”?

3. Speaking of Jesus, the KJV reads: “Him hath God exalted *with* his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour.” Some translations read “Him hath God exalted *to* his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior.”

- ? What would be the significance of these two different readings?

God exalted Jesus with his right hand.

God exalted Jesus to his right hand.

- ? What would be the significance of and importance to you to have Jesus sitting exalted on “the right hand of God”?

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