

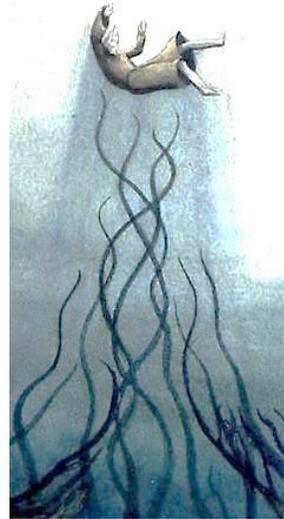
**St. Luke Ev. Lutheran Church  
Sermon by Pastor Anthony E.  
Schultz**

**The Resurrection of Our Lord  
(Easter Day)**

**April 1, 2018**

**Jonah 2:2-9 EHV**

<sup>2</sup>He said: "In my distress I called to the LORD, and he answered me. From the belly of the grave I cried out; you heard my voice. <sup>3</sup>You threw me into the depths, into the heart of the seas. The currents surrounded me. All your breakers and your waves swept over me. <sup>4</sup>I said, 'I have been driven away from your sight; yet I will look again toward your holy temple.' <sup>5</sup>Waters encompassed me to the point of death. The deep surrounded me. Seaweed was wrapped around my head. <sup>6</sup>To the roots of the mountains I sank down; the earth with its bars was around me forever. But you brought up my life from the pit, O LORD my God. <sup>7</sup>When my life was ebbing away, I remembered the LORD. My prayer came to you, to your holy temple. <sup>8</sup>Those who cling to worthless idols forsake the mercy that could be theirs. <sup>9</sup>But I, with a song of thanksgiving, will indeed sacrifice to you. What I have vowed, I will indeed repay. Salvation belongs to the LORD."



People of God, rescued from the flaming lake of fire in Hell by the innocent blood of the crucified and risen Christ:

I remember when I was in grade school – summer vacation we would drive from south central Illinois – not far from Peoria to

LaCrosse to visit my grandmas and all my aunts and uncles. My most favorite part was when we would visit Uncle Earl and Aunt Vivian – in West Salem. Uncle Earl owned a swatch of land by Lake Neshcoro. He had a pier that went out onto the Lake. I remember one time fishing after it had rained alot – and the water level was right up even with the pier – water with a little bit of green algae was just washing a little over the edge of the grey warped planks. I remember standing at the edge watching my little bobber floating on the top – my little minnow bait about 18 inches below the surface. Suddenly there was a tug, tug, tug and down went the bobber! I stepped forward to begin the struggle with this mighty fish from the deep when I slipped and went right off the pier – under water – down, down, down, down. Everything was suddenly very dark and very quiet. I got near what I thought must be the bottom and I jammed my fishing pole into the soggy bottom. Up I went toward the surface – and suddenly I felt the strongest hands in the world – two hands on each shoulder as my Dad and Uncle Earl pulled me up and out of the water and set me back on the pier! It was only later that it sank in – what if I had come up – just a little closer to where I fell in. I could have cracked my head – been stuck – trapped under the pier – and drowned! For a moment it was really scary – and then it was ok. This is a pale – pale picture of Jonah and the great fish! It might seem strange – on Easter Sunday – to hear a sermon about Jonah. We might expect to hear a sermon on Matthew 28.

**After the Sabbath, at dawn, on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. There was a violent earthquake for an angel of the LORD came down**

from Heaven and going to the tomb rolled back the stone and sat on it His appearance was like lightning and his clothes were white as snow. The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men. The angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid for I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here. He is risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples he is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see Him. Now I have told you!”

You might expect to hear a sermon on 1 Corinthians 15. **Where O death is your victory? Where O death is your sting? The sting of death and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.** You might expect to hear a sermon on Romans chapter 8. **No in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us for I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future nor any powers, neither height nor depth nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

We are going to hear all that and more. Already in the Old Testament God’s Word promised to God’s people that the LORD the great I AM had power over death and the grave. Already in the Old Testament God’ showed His people sneak previews – the powerful concrete promises that Jesus would overcome death and the prison of the grave – in Jesus’ life and sacrifice to save us. And because of Jesus – the grave will never ever be the end of us either!

### **Jesus Sets Us Free from Death!**

## 1. In life there is much distress

## 2. Jesus is our forever Rescue!

Have you read the scroll of Jonah lately? Do you remember studying Jonah in Sunday School – in Christ~light Bible Study? The People’s Bible volume Obadiah, Jonah and Micah was by the grace of God written by Prof. Cyril W. Spaude. Prof. Spaude was blessed by Jesus with a wonderful mind for languages. Prof. Spaude taught college level Hebrews and college level Greek, too. Blessed is someone who could teach either – doubly blessed to teach both. Back in the day Prof. Spaude was exceptional in many ways – by the grace of God – especially respectful of his co-workers at Northwestern College and the newest teachers at Northwestern Preparatory School. Again – words of kindness for Jesus’ sake – spoken some 25 years ago – still remembered by the grace of God – still today!

Context: Jonah preached God’s Word before and during the reign of Jeroboam II~King of Israel. Jonah probably sat down and wrote the 4 chapters of his ministry to Nineveh about 780 B.C. So ball park think about 800 years before baby Jesus was born. Jonah preached God’s word about 80 years after Elisha. Jonah was a prophet early in the ministries of Hosea and his wife of unfaithfulness Gomer and their children Jezreel, Not loved and Not my people – during the ministry of Isaiah – **he was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities and... by His wounds we are healed – all we like sheep have gone astray and the LORD has laid on him the iniquities of us all!** And the ministry of Micah – **in Bethlehem He will be born** – the humble King of kings and Lord of lords.

Back in the day there was an Assyrian King Shalmaneser III. He fought a bloody battle at Qarqar in Syria to put down a revolt by a number of Syrian kings joined by Ahab King of the North—the King of Israel. Israel was forced to pay tribute to the same Assyrian king. In the meantime Israel’s own borders were shrinking as it lost possession of one outlying area after another. **“And everyone in Israel, whether slave or free, was suffering.”** 2 Kings 14:26. At this low point in Israel’s history—the Lord sent Jonah to King Jeroboam II with the promise of restoration and better days. God always keeps his promises. Jeroboam II reigned for 40 years as Israel’s thirteenth king and became one of her most powerful kings. Yet, for all the prosperity and military power he enjoyed, he was a very evil king. God’s Word says, **“He did evil in the eyes of the LORD.”** 2 Kings 14:24. This then is the context when Jonah was sent by the LORD to call the people of the great and dreadful city of Nineveh to repent or she would be destroyed!

Jonah didn’t want to go to Nineveh. Not because he was afraid of the people of Nineveh. Jonah was afraid they would hear God’s Word—repent of their sins—and be spared. Jonah wanted them to be crushed—*utterly* crushed—*completely* destroyed. He wanted nothing to do with their rescue, forgiveness and salvation. So when the LORD sent Jonah to Nineveh—Jonah got on board a ship and headed west—pretty much toward the Rock of Gibraltar—near what would later be Spain and Portugal. You can run—well *not really*—and you can’t hide from your Heavenly Father. Jonah wasn’t far from the pier before there was a terrible storm. They tried everything humanly possible—tossed

everything overboard and the storm got no better. They cast lots – and the lot fell to Jonah. God’s Word says, **Then they took Jonah and threw him overboard and the raging sea grew calm. At this the men greatly feared the LORD, and they offered a sacrifice to the LORD and made vows to Him.** Jonah 1:15,16 **The men greatly feared the LORD...** does that mean saving faith? It is most certainly not for us to judge. It is not for us to say. It is the LORD alone who can judge ♥! Having said that – if you did speculate – the easy answer would be to suggest – they were just scared. They didn’t know or understand enough about the great I AM to call it saving faith – and so? I would suggest – are we remembering the Scripture the LORD **would have all people to be saved and to come to knowledge of the truth?** Remember the Scriptures that say again and again Abraham, Israel, Jacob, Moses, David, Obadiah, Job and Hezekiah and Daniel **feared God.** Again are we looking for hope – for grace – for mercy – or are we playing the part of the Pharisees we studied in Adult Bible Class last week – and looking for reasons to say no?

**<sup>2</sup>He said: “In my distress I called to the LORD, and he answered me. From the belly of the grave I cried out; you heard my voice. <sup>3</sup>You threw me into the depths, into the heart of the seas. The currents surrounded me. All your breakers and your waves swept over me. <sup>4</sup>I said, ‘I have been driven away from your sight; yet I will look again toward your holy temple.’ <sup>5</sup>Waters encompassed me to the point of death. The deep surrounded me. Seaweed was wrapped around my head.** On our own – by our self – we are helpless – doomed – lost. It is only by the grace of God that we are forgiven – redeemed – rescued from

the pit of the grave because Jesus died and rose again to forgive us! Jesus died and rose again to save us! Jesus borrowed a grave. Jesus was in the tomb Friday night – Saturday morning, noon and through the night. At Sunday's first light Jesus rose from the dead. He descended into the Hell – to proclaim His ultimate victory. Then He appeared to all the people in 1 Corinthians 15

**<sup>3</sup> For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, <sup>4</sup> that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, <sup>5</sup> and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the Twelve. <sup>6</sup> After that he appeared to over five hundred brothers at the same time, most of whom are still alive, but some have fallen asleep. <sup>7</sup> Then he appeared to James, and then to all the apostles. <sup>8</sup> Last of all, he appeared also to me, the stillborn child, so to speak. <sup>9</sup> For I am the least of the apostles, and I am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted God's church. <sup>10</sup> But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not ineffective. 1 Cor. 15 EHV.**

The Friday before Good Friday a 26 year old terrorist burst into a French grocery store and took hostages. 4 hours after this nightmare began – a Lt. Col. named Arnaud Beltrame – offered to exchange himself for a woman hostage. Moments later he was fatally wounded. He willingly gave his life to save someone he most likely had never even met. He died so she could live. The Lt. Col.'s name was Arnaud Beltrame! Will you remember his name when you leave Church today? Probably not – Arnaud Beltrame – Arnaud Beltrame – Arnaud Beltrame! There is a woman in France that will never ever forget his name. She will

spend from now until the day she dies trying to think of ways to thank him and she can't – she *can't!* Jesus died to save you and me. How can we thank Him? By reading our Bible. By coming to Church to worship Him. By coming to Lord's Supper – to remember His death until He comes! Tell anyone and everyone that **Jesus is risen – He is risen indeed!** *Thank you, Jesus! Amen!*  
To God alone all glory!

*Rev. Anthony P. Schatz*

