

Christian MONTHLY

DEDICATED TO THE PROCLAMATION
OF THE WORD OF GOD



Psalm 119:105
Thy word is a lamp unto my feet,
and a light unto my path.

April 2023

He Is Risen!

Pastor Dennis Hamu
Wolf Lake, Minnesota

THERE WERE NO GREATER WORDS uttered in the history of man. Angels spoke these words to the women who came to Jesus' tomb and found it empty. This is recorded in the *Gospel of Luke 24:4-8*:

And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments: And as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee, Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. And they remembered his words.

The voices of angels announced the news of the birth of our Lord and now they announce His resurrection. All has been accomplished and the plan of redemption completed. He is risen indeed!

The resurrection of our Lord is the culmination of His work here on this earth. The suffering and death of Jesus filled His disciples with fear and dread as they thought all hope was lost. Their messianic ideals were shattered and now they found themselves without any direction in this world. Peter, perhaps, suffered the most as he thought of his denial of Jesus after his boast of being willing to die with him. Then these women show up with the news, "He is risen," and their world is turned upside down. They soon will understand what exactly Jesus accomplished for them through His death and resurrection. The power of the Holy Spirit will be poured out on them and they will begin to spread the Gospel, the good news of the kingdom of God. The risen Lord made all of this possible as He breathed on them and commissioned them to go out and preach the forgiveness of sins by the power of the Holy Spirit. The risen Lord brought peace to His disciples and restored Peter as recorded in the *Gospel of John*. The risen Lord

changed His disciples eternally; their world was truly turned upside down and would never be the same. All of Jesus' disciples would die a martyr's death except John; because of the One who arose they understood their lives differently: they did not love their lives unto the death but rather gave them up, and in doing so they live eternally with HIM.

We, as well, have been changed by His resurrection. We don't need to wallow in our sins or fear death. The death and resurrection of our Lord has brought salvation to the world. We were destined to die, but now we live. Paul would later say in *1 Corinthians 15:20-22*:

But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.



This he would say in defense of the resurrection of Christ, saying to the Corinthians that without the resurrection our faith is in vain and we are of all people most miserable, because we would still be in our sins and those who have died in Christ would have done so in vain. "He is risen" means that we are not in our sins, and those who have died in Christ have, in fact, been victorious. We have all been made alive through His resurrection and the victory is ours. *1 Corinthians 15:57-58*:

But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

May the words "He is risen" bring us great joy this season as we remember the Resurrection of our Lord and the life we have received through Jesus. He is the First and the Last, the Living One, the One who was dead, but look He is alive forevermore! He is Risen! He is Risen indeed! ~

He Was Delivered and Raised for Us

Andrew Mickelsen
April 1956 CM

I found this article written by our former Chairman of the Apostolic Lutheran Church, Pastor Andrew Mickelsen, which was originally sent into the April 1956 Easter *Christian Monthly* and reprinted in the April 1982 issue. It seems timely as it deals with the issue of absolution (remission and retaining of sins) as commissioned by Jesus in the gospels. It seems that we rarely hear it preached in sermons from the pulpit anymore and has even become a controversial matter today. I've heard it said that this is "Apostolic Lutheran" doctrine and one said, "God has not revealed this to me." Each minister knows why he is not preaching this portion of Scripture, even though Jesus Himself instituted it while He walked this earth. "My Word is the same yesterday, today and forever." My observation is that they fear that for some hearers it may become a work that is a part of what one must do to merit salvation. That can happen but we need to pray that it could be revealed in its truth to our speakers so as to not cause confusion and division. I think Pastor Mickelsen explains its importance and its benefits to the believer biblically.

This is a well-explained account of the crucifixion and resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and His intended commission to "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel." He breathed on His disciples the Holy Spirit and sent them out, saying, "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." *Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses. (Acts 13:38-39)*

God's peace.

Edith Bisila; Circle Pines, Minnesota

Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

Romans 4:25

GOD DELIVERED HIS OWN SON to be crucified on Calvary's cross in order that He would suffer the punishment and pay the penalty for our offenses. It was not easy for Jesus to submit to the will of God, although He willingly did so, for He says: *Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. (John 12:27)* Jesus felt all the terror of the wrath of God poured out against sin from the beginning of time, and suffered all the agony of sinsick souls rolled up into one heap, and placed upon His soul. Is it any wonder that He says: "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death"? (*Matthew 26:38*) Human pen cannot portray, nor tongue express the agony of soul that Jesus suffered in the Garden of Gethsemane and on Calvary's cross, when He was delivered for our offenses. But by thus suffering and giving His life as a ransom for us all, our sin debt is paid and our redemption secured, so that today sinsick souls can be comforted and healed by the blood of the Lamb.

Therefore, we thank Thee, Lord Jesus, for Thy suffering and death, by which Thou provided a redemption for us. We thank Thee that this redemption is in Thy blood, the forgiveness of our sins, according to the riches of Thy grace

(Ephesians 1:7). We thank Thee that Thy blood speaks to us today and urges us to believe the forgiveness of our sins, for it is not a mute blood (Hebrews 12:24). We thank Thee that it speaks through the mouths of Thy blood-washed people who today preach repentance and the forgiveness of sins, according to Thy commandment (Luke 24:47).

"And was raised for our justification." Can we be justified by only believing that Jesus died for our sins? No, not according to Scripture, for Saint Paul says: *And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. (1 Corinthians 15:17)* Why is the resurrection of Jesus so important? The answer is evident. If death could have held Jesus captive, there would be no hope of eternal life for us. Our faith in His suffering and death for our sins would be vain, and we would still be in our sins because there would be no gospel of forgiveness in His name and blood, for it was after His resurrection that He commissioned His own to preach this Gospel, and said: *Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained. (John 20:23)* Where there is no gospel of forgiveness of sins, there is no peace of a good conscience, and there is no justification, for our faith must be anchored on these two immutable things: Jesus our Savior, who is the same yesterday, today and forever, and the Word of God that shall remain forever. Then we will be justified by faith, and have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 5:1). And we will have a *...strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. (Hebrews 6:18-20)*

All the powers of hell were arrayed against our Lord to hold Him in that tomb. Here, on earth, the tomb was sealed and guarded by men, and in Revelation 12, we are told how the dragon and his angels fought against Christ and the hosts of heaven but prevailed not. Jesus arose victoriously on the third day. Victorious over death, hell and the devil, to give this victory to His own. Now Saint John says: *And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. (Revelation 12:10)*

We do not have to guess when the accuser was cast out because we have a sure word of Jesus, who, after likening Himself to a kernel of wheat that dies and springs up again to bring forth much fruit, says: *Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. (John 12:31)* Satan was cast out from before God that he could not accuse the brethren day and night anymore when Jesus arose victorious over death, hell and Satan, and gave this victory to His own. How does Jesus give us the victory? This is the important question. Heaven answered this question for us in this manner: *And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony... (Revelation 12:11)*

Dear friend, do not seek any other way to overcome the accuser or an accusing conscience than by the blood of the Lamb, which is applied, or sprinkled, in the gospel of Christ, when the brethren, or the children of God, testify the

forgiveness of all your sins in Jesus' name and blood. It is by the remission of sins that we have knowledge of salvation and by faith we lay hold of this forgiveness and salvation, which our crucified and resurrected Savior provided for us, and thus we are justified and have the peace of God, which is the peace of a good conscience, for it is written: *To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins, Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us (Luke 1:77-78)*

This is the glad tidings that Jesus came to bring to us. This is the peace that He brought to His own on the first day of resurrection. To those penitents sinners who believe this Gospel, Christ is the rising of the morning sun after a dark, fearful night. A night in which they were spiritually asleep and lived in a hellish nightmare of sin, tormented by the thoughts of a just punishment from a righteous God whom they had angered. Oh, what a beautiful new day has dawned for them, more beautiful than they had ever hoped for, for behold, the Sun of Righteousness arises with healing in his wings (Malachi 4:2). Gone is the fearful night of hopelessness and torment. Gone are the dreadful thoughts of an eternity

without God. With the dawning of a new day, that brought newness of life by faith in the resurrected and living Savior, comes a new hope, new faith and new peace. It is this day that the psalmist beheld when he wrote: *This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it. (Psalm 118:24)*

The redeemed sinners love the Lord because He loved them first, and lifted them up out of the horrible pit of unbelief and out of the miry clay of sin, and set their feet upon the Rock and establish their goings, and put a new song into their mouths, even praise unto their God (Psalm 20:2-3). The redeemed are not ashamed of Jesus, nor His Gospel for they know it to be the power of God unto salvation for everyone that believeth. Therefore they tell others what Jesus has done for them and urge others to repent and to believe the Gospel, that they also would be partakers of this first resurrection. Oh, how wonderful it is to experience that which Saint Paul says in Ephesians 2:1: *And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins.* This is the true Easter blessing that brings joy and rejoicing to the heart and soul. May this Easter blessing be yours, dear friend. God's peace! ~

Christ Jesus Lay in Death's Strong Bands

Christ Jesus lay in death's strong bands For our offenses given;
But now at God's right hand He stands And brings us life from heaven.
Therefore let us joyful be And sing to God right thankfully
Loud songs of alleluia! Alleluia!

No son of man could conquer death, Such ruin sin had wrought us.
No innocence was found on earth, And therefore death had brought us
Into bondage from of old And ever grew more strong and bold
And held us as its captive. Alleluia!

Christ Jesus, God's own Son, came down, His people to deliver;
Destroying sin, He took the crown From death's pale brow forever.
Stripped of pow'r, no more it reigns; An empty form alone remains;
Its sting is lost forever. Alleluia!

It was a strange and dreadful strife When life and death contended.
The victory remained with life, The reign of death was ended.
Holy Scripture plainly saith That death is swallowed up by death;
Disgraced, it lies defeated. Alleluia!

Here the true Paschal Lamb we see, Whom God so freely gave us;
He died on the accursed tree—So strong His love—to save us.
See, His blood now marks our door; Faith points to it; death passes o'er,
And Satan cannot harm us. Alleluia!

So let us keep the festival To which the Lord invites us;
Christ is Himself the joy of all, The sun that warms and lights us.
Now His grace to us imparts Eternal sunshine to our hearts;
The night of sin is ended. Alleluia!

Then let us feast this Easter day On Christ, the bread of heaven;
The Word of grace has purged away The old and evil leaven.
Christ alone our souls will feed; He is our meat and drink indeed;
Faith lives upon no other! Alleluia!



Martin Luther

I Died for You

Gwen Wilson
Ridgefield, Washington

Dear Children,

Hello to each of you. I pray all is well with you. I and my family are well.

The spring season will soon be here, and new life will begin to show on the plants and trees. All will be new once more, by the power of our Almighty God. He does all things decently and in order. Our family has welcomed new life into it just in the past weeks, with two baby girls, just two weeks apart. We are happy, thankful grandparents again and get to love nineteen grandchildren.

We are now in the Easter season and our hearts can rejoice that God sent His Son to save us.

Let's look at some Scriptures where Jesus spoke to the people when He was on earth. He is now, through His Word, speaking to us. His Word never changes.

LET'S LOOK IN THE Old Testament in Isaiah 53. Here we see a prophecy of Jesus living on earth as a child and growing up, and then dying. This was 700 years before Jesus' birth.

V. 2 He shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground.

V. 3 He is despised and rejected of men: a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.

V. 4 Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows.

V. 5 But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities (sins): the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

V. 6 All we like sheep (We are compared to sheep because they are prone to trouble and always need their shepherd to get them out of it!) have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him (Jesus) the iniquity (sins) of us all.

Verses 7-9 He was oppressed (harsh treatment), and he was afflicted (pain and suffering), yet he opened not his mouth: (He bore all this without a sound.)

He was taken from prison and from judgment: for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. (God speaking!)

He made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit (not speaking the truth) in his mouth.

Verses 10-12 Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin.

He (the LORD) shall see the travail of his (Jesus') soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he (Jesus) shall bear their iniquities (take ALL sin on Himself).

He hath poured out his soul unto death; and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors. (Jesus speaks to His Father God on our behalf when we have sinned and He desires mercy for us.)

Here we have a prophecy hundreds of years before Jesus' birth. In the Word there, one can see all that did take place when Jesus lived on earth. At 33 years of age, and after three short years of preaching and teaching, and healing, He was put to death.

He came as a tender plant, perfect in every way and doing nothing but good, and yet He was rejected of men. He had to die a cruel death to save us from our sins, so that one day all with believing hearts will get to live in heaven with Him.

So many people still reject Him and refuse to believe He was real and have no use for Him. We see this all around us, and yet we know Jesus came and died for them, too. We cannot choose Jesus; He is the one who chooses us. He gives us faith to believe. He sends the Holy Spirit to abide in our hearts to lead and guide us. We are His sheep and He is our Shepherd. We know His voice and He KNOWS His sheep.

I pray that you will take time to ponder the big price that Jesus paid to save your soul. It is no small thing. The Bible says that we people would almost not or even dare to die for a righteous person or a good person. But Jesus died for ALL SINNERS.

I thank God for sending His Son, and I pray you do, too. The believer has a home waiting in heaven one day. That home will NEVER end. We have our heavenly Father and Jesus His Son waiting for us.

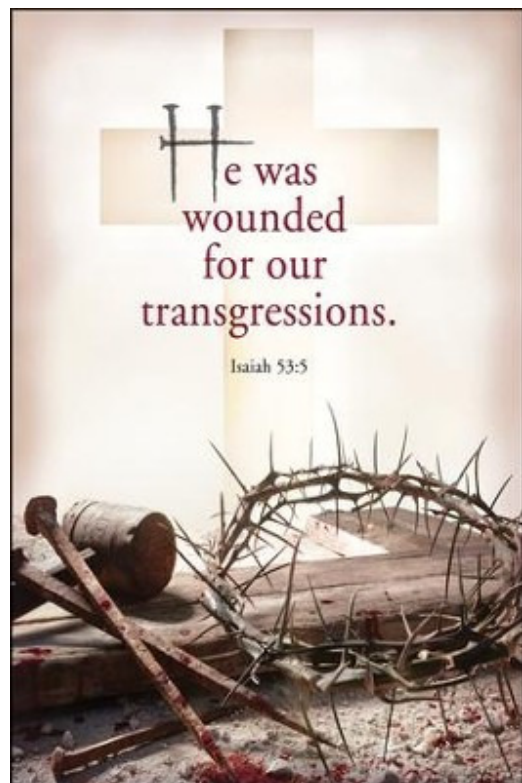
I want to leave you with one more verse that you can hear Jesus speaking right to you.

Jesus was speaking to Martha at the time when she and Mary's brother Lazarus had died, and Jesus raised him from the grave.

John 11:25-26: Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?

I wish a blessed Easter to you all.

God's peace.



Living the Effects of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ

Orval Wirkkala
April 2014 CM

WHILE JESUS WAS YET IN the tomb, those who did not understand the meaning and purpose of the life of Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the Son of man, made provision to stop Him from coming out of the tomb in which His dead body had been laid. This they did by placing a stone in the opening of the tomb and by putting guards at the tomb (Matthew 27:62-66).

When He arose on Easter morning, the guards who had been “as dead men” during His resurrection, went to tell the chief priests all the things that were done. They were told by the chief priests and elders to tell people that His body had been stolen away in the night by the disciples (Matthew 28:4, 11-15).

The rejection of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the denial which began on the same day on which He arose, continues today. In a letter written somewhere in the neighborhood of twenty years after this unparalleled historic event, a Christian congregation had a question concerning the resurrection of the dead.

The question did not so much center on the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, but more so on the question: “Is there a resurrection of the dead?” For the answer to that question drives the answer to the following questions: Did Jesus arise from the dead? Do we need to believe that He arose from the dead? Can’t we be a Christian without believing that He arose from the dead?

Everything that we believe and trust in is dependent upon whether Jesus Christ arose from the dead and is alive today. If He indeed arose from the dead, then it follows that all that He did and said in His life is true. If He did not rise from the dead, then it also follows that all that He did and said is not true.

Let us hear how this question was answered by the Apostle Paul in approximately the year 50 AD, picking up at the beginning of chapter 15 of 1 Corinthians.

He begins his answer by speaking of the Gospel that he received and which is defined as the death, the burial and the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. He goes on to give evidence of Jesus’ resurrection by pointing out the various people who had seen Jesus alive after His resurrection, which included Paul himself. He poses a rhetorical question and gives the consequences of no resurrected Jesus.

Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. (1 Corinthians 15:12-19)

No resurrection means that Christ is not risen, the content of our preaching is worthless, our faith has no substance, we are liars, we are yet in our sins, those who have gone on before have died in their sins, and we who are living today have only this life to live. But, no, He is resurrected, and therefore the opposite of what he just told them/us is true.

But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. (1 Corinthians 15:20-26)

Christ arose and He is the “firstfruits” of them that slept. His unique resurrection precedes all other resurrections, for even though people have been raised from the dead previously in a physical sense, all but Jesus went back to the grave to await the final resurrection unto life. This thought is captured by both the Prophet Isaiah and the Apostle John:

Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief; when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his

seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors. (Isaiah 53:10-12)



And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. (John 12:23-24)

What does this mean for you, for me, as we live in our post-resurrection life?

Christ is risen; there is a resurrection from the dead. This means that the content of our preaching is true, our faith has as its object the person and work of Jesus Christ, we are telling the truth, we are not in our sins, those who have fallen asleep (died) before us are awaiting the resurrection from the dead, and we have a lot more to look forward to than this life.

Let this be an encouragement to us today, for our preaching is not based on some abstract idea, but rather it is based on the historical facts of the death, burial and resurrection of the Incarnate God, Jesus the Christ.

Dear brothers and sisters, keep on preaching the crucified and resurrected Jesus Christ! ~



MEETING NOTICE

The 115th Annual Meeting of the Apostolic Lutheran Church of America will be hosted by the Apostolic Lutheran Church of New York Mills, MN and will be held on June 29th, 2023, at the New York Mills School in New York Mills, MN.

In accordance with the By-Laws, the Annual Reports will be read; the members of the Central Board, the Eastern Mission Board, the Western Mission Board, and the Southern Mission Board will be elected. All matters will be considered and acted upon. Congregations are requested to send their delegates to this meeting.

The schedule of meetings and services are as follows:

- Tuesday, June 27th Ministers meeting 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM at the New York Mills Apostolic Lutheran Church, 315 Main Ave S, New York Mills, MN 56567
- Wednesday, June 28th National Sunday School Meeting 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM and Eastern Mission Meeting 3:00 PM at the New York Mills Apostolic Lutheran Church, 315 Main Ave S, New York Mills, MN 56567
- Thursday, June 29th Annual Business Meeting 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM at the New York Mills School, 209 N Hayes Ave, New York Mills, MN 56567
The Foreign Mission Business Meeting will immediately follow the Annual Business Meeting.

Opening Service 7:00 PM at the New York Mills Apostolic Lutheran Church, 315 Main Ave S, New York Mills, MN 56567

Devotional services will be held 10 AM, 2 PM and 6:30 PM beginning on Thursday, June 29th through Sunday, July 2nd, 2023, at the New York Mills School, 209 N Hayes Ave, New York Mills, MN 56567. Ministers, members, and the general public are invited to participate in these services.

On behalf of the Central Board of the Apostolic Lutheran Church of America,
David Myllymaki, Chairman
John Isaacson, Secretary

Victory in Jesus!

Soldiers of King Jesus, raise the shout again,
Victory in Jesus, victory!
Marching to the music of the glad refrain,
Victory in Jesus evermore.

O'er the pow'rs of darkness, o'er the hosts of sin,
Victory in Jesus, victory!
Trusting, watching, praying, we shall surely win,
Victory in Jesus evermore.

Send the happy watchword all along the line,
Victory in Jesus, victory!
Let all error perish, lives the truth divine,
Victory in Jesus evermore.

For His church and kingdom, for each trusting soul,
Victory in Jesus, victory!
From the courts of Heaven joyful paeans roll,
Victory in Jesus evermore.

Refrain: Victory, victory, victory in Jesus!
Sing His overcoming blood, sing the grace that frees us;
Ring it out more boldly, song of faith and cheer,
Till the whole wide world shall hear.

Eliza E. Hewitt

Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.

But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

1 Corinthians 15:50-58

Our Mighty Conqueror

Lois Matson
Yacolt, Washington

And thou shalt make a veil of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen of cunning work: with cherubims shall it be made: And thou shalt hang it upon four pillars of shittim wood overlaid with gold: their hooks shall be of gold, upon the four sockets of silver. And thou shalt hang up the veil under the taches, that thou mayest bring in thither within the veil the ark of the testimony: and the veil shall divide unto you between the holy place and the most holy. And thou shalt put the mercy seat upon the ark of the testimony in the most holy place. (Exodus 26:31-34)

Moses was given detailed instructions for building the tabernacle where God would meet with His people. In the innermost area, called the Holy of Holies or the Most Holy Place, the mercy seat rested on the ark of the testimony. The Most Holy Place was protected by a thick, beautiful veil. The high priest entered behind the veil only once a year, on the Day of Atonement, bringing the blood of the sacrifice to atone for his own sins and the sins of the people. No one else, ever, entered that place.

When Solomon built the first temple at Jerusalem, it also had a veil around the Most Holy Place. *And he made the veil of blue, and purple, and crimson, and fine linen, and wrought cherubims thereon. (2 Chronicles 3:14)* The blood of bulls and goats was still offered once a year, by the high priest, for sin.

Herod's temple, the second temple, was in existence at the time of Jesus, and it also had a veil preventing access to the Most Holy Place. Sacrifices were made, the blood was brought in to atone for sin, once a year.

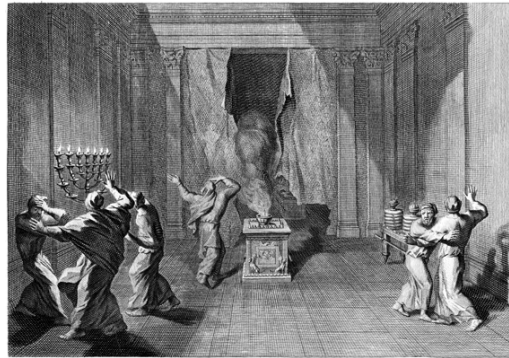
Time after time. Year after year.

And at the death of Jesus Christ on the cross, the veil in the temple was torn from top to bottom. The gospel writers Matthew, Mark and Luke all record this event.

Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent. (Matthew 27:50-51)

And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost. And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom. (Mark 15:37-38)

And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst. And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost. (Lk 23:44-46)



The veil was torn! The Most Holy Place was open. No longer would access to the Father occur through the earthly high priest, for Jesus Himself has become our Great High Priest. *Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of*

God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. (Hebrews 4:14-16)

For us, Jesus has torn the veil that separated us from the Most Holy Place. For us, instead of the blood of bulls and goats, He has offered His own blood. For us, instead of year by year, He offered Himself as the perfect sacrifice, once for all time.

Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And having an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. (Hebrews 10:19-22)

Our Lord Jesus is the Mighty Conqueror! The risen Man of Sorrows has overcome death, hell and the devil for us. God be praised!

*Once our blessed Christ of beauty Was veiled off from human view;
But thro' suffering, death and sorrow He has rent the veil in two.
Now He is with God the Father, Interceding there for you;
For He is the mighty conqu'ror, Since He rent the veil in two.
Holy angels bow before Him, Men of earth give praises due;
For He is the well-belovèd Since He rent the veil in two.
Thro'out time and endless ages, Heights and depths of love so true;
He alone can be the giver Since He rent the veil in two.
O behold the Man of Sorrows, O behold Him in plain view;
Lo! He is the mighty conqu'ror, Since He rent the veil in two.
Lo! He is the mighty conqu'ror, Since He rent the veil in two.*

N. B. Herrell

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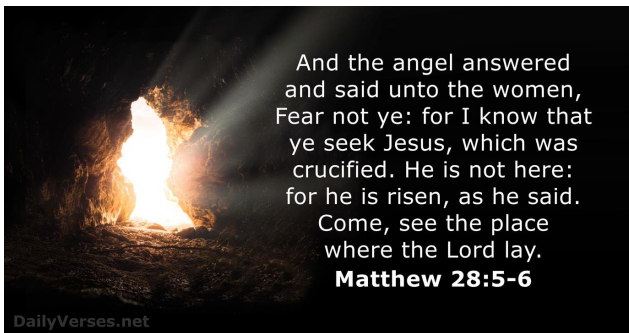
The Resurrection

Athanasius

FITTING INDEED, THEN, AND WHOLLY consonant was the death on the cross for us; and we can see how reasonable it was, and why it is that the salvation of the world could be accomplished in no other way. Even on the cross He did not hide Himself from sight; rather, He made all creation witness to the presence of its Maker. Then, having once let it be seen that it was truly dead, He did not allow that temple of His body to linger long, but forthwith on the third day raised it up, impassible and incorruptible, the pledge and token of His victory.

It was, of course, within His power thus to have raised His body and displayed it as alive directly after death. But the all-wise Savior did not do this, lest some should deny that it had really or completely died. Besides this, had the interval between His death and resurrection been but two days, the glory of His incorruption might not have appeared. He waited one whole day to show that His body was really dead, and then on the third day showed it incorruptible to all. The interval was no longer, lest people should have forgotten about it and grown doubtful whether it were in truth the same body. No, while the affair was still ringing in their ears and their eyes were still straining and their minds in turmoil, and while those who had put Him to death were still on the spot and themselves witnessing to the fact of it, the Son of God after three days showed His once dead body immortal and incorruptible; and it was evident to all that it was from no natural weakness that the body which the Word indwelt had died, but in order that in it by the Savior's power death might be done away.

A very strong proof of this destruction of death and its conquest by the cross is supplied by a present fact, namely this. All the disciples of Christ despise death; they take the offensive against it and, instead of fearing it, by the sign of the cross and by faith in Christ trample on it as on something dead. Before the divine sojourn of the Savior, even the holiest of men were afraid of death, and mourned the dead as those who perish. But now that the Savior has raised His body, death is no longer terrible, but all those who believe in Christ tread it underfoot as nothing, and prefer to die rather than to deny their faith in Christ, knowing full well that when they die they do not perish, but live indeed, and become incorruptible through the resurrection. But that devil who of old wickedly exulted in death, now that the pains of death are loosed, he alone it is who remains truly dead. There is proof of this too; for men who, before they believe in Christ, think death horrible and are afraid of it, once they are converted despise it so completely that they go eagerly to meet it, and themselves become witnesses of the Savior's resurrection from it. Even children hasten thus to die, and not men only, but women train themselves by bodily discipline to meet it. So weak has death become that even women, who used to be taken in by it, mock at it now as a dead thing robbed of all its strength. Death has become like a tyrant who has been completely conquered by the legitimate monarch; bound hand and foot the passers-by jeer at him, hitting him and abusing him, no longer afraid of his cruelty and rage, because of the king who has conquered him. So has death been conquered and branded for what it is by the Savior on the cross. It is bound hand and foot, all who are in Christ trample it as they pass and as witnesses to Him deride it, scoffing and saying, "O Death, where is thy victory? O Grave, where is thy sting?" (1 Corinthians 15:55) ~



He Is Risen, Indeed! Alleluia!

The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.

Luke 24:34

WHAT DID THAT APPEARANCE SAY to the penitent man? Of course, it said to him what it said to all the rest, that death was conquered. It lifted his thoughts of his Master. It changed his whole atmosphere from gloom to sunshine, but it had a special message for him. It said that no fault, no denial, bars or diverts Christ's love.

Peter, no doubt, as soon as the hope of the Resurrection began to dawn upon him, felt fear contending with his hope, and asked himself, "If He is risen, will He ever speak to me again?"

And now here He is with a quiet look on His face that says, "Notwithstanding thy denial, see, I have come to thee."

Alexander MacLaren