

Grace to you and peace ... from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth.

As we read our text, look for the references to Jesus' resurrection: ¹⁰ Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush Him; He has put Him to grief; when His soul makes an offering for sin, He shall see His offspring; He shall prolong His days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in His hand. ¹¹ Out of the anguish of His soul He shall see and be satisfied; by His knowledge shall the righteous One, My servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and He shall bear their iniquities. ¹² Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the many, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong, because He poured out His soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet He bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors. (ESV)

Text: Isaiah 53:10-12 A Easter 4/16/17 1 Corinthians 15:51-58 Matthew 28:1-10 Psalm 96
Hymns: 199, 732, 200 (selected verses), 799

BLESSINGS FROM OUR CRUCIFIED, RISEN SAVIOR

I know that my Redeemer lives;
What comfort this sweet sentence gives!
He lives, He lives who once was dead;
He lives my everliving Head.

He lives triumphant from the grave,
He lives eternally to save.
He lives all glorious in the sky,
He lives exalted there on high. (TLH #200:1-2)

Dear fellow believers in the crucified, risen Christ,

This morning we'll take a brief look at our Savior on the cross and the events that lead up to Easter. But mostly we'll look at Jesus' empty tomb and all that it means for us. Our theme is **BLESSINGS FROM OUR CRUCIFIED, RISEN SAVIOR.**

We read in Romans 5:12, "*Through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned.*" Adam's sin brought physical and eternal death on our whole human race. But God in His mercy had planned our salvation in Jesus (Gen. 3:15; etc.). We're told, "*It was the will of the [Father] to crush [Jesus].*" The idea from the original text is that God "wanted to" and "was determined to" save us through Jesus' suffering and death. God knew **everything** His Son would have to put Himself through, and have to suffer. In His amazing love for us God sacrificed His only dear Son so that we could be saved. "*He has put Him to grief, when His soul makes an offering for sin.*" "*The will of the [Father] shall prosper in [Jesus'] hand.*" "*He poured out His soul to death.*" "*Out of the anguish of [Jesus'] soul [the Father] shall see and be satisfied.*" Jesus perfectly, completely carried out His Father's will for our salvation. In His amazing love for us, Jesus paid for every one of our sins on the cross in our place, and we are saved!

Jesus' suffering and death is the focus of Lent. But today is Easter Sunday, when our focus is on Jesus' resurrection. Did you catch the references to Jesus' resurrection in our text? We're told that the Father "*shall prolong [Jesus'] days.*" Jesus' days couldn't have been prolonged if He had died and stayed dead. After Jesus died, His Father raised Him back to life again! In the 16th Psalm Jesus prophesied of His death and resurrection, saying to His Father, "*My flesh also will rest in hope. For You will not leave My soul in the grave, nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. You will show Me the path of life*" (vv. 9-11). Jesus knew He would be put to death and laid in a grave. But He also knew He would rise from the dead! When the women came to Jesus' tomb on that first Easter morning the angel told them, "*He is not here; He has risen, just as He said*" (Mt. 28:6, NASB). The Apostle Paul says, "*If Christ is not risen, your faith is futile.... If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable.*" How important is Jesus' resurrection to our Christian faith? It's **everything!** The way we live our lives and our hope for going to heaven one day all depend on a living Jesus. If Jesus is dead and gone, what are we doing here? We Christians would be the saddest people on earth. "**But,**" Paul says, "**now Christ is risen from the dead!**"! (1 Cor. 15:17, 19-20a).

We're told that Jesus "*shall see His offspring.*" Who are Jesus' "offspring" – His children? We are: everyone who believes in Him. Jesus had said, "*The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified*" (referring to His death). "*Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain*" (Jn. 12:23-24). Jesus compares His death and being laid in the grave to putting a seed in the ground. The seed grows into a plant that produces fruit. The Gospel's message of Jesus' death and resurrection keeps bringing more and more people to believe in Him, making more and more people Jesus' believing children.

God says that Jesus "*will ... divide the spoil with the strong.*" On the cross Jesus fought against the devil and sin and death and hell for us. When He rose from the dead Jesus proved He had won! Jesus shares all the "*spoil*" – all the blessings of His resurrection – with us.

We're assured that Jesus "*bore the sin of many;*" that is, the sins of us all. The idea from the original text is that Jesus has lifted our load of sin off of us and taken all of our sins away. Jesus died for our sins on the cross. If He had stayed dead, could our sins be forgiven? Paul says, "*If Christ is not risen, ... you are still in your sins. ... But now Christ is risen from the dead!*"! (1 Cor. 15:17, 20a). Jesus rose from the dead. **All** of our sins have been forgiven and taken away!

We're told that Jesus "*makes intercession for the transgressors.*" The Bible says, "*Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us*" (Ro. 8:34). As our resurrected, **living** Savior Jesus is always interceding for us before His Father, reminding His Father that He paid for all of our sins on the cross. When we sin and tell God we're sorry, for Jesus' sake He forgives us. Again Scripture says, "*[Jesus] is able to save to the utmost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them*" (He. 7:25).

Paul says that Jesus "*was delivered up for our offenses, and was raised for our justification*" (Ro. 4:25). By raising Jesus from the dead, God showed that He had accepted Jesus' payment for our sins. We're told, "*By His knowledge*" (by making known what He did for us) "*shall the*

righteous One, My servant, make many to be accounted righteous." We believe in Jesus and His life, death, and resurrection for our salvation. By faith in Jesus, He cleanses us with His blood and covers us with His righteousness. For Jesus' sake, God declares us sinners to be righteous in His sight – not guilty, completely forgiven!

We already heard, the Father "*shall prolong His days*" – that Jesus would rise from the dead. If Jesus hadn't risen from the dead, we couldn't rise from the dead and go to heaven. Paul says, "*If Christ is not risen, ... then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. ... But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since by a man*" (Adam) "*came death, by a Man*" (Jesus) "*also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming. ... So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power*" (1 Cor. 15:17a, 18, 20-23, 42-43). "*If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus*" (1 Thess. 4:14). Jesus says, "*Because I live, you will live also.*" "*Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also*" (Jn. 14:19b; 1-3).

"Dear Jesus, for what You did for us on the cross and for Your empty tomb, with all our heart we thank You. Truly, we are **blessed!**"

He lives to silence all my fears,
He lives to wipe away my tears,
He lives to calm my troubled heart,
He lives all blessings to impart.

He lives and grants me daily breath;
He lives, and I shall conquer death;
He lives my mansion to prepare;
He lives to bring me safely there.

He lives, all glory to His name!
He lives, my Jesus, still the same.
Oh, the sweet joy this sentence gives,
"I know that my Redeemer lives!" Amen. (TLH #200:5, 7-8)