

**Transcript 04-17-21 PASTOR DAVE'S SERMON: "JESUS IS ALIVE."**

>> Pastor Dave: HE IS RISEN.

HE IS RISEN INDEED. HALLELUJAH!

WAIT A MINUTE, DAVE, IT IS NOT EASTER.

WE'RE TWO WEEKS OUT OF EASTER, BUT WE'RE STILL IN THE EASTER SEASON.

IN FACT, OUR TEXT FOR TODAY, WHICH YOU MIGHT BE GETTING YOUR BIBLES OUT AND OPEN THEM TO LUKE 24:36-49, AND THAT WILL BE OUR TEXT.

AND THAT'S ON THE EVENING OF THE VERY FIRST EASTER DAY.

THE RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

SO GRACE AND PEACE TO YOU FROM GOD OUR FATHER AND OUR RESURRECTED LORD JESUS CHRIST.

LET'S GET RIGHT INTO OUR TEXT.

AND I'M GOING TO STOP AS WE GO THROUGH THIS AND DO A FEW EXPOSITORY COMMENTS AS WE GO THROUGH THE READING.

SO IT IS GOING TO START OFF WITH VERSE 36 OF LUKE 24.

IT STARTS OFF WITH, "WHILE THEY WERE STILL TALKING ABOUT THIS" -- NOW, WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

THIS INVITES US TO GO BACK TO THE EARLIER SECTION OF LUKE.

THE RESURRECTION DAY, WHEN A DISCIPLE NAMED CLEOPAS, AND ANOTHER DISCIPLE --

COULD IT BE CLEOPAS' WIFE, MARY?

THIS DISCIPLE IS UNNAMED.

WE DON'T KNOW EXACTLY WHO IT IS.

THEY'RE ON THE ROAD FROM EMMAUS TO JERUSALEM. IT IS JUST A SHORT WALK, NOT TOO FAR, AND JESUS APPEARS TO THEM, AND HE ASKS THEM WHAT'S GOING ON?

AND THEY SAY, ARE YOU THE ONLY ONE HERE WHO DOESN'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED?

AND HE GOES, WELL, WHAT HAPPENED?

AND HE GOES, JESUS OF NAZARETH WAS CRUCIFIED.

WE HAD HOPED THAT HE WOULD BE THE MESSIAH.

AND SO JESUS WALKED ALONG WITH THEM, BUT THEY WERE KEPT FROM RECOGNIZING HIM.

AND I'M GIVING YOU A VERY BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THIS.

YOU CAN READ IT FOR YOURSELF, AND I SUGGEST THAT YOU DO.

IT IS JUST THE SECTION RIGHT BEFORE THIS PRIKOPE, THIS CUTOUT OF READING THAT WE'RE LOOKING AT TODAY.

AS THEY'RE WALKING ALONG, THEIR EYES WERE KEPT FROM RECOGNIZING JESUS.

AND JESUS OPENED THEIR MINDS.

HE SPOKE TO THEM ABOUT HOW THE LAW, HOW MOSES, THE PROPHETS AND THE PSALMS ALL POINTED TO JESUS HAVING TO BE CRUCIFIED.

AND WHEN THEY REACHED THEIR DESTINATION, JESUS PRETENDED LIKE HE WAS GOING TO GO ON.

BUT THEY INVITED HIM IN.

AND WHEN THEY INVITED HIM IN, HE SAT WITH THEM AT DINNER.

THEY BROKE THE BREAD, AND THEIR EYES WERE OPENED.

AND THEY RECOGNIZED JESUS IN THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD.

SOUNDS LIKE HOLY COMMUNION, DOESN'T IT?

DO YOU RECOGNIZE JESUS WHEN WE SHARE THE BREAD AND THE CUP DURING HOLY COMMUNION, THE VERY BODY AND BLOOD OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST GIVEN AND SHED FOR YOU FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS.

THEIR EYES WERE OPENED.

AND THEN IT SAYS JESUS VANISHED.

WHERE DID HE GO?

THESE DISCIPLES ENDED UP GOING BACK TO JERUSALEM TO TELL THE OTHER DISCIPLES WHAT HAD HAPPENED.

AND THIS IS WHERE WE'RE AT.

WHILE THEY WERE STILL TALKING ABOUT THIS, JESUS' APPEARANCE, NOT ONLY THE EMPTY TOMB THAT SIMON HAD SEEN, BUT THESE DISCIPLES HAVING EATEN WITH JESUS AND RECOGNIZED HIM --

WHILE THEY WERE STILL TALKING ABOUT THIS, JESUS HIMSELF STOOD AMONG THEM.

NOW, THEY WERE BEHIND LOCKED DOORS, IN AN UPPER ROOM, BECAUSE THEY WERE AFRAID OF THE PERSECUTION THAT MIGHT COME TO THEM.

THE PERSECUTION THAT TOOK JESUS OUT, THEY THOUGHT THEY WERE NEXT ON THE LIST.

SO THEY WERE TERRIFIED.

THEY WERE HIDING.

THEIR LEADER WAS GONE.

HE WAS DEAD.

HE WASN'T COMING BACK.

BUT JESUS STOOD AMONG THEM, AND HE SAID, "PEACE BE WITH YOU."

ISN'T THAT A WONDERFUL THING FOR HIM TO SAY?

HE COULD HAVE SAID A LOT OF THINGS.

HE COULD HAVE SAID, WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU GUYS?

YOU RAN OUT, YOU DESERTED ME WHEN I WAS ARRESTED; YOU LEFT ME THERE ALL BY MYSELF.

WHAT'S UP WITH YOU, PETER? YOU SAID, EVEN IF I HAVE TO DIE FOR YOU, I'LL NEVER DENY YOU.

AND YET THERE YOU WERE, DENYING ME THREE TIMES, JUST LIKE I SAID YOU WOULD, AND YET YOU STILL DID IT.

HE DIDN'T SAY ANY OF THOSE THINGS.

HE SAID, "PEACE BE WITH YOU."

AND JESUS SAYS THE SAME THING TO US, AS WE'RE SEQUESTERED IN OUR COVID-19 HOMES, JESUS COMES TO US, BEHIND THOSE LOCKED DOORS, AND SAYS, "PEACE BE WITH YOU."

THEY WERE STARTLED AND FRIGHTENED, THINKING THEY SAW A GHOST.

HE SAID TO THEM, "WHY ARE YOU TROUBLED, AND WHY DO DOUBTS RISE IN YOUR MIND?"

LOOK AT MY HANDS AND MY FEET, IT IS I, MYSELF."

THE GREEK IS "EGGO I MI," AND WHEN YOU'RE A GREEK STUDENT AND YOU SEE "EGGO I MI," I AM, IT'S ALWAYS EXCITING BECAUSE WHO WAS IT THAT GOD SAID HE WAS WHEN HE APPEARED TO MOSES IN THE BURNING BUSH?

THE "EGGO I MI," THE GREAT I AM.

IT IS I, MYSELF.

I AM GOD, JESUS IS SAYING.

"TOUCH ME AND SEE.

A GHOST DOES NOT HAVE FLESH AND BONES, AS YOU SEE I HAVE."

WHEN HE SAID THIS, HE SHOWED HIM HIS HANDS AND HIS FEET.

AND WHILE THEY STILL DID NOT BELIEVE BECAUSE OF JOY AND AMAZEMENT -- THEY DIDN'T BELIEVE BECAUSE OF JOY AND AMAZEMENT.

THEY WERE TOO BLOWN AWAY BY IT.

SO WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

HAVE YOU EVER HAD SOMETHING HAPPEN TO YOU THAT WAS SO GOOD THAT YOU SAID, OH, MAN, I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS?

OR MAYBE SOMETHING TERRIBLE.

AND YOU SAID, I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS IS HAPPENING TO ME.

BUT THIS WAS A JOYFUL EXCLAMATION.

THEY DIDN'T BELIEVE BECAUSE OF JOY.

THEY WERE OVERWHELMED WITH JOY BECAUSE THE MESSIAH, THEIR LEADER, THE ONE THEY HAD COMMITTED THEIR LIVES TO FOR THREE YEARS, WAS BACK AMONG THEM.

THEY GAVE HIM -- AND THEN JESUS SAID, "DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING HERE TO EAT?"

WHY WOULD JESUS SAY THAT?

BECAUSE GHOSTS DON'T EAT.

SO THEY GAVE HIM SOMETHING TO EAT.

LET'S SEE, WHERE ARE WE AT HERE?

AND HE TOOK IT AND ATE IT IN THEIR PRESENCE.

I GUESS THEY DIDN'T SEE THE FISH GOING DOWN HIS THROAT, LIKE YOU WOULD IF A GHOST DID IT, SO THEY MUST HAVE BELIEVED A LITTLE MORE.

AND THEN HE SAID TO THEM, "THIS IS WHAT I TOLD YOU WHILE I WAS STILL WITH YOU: EVERYTHING MUST BE FULFILLED THAT IS WRITTEN ABOUT ME IN THE LAW OF MOSES, THE PROPHETS, AND THE PSALMS."

NOW, WHAT EXACTLY ARE WE TALKING ABOUT?

WELL, THERE IS A LOT OF PSALMS.

PSALM 16, PSALM 22, ESPECIALLY ISAIAH 53.

DAVID TALKS ABOUT HIS SON THAT DIED AFTER HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH BATHSHEBA, AND HE SAID, I'M NOT GOING TO MOURN ANYMORE BECAUSE HE IS GONE.

HE WON'T COME TO ME, BUT I WILL GO TO HIM.

SO HE IS RECOGNIZING AN AFTERLIFE.

AND JESUS IS SAYING ALL THESE THINGS POINT TO HIM.

THIS IS KEY TO OUR THEOLOGY.

A LOT OF PEOPLE THINK THE OLD TESTAMENT IS JUST A BUNCH OF RULES AND LAWS AND A MEAN GOD, BUT REALLY WHAT THE OLD TESTAMENT IS IS THE CRADLE THAT HOLDS THE CHRIST CHILD.

SO JESUS GOES THROUGH THE SCRIPTURES WITH THE PEOPLE ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS, AND THE PEOPLE ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS SAID OUR HEARTS WERE BURNING INSIDE OF US AS JESUS OPENED THE SCRIPTURES TO US.

AND THEN HE DID THE SAME THING HERE.

BUT HERE HE DID IT AFTER HE ATE.

ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS, HE OPENED THEIR HEARTS AND MINDS BEFORE HE ATE.

AND THEN THEIR EYES WERE OPENED WHEN HE BROKE THE BREAD WITH THEM.  
HERE HE TEACHES -- HE EATS AND THEN HE TEACHES THEM.  
NOW, THE POINT I WANT TO MAKE IS: WHEN WE READ SCRIPTURE, AND ANY THEOLOGY THAT  
VIEWS THE ENTIRETY OF THE WORD OF GOD THROUGH THE LENS OF THE GOSPEL, THROUGH  
THE LENS THAT GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD THAT HE GAVE HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON THAT  
WHOSOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM SHALL NOT PERISH BUT HAVE ETERNAL LIFE, IT MAKES SENSE.  
IT IS THE WAY WE NEED TO BE DOING IT.  
ALL OF SCRIPTURE TESTIFIES TO JESUS AND HIS COMING.  
LET ME SEE IF I CAN FIGURE OUT WHERE WE ARE.  
HE SAID TO THEM, "THIS IS WHAT I TOLD YOU WHILE I WAS STILL WITH YOU" -- I'M ON 44 --  
"EVERYTHING MUST BE FULFILLED THAT IS WRITTEN ABOUT ME IN THE LAW OF MOSES, THE  
PROPHETS, AND THE PSALMS.  
THEN HE OPENED THEIR MINDS SO THAT THEY COULD UNDERSTAND THE SCRIPTURES.  
HE TOLD THEM, "THIS IS WHAT IS WRITTEN: THAT CHRIST WILL SUFFER AND RISE FROM THE  
DEAD, AND ON THE THIRD DAY" -- AND BE RAISED FROM THE DEAD ON THE THIRD DAY, AND  
REPENTANCE -- LET ME READ THAT AGAIN.  
"THIS IS WHAT IS WRITTEN: THAT CHRIST WILL SUFFER AND RISE FROM THE DEAD ON THE  
THIRD DAY, AND REPENTANCE AND FORGIVENESS OF SIN WILL BE PREACHED IN HIS NAME TO  
ALL NATIONS, BEGINNING IN JERUSALEM.  
YOU ARE MY WITNESSES OF THESE THINGS.  
I AM GOING TO SEND YOU WHAT MY FATHER HAS PROMISED.  
BUT STAY IN THE CITY UNTIL YOU'VE BEEN CLOTHED WITH POWER FROM ON HIGH."  
AND THEN A COUPLE BONUS VERSES FOR YOU.  
LUKE GETS INTO THE ASCENSION A LITTLE BIT.  
HE GETS INTO IT MORE IN THE NEXT BOOK THAT LUKE WRITES, THE BOOK OF ACTS.  
IT REALLY SHOULD BE LUKE 2.  
"WHEN JESUS HAD LED THEM OUT OF THE VICINITY OF BETHANY, HE LIFTED UP HIS HANDS  
AND BLESSED THEM.  
WHILE HE WAS BLESSING THEM, HE LEFT THEM AND WAS TAKEN UP INTO HEAVEN.  
THEN THEY WORSHIPPED HIM AND RETURNED TO JERUSALEM WITH GREAT JOY.  
AND THEY STAYED, CONTINUALLY AT THE TEMPLE, PRAISING GOD."  
NOW, WHAT A DRASTIC CHANGE.  
THEY'RE HIDING IN THESE ROOMS.  
THEN JESUS APPEARS TO THEM, HE TELLS THEM THAT HE IS GOING TO SEND THE HOLY SPIRIT,  
THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT IS GOING TO COME UPON THEM.  
THAT HE IS THEIR WITNESSES, BUT DON'T GO OUT AND WITNESS YET, BUT YOU HAVE TO WAIT.  
YOU HAVE TO WAIT IN THE CITY UNTIL THE HOLY SPIRIT COMES UPON YOU.  
AND THEY DIDN'T HAVE TO WAIT LONG, DID THEY?  
BECAUSE ON PENTECOST, IN ACTS 2, IT IS DESCRIBED THAT WHILE THEY WERE THERE, THIS BIG  
WIND CAME, TONGUES LIKE FIRE APPEARED OVER PEOPLE'S HEADS, AND THE APOSTLES  
STARTED SPEAKING IN TONGUES SO EVERYONE AROUND THE WORLD SPEAKING THE  
DIFFERENT LANGUAGES, THAT WERE THERE FOR THE FESTIVAL OF PENTECOST, COULD  
UNDERSTAND THE GOSPEL IN THEIR OWN LANGUAGE.  
AND THESE WERE GALILEAN FISHERMEN.

THEY DIDN'T HAVE ANY LINGUISTIC TRAINING.  
IT WAS THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT THAT ENABLED THEM TO BE THE WITNESSES.  
NOW, THEY WERE EMPOWERED.  
THE BIBLE TELLS US WHAT A GREAT DIFFERENCE THEY MADE IN THE WORLD.  
THEY RECEIVED THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT -- AND WE'RE GOING TO GET INTO THAT IN A LITTLE BIT, TOO.  
BUT THEN THEY DIDN'T GO OUT IMMEDIATELY.  
THEY JUST KIND OF HUNG OUT IN JERUSALEM UNTIL THE BIG PERSECUTION AROSE.  
THEY STARTED HUNTING THE DISCIPLES DOWN, SO THEY FLED TO A VARIETY OF PLACES, INTO SUMARIA AND ASIA MINOR, AND INTO ALL OF THESE DIFFERENT AREAS THAT WERE AROUND THEM, AND THE GOSPEL WAS SPREAD.  
GOD HAS A PLAN.  
GOD HAS A PURPOSE.  
AND HE IS CALLING YOU AND MYSELF TO BE A PART OF THAT PLAN AND A PURPOSE, THAT WE ARE TO WAIT.  
AND THIS IS A LESSON THAT WE CAN LEARN.  
THIS IS A LESSON THAT WE CAN LEARN FOR TODAY BECAUSE AS SOON AS WE GET SAVED, SO TO SPEAK, AS SOON AS WE DISCOVER GOD'S LOVE IN CHRIST, WE WANT TO GO OUT AND SHARE IT ALL WITH PEOPLE.  
BUT JESUS SAYS JUST STAY AND WAIT.  
BUT IT IS NOT JUST ANY KIND OF WAITING.  
IT IS WAITING FOR THE STORY OF JESUS BECAUSE THE HOLY SPIRIT IS WHAT?  
THE HOLY SPIRIT IS THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST.  
THE PURPOSE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IS TO POINT TO JESUS, TO BE A SIGN POINT TO DIRECT US TO THE SALVATION THAT IS FOUND ONLY IN THE NAME OF JESUS.  
THAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.  
WAIT FOR THAT HOLY SPIRIT.  
AND SINCE IT IS THE ONGOING MINISTRY OF CHRIST, WE ARE TO WAIT AT THE WORD OF CHRIST.  
SO WHERE DO WE DO THAT?  
WE STUDY THE BIBLE.  
WE READ GOD'S WORD AS IT COMES TO US.  
WE HEAR PROCLAMATIONS.  
WE HEAR THE SERMONS.  
WE GATHER TOGETHER AMONG OTHER BELIEVERS TO ENCOURAGE ONE ANOTHER.  
WE RECEIVE THE SACRAMENTS, THE VERY BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST, TO STRENGTHEN OUR FAITH AND TO ASSURE US OF THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS THAT CHRIST HAS WON FOR US THROUGH HIS INNOCENT SUFFERING AND DEATH.  
NOW, THE BIG DEAL: JESUS WAS RESURRECTED.  
THAT IS AN HISTORICAL FACT.  
BUT WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?  
I'M SO GLAD YOU ASK.  
BECAUSE APART FROM THE GOSPEL, THE RESURRECTION WOULD JUST BE AN HISTORICAL EVENT.

BUT THERE IS SO MUCH MORE TO IT.

THE GOSPEL, AND JESUS' ASCENSION, TELLS US THAT THIS IS FOR US.

LET ME READ TO YOU SOME SCRIPTURES, THAT JESUS WAS RAISED FROM THE DEAD SO THAT WE, TOO, COULD BE RAISED FROM THE DEAD.

YOU SEE, WHEN JESUS WAS ON EARTH, HE BOUND SATAN, HE RAISED THE DEAD, HE HEALED THE BLIND, HE HEALED THOSE WHO WERE WITH LEPROSY, HE DROVE OUT THE DEMONS, AND THEN HE FINALLY CONQUERED THE LAST HOLD THAT THE DEVIL HAD ON FALLEN MAN, AND THAT WAS DEATH, THROUGH HIS RESURRECTION.

AND THE GOSPEL TELLS US THAT WHEN WE BELIEVE, WHEN WE APPLY FAITH TO THE WORK THAT CHRIST HAS DONE, HE HAS DONE THAT FOR US.

HIS SALVATION IS FOR US.

AND SCRIPTURES -- PAUL WRITES IN 1 CORINTHIANS 15:20 AND 21: "CHRIST HAS INDEED BEEN RAISED FROM THE DEAD."

"THE FIRST FRUITS" -- THAT MEANS THERE IS GOING TO BE MORE -- "OF THOSE WHO HAVE FALLEN ASLEEP, FOR SINCE DEATH CAME THROUGH A MAN" -- THAT'S ADAM -- "THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD COMES ALSO THROUGH A MAN, AND THAT IS JESUS."

COLOSSIANS 1:18: "AND HE IS THE HEAD OF THE BODY, THE CHURCH.

HE IS THE BEGINNING AND THE FIRST BORN FROM AMONG THE DEAD."

THAT MEANS WE'RE GOING TO BE FOLLOWING.

WE WILL BE RAISED FROM THE DEAD AS WELL.

WE WILL BE RESURRECTED BECAUSE CHRIST WAS RESURRECTED.

SO THAT IN EVERYTHING, HE MIGHT HAVE THE SUPREMACY.

ACTS 26:23: "THAT THE MESSIAH WOULD SUFFER, AND AS THE FIRST TO A RISE FROM THE DEAD, WOULD BRING THE MESSAGE OF LIGHT TO HIS OWN PEOPLE AND TO THE GENTILES."

IT IS NOT JUST FOR THE JEWS; IT'S FOR ALL PEOPLE.

IT'S FOR YOU.

IT'S FOR ME.

IT'S FOR EVERYONE.

AND THEN IN 1 JOHN:2-3: "DEAR FRIENDS, NOW WE ARE CHILDREN OF GOD, AND WHAT WE WILL BE HAS NOT YET BEEN MADE KNOWN.

BUT WE KNOW THAT WHEN CHRIST APPEARS, WE WILL BE LIKE HIM.

FOR WE SHALL SEE HIM AS HE IS."

SO THE PROMISE THAT WE HAVE WITH THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST IS THAT BECAUSE CHRIST WAS RESURRECTED, HE IS GIVING US THAT OPPORTUNITY AND THAT GIFT THROUGH FAITH IN HIM.

OH, AND THERE'S MORE.

THERE IS SO VERY MUCH MORE.

AS WE'RE WAITING FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT TO COME TO US, AS WE'RE WAITING AT THE WORD, AS WE'RE WAITING IN FELLOWSHIP WITH ONE ANOTHER, WHERE TWO OR MORE ARE GATHERED, THERE I AM, WHEN WE'RE WAITING RECEIVING THE SACRAMENT, WE UNDERSTAND THAT GOD HAS A PLAN AND A PURPOSE FOR OUR LIVES.

ESPECIALLY IN THIS COVID TIME, SO MANY PEOPLE HAVE COME TO DESPAIR OVER THE DESTINY OF HUMAN HISTORY.

MAYBE YOU'VE BEEN CAUGHT UP IN THAT DESPAIR AS WELL.

I KNOW AT TIMES I HAVE.  
THINGS SEEM TO BE HOPELESS SOMETIMES.  
WHERE IS LIFE GOING, ANYWAY?  
EVERYWHERE WE LOOK, WE HEAR WARS AND RUMORS OF WAR, PULLING OUT OF  
AFGHANISTAN -- WHAT'S THAT GOING TO MEAN?  
ARE WE GOING TO BE ATTACKED AGAIN SOON?  
NATION LIFTS UP SWORD AGAINST NATION.  
THERE IS KILLING GOING ON.  
PEOPLE ARE AT EACH OTHER'S THROATS IN  
OTHER NATIONS AND OTHER CITIES AND AMONG OUR OWN NEIGHBORHOODS.  
WHAT HOPE IS THERE FOR HUMAN DESTINY?  
WHAT IS THE MEANING OF IT ALL?  
IN THE MIDST -- THIS IS THE GOOD NEWS -- STAY WITH ME ON THIS, PLEASE.  
IN THE MIDST OF OUR TEMPTATION AND DESPAIR, WE HEAR THE STORY OF THE ASCENDED  
ONE.  
JESUS CHRIST LIVES AND REIGNS AT GOD'S RIGHT HAND.  
THE KINGDOM OF THIS WORLD AND THE KINGDOM OF OUR LORD AND HIS CHRIST WILL RULE  
THE WORLD AT SOME POINT.  
HUMAN DESTINY IS SECURE IN THE HANDS OF JESUS CHRIST.  
WE SHALL NOT DESPAIR.  
CLOTHED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT, EMPOWERED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT, WE SHALL BEAR  
WITNESS TO OUR ASCENDED RULER, TO ALL OF THE WORLD'S DESPAIRING PEOPLE.  
I WANT TO SHARE SOME VERSES ABOUT WHAT IT MEANS FOR GOD TO BE RAISED AT THE  
RIGHT HAND OF GOD.  
THAT DOESN'T MEAN THAT LEFT-HANDED PEOPLE ARE ANATHEMA, THAT THEY'RE A CURSE.  
RIGHT HAND JUST MEANS IT IS THE STRONG HAND.  
IT IS THE POWERFUL HAND.  
IT IS WHERE GOD HAS ASSIGNED ALL OF THE STRENGTH AND THE POWER OF THE HEAVENS  
AND THE EARTH.  
AND SO HERE IS SOME SCRIPTURE.            IN EXODUS 15:6, THIS IS AFTER THE JEWS WERE LET  
OUT OF THE CAPTIVITY OF SLAVERY IN EGYPT.  
YOUR RIGHT HAND, LORD, WAS MAJESTIC IN POWER.  
YOUR RIGHT HAND, LORD, HAS SHATTERED THE ENEMY.  
IS THERE ANYTHING THAT THE POWER OF THE LORD CAN'T DEFEAT?  
NO.  
CAN I GET A HALLELUJAH?  
IT IS THE MOST POWERFUL THING IN THE UNIVERSE.  
PSALM 98:1: "SING TO THE LORD A NEW SONG, FOR HE HAS DONE MARVELOUS THINGS.  
HIS RIGHT HAND AND HIS HOLY ARM HAVE WORKED SALVATION FOR HIM."  
THAT'S SENDING CHRIST INTO THE WORLD.  
HE HAS WORKED SALVATION THROUGH JESUS, WITH THE POWER OF HIS MIGHTY HAND.  
EPHESIANS 1:20 AND 22: "HE EXERTED, WHEN HE RAISED CHRIST FROM THE DEAD, AND  
SEATED HIM AT HIS RIGHT HAND IN THE HEAVENLY REALMS" -- THAT'S HIS POWERFUL HAND --

"FAR ABOVE ALL RULE AND AUTHORITY, POWER AND DOMINION, AND IN EVERY NAME THAT IS INVOKED, NOT ONLY IN THE PRESENT AGE, BUT IN THE ONE TO COME. AND GOD PLACED ALL THINGS UNDER HIS FEET AND APPOINTED HIM TO BE HEAD OVER EVERYTHING FOR THE CHURCH."

SO HERE IS THIS ALL-POWERFUL GOD.

AND WE COME TO THAT GREAT QUESTION: IF GOD IS ALL POWERFUL, HOW COME THERE ARE STILL WARS GOING ON?

AND IF GOD IS ALL LOVE, WHY DOES HE LET THESE THINGS HAPPEN?

WELL, HE DOES LOVE US.

HE IS ALL POWERFUL, BUT HE HAS GIVEN US FREE WILL.

BUT HERE IS THE HOPE, HERE IS THE PROMISE THAT THE RESURRECTION BRINGS TO US IN THIS VERY DAY, ON THIS APRIL 16th OF 2021, THAT JESUS IS ALIVE BECAUSE HE IS RISEN.

HE IS RISEN, INDEED.

HALLELUJAH!

LISTEN TO THIS VERSE: "BECAUSE GOD HAS A PLAN, AND HE IS CHANGING THE WORLD."

CAN YOU IMAGINE HOW TERRIBLE THE WORLD WOULD BE IF CHRIST'S KINGDOM WASN'T BUDDING FORTH, IF THERE WEREN'T CHRISTIANS IN HERE WHO TOOK THEIR FAITH SERIOUSLY, THAT WERE KIND TO ONE ANOTHER, THAT LIVED TO CARE FOR OTHER PEOPLE?

COULD YOU IMAGINE THE DESPAIR THAT WAS WAY WORSE THAN IT IS NOW?

BUT LISTEN TO THIS VERSE FROM REVELATION, THIS HANDEL'S MESSIAH IS IN IT, REVELATION 11:15: "THE SEVENTH ANGEL SOUNDED HIS TRUMPET, AND THERE WERE LOUD VOICES IN HEAVEN WHICH SAID THE KINGDOM OF THE WORLD HAS BECOME THE KINGDOM OF THE LORD AND HIS CHRIST, AND HE WILL REIGN FOREVER AND EVER."

AND HE WILL REIGN FOREVER AND EVER.

WHERE IS OUR DESPAIR?

THERE IS GOING TO BE A DAY WHEN CHRIST RETURNS.

WE DON'T KNOW WHAT WE WILL BE LIKE THEN, BUT WE DO KNOW -- 1 PETER TELLS US THAT WE DO KNOW WHEN CHRIST RETURNS THAT WE WILL BE LIKE HIM, AND GOD HAS PROMISED THAT HE WILL RETURN.

JESUS IS NOW SITTING AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD THE FATHER.

HE HAS DISPATCHED HIS HOLY SPIRIT SO THAT THE PERSON OF CHRIST, IN THE PRESENCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, CAN BE AMONG US EVERYWHERE, ANY PLACE IN THE WORLD, ANY PLACE IN THE UNIVERSE.

GOD IS PRESENT.

JESUS IS ALIVE.

LET US THEREFORE JOIN VOICES WITH ALL BELIEVERS, FROM EVERY CORNER OF THE PLANET, IN HANDEL'S MAGNIFICENT MELODY: "THE KINGDOM OF THIS WORLD HAS BECOME THE KINGDOM OF OUR LORD AND OF HIS CHRIST, AND HE SHALL REIGN FOREVER AND EVER."

HALLELUJAH!

HALLELUJAH!

HALLELUJAH!

CHRIST IS RISEN.

HE IS RISEN, INDEED.

HALLELUJAH!

AND THIS ISN'T JUST HISTORY.

JESUS IS ALIVE.

AND HE IS PRESENT.

HE IS PRESENT IN THE LIFE OF ALL BELIEVERS.

AND MAY THE PEACE OF GOD THAT SURPASSES ALL HUMAN UNDERSTANDING GUARD YOUR  
HEARTS AND MINDS IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD.

AMEN.