

**Historic Scripture Lessons ✕ for Festival of Easter Sunday**  
**Old Testament**

**Hosea 13:14 NIV** "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death. Where, O death, are your plagues? Where, O grave, is your destruction? I will have no compassion."

**Epistle**

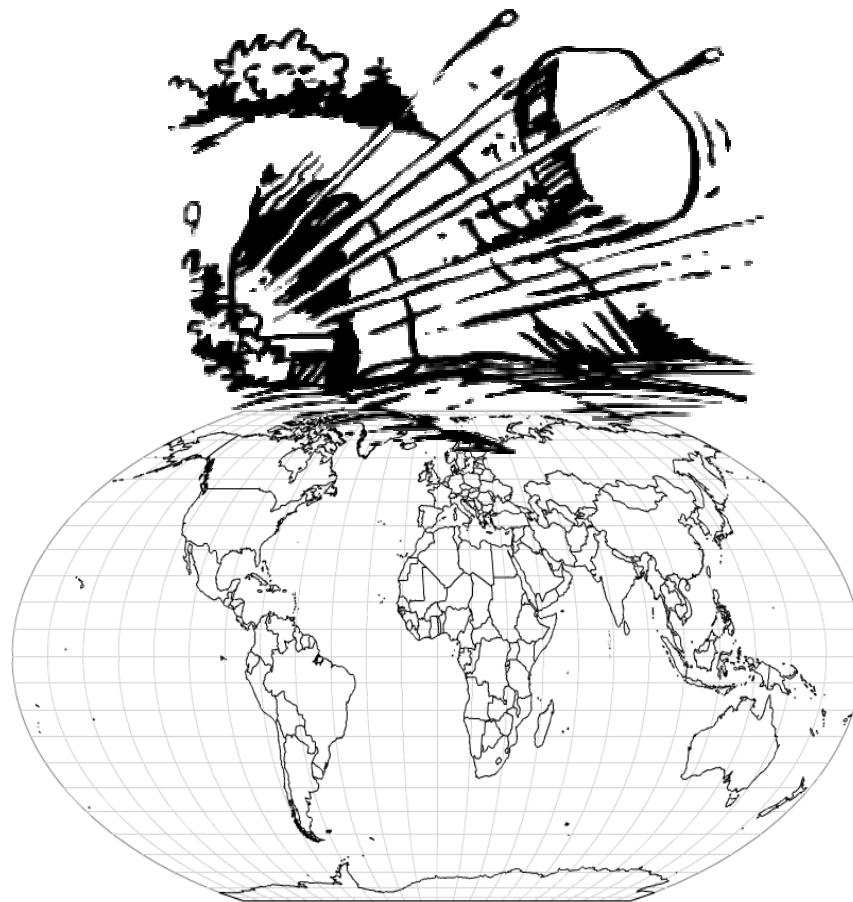
**I Peter 1:3-12** Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In His great mercy He has given us new birth into a living hope through the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade - kept in Heaven for you, 5 who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. 6 In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. 7 These have come so that your faith - of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire - may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. 8 Though you have not seen Him, you love Him; and even though you do not see Him now, you believe in Him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, 9 for you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls. 10 Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, 11 trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. 12 It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the Gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from Heaven. Even angels long to look into these things.

**Gospel**

**Matthew 28:1-8** After the Sabbath, at dawn on the First Day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. 2 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. 3 His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. 4 The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men. 5 The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, Who was crucified. 6 He is not here; He has Risen, just as He said. Come and see the place where He lay. 7 Then go quickly and tell His disciples: 'He has Risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see Him.' Now I have told you." 8 So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell His disciples.

*Alleluia!*

Our Savior Lutheran Church  Lakeland, FL USA  
Easter Sunday ✕ *The Resurrection of Our Lord*  
*He's Risen! April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015 9:30am Alleluia!!*



**1. He is arisen! Glorious Word!**  
**Now reconciled is God, my Lord;**  
**The gates of Heav'n are open.**  
**My Jesus did triumphant die,**  
**And Satan's arrows broken lie,**  
**Destroyed hell's direst weapon.**

**Oh, hear**  
**What cheer!**  
**Christ victorious**  
**Riseth glorious,**  
**Life He giveth-**  
**He was dead, but see, He liveth! Amen.**

# OSL OUR SAVIOR LUTHERAN CHURCH OSL

6920 N Socrum Loop Road / (north) Lakeland, FL 33809 USA

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BIBLE CLASS 8:30 AM WORSHIP 9:30 AM FELLOWSHIP 10:45 AM

\* A.R. Burmeister 430-5859 \* Organ: Janice Thomas (813) 650-9198

## April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015 \* Easter Sunday - Resurrection

**WELCOME to Our Savior!** We are so happy to have you worship with us today. If you are visiting us for the first time (or in a long time), we ask that that you please fill out a visitor card found in the pew cardholder and place it in the offering plate. Come and worship with us again! **God bless you.**

**OUR ORDER OF WORSHIP** Printed here and in red (TLH) hymnal at p.5

Service		
Opening Hymn	200 (8v)	<i>Sing v.1-4</i> I Know My Redeemer Lives
Hymn of the Day	199 (4v)	Jesus Christ Is Ris'n Today Alleluia!
Exordium Hymn	189 (1v)	He Is Arisen! Glorious Word!
Offertory Verse	202 (4v)	<i>Sing v.1</i> Welcome, Happy Morning!
3 <sup>rd</sup> Hymn	205 (5v)	The Day of Resurrection
Closing Hymn	200v5-8	<i>Sing v5-8</i> He lives to silence all fears..

### Suggested Bible readings for the weekdays after Easter Sunday

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Deut.9:1-29	Deut.10:1-22	Deut.11:1-32	Deut.28:1-14	Deut.28:15-68	Deu.34:1-12
Luke23:26-56	Matt.26:1-35	Matt.26:36-75	Matt.27:1-38	Matt.27:39-66	Mark14:1-31

### PROPERs for THE FESTIVAL of EASTER APRIL 5, 2015

**INTROIT** When I awake, I am still with You. Alleluia! You have laid Your hand upon me. Alleluia! Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain it. Alleluia! Alleluia! O Lord, You have searched me and known me! You know my sitting down and my rising up. ...from Psalm 139

**COLLECT** Almighty God, who through Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, has overcome death and opened for us the gate of everlasting life, we humbly ask You that, as You put into our minds good desires, so by Your continual help may we may bring those desires to good effect; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives, and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one True God, now and forever, C: ♪ A - -men.

**GRADUAL** C: Alleluia! This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. Oh, give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good, His love endures forever. Alleluia! Alleluia! Christ, our Passover, is sacrificed for us. Let us keep the feast with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. Alleluia! ...from Psalm 118

**SCRIPTURE LESSONS:** (printed on outside back page 7 of the bulletin. →)

OT **Hosea 13:14** Death, where's your sting(?) Grave, where victory?  
Epi. **I Peter 1:3-12** Jesus' Resurrection gives inheritance.  
Gos. **Matthew 28:1-8** Jesus' Easter appearance to the Marys.

\* p.1 \*

PRAYER REQUESTS:	Member or Relation	Pray for...
Adeline & Richard Birkenmeier	Richard's spiritual & emotional state	
David & Rachel Divine	(Vivian's g'son & daugh)	Serve in US Army - Alaska
Jim & Elma Hendricks	Jim & Elma both have been battling illness - healing	
Paul & Daniella Koehler	Induced labor yesterday. Blake may be here today	
Linda Kryszak	Still recuperating at home. Pray for pain relief & healing	
Vivian Temple (Tom)	Vivian was in and out of hospital with blood clot	
Ethel Wendt (Steve)	Thanksgiving and healing. Ethel has her cast off	
Don Wienke (Bev)	Don had double-bypass open-heart surgery Friday	

Volunteers	Today	Next Sunday
Greeters	Bev & Don Wienke	(Sub) Jeanette & Ernie Kubly
Ushers	Leroy Dux	Leroy Dux
Treaters	(Easter Breakfast)	(Volunteer)

Statistics	Last week	Year to date (Avg)
Sunday (Communion) Thu, Fri.	37(27) 17,20	(MT=18,GF=20)43,33
Bible Class Attendance: Sunday	12	14
Last Sunday Offering + MT + GF	\$ .00	(Total) \$ .00

Calendar of Events		
Sunday, 4/5	8:15 am	Easter Breakfast at church
Blessed & Happy	9:30 am	Easter Festival Worship (NO L.S.)
Easter, 2015!	10:45 ff...	Fellowship, Coffee... Blessed Easter!
Thursday, 4/9	7:00 pm	OSL April council meeting at church
Saturday, 4/11	11:30 pm	Catechism Class (Mariah) at church
Sunday, 4/12	8:30 am	Bible Study in fellowship hall 2 <sup>nd</sup> Art.
Easter-2 Sunday=	9:30 am	Divine Worship (NO Communion)
Quasimodogeneti	10:45 ff...	"FFF" = Food, Fun & Fellowship ...Stay!

Our (Savior) Elders are: Leroy Dux 940-3237; Jim Vanesky 644-7807; John Weber 853-5458 & Don Wienke 863-815-8892. Please contact them.

\* **APRIL monthly calendar** is out and available online and in printed form.

\* Huge **THANK YOU** to members(ladies) who provided Our Easter breakfast!

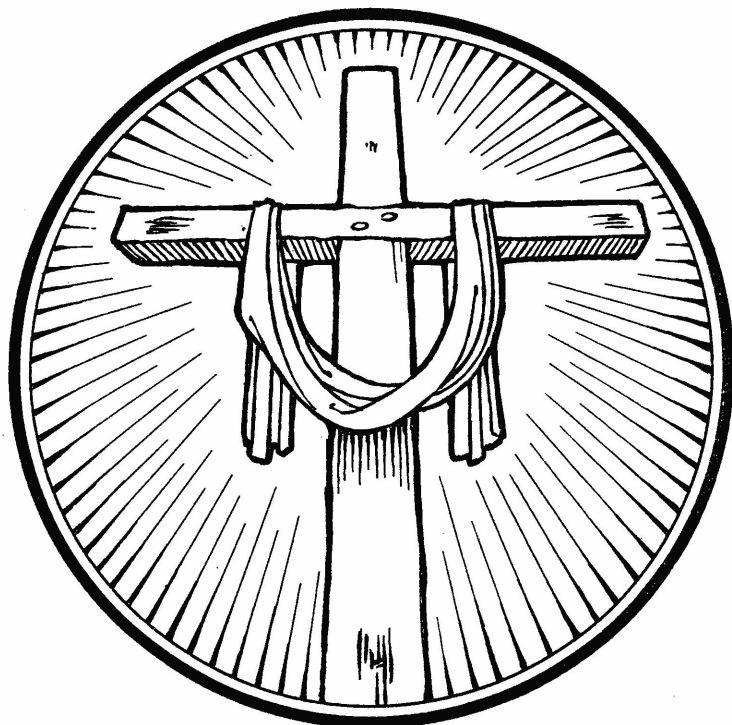
\* Thank you also to all who signed up and provided Lilies for the sanctuary.

Next Sunday 4/12 Easter-2 (p.5 No L.S.) TLH# 202 208.1-5 189 208.6-10 201



**Thank you to all who donated lovely Easter lilies.**  
**Easter Lily Donors**                      **In Memory/Honor of:**

Don & Linda Bires	In honor of our fallen heroes
Pastor Burmeister	Doris Burmeister, mother
Bev Foster	Barbara & Robert Foster
Elaine Jones	Richard Jones
Elma Hendricks	Elma's family
Jim Hendricks	Jim's family
Mary Lou Knigge	Family
Linda Kryszak	In honor of all soldiers
Jeanette Kubly	Ernie Kubly
Tom & Vivian Temple	William Pennock & Melinda Colp
Joe Thacker	Kay Thacker
David & Janice Thomas	Rev. Norman Pommeranz, father
David & Janice Thomas	Jane Thomas, David's mother
Ethel & Steve Wendt	
June Weyenberg	Robert Weyenberg
Don & Bev Wienke	Markus Wienke, grandson
John Wuolle	



**I. The Service of Preparation ✧ TLH p.5**



**WELCOME, ALL! EASTER SUNDAY + Jesus' Triumphal Resurrection**

**OPENING HYMN "I Know That My Redeemer Lives" #200 Sing verses 1-4**

**The INVOCATION** (Congregation please rise.)

*P: ♪ In the Name of the Father, and of the Son ✧ and of the Holy Spirit.*

**C: ♪ A - -men.**

**The CONFESSION of SINS**

*P: Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins to God our Father, asking Him in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness. ♪ Our help is in the Name of the Lord.*

**C: ♪ Who made heaven and earth.**

*P: ♪ I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord.*

**C: ♪ And Thou forgavest the iniquity of- my- sin.**

*P: Almighty God, our Maker and Redeemer, we poor sinners confess to Thee that we are by nature sinful and unclean, and that we have sinned against Thee by thought, word, and deed. Therefore we flee for refuge to Thine infinite mercy, seeking and imploring Thy grace for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

**C: O most merciful God, who hast given Thine only begotten Son to die for us, have mercy upon us and for His sake grant us remission of all our sins; and by Thy Holy Spirit increase in us true knowledge of Thee and of Thy Will and true obedience to Thy Word, to the End, that by Thy grace we may come to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

*P: Almighty God our heavenly Father, hath had mercy upon us and hath given His only Son to die for us and for His sake forgives us all our sins. To them that believe on His Name He gives the power to become children of God and hath promised them His Holy Spirit. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. Grant this, Lord, unto us all.*

**C: ♪ A - -men.**

**The INTROIT (Entrance)**

*P: When I awake, I am still with You. Alleluia! You have laid Your hand upon me. Alleluia! Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain it. Alleluia! Alleluia! O Lord, You have searched me and known me! You know my sitting down and my rising up. ...from Psalm 139*

**The GLORIA PATRI (Glory be to God)**

**C: ♪ Glory- be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning; is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.**

**KYRIE ELEISON (Lord Have Mercy)**

**C: ♪ Lord, have mercy upon us. Christ, have mercy upon us. Lord, have mercy upon us.**

**GLORIA IN EXCELSIS** (*Glory in the Highest*) *P:* ♪ *Glory be to God on high.*

*C:* ♪ And on earth peace, good will toward men. We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we worship Thee, we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee, for Thy great glory. O Lord God, heav'nly King, God the Father Almighty. O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ; O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son- of the Father, That takest away the sin of the world, have mercy upon- us. Thou that takest away the sin of the world, receive our prayer. Thou that sittest at the Right Hand of God the Father, have mercy upon- us. For Thou only art holy. Thou only art the Lord. Thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art most high in the glory of God the Father. A-men.

**The SALUTATION** (*Greeting*)

*P:* ♪ *The Lord be with you.*

*C:* ♪ *And with thy spir-it.*

**The COLLECT** (*Prayer for this Sunday prayed by Pastor - words on page 1*)

*C:* (*sung after the Collect*) ♪ **A- - -men.** The congregation may be seated.



## **II. The Service of The Word** TLH p.10



**OLD TESTAMENT:** Hosea 13:14 Death has no sting(?) Grave no victory!

**EPISTLE:** I Peter 1:3-12 Jesus' Resurrection gives us the richest inheritance.

**GRADUAL** *C:* Alleluia! This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. Oh, give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good, His love endures forever. Alleluia! Alleluia! Christ, our Passover, is sacrificed for us. Let us keep the feast with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. Alleluia! ...from Psalm 118

*C:* (*Sung after the Epistle & Gradual*) ♪ Allelu-ia, Allelu-ia, Allelu- - -ia!

**The HOLY GOSPEL:** Matthew 28:1-8 The congregation please rise.

*C:* (*Sung before the Holy Gospel is read*) ♪ **Glory be to Thee, O LORD.**

*C:* (*Sung after the Holy Gospel is read*) ♪ **Praise- be to Thee, O CHRIST.**

**APOSTLES' CREED** (*Our Confession of Faith*) All say together *C:*

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord;

Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary;  
Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried;  
He descended into hell; the Third Day He Rose again from the dead;  
He ascended into heaven

And sitteth on the Right Hand of God the Father Almighty;  
From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Christian Church,  
the Communion of Saints, the Forgiveness of sins,  
the Resurrection of the body ✕ and the Life everlasting. Amen.

(The Congregation may be seated for the next hymn.)

**HYMN of the DAY** "Jesus Christ Is Risen Today; Alleluia!" #199 4 verses

✕ p.3 ✕

**SERMON Text:** Daniel 3:8-25 **THEME:** "AN EASTER FIERY FURNACE?!"

**EXORDIUM VERSE** "*He Is Arisen! Glorious Word!*" TLH #189 (*front cover*)

(*End of Sermon*) The Peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus to life everlasting, **Amen.**

(*After Sermon*) *C:* ♪ Create in me a clean heart, O God, and- renew a right spirit within me, Cast me not away from Thy presence; and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of Thy salva-tion; and uphold me with Thy- free spirit. A-men.

### **The OFFERING**

**OFFERTORY VERSE** "*Welcome, Happy Morning!*" TLH #202 Sing verse 1

1. "Welcome, happy morning!" Age to age shall say;  
Hell today is vanquished, Heav'n is won today!"

Lo, the Dead is living, God forevermore!

Him, their true Creator, all His works adore.

"Welcome, happy morning!" Age to age shall say;

HELL TODAY IS VANQUISHED, HEAV'N IS WON TODAY!" Amen.



**PRAYER for the CHURCH** Either a General or Seasonal Prayer may be used.

After the General Prayer,

### **The LORD'S PRAYER**

*C:* Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name;

Thy Kingdom come, Thy Will be done on earth as it is in Heaven;

Give us this day our daily bread,

And Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us;

And lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from evil;

For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever & ever, Amen.

**3<sup>RD</sup> HYMN** "The Day of Resurrection" TLH #205 (3 verses) LANCASHIRE

**The COLLECT for** (the Spread of) **the WORD** (*Prayer*)

*P:* Blessed Lord, You have caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning, grant that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that by the patience and comfort of Your holy Word we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life which You have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One True God, now and forever. *C:* ♪ **A- - -men.**

### **The BENEDICTION**

*P:* ♪ The Lord bless you and keep you,

The Lord make His face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you,

The Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give ✕ you peace.

*C:* ♪ **A-men, A-men, A- - -men.**

**CLOSING HYMN** "I Know That My Redeemer Lives" TLH #200 Sing vv.5-8

**SILENT PRAYER.** (CANDLES OUT) ✕ ✕ ✕ **ANNOUNCEMENTS; FELLOWSHIP.**

A very blessed and joyful Easter to All of you in the Name of Our Risen Savior Christ!

✕ p.4 ✕

## EASTER SUNDAY Daniel 3:8-25 "EASTER FIERY FURNACE?" 04.05.15 OSL

INTRODUCTION There was a legend in ancient times about a bird called a **Phoenix**, which lived in the Arabian desert. In this legend the phoenix would build its nest and live in it for 500 years. At the end of that time, the sun's hot rays would **set the nest on fire**. The phoenix would flap its wings and be burned up in the flames. However, out of the fire, the phoenix would come alive again. It would rise from the ashes with a renewed and refreshed body to live a new life.

Now even though the phoenix is of course only a legend, it became for the **early Christians an important symbol** of some very real things in which they believed. The phoenix pictures the **Resurrection** of our Lord Jesus. Christ went through many **fiery trials**; He **suffered hell** for us on the Cross and was subjected to the flames of death. But His stay in the tomb was short-lived. For on the third day He **ROSE FROM THE GRAVE** as the **Lord of all creation**, with a Body that was renewed and that cannot die any more. The phoenix therefore also pictures what will happen **for us who belong** to the risen Christ. Though we too must be subjected to the flames of death because of our sinfulness, our Lord has promised that we will be **raised from the ashes** and **saved from hell** by the power of His Resurrection. Our bodies, and those of all believers in Christ, will be **made new, just as His was**.

In this Old Testament reading, three faithful men of God, **Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego**, faced some **very literal flames of death**. They got into trouble when they refused to bow down to a huge idol that the Babylonian king, **Nebuchadnezzar** had set up. In celebration of his conquests of Israel and other nations, Nebuchadnezzar had this massive **90-foot tall idol** constructed, entirely plated with gold. Now King Nebuchadnezzar allowed the people he had conquered to keep their own religions, but he demanded that they **must also** follow the religion of his kingdom, embodied by this idol, or suffer death. Faithful Israelites could not possibly do that. For the only true God had commanded them, "**You shall have no other gods.**" (1<sup>st</sup> Commandment) So when the music began to play and the people who were present were ordered to bow down, these **three men remained standing** (*deadly musical chairs?*). When they refused to obey, even after having been brought before the king himself, they were sentenced to death. They were **thrown into the blazing furnace**.

**Jesus Christ Himself also "got into trouble"** when He refused to give homage to the **idols of His day**. It was not a golden image which He was pressured to bow down to but ones such as the Devil laid before Him, the idol of **glory without suffering or the Cross**. Jesus was also pressured to bow down to the idol of the **man-made laws of the Pharisees** and the religious institutions of His day that stood opposed to God. They would have let Jesus go on teaching if He would've given reverence to their ways and fit in with their system. But because He didn't, because He remained faithful to His heavenly Father's will regardless of the consequences, **they plotted His death**. (Not a fiery furnace, but instead,) He was sentenced to **Crucifixion**

on **Good Friday**. (Hung, crucified, not burned)

We too can get ourselves into trouble when we refuse to bow down to the idols of our day. We're not pressured to give homage to a gold statue either, but to other **"deities" of our age** – things like the **"god" of the human spirit**, which ascribes to people *unlimited potential and goodness*, and which therefore denies our inborn sin and rebellion against God. Or, the **"god" of self-fulfillment**, which says that the most important thing in life is for a person to find **pleasure and happiness** for themselves, and in doing so rejects Jesus' words to deny yourself and take up your cross and follow Him; or the **"idol" of tolerance**, which says that we should be inclusive of **all religions and beliefs** and lifestyle choices, and which therefore rejects Jesus' claim that He and His words are the **only eternal truth** and that He is the **only** way to eternal life. Remember that what got Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego into trouble was that they were **not** inclusive of the king's religion. Satan and the world are perfectly happy when people call themselves Christians and even go to church, as long as they don't insist that there is **no way to heaven except through Jesus**, as long as they allow human works and human righteousness to obscure the saving work of Christ.

The reality is that being faithful to God and refusing to fit in with the world's system will bring various **difficulties** and even **persecutions**. It may not be a fiery furnace or the prospect of being burned at the stake, as some early Christians were; but difficulties and mistreatment do certainly come to the faithful. And the fact of the matter is that in the end we all face a sentence of death. For **we all have sinned and fallen (far) short of God's glory**. And the Scriptures declare **that** is a crime deserving of the fiery furnace of judgment.

It is into that reality that Easter breaks today with its awesome words of deliverance and new life. God has promised that all who trust in Christ will **receive forgiveness** and through Him will **be rescued** from death (*and hell's*) blazing fire. That was certainly how it was for Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Knowing their God to be the Lord and Giver of Life, they exhibited a most confident faith in Him. Listen to their words: "**O Nebuchadnezzar, if we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and He will rescue us from your hand, O king. But even if He does not, we want you to know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up.**" Nebuchadnezzar was enraged by their seeming obstinacy, and so he heated the furnace seven times hotter than usual. He had them firmly tied, and they were thrown into the furnace just as they were, wearing all their clothes. It was so hot that the men who threw them in were themselves killed; for the unbelieving will not be saved.

But when Nebuchadnezzar looked into the furnace, he **didn't** see Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego burning to death. Instead, he stood up and said, "**Look! I see four men walking around, untied and unharmed. And the fourth one looks like the Son of God!**" Though the King couldn't understand it, these three men didn't die in the flames because God was with



them. The Son of God, our Lord Jesus, was there in the furnace to save them from death. He kept the fire from burning them. When Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came out, their clothes were not even singed, and there was no smell on them of death or fire. **They came out of the flames unbound, alive and well.**

What we rejoice in today is that when the time comes that we enter the flames of death, **God will save us also who trust in Him, just as He did these men.** We may be put into the grave tied with the ropes of death's curse, **but we will come out unbound, free and well.** How do we know that is true? Because Jesus took away the burning sting of death for us by His cross and empty tomb. As the Scriptures say, *"Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O grave, is your sting? The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the Law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!"*

**That Victory is ours because Jesus** willingly succumbed to death's flames for us on the Cross. Jesus put Himself into the furnace for us, just as He did for Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. He went into the place of death and the grave in order to save His people. At Calvary, He literally suffered the anguish of hell that we deserve in our place, being scorched by sin and Satan and death. **But that was far from the end of the story.** We know **His Body did NOT decay in the tomb.** Instead, He conquered death and the devil by rising from the grave triumphantly on the Third Day. Just like the three men, He came out of the tomb unharmed as the victorious Ruler of all. **Jesus put Himself into the furnace of death in order to protect us from its blazing heat and to deliver us from it eternally.**

You might compare what Jesus did for us to the heroic **rescue of a child by a fireman.** We were trapped in the **burning house of judgment.** But on Good Friday Jesus entered the house, experiencing the deathly fury of its heat. And on Easter morning He carried us out, safe and well. Jesus' exit from the tomb is **also our exit from the tomb.**

Just as He was there for Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, Christ is surely also there for us always, even in death, because we are baptized into Him; we are joined to Him by faith. The Scriptures say, "Do you not know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? If we were united with Him in His death, we will certainly also be united with Him in His resurrection." Through water and the Word, Christ has **doused the flames of death and has raised us with Him to New Life.** The smell of death cannot be found on us, for Christ is in us, and we are in Him. The three men were fully clothed before they went into the fiery furnace. So **also we were fully clothed in Baptism with the robe of Christ Himself.** And just as the three men came out of the furnace better than when they went in, so **also on the Last Day we will come out of the grave better than we entered it.** Our waiting souls in heaven will be rejoined with our resurrected bodies, to share in the glory and perfection and immortality of Christ. As Jesus said, *"I am the Resurrection and the Life. He who believes in Me will live, even though He dies. And whoever lives and believes in Me*

*will never die."* And again Jesus said, "Because I live, you will live also." **New life for Jesus means new life for us.** His Easter assures us of *our* Easter and of **our eternal release** from all sorrow and trouble and pain.

**CONCLUSION** The risen Christ is truly there to protect and save you from death's furnace. That's why God says through His prophet, **Isaiah, "Fear not, for I have redeemed you. I have called you by name. You are Mine . . . When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze. For I am the Lord, your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior."**

Dear children of God, **YOU are** the phoenix-es, because your **Lord is the Great Phoenix.** Because Jesus came alive again, you and all believers in Him will truly also come alive again when He returns. Let us then this day be faithful to our gracious God, just as **Shadrach, Meshach,** and **Abednego** were, trusting in Him to the very end. For Christ Himself gives you this promise, **"Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life."** *In the Name of the Father and of... Amen. SDG*

#### **EASTER SUNDAY Daniel 3:8-25 "EASTER FIERY FURNACE?" 04.05.15 OSL**

**TEXT Daniel 3:8-25** At this time some astrologers came forward and denounced the Jews. 9 They said to King Nebuchadnezzar, "O king, live forever! 10 You have issued a decree, O king, that everyone who hears the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes and all kinds of music must fall down and worship the image of gold, 11 and that whoever does not fall down and worship will be thrown into a blazing furnace. 12 But there are some Jews whom you have set over the affairs of the province of Babylon – Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego – who pay no attention to you, O king. They neither serve your gods nor worship the image of gold you have set up." 13 Furious with rage, Nebuchadnezzar summoned Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. So these men were brought before the king, 14 and Nebuchadnezzar said to them, "Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the image of gold I have set up? 15 Now when you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes and all kinds of music, if you are ready to fall down and worship the image I made, very good. But if you do not worship it, you will be thrown immediately into a blazing furnace. Then what god will be able to rescue you from my hand?" 16 Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. 17 If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and he will rescue us from your hand, O king. 18 But even if he does not, we want you to know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up." 19 Then Nebuchadnezzar was furious with Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, and his attitude toward them changed. He ordered the furnace heated seven times hotter than usual 20 and commanded some of the strongest soldiers in his army to tie up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego and throw them into the blazing furnace. 21 So these men, wearing their robes, trousers, turbans and other clothes, were bound and thrown into the blazing furnace. 22 The king's command was so urgent and the furnace so hot that the flames of the fire killed the soldiers who took up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, 23 and these three men, firmly tied, fell into the blazing furnace. 24 Then King Nebuchadnezzar leaped to his feet in amazement and asked his advisers, "Weren't there three men that we tied up and threw into the fire?" They replied, "Certainly, O king." 25 He said, "Look! I see four men walking around in the fire, unbound and unharmed, and the fourth looks like a son of the gods."