

DEVOTION FOR THE FIFTH MONDAY OF EASTER

PSALM 40:1-5

I waited patiently for the Lord; He inclined to me and heard my cry.

He drew me up from the pit of destruction, out of the miry bog,
and set my feet upon a rock, making my steps secure.

He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God.

Many will see and fear, and put their trust in the Lord.

Blessed is the man who makes the Lord his trust, who does not turn to the proud,
to those who go astray after a lie!

**You have multiplied, O Lord my God, your wondrous deeds and your thoughts towards us;
none can compare with you!**

I will proclaim and tell of them, yet they are more than can be told.

*Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
As it was in the beginning, is now and will be forever. Amen*

Old Testament Reading: Leviticus 20:1-27 *Consequences of un-holiness*

New Testament Reading: John 19:1-41 *Jesus dies and is buried*

“NO GRAVE COULD HOLD HIM DOWN”

Jesus commended His spirit into the Father’s hands, breathed His last and died in peace. He had accomplished all the Father had sent Him to do. Through Isaiah, God said, “*The Word that goes forth from my mouth will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.*” Jesus is the Word of God made flesh. He was sent that He might gather the lost sheep of Israel and make peace between God and human beings, through His blood shed on the cross. Although His death looked like defeat, it was in fact victory. Jesus cried out in a loud voice “*It is finished.*” At once the curtain in the temple was torn in two, the earth quaked and the tombs of the saints were opened. Jesus had accomplished the purpose for which God had sent Him. He had taken away the sin of the world and reconciled the creation to the Creator. Jesus died, as we all will one day die. But because Jesus died, we will be able to die in the same peace. Like Jesus we too will be able to commend our spirits into the loving hands of our heavenly Father and rest in His peace.

Jesus’ body was buried. One day our bodies will also be returned to the earth. In the world the grave is referred to as the ‘final resting place.’ But Jesus’ grave was merely a ‘resting place.’ Early on the morning of the first day of the week, He rose again. Death had no power over Him. No grave could hold Jesus down! He had disarmed death and the devil, by taking away the sin of the world. Death has no power over those who trust in Christ as Saviour. The graves of those who believe have become like His grave, ‘resting places.’ A time will come when our bodies will rest in the grave, awaiting the day Jesus calls us to share in His resurrection. No grave can hold down those who have been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb! We have God’s word on it, sealed in the blood of Christ, testified to by Jesus’ resurrection on the third day, promised in our baptism into His death and resurrection. No grave will hold us down! We have Jesus word, “*I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live even though he die. And whoever believes in me will never die.*”

“THIS BODY IN THE GRAVE WE LAY” (Public Domain)

This body in the grave we lay. There to await that solemn day.

When God Himself shall bid it rise, to mount triumphant to the skies.

And so to earth we now entrust, what came from dust and turns to dust.

And from the dust shall rise that day, in glorious triumph o’er decay.

The soul forever lives with God, Who freely hath His grace bestowed.

And through His Son redeemed it here, from every sin, from every fear.

**All trials and griefs are past, a blessed end has come at last.
Christ's yoke was borne with ready will; who dieth thus is living still.**

**We have no cause to mourn or weep; securely shall this body sleep.
Till Christ Himself shall death destroy, and raise the blessed dead to joy.**

**Then let us leave this place of rest, and homeward turn, for they are blest,
Who heed God's warning and prepare, lest death should find them unaware.**

**So help us, Jesus, ground of faith; Thou hast redeemed us by Thy death.
From endless death and set us free. We laud and magnify Thee.**

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, you took on our humanity fully through your conception by the Holy Spirit within the womb of your mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary. You shared in the pains and sorrows that are common to creatures of flesh and blood, including the suffering that precedes death, the most violent death of the cross. You died as we will die. You gave your spirit into your Father's hands in peace, for you are the sinless Son of God from eternity and a human being sinless from conception, who lived a perfectly holy life in thought, word and deed. You died to take away our sin, so that we, sinful from conception, who sin actively and passively in what we do and fail to do, would have forgiveness and also be able to commend our spirits to your Father in peace. Bless us always to live in the confidence of your forgiveness, so that when our time comes, we too may commend our spirits into your Father's hands in peace. You are our peace! In your Name. Amen

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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 and ever. Amen

THE CREED

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 Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen

BENEDICTION

John 12:26-27

"Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. If anyone serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there will my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will also honour him."