

*Pastor Shaun Arndt*  
*April 4, 2021*  
*Easter Dawn*

*The LORD is my strength and song and He has become my salvation. Alleluia!*  
*Dear friends in Christ, the Risen Lord,*

Many times they have laughed together. Often they had to speak loudly because the family gathering was so loud with the buzz of many joyful conversations all at once. But now they quietly stand around the hospital bed, knowing she will gone soon. Nothing quiets a room like death.

All is gone, his wealth taken or destroyed in a single day. His beloved children dead. **Job** tears his robe, takes the razor and silently starts to remove his hair. Nothing quiets a room like loss.

They had seen it all. Hunger, sickness, warfare, death of young and old, destruction, fire, and then the long, grueling walk to the far of land of captivity. The so in the Psalm they said: **By the rivers of Babylon... we wept... we hung up our harps on the willows... How can we sing?** Nothing quiets a room like destitution.

There is no shortage of examples from Scripture and everyday life that speak of how sin, sorrow, and death silence the sounds of peace, life, and joy.

But you already know this, don't you? You don't have to be very old at all before you are very familiar with such truly uncomfortable moments of silence or what so often comes along with them, the sound of tears, pain, weeping and heavy sighs. Destructive storms and a virus that brings the world to its knees are evidence of what the Bible says: **All of creation is groaning with birth pains right up to the present time.**

Deep down we know the reason for the fearful quiet of death and songs of weeping and woe. Even though we may try to evade the answer or hide it with distractions, our hearts contain the natural knowledge of God that all is not right between us and the Almighty. Whether it's a nagging guilty conscience or the sheer terror that grips our heart at a brush with death it all hints at the truth we find in our lesson: **You were angry with me.**

Though the sinful part of us may want to cry unfair, the fact is **anger** is the fitting attitude the holy God should have against sinners.

After all, we get that it is pure evil to repay goodness and kindness with wickedness and malice. And that's not only what our first parents did long ago in the garden, but that's what we do with every sin, by every imperfection against God's Holy will whether it's spoken, done or thought.

The proof of our guilty verdict is in the certainty of the cemetery.

And yet sorrow and death should just be the warm up rehearsal for the endless weeping of hell our every failure to be perfect has earned us. And it would be, except that our God teaches us a brand new song His people **will sing** forever: **the Song of Salvation.**

This **Song** our lesson speaks about is loud—window rattling loud! It is full of hearty **thanks**, eager **proclaiming** and excited **declaring!** It is not sung or played weakly, but with **strength!** It is a **loud song of joy** God has written for all the **peoples... in all the earth!**

This song is so full of **amazing things** it can't just be sung, it needs to be shouted—**shout aloud and sing for joy!** This is like the shout of little kids on the playground who can't contain themselves! This is the kind of **singing for joy** that makes the building echo!

All this joy is tied to a day. Twice the Lord's prophet says: **In that day...** There is a special day that will make people who live in this vale of tears **shout aloud and sing for joy!**

God alone stands behind such a day: **I will give thanks to you, LORD... surely God is my salvation. The LORD is my strength and song and He has become my salvation.**

**Salvation** means to take someone out of a hopeless situation and bring them to safety. **Salvation** is the drowning child, whom the lifeguard pulls to safety. **Salvation** is the unconscious person the firefighter carries out of the burning house. **Salvation** is the person bleeding to death until the the paramedic intervenes.

So ***That Day*** is the day when the LORD saves, rescues, delivers his people from sin, hell and death.

Now certainly there are many days in salvation history that could fit this song in Isaiah 12: God rescuing the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. The birth of the Son of God we celebrate at Christmas. Christ's raising His people up to everlasting joy on the last day.

But one day fits more than any other, the day that all those other days are connected to and depend on. **That day** is the day the Lord has made, the day we celebrate this day, the day when Jesus Christ kicked death in the teeth and proved He tramples Satan down into the dust!

Consider the **amazing things** Jesus' bodily rising from the dead mean for us: **Though you were angry with me (LORD), your anger has turned away and you comfort me.**

Notice God didn't pretend our sin was no big deal and neither did He just forget about His anger. If He did that, he could not be the holy God and righteous judge. Sin must be punished. His holy anger satisfied.

So that's exactly what happened as Jesus hung on the cross. God's **anger** was turned away from you and me who deserved it and put onto the sinless Jesus.

Like a levy stopping holding back raging flood waters, the Father gave His Son, Jesus Christ to be the one who blocks the raging hellish punishment from drowning us as our sins deserved.

Like a lighting-rod taking the bolt to save the building, Jesus willingly chose to let the righteous wrath of God strike himself down to death to spare us.

In saving love **the LORD turned his anger away** from us and onto Jesus. But on the third day, Jesus proved He is indeed true God, **the Holy One of Israel** when He returned to life.

By dying for our sins He removed them entirely. Because Jesus lives our sin is gone. It is removed, pardoned, no more!

Need reassurance? **Your anger has turned away, and you comfort me.** What comfort could be better than the Risen Lord Jesus announcing ‘Peace’ and ‘Forgiveness’ not just to His disciples on Easter night, but to us this very day in His Word, spoken and written, and in His pledge of forgiveness and life in His body and blood in the Lord’s supper.

On Easter the baptismal font is front and center to remind you what the Bible teaches us, that in baptism the Holy Spirit joined you to Jesus’ death and resurrection and all it brings: forgiveness, life and eternal joy!

By His life, death and rising again, Jesus gives us this reason to sing: **Therefore with joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.**

Like an ever fresh well, Jesus is a source of forgiveness, peace, and joy that will never run out. In John 4, Jesus makes the same point: **The water I give... will become a spring of water welling up to eternal life.**

Jesus doesn’t give you a happy song just to sing today, but for all eternity. His empty tomb is the promise that He will bring you to heavenly joy at death and one day your grave will be empty as His grave is!

At the last day He will even raise up our bodies to never ending joy in the new heavens and new earth where there will be no more tears, sorrows, pains, no fear, no death, where His believing people **shout aloud and sing for joy** forever!

Dear friends, drink deeply from Jesus’ Word. Let His promise to be with you always and do what is eternally best for you refresh you when you’re hurting and struggling. Remember whatever griefs we endure in this broken world are temporary. **That** final day is coming when the guilt of sin will turn to perfect peace, when loss is lost in that eternal kingdom, when death dies to life and fear falls to joy.

The forgiveness and refreshment our Risen Savior gives in His Easter victory, means even when we have tears in our eyes, we can still sing that **He has become** (our) **salvation.**

And so in that hospital room, the pastor sang and the family joined in: *Jesus loves me, this I know for the Bible tells me so... Jesus loves me He who died, heaven’s gates to open wide* and as they sang, the Lord took grandma home to heavenly joy to the tune of a song of salvation in Christ.

Another Psalm let us hear Israelite exiles sing again: **When the LORD restored the captives to Zion were like men who dreamed... our mouths were filled with laughter, and our tongues with shouts of joy.**

Job sat in the ashes and even though his body was racked with the pain of his sores from the bottom of his feet to the top of his head, yet he sang: **I know that my Redeemer lives and at the end of time He will stand over the dust. Then, even after my skin has been destroyed... in my own flesh I will see God.**

And so Jesus' sin erasing, fear destroying, death killing will bring us to **that day** when with full throated resurrection joy we will **Sing the Song of Salvation!** Amen.

*The LORD is my strength and song, and He has become my salvation. Sing to the LORD, for he has done amazing things! Amen.*

*We sing the hymn on page 8.*