

Holy Saturday Meditation

Jesu Juva

Blessed are you when you see Christ in the Old Testament.

Blessed are you when you know that Christ not only created you, but re-created you. And when He did, as in the beginning, He pronounced you good.

Blessed are you when you know you are safe from the waters of sin and death in the ark of the Church. And that one day, that ark will come safely to rest on the mountain of God in heaven.

Blessed are you when you know that all your sin is rusting at the bottom of the baptism font, just like Pharaoh's chariots at the bottom of the Red Sea.

Blessed are you when you know that Christ has raised up children for Abraham from stones, because He has removed your heart of stone and given you a new heart and a new spirit.

Blessed are you when *you who are dust and to dust you will return* can sit in that dust with Job and say *I know that my Redeemer lives*.

Blessed are you who know that Christ gathers His people from every time and place, shepherding them through the wilderness, exile, Egypt, and even here.

Blessed are you when you know that Christ descended into the fiery furnace of hell to rescue us from the flames that burn but do not consume.

Blessed are you when you know that these stories are your stories. Your baptism into Christ has put you in them. They are not just cool stories from the past, about other people. They are cool stories from the past that teach you about you; and about Christ, your Saviour. That teach you where you've been, where you're going, and how Christ will get you there.

So we'll hear the stories again tonight. Old Testament stories. Our stories. Our ancestors teaching us and handing down to us the faith. That we may live with them and they with us.

For *this is the night* when all of history is reduced and packed into one event - everything before pointing to it, and everything since springing from it: the Passover of our Lord. The night when our Lord passed over from death to life, that we who die - from Abel to the end of time - might live in Him.

This is the night everything changed. When sin's tangled web was forced to release its prey. When the grave's cold fingers were pried off the dead. When hell's steely doors were torn off their hinges. *When Christ, the Life, rose from the dead . . . innocence is restored to the fallen and joy is given to those downcast.*

This is the night of fulfillment and promise, of the past and the future.

This is the night of rejoicing and of light. *The ancient darkness has been forever banished.* And we are blessed. Blessed in Christ.

So we gather tonight, not in vigil for the dead, but as wise virgins awaiting their Bridegroom.

We gather in quiet joy, before the full-throated joy of tomorrow.

We gather in candlelight, before the rising of the sun, before the rising of the Son, tomorrow.

Blessed are we.

God has brought His Israel into joy from sadness (LSB #487).

In the Name of Jesus. Amen.