

**Holy Trinity Lutheran Church
Des Moines, WA
April 8, 2012 – Festival Service**

Isaiah 25:6-9

This is That “Someday!”

- 1. Others Have Sighed**
- 2. This Day is Different!**
- 3. There is no more, “Some Day.”**

**Hymns: *Triumphant from the Grave* – 157 –
265 – 143:2,3,5**

All Scripture quotations from the NIV 1984

⁶ On this mountain the LORD Almighty will prepare a feast of rich food for all peoples, a banquet of aged wine— the best of meats and the finest of wines. ⁷ On this mountain he will destroy the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations; ⁸ he will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign LORD will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove the disgrace of his people from all the earth. The LORD has spoken. ⁹ In that day they will say, “Surely this is our God; we trusted in him, and he saved us. This is the LORD, we trusted in him; let us rejoice and be glad in his salvation.”

A young girl feels all alone. She is surrounded by poverty. Violence in the streets around her is common. She lives in a rundown apartment, sharing a cramped and cluttered room with two of her siblings. Every mealtime brings the question of whether there will even be food on the table. This young girl doesn't have a lot of joy in her life, yet she has found one place where she goes to escape. Outside of her window, she scurries up a fire escape and makes her way onto the roof of her building. It isn't glamorous, but up there, she has a place to herself. On that roof, she feels as if she is away from everything; it is just this girl, the world, and her dreams. And as she lays on her back, trying to forget about everything that is wrong in her life, her sigh is simple,

“Someday...” Someday, things will be better. Someday, this will be in my past. Someday...

If you flip through the pages of the Old Testament, you can hear that sigh coming from God's people over and over again. It is there in Genesis in the account of Adam and Eve. There we find the first people, created perfectly by God to live in a perfect world. But we see them as they are ejected from the Garden of Delight because of their disobedience. Because of their sin, they are relegated to a life of hard labor. Far away from perfection, we find them battling one another in their marriage. We see them despairing as their broken family falls apart. There is no doubt that there were days when Adam took a pause from the work in his fields, or Eve stepped away from her gardening, and they sighed, “Someday...”

That sigh is heard again in the book of Kings. There we find David, a man who had once lived in the serenity of shepherding his flocks in the open fields. But through God's Word, we know that David became a king who was defined by war, bloodshed, and conquest. At home, he dealt with jealous wives and rebellious children, all the direct result of his sin. In a world of upheaval, it is easy to imagine that there were times when David looked longingly out of his palace windows and sighed, “Someday...”

Those people were not alone in the Old Testament. Time and time again, we can hear that sigh; a plea that was the direct result of their sin and disobedience. Contrary to what the devil would tell them with every temptation, sin was never the solution it always left them wanting. It left them shrouded in a world of tears and sadness. There were so many people, spread out over so many years, but there is one sigh that we hear again and again, “Someday...” In fact, it is Isaiah's someday sigh that we hear today, ***“On this mountain the LORD Almighty will prepare a feast of rich food for all peoples, a banquet of aged wine— the best of meats and the finest of wines. On this mountain he will destroy the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations; he will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign LORD will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove the disgrace of his people from all the earth.”*** For a man like Isaiah, living in a time of destruction and exile, those words must've felt like nothing but a dream.

All of the Old Testament people joined with Isaiah in longing for a time of a victory celebration. They looked to a time when God would take away the darkness that covered them. They longed for the hour when God would destroy the sure and certain death that was in their future. They waited for the day when God would lift the heavy burden of sin that was upon them. Someday, God would dry the tears of sadness and despair that filled their lives. It was this hope alone that could keep them going despite living in such a dark and sad world. They held onto their sigh of "Someday."

And times do not change, do they? Like those people of the Old Testament, it can sometimes seem like we are hanging onto a far off hope. It can feel like all that we can do as we struggle through life is to say, "Someday..." We know that same world of pain that they lived and experienced; that world that often seems to be without any kind of joy.

It is a world that we are born into. What Adam and Eve brought into the world with their first sin, they have passed down to every person after them. And it is a world that we experience daily. Because of our sin, we know tears and sadness. We deal with relationships that fall apart. We experience heartache at the hands of those who are close to us. Our lives are ripped apart by sudden troubles. We know what it is like to struggle through each day. We feel the effects of damage that can never be fixed.

We also know death. Its cold hand has most likely touched all of our lives. We know the pains of unexpected loss. We know the ongoing emptiness that can never be filled. We feel sadness that can sometimes only be expressed by a flood of tears.

And through it all, we are veiled in a darkness that keeps us from understanding why all of this happens. We struggle to see purpose.

And so, we search and we wonder. We look for answers and we seek out solutions. Maybe, like those Old Testament people, we simply sigh, "Someday...things will get better." But as we continue through this daily world of tears and sadness and death, we can begin to doubt if this "someday" will ever come. The daily grind of sadness and tears can lead us to believe that perhaps those sighs of "Someday" are just a blind and ignorant hope.

But it is in that world of tears and sadness, death and darkness, that today I see something much different. Though I look out at people who can be deeply affected by this world, I see people who reflect something else. I see a sanctuary glowing in white. I smell fresh lilies, the scent of life. I hear glad shouts of Alleluia! I see faces beaming with joy! What can account for such joy in such a world of sadness?

Why is there an air of confidence surrounding us today? For so many people who have sighed in the face of their troubles and said, "Someday..." this day brings a proclamation of joy. This is that "someday." Easter Sunday marks the day that every person in the Old Testament looked forward to with hope. Easter Sunday marks the day that every person in the New Testament church holds onto securely. It's exactly as we sang it a few minutes ago. This day marks the feast of victory for our King. On this day we set our eyes upon a truly remarkable experience. It is a banquet, like nothing that can be imagined. In this heavenly feast, there will be no shortage. It is prepared by God himself and laid out before us is the best and finest of food and drink that can be found. This is the kind of banquet that marks a victory. And it is victory that we are celebrating. God's own Son, Jesus Christ, the King of Kings has won a victory. He has taken down every single one of those enemies that causes pain and sadness and death in this world. This is the day of Salvation!

And as we join in this great celebration, there is nothing that can stop the joy, because God in his power and wisdom has taken every hindrance away. That veil of darkness that once covered all people; that shroud which left all people searching blindly for answers has been removed. The barrier that once stood between a holy God and sinful people has been broken down forever.

People who could never have dreamed of coming before the LORD now are invited to celebrate in victory with him. And the invitation goes out to all people of all nations. There is not a soul for whom Christ has not died.

As we go to this table, every one of us can go with a clear conscience. The guilt and shame of our sins has indeed been done away with. This victory feast proves that the sacrifice that was made upon the cross was counted. Every sin was

taken upon Jesus and nailed to that cross with finality. No matter what kind of errors or mistakes might be in our past, we come to this feast assured that they are gone, and so too is our guilt. The blood of Jesus purifies us from all sin.

And it isn't just our sin that is gone; death also has been swallowed up. The great curse that has inflicted every person holds no power any longer. The broken seal around the empty tomb is our greatest assurance in life and in death. The grave could not hold our Savior and we know that the grave holds no power over us either. It is proof that God accepted Jesus' sacrifice. It is proof that Jesus defeated our enemies. It is proof that eternal life will be ours.

And in a place with no shame, guilt or effects of sin; in a place where death can no longer rear its ugly head; in that place there will be no tears. God's solution for our sadness is not simply to wipe our tears away. As he dries our eyes, he has also taken the cause of that pain away. Think of how truly awesome that is! When a child cries, the most that we can ever do is to wipe those tears away, yet often, there is nothing that can be done about the cause. How great that when God wipes away our tears, they are gone forever.

With nothing to hinder and an invitation sent to all, the only thing left to do is celebrate. We revel in the victory for which we have gathered. We cherish the fact that we can be together with God. We move forward with the sure knowledge that any trouble we might face in this life is not worth comparing to the everlasting joy which we know is already waiting for us in heaven. The victory feast is set. Your invitation and place is set. Your Easter joy will never end. That is a message that give us joy each and every day that we spend upon this earth. The message of Easter changes our outlook every single day. There are no more empty sighs of "someday," because of what has happened on this day today! Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!

And with that knowledge, Isaiah gives us words of praise to sing. They are the response of God's people who know confidently that all the trouble has been done away with. They are words of confidence spoken in the light of all that has been opened up before us. On this Easter Day, let us stand and let us fulfill what the prophet knew would be said on that day of victory for the Lamb.

Those words of response are found on page 8 of your worship bulletin. Let us join together in shouting the words of praise reserved for THIS day!, **"Surely this is our God; we trusted in him, and he saved us. This is the LORD, we trusted in him; let us rejoice and be glad in his salvation."** Amen!