

## **WHAT THE LORD SHOWED US THROUGH HIS CRUCIFIXION**

Rt. Rev. Peter M. Buss

You all know some of the story of Easter time. You remember how it was that the wicked men who ruled the Jews at that time hated the Lord. They hated Him because they were wicked, and when the Lord taught truth it showed how wicked they were. They hated Him also because people were following Him, and they wanted to rule people themselves, and they didn't want to lead them to the Lord.

So they plotted to kill Him, and they made up all sorts of evil and untrue things about Him, to try to kill Him. And they sent soldiers by night to take Him prisoner, and eventually they forced Pontius Pilate to agree to let Him be crucified. Then they thought that they had won, and they came and laughed at the Lord, as He was on the cross, thinking that He was going to die, and would not worry them any more.

Of course they were wrong. The Lord can't die. It seemed as if His body died, but less than three days later, on Easter morning, He rose again, and there was nothing left in the sepulcher. And He came and showed Himself to Mary Magdalene and to the disciples, that they might know that He was indeed their God, and they must worship Him forevermore.

Now we might ask ourselves why it was that the Lord let these evil people do such terrible things to Him. After all, He is the Lord. Why didn't He stop them? He could have. He said to the disciples that all He had to do was ask, and He would have thousands of angels to fight against the wicked soldiers. But He let them take Him prisoner, and crucify Him.

The reason is that the Lord loves us so much that He let these things happen to Him, so that He could teach us some things which are very important to us. He knew that this way we would learn them very well indeed, and He was willing to suffer so that He could teach us these terribly important things. This morning we will speak of two of these things.

First of all, the Lord wanted to show us how terrible evil is when it becomes settled in your heart. He let us see how the leaders of the Jews, who pretended to be so good, could break all their own laws, and murder and lie, because, since they were evil, they hated the Lord. Just as the evil people of that time hated the Lord, so evil people today hate what is good and right. A thief hates policemen and judges, even if they are good people—because they stop him doing the things he loves to do. A student who is naughty dislikes their teachers, because they punish them, even though they may be good people.

The student loves wrong things, and hates those who stand in their way. All evil people hate others who are in the way of their evil, and if they could, they would do them harm, and perhaps even kill them. You know how sometimes a robber will kill a policeman so that they can steal—yet that policeman has done nothing wrong.

The Lord wanted to show also how evil people hate the Lord most of all. They hate Him, because His laws look after good people, and punish evil people. So we are told that the devils of hell wish to kill the Lord if they could, just as those evil leaders of the Jews wanted to. A lot of people on this earth try to laugh at the Lord, and mock Him, because they hate Him and His laws and because they are evil at heart.

The second thing the Lord was showing was how weak evil people are. You remember that they thought they had killed the Lord, and they thought they had been very clever. But then the Lord rose again, and He is alive forevermore, and all that they had tried to do was like nothing. They hadn't killed Him at all. Today, thousands of years later, we still worship our Lord as He lives in heaven.

The Lord is trying to show each one of us that evil can hurt us only for a little time. You know, we look around the world, and we see that many evil people can make good people unhappy. A wicked king can make lots of people unhappy. Wicked soldiers, or policemen, or wicked people can hurt good people, and bring a lot of unhappiness. Sometimes, when we look around, it seems that the good people are less happy than the evil ones, because the evil ones are getting what they want.

The Lord was trying to show us that the very worst things that evil people can do can only hurt for a short while. They tried to kill the Lord, and take away His power, and they seemed to win. But only for a short while. After that they couldn't touch the Lord any more. And after death, it was their power that was broken. He does this with us too. When evil people hurt us, or bring us unhappiness, He then works to make us happy again. And the evil that men do lasts only a little while, but the good that the Lord brings lasts forever.

So when you think of Easter Sunday, you can remember how people hated the Lord and tried to kill Him, but all they did came to nothing. And then you can think how all evil people try to hurt the Lord, and good people, but because the Lord has beaten the hells, evil people can only hurt someone for a little while, but the Lord brings happiness forever. *Amen.*