

# Concordia Lutheran Conference

## Daily Devotions

By Carl M. Zorn

for the

**Twenty-Fourth Sunday after Trinity**

**– Friday –**

*Thou shalt rest and stand in thy lot at the end of the days.* – Daniel 12:13

Thus spoke the Lord to the Prophet Daniel through the heavenly messenger. And thus the Lord speaks to His children concerning their death, the life thereafter, and the resurrection of the body. Thus the Lord speaks of death to every one of us who trusts in the merits of His Son for our salvation. The death of God's children is not a perilous and terrifying experience to be dreaded and feared. It is rest, sweet, peaceful, blissful rest, which is but faintly foreshadowed by the rest we enjoy when sleeping. When we sleep here in this life, a period of peaceful rest is often broken by disturbing and sometimes frightening dreams, some of which waken us suddenly and break our sleep, some of which merely cause subconscious anxiety which destroys the continuity of our rest. When a believer, fearing no evil, passes through the valley of the shadow of death (Psalm 23), and his soul is separated from his body, Scripture in many places speaks of the “*rest*” that follows (Revelation 14:13; Hebrews 4:9; etc.). We rest; our body rests; and our soul rests. The soul rests or “*sleeps*” (Matthew 9:24; John 11:11; etc.) in the arms of Jesus, and no torment shall touch it. It does not, however, rest in unconsciousness, experiencing the “*nothingness*” of the so-called “*soul-sleep*” taught by certain of the sects. The soul is at once in the presence of Christ (Philippians 1:23; Luke 23:43), experiencing “*fulness of joy and pleasures*” at God's right hand (Psalm 16:11), “*comforted*” (Luke 16:25), “*blessed*” or happy (Revelation 14:13) in “*the glory*” with which even the most positive experiences of this present time cannot compare and which completely eclipses “*the sufferings*” that we here must endure (Romans 8:18). The body which returns to the dust of the ground (Genesis 3:19; Ecclesiastes 12:7) rests in the earth as in a sleep (Daniel 12:2), in God's keeping (Psalm 139:8), until He wakens it again in the resurrection (John 5:28-29; I Thessalonians 4:16), restores it even though it had decayed (Job 19:26-27), and changes it into an incorruptible, glorified body like unto that of our Savior (Philippians 3:21; I Corinthians 15:51-52). In the “*rest*” of temporal death, no human voice can wake us, no one can disturb our rest, nothing at all can disquiet us. In this world, in this life, no rest can be found. But in temporal death God's children experience real rest from “*the sufferings of this present time*” (Romans 8:18), entirely removed from this world and from time into the timelessness of eternity. That rest will not be interrupted by the resurrection of our bodies – as if, even for a moment, we should lose it – but our glorified body will be reunited with our resting, blissful, blessed, comforted and rejoicing soul to live thenceforth and forevermore, body and soul, “*in [our] lot*” with Daniel, in “*the kingdom prepared for [us] from the foundation of the world*” (Matthew 25:34).

**PRAYER** – O God, how my flesh and my heart faileth in dread of death! But how eagerly my spirit, renewed in knowledge by Thy Word, longs for that sweet rest which awaits me as Thy gracious gift for Christ's sake. Oh, my dear heavenly Father, ever keep me Thy child in true faith, that I may go to sleep in Thee and wake in the mansions of heaven. Amen.

Asleep in Jesus! Blessed sleep, from which none ever wakes to weep; a calm and undisturbed repose, unbroken by the last of foes. Asleep in Jesus! Oh, how sweet to be for such a slumber meet, with holy confidence to sing that death has lost his venomed sting. Asleep in Jesus! Peaceful rest, whose waking is supremely blest; no fear, no woe, shall dim that hour that manifests the Savior's power. Asleep in Jesus! Oh, for me may such a blissful refuge be! Securely shall my ashes lie and wait the summons from on high.

Hymn 587