KEYS OF DEATH & HELL

REV. 1:17-19: WHEN I SAW HIM, I FELL ON ME KNEES AS THOUGH DEAD. BUT HE LAID HIS RIGHT HAND ON ME, SAYING, FEAR NOT, I AM THE FIRST & THE LAST & THE LIVING ONE: I DIED, & BEHOLD I AM ALIVE FOREVERMORE, & I HAVE THE KEYS OF DEATH & HADES.

THE HEIGHT / DEPTH / LENGTH / BREADTH – THE CROWNING POINT & CLIMAX OF ALL THEOLOGY IS EASTER. AS YOU READ THROUGH THE BK. OF REV., YOU WILL COME TO UNDERSTAND THAT DEATH IN CHRIST IS GAIN. IN THIS VISION OF ST. JOHN, JESUS CLAIMS TO BE THE FIRST & THE LAST & SAYS I HAVE THE KEYS OF DEATH & HELL! AND FOR THE FOLLOWERS OF XP, THAT MEANS THAT DEATH IN CHRIST IS GAIN. THE NOBLE ARMY OF MARTYRS MARCHES THROUGH THE PAGES OF REVELATION & MOVES THROUGH DEATH WITH WAVING PALM BRANCHES. ---- SYMBOL OF TRIUMPH IN CHRIST WHO OPENS FOR EVERY FOLLOWER THE DOORS OF DEATH AND HAS SHUT BEHIND THEM THE DOORS OF HELL. TOWARD THE END OF REVELATION, WE ARE ASSURED THAT THE GATES OF HELL WITH SATAN INSIDE WILL BE LOCKED FOREVER. BUT FIRST THE DOORS OF DEATH BREAK & TUMBLE TO THE GROUND & WE FIND OURSELVES CRYING OUT, O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING? O GRAVE, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY?.... THANKS BE TO GOD WHO GIVES US THE VICTORY THROUGH OUR LORD JESUS XP. XP HOLDS THE KEYS OF DEATH & HELL! ..... SO WE FOLLOW XP & HIS HOLY RETINUE AS THEY MOVE FROM THE AGONY OF THE CROSS TO THE JOY OF PARADISE. THE 1ST STOP IS AT THE VERY GATES OF HELL. ST. PETER TELLS US THAT HE WENT & PREACHED TO THE SPIRITS IN PRISON. THE PROCESSION IS MAJESTIC! BEHIND THE GREAT GATES THE SPIRITS IN PRISON TREMBLE. SATAN HIMSELF COWERS BEHIND THE FORBIDDING WALLS. THE VICTOR SIGNALS THE ARCHANGEL AT THE HEAD OF THE GREAT COLUMN OF THE HEAVENLY HOST & THE HERALD CRIES OUT: LIFT UP YOUR HEADS, O GATES! AND BE LIFTED UP, O ANCIENT DOORS, THAT THE KING OF GLORY MAY COME IN. THE SENTRY AT HELL'S GATES CALLS OUT: WHO IS THIS KING OF GLORY? THE HERALD ANSWERS: THE LORD, STRONG & MIGHTY / MIGHTY IN BATTLE / HE IS THE KING OF GLORY..... LIFT UP YOUR HEADS, O GATES, & BE LIFTED UP, O ANCIENT DOORS THAT THE KING OF GLORY MAY COME IN! AGAIN THE SENTRY WANTS TO KNOW: WHO IS THIS KING OF GLORY? & AGAIN THE HERALD ANSWERS, THE LORD OF HOSTS, HE IS THE KING OF GLORY! SLOWLY, RELUCTANTLY, THE GATES OF HELL OPEN UP & THE PROCESSION MOVES IN. THE VICTOR PREACHES TO THE SPIRITS IN PRISON & THEN HE TURNS TO MOVE ON:

> THE VICTOR DID THE FOE REPEL / HE SOUNDED SATAN'S FINAL KNELL / HE CLOSED THE YAWNING GATES OF HELL / ALLELUIA

THE PROCESSION PROCEEDS TO THE STRONGHOLD OF DEATH. DEATH IS THE LAST ENEMY TO BE CONQUERED / DEATH -- DARK & DISMAL ONCE MORE THE HERALD CRIES OUT: LIFT UP YOUR HEADS, O GATES! AND BE LIFTED UP, O ANCIENT DOORS, THAT THE KING OF

GLORY MAY COME IN. AGAIN THE SENTRY WANTS TO KNOW, WHO IS THIS KING OF GLORY? / THE LORD OF HOSTS, HE IS THE KING OF GLORY! THE DOORS SWING OPEN WIDE & THERE BEGINS THIS LONG PROCESSION FROM ALL NATIONS & PEOPLES & TONGUES MOVING ON & UP TO PARADISE:

DEATH'S MIGHTIEST POW'RS HAVE DONE THEIR WORST / AND JESUS' HATH HIS FOES DISPERSE / LET SHOUTS OF PRAISE & JOY OUTBURST. ALLELUIA!

THE PROCESSION NOW MOVES ON TO THE THIRD DAY / EASTER / ONLY A FEW MOMENTS BEFORE COCKCROW. THE RISEN LORD SHOWS HIMSELF ALIVE TO THE WOMEN & SLOW-TO-BELIEVE DISCIPLES. FINALLY THEIR DOUBTS & SKEPTICISM GIVE WAY TO FAITH / NEW STRENGTH & PURPOSE & POWER. THE PROCESSION PAUSES. THE HERALD'S VOICE CALLS OUT TO THE LAND OF THE LIVING: LIFT UP YOUR HEADS, O GATES & BE LIFTED UP, O ANCIENT DOORS THAT THE KING OF GLORY MAY COME IN. THE SENTRY HESITATES, THEN CALLS OUT: WHO IS THIS KING OF GLORY? ..... THE LORD OF HOSTS! HE IS THE KING OF GLORY!

ON THE THIRD MORN HE ROSE AGAIN / GLORIOUS IN MAJESTY TO REIGN / OH, LET US SWELL THE JOYFUL STRAIN! ALLELUIA

THE PRINCE OF LIFE LIVES VISIBLY WITH HIS DISCIPLES FOR 40 DAYS. THEY SEE HIM / SPEAK TO HIM / BEGIN TO UNDERSTAND HIM / LOVE HIM. HE COMMISSIONS HIS DISCIPLES TO SPREAD THE GOOD NEWS OF FORGIVENESS, LIFE & SALVATION TO THE UTTERMOST PARTS OF THE EARTH. HE ASCENDS INTO HEAVEN & A GREAT MULTITUDE OF ANGELS GREET HIM WITH A TRIUMPHAL MARCH. THEY MOVE TO THE SHINING GATES OF GLORY. A SENTRY NODS TO GOD THE FATHER & CRIES OUT: LIFT UP YOUR HEADS, O GATES! AND BE LIFTED UP, O ANCIENT DOORS! AND THE KING OF GLORY WILL COME IT!

HE OPENED PARADISE ONCE MORE / HE LEADS THE WAY THROUGH HEAVEN'S GREAT DOOR / WHERE SAINTS SHALL PRAISE HIM EVER-MORE. ALLELUIA!

A SHIMMERING ANGEL PRESENTS TO THE FATHER THE CROWN OF GLORY. THE CROWN IS PLACE ON JESUS: THANK YOU MY SON, THANK YOU FOR YOUR FAITHFULNESS. THE SAINTS & ANGELS BEGIN THEIR CHANT: WORTH IS THE LAMB WHO WAS SLAIN TO RECEIVE POWER & WEALTH & WISDOM & MIGHT & HONOR & GLORY & BLESSING. THEN THE VICTORIOUS KING BREATHES OUT HIS SPIRIT WHO SPEAKS FOR THE KING HIMSELF: BEHOLD, I STAND AT THE DOOR & KNOCK. IF ANY MAN WILL HEAR MY VOICE & OPEN THE DOOR, I WILL COME INTO HIM. HE CALLS US TO OPEN THE GATEWAY TO OUR HEARTS THAT THE KING OF GLORY MAY COME IN.

LORD, BY THE STRIPES WHICH WOUNDED THEE / FROM DEATH'S DREAD STING THY SERVANTS FREE / THAT WE MAY LIVE & SING TO THEE. ALLELUIA.

HE LAID HIS RIGHT HAND UPON ME, SAYING, FEAR NOT, I AM THE FIRST & THE LAST & THE LIVING ONE; I DIED, & BEHOLD I AM ALIVE FOREVERMORE