

Questions That Easter Answers, Sermon  
Delivered at Dexter Avenue Baptist Church

[21 April 1957]  
Montgomery, Ala

*Building upon his Palm Sunday message Garden of Gethsemane, King contemplates the resurrection of Jesus in this Easter sermon. He mourns the unremitting savagery and hate in Montgomery and throughout the South. "Why is it, God? Why is it simply because some of your children ask to be treated as first-class human beings they are trampled over, their homes are bombed, their children are pushed from their*

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*classrooms, and sometimes little children are thrown in the deep waters of Mississippi?" King admonishes his congregation to believe that, despite the crucifixion, Jesus' resurrection signals the inexorable triumph of good over evil, including the evil of segregation "As I look over the world, as I look at America, I can see Easter coming in race relations I can see it coming on every hand I see it coming in Montgomery " The following text is taken from an audio recording of the service*

[Choir singing]

We come once more to Easter Day. And one begins to wonder what this day means. For some, Easter is little more than a fashion show. [Congregation] (Amen) For others, Easter is little more than a national holiday with no semblance of a religious holy day. We look upon Easter in diverse ways. And as I look over this congregation this morning and see the beautiful hats and the beautiful dresses and all of the things that go to commercialize Easter, I wonder if we really know the real meaning of it. But in the midst of all of that I imagine that most of you assembled here this morning for something deeper and something more meaningful than outer show. Easter is a day above all days. It surpasses the mystery and marvel of Christmas with all of the glory of the incarnation. It asserts that man's extremity is God's opportunity. It affirms that what stops us does not stop God and that miracle is as much a part of the end as of the beginning. Above all, Easter provides answers to the deepest queries of the human spirit. Easter symbolizes an event that provides answers to questions that have puzzled the probing minds of philosophers and theologians over the generations. You raise basic questions about the universe and about life and about all of the mysteries attached to it. And the Christian faith comes back confirming in words that echo across the generations that Easter has the answer. And I want to deal with some of these questions this morning, some of the questions that Easter answers, questions that we raise sometimes consciously and sometimes unconsciously.

One of the first questions that we find ourselves raising, Is the life of man immortal? Oh, from time to time we try to get by this question. You see this is, at bottom, the question, If a man dies, shall he live again?<sup>1</sup> This question is as old as the primitive gropings of ancient man and as modern as a morning's newspaper. "If a man dies, shall he live again?" It is a question of immortality. We try sometimes to be nonchalant about it. Or we might even agree with H. G. Wells that it is an irrelevant question, it is the height of [egotism?] to talk about immortality of the soul.<sup>2</sup> Oh, we try to be agnostic about it sometimes and say we just don't know, it isn't important anyway. But then one day, death invades our home and snatches away from us a loving, devoted friend. One day we come to the moment that we see our devoted loved one fade away. As Carlyle said concerning his mother, "Like the last pale circle of the moon fading in the deep seas."<sup>3</sup>

1 Cf. Job 14:14

2 For the full text of Wells's thoughts, see *First and Last Things: A Confession of Faith and a Rule of Life* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1908), p. 110.

3 In Carlyle's translation of Goethe's *Sorrows of Werther*, a passage reads "Then, contemplating the

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And in that moment, we can't be nonchalant. In that moment, we are not exactly agnostic. In that moment, we unconsciously cry out for the meaning of this thing. And there is something deep down within our souls that revolts against saying good-bye forever. We begin to ask, Is the ultimate destiny of man a rendezvous with the dust? Is the spirit of man extinguished at death like a candle guttered by a passing wind? We begin to wonder if death is a state of nothingness that leads us finally to a meaningless existence with no reality.

Then comes Easter to answer the question. Easter comes out ringing in terms that we all hear if we seek to hear it, that the soul of man is immortal. Through the resurrection of Jesus Christ we have fit testimony that this earthly life is not the end, that death is just something of a turn in the road, that life moves down a continual moving river, and that death is just a little turn in the river, that this earthly life is merely an embryonic prelude to a new awakening, that death is not a period which ends this great sentence of life but a comma that punctuates it to more lofty significance. That is what it says. That is the meaning of Easter. That is the question that Easter answers—that death is not the end (*Amen*).

And as we think this morning, as we think in the mornings to come, about the immortality of the soul, here is the answer. For we have the testimony of reason on our side. Rationality tells us somehow that God would not make a universe and bring man across the centuries unfolding through the evolutionary process from a watery existence to the marvelous height of personality. And something tells us that God wouldn't cut it off now that he has planted within our lives an infinite responsibility and we need infinite time to fulfill it (*Yeah*). Easter rings out and says to us with all of the rationality that can be mustered up that man lives on, that death is not the end, and somehow those who have left us along the way of life, those who have gone on into the distant eternities are not gone forever. We will see them again. And that is the marvelous and beautiful meaning of this faith. That is the first question that Easter answers—that life is immortal, that death is not the end.

We begin to wonder also about the reality of the invisible. And one of the big questions of life is whether the material is ultimately real or the spiritual is ultimately real. This has been the great question of philosophy through the generations, and philosophers have usually split up at this point. Some have been materialist, and some have been idealist. The materialist insisting that matter is the ultimate reality—those things which you see and touch and feel, those things which you can apply your five senses to. The idealist, on the other hand, insisted that mind is the ultimate reality, that spirit, that intangible forces are ultimately real. Then Easter comes unto us and says we take sides with the idealist, that these earthly, mundane, material things will pass away, that as you look at them they look like something permanent but they are just here for a season and then they go on, but there are these invisible, these intangible things that stand forever.

Oh, as we look at them, as we look at the visible things, we tend to think that this is all. As Professor Sorokin of Harvard says, we live in a sort of sensate civilization

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pale moon, as she sinks beneath the waves of the rolling sea, the memory of bygone days strikes the mind of the hero" (*The Works of J. W. von Goethe*, ed. Nathan Dole, trans. Thomas Carlyle and R. D. Boylan [Boston: Wyman-Fogg, 1901], p. 87).

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and we tend to think that just the things that we see, just the things that we touch, just the things that we can apply our five senses to, have existence<sup>4</sup> But Easter comes and says that isn't true You walk out at night, and you look up at the beautiful stars as they bedeck the heavens like swinging lanterns of eternity, and somehow you think you see all. But oh no, you can never see the law of gravitation that holds them there. You look at this building, and you look at its beautiful architecture, and you think you see all. You look out and you walk out this morning, and you look over at the beautiful capitol building and all of the surrounding buildings, and you think you see all The materialist would say that's about all But oh no, you don't see all You can never see the mind of the architect who drew the blueprint You can never see the faith and the hope and the love of the individuals who made this church possible You can see the external bricks, you can see the building, but you cannot see the internal forces that brought it into being

You look up here this morning and hear somebody talking and you cry out, "Yes, I see you, M L King" But I'm here to tell you this morning that you don't see me. (*No*) You look here, and you see my body You see my external being. You see something that's merely a manifestation of something else But the real me, you can never see (*Amen*) You can never see that something that the psychologists call my personality (*Yeah*) You can never see my mind You can never see my ideas You can only see my body, and my body can't think My body can't reason My body only moves at the dictates of my mind And so this morning, Easter tells us that everything that we see is a shadow cast by that which we do not see The invisible is a shadow cast by the invisible Easter cries out to us that the idealists are right, that it is ultimately mind, personality, *spiritual* forces that are eternal and not merely these material things that we look about and see For, one day, the gigantic mountains will pass away One day, even the stars that bedeck the heavens will move out of their course One day, the beautiful building of Dexter will not stand here But there is something that will stand There is faith, there is love, there is hope, there is something beyond the external that will stand through the ages<sup>5</sup> The Christian faith says this is the testimony of Easter—that Christ on the day that he walked with a group of men on the Emmaus road was a little more real than he was the day before, the days before that, that he walked with them in the flesh, for there is something now that takes him into the spiritual realm<sup>6</sup> And he's more real now than he was before So Easter comes and says to us that the invisible forces are the forces that are ultimately real and the visible forces are merely shadows cast by the invisible

There is another question that we like to raise, it is the question of whether life is doomed to futility and frustration. We wonder whether life has meaning or whether it is doomed to final frustration and futility, and some people have con-

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<sup>4</sup> Pitrim Alexandrovitch Sorokin (1889-1968) was a Russian-born sociologist who characterized twentieth-century Western industrial society as "sensate," possessing a reality that is perceived largely through the senses

<sup>5</sup> Cf 1 Corinthians 13:13 (MOFFATT, RSV)

<sup>6</sup> Luke 24 On the day of the Resurrection, two disciples met the risen Jesus on the Emmaus road When they broke bread with him, Jesus vanished They then returned to Jerusalem and told of their encounter, saying, "The Lord is risen indeed"

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cluded that it is doomed to final frustration and futility. Some people feel that life is nothing more than a pendulum swinging between frustration and futility, and ultimately, it has no meaning. It's just a pendulum swinging. You've read of the pessimistic philosopher Schopenhauer, and he builds a whole philosophy on that in his book *The World as a Will and an Idea*. He builds a whole philosophical system on this fact, that life is nothing but a pendulum swinging between boredom and futility.<sup>7</sup> It is nothing but a boring, disillusioning, bewildering statement. But then Easter comes to us and tells us that that isn't true. And one can discover meaning in this life through the resurrection of Jesus Christ and that all of the disappointments of life can be transformed into meaningful experiences.

Oh, this morning are you disappointed by something? Are you disappointed about some experience that you've had in life? Well, don't give up in despair. You're just in Good Friday now, but Easter is coming. Are you disappointed about some great ideal that you had and you felt that you would have achieved by now, but you have not achieved it? You have somehow been caught in the moment. You have somehow been caught at a point at which it seems that you can't get out. Well, don't give up in despair. If you will just wait, Easter will come. This morning, have you had some high and noble ideals? Have you had some high and noble hopes, and it seems that they have been blasted by the years? Well, don't give up. Don't despair, because Easter is coming. And this is the thing that men through the generations have learned when they live close to Jesus Christ, that Easter can emerge, and that all of the darkness of Good Friday can pass away.

There are some people who find themselves in the experiences of Good Friday. And Good Friday is something of an inevitable transition of life. But if you look at life in all of its reality, you see it at one moment swinging back toward the beautiful days of Palm Sunday. There you hear the loud hosannas, there you stand in your state of happiness and joy and fulfillment in everything. But then you discover that life again swings over to Good Friday. This is a part of life. That is the dark part, that is the disappointment, that is the delusion, the disillusioning side of life. And some people swinging over from Palm Sunday to Good Friday give up in despair. They run to the rivers and cry out, "I can't take it." And sometimes they even jump in because Good Friday's on them, and they have lived so long in the midst of Palm Sunday.

But if you live close to Jesus Christ, there is something that cries out to you, "If you can just stand up with the Good Friday, there is another day that emerges." There is an Easter that comes out. And there is an Easter that comes and blocks out all of the darkness of Good Friday. (*Yeah*) There is an Easter that comes on the scene and blocks out all of the crucifixion that establishes itself on Good Friday. If you can just hold on, the pendulum swings back and forth, but it has a fulfillment. We find ourselves in the thesis of Palm Sunday, and then we move over into the antithesis of Good Friday. But Jesus Christ, with all of his beauty and all of his eloquence, rings out across the centuries and says, "There is a synthesis in Easter." And this means

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<sup>7</sup> King refers to Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Idea* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1883), 1402. "Life swings like a pendulum backwards and forwards between pain and ennui."

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that life is meaningful, that life is not doomed to frustration and futility but life can end up in fulfillment in the life and the resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

There is another question that men like to ask Is the universe on the side of the forces of justice and goodness? Sometimes it looks dark and sometimes people come to feel that the universe is on the other side, that the universe seems to say "Amen" to the forces of injustice, and that the voices of the universe seem to cry out "Hallelujah" to the forces of godlessness And oh, it looked dark for men centuries ago, looked like everything that they had stood for had gone

Just last week, we thought about the darkness and the agony and the disappointment that Jesus suffered.<sup>8</sup> We can see him as he goes into the garden to pray, as he cries out, "Oh God, Father, let this cup pass from me"<sup>9</sup> That was a dark moment And the interesting thing about it and the thing that we can never forget is that that cup didn't pass It reminds us that everything we pray for will not come It reminds us that sometimes we can ask for our highest hopes to be fulfilled and God doesn't always fulfill them The cup didn't pass And it looked mighty dark, didn't it?

But on the next morning, the next afternoon, after standing in Pilate's judgment hall, he had to go out and face the darkness of the cross<sup>10</sup> Huge symbols accompanied the event. The Bible paints it in vivid terms it looked like the whole universe got dark<sup>11</sup> The disciples themselves were disappointed, and they decided to run on back to Galilee. This Savior, this leader, this teacher that had lived with them so many years, they felt was now defeated And the universe to them, at that time, seemed to have no meaning The universe was now justifying injustice The universe was now on the side of godlessness The universe was on the side of the forces of evil now We can see Jesus there dying on the cross amid two thieves<sup>12</sup> (*Yeah*) The most righteous man that ever entered human history (*Yeah*) dying a most ignominious death We look at him there and all that goes with goodness, all that goes with nobility, all that goes with that which is sublime, seems to be crushed now. And that was a dark moment (*Yeah*) But thank God the crucifixion was not the last act in that great and powerful drama There is another act And it is something that we sing out and cried and ring out about today Thank God a third day came<sup>13</sup> (*Yeah*) Thank God a day came when Good Friday had to pass (*All right*)

And that's what our religion says to us—that Good Friday may occupy the throne for a day, but ultimately it must give way to the triumphant beat of the drums of Easter (*Yeah*) It says to us that somehow nagging tares may come in to stand in the way of stately wheat but one day the tares must pass away and the wheat will grow on.<sup>14</sup> (*Yeah*) It says to us sometimes a vicious mob may take possession and crucify

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8 King refers to his Palm Sunday sermon Garden of Gethsemane, 14 April 1957, pp 275–283 in this volume

9 Cf Matthew 26 39

10 Matthew 27 2, 11–26

11 Matthew 27 45

12 Matthew 27 38

13 According to Christian tradition, Jesus rose from the dead on the third day after his crucifixion

14 Cf Matthew 13 24–30 King refers to the parable of the wheat and tares in which a farmer's

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the most meaningful and sublime and noble character of human history It says to us that one day that same Jesus will rise up and split history into A D and B C (*Yeah*) so that history takes on a new meaning That's what Easter says to us (*Yeah*), that the forces of darkness, the forces of evil, the forces of *justice must finally* come to the light and must finally come to the forefront And the forces of darkness and evil must finally pass away (*Yeah*) Thank God that truth crushed to earth (*Yeah*) will rise again<sup>15</sup> (*Yeah*)

You know every now and then, my friends, I doubt Every now and then I get disturbed myself Every now and then I become bewildered about this thing I begin to despair every now and then And wonder why it is that the forces of evil seem to reign supreme and the forces of goodness seem to be trampled over. Every now and then I feel like asking God, Why is it that over so many centuries the forces of injustice have *triumphed* over the Negro and he has been forced to live under oppression and *slavery* and exploitation? Why is it, God? Why is it simply because some of your children ask to be treated as first-class human beings they are *trampled* over, their homes are *bombed*, their *children* are pushed from their classrooms, and sometimes little children are thrown in the deep waters of Mississippi?<sup>16</sup> Why is it, oh God, that that has to happen? I begin to despair sometimes, it seems that Good Friday has the throne It seems that the forces of injustice reign supreme But then in the midst of that something else comes to me

And I can hear something saying, "King, you are stopping at Good Friday, but don't you know that Easter is coming? (*Yeah*) *Don't worry* about this thing! You are just in the midst of the transition now You are just in the midst of Good Friday now But I want you to know, King, that *Easter is coming!* One day truth will rise up and reign supreme! (*Yeah*) One day *justice* will rise up One day all of the children of God will be able to stand up on the *third* day and then cry, 'Hallelujah, Hallelujah' (*Yeah*) because it's the Resurrection day" (*That's the truth*)

And when I hear that I don't despair I can cry out and sing with new meaning This is the meaning of Easter, it answers the profound question that we confront in Montgomery And if we can just stand with it, if we can just live with Good Friday, things will be all right For I know that Easter is coming and I can see it coming now As I look over the world, as I look at America, I can see Easter coming in race relations I can see it coming on every hand I see it coming in Montgomery I see it coming in Alabama I see it coming in Mississippi Sometimes it looks like it's coming slow, but it's still coming (*Yeah*) And when it comes, it will be a great day, for all of the children of God will be able to stand up and cry, "This is God's day All hail the power of Jesus's name"<sup>17</sup> This is the meaning of it

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enemy sowed noxious weeds in his wheat field The farmer instructed his servants to wait until harvest time to separate the tares from the wheat and to burn it

<sup>15</sup> Cf William Cullen Bryant, "The Battlefield" (1839)

<sup>16</sup> King refers to the January 1957 bombing of the homes of bus boycott leaders and ministers Robert Graetz and Ralph Abernathy and of several black churches Unexploded dynamite was also discovered on King's porch during the period after the bus boycott He also alludes to the violence that accompanied school desegregation efforts and the 1955 lynching of Emmett Till, whose brutalized body was found in Mississippi's Tallahatchie River

<sup>17</sup> King cites Edward Perronet's hymn "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name" (1779)

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And I want to tell you one more thing, and then I'm concluding. People are always asking, "What is the most durable power in the universe? And the fact is that Easter answers that question too. You wonder about it. What is it that is the heart-beat of the moral cosmos? What is it? Philosophers have tried to grapple with it over the years, and they moved back, and maybe Heraclitus comes out and says that it's pleasure.<sup>18</sup> Maybe somebody else comes out and points out to certain moral established principles. But I tell you I want to reach out and get one morally established principle for you, and said that that is the basic and underlying principle of the universe, that is the most durable power in the world. And do you know what that is? It's the power of love. Easter tells us that. Sometimes it looks like the other powers are much more durable. Then we come to see that isn't true. But the most durable, lasting power in this world is the power to love.<sup>19</sup> And my friends, it seems to me that history tells us that. History's a running commentary of it. We have seen the forces of military power hold the throne for a while, haven't we? And it looked like this was the most durable power in the world. It seemed that might made right. It seemed that somehow the more guns and the more ammunition you could get, the greater the power was, the greater the durability of it. Then at every point in history, we have been able to see that this kind of power passes away.

Just the other day, I stood over the tomb of Napoleon in Paris, one of the most beautiful sights in the world.<sup>20</sup> The greatest tomb erected to a man anywhere in the world. It can only be matched or outmatched by the Taj Mahal in India, but that's to a woman. And here that statue, that great tomb stands to a great hero, to a great warrior, to a great military genius. And as I looked there I could not only think of its beauty. But my mind for the moment went back across the centuries. I thought about Alexander the Great with all of his military power, then I said, "He came to his end." I went on back even more and started thinking of the great warrior, Asia's Genghis Khan.<sup>21</sup> I said that all of his power came to an end. Went back to the Caesars and thought about the great power of the Roman Empire. Then I said, "Even it came to its end by the sword, for he who lives by the sword, will die by the sword."<sup>22</sup> And all of the glory of Rome had to fall one day, and I could see the hordes of Visigoths marching through Rome in 510 A.D. Rome fell.<sup>23</sup> My mind went on back to Charlemagne, said, "He's gone."<sup>24</sup>

Then I started thinking of Napoleon himself. My mind ran across his life. I could see him, at the age of nineteen, walking across the banks of the Seine River con-

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18 King mistakenly cites Heraclitus rather than Epicurus, whose philosophy is identified with the pursuit of pleasure.

19 King expanded on this theme in a sermon, from which *Christian Century* published an excerpt (King, "The Most Durable Power," Sermon at Dexter Avenue Baptist Church on 6 November 1956, 5 June 1957, pp. 302-303 in this volume).

20 King visited Paris on 18-21 March 1957 following a trip to celebrate Ghana's independence.

21 Genghis Khan (1162-1227) was a political leader and conqueror who united the Mongol tribes and created an empire that stretched from the Caspian Sea to the Sea of Japan.

22 Cf. Matthew 26:52.

23 The Visigoths sacked Rome in 410 CE. The last Roman emperor, Romulus, died in 476 CE.

24 Charlemagne unified Western Europe in the late years of the eighth century and was crowned the first Holy Roman Emperor by Pope Leo III in 800 CE. His sons divided his empire after his death in 814 CE.

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templating suicide I could see him later as he stood there around France in 1795, just at a youthful age as he came into the situation to quiet a mob I could see him again in 1796 as he took over the army and led them to Italy, and with a group of inexperienced, ill-fed, ill-paid men, he was able to win the victory I could see him again in 1798 when he marched into Egypt and Syria, how in the midst of that battle he was able to conquer these nations with ease I could see him again in 1799, and he became dictator with the title of First Consul I could see him again in 1800 as he marched into Austria, and there at the battle of Marengo, brought into being one of the greatest victories of his career I could see him again in 1804, and he became the emperor I could see him again in 1812, standing with all of his power Then I saw him a year later move over into the battle of Leipzig And I could see that same Napoleon going down, that Napoleon that had conquered more nations than *any warrior* that had ever lived And I watched him as he marched to Waterloo I could see Napoleon, with *all* of his military power, *dying* and *faltering* with his army at Waterloo I said to myself, "This is the doom of every Napoleon This is the doom of every man and every nation that feels that victory can ultimately come through force"

In the midst of that, as Coretta and I walked away from that building, I decided that my mind had to go back a little beyond that It went back about twenty centuries And I could see a little boy being born I could see him at the age of thirty years old going out on his Galilean mission He didn't have any armies with him (*That's right*) He didn't have many followers with him (*Come on*) He didn't even have a hundred percent cooperation from them, for one of them betrayed him and another went around and condemned, denied it, denied that he knew him<sup>25</sup> And all of them deserted him at the end But I thought about it And I watched him as he walked around the hills of Galilee just doing good, just preaching the gospel to the brokenhearted, healing the sick and raising the dead And I just watched him I looked at him, and I said, "Now, he doesn't have a band [*following him?*] He has no great army! He has no great military power" Then I can see him go with another kind of army I can hear him as he says somehow to himself, "I'm just going to put on the breastplate of righteousness And I'm going take the ammunition of love and the whole armor of God, and I'm just gonna march"<sup>26</sup> And my friends, he started marching And after he marched a little while, he came to his Waterloo Good Friday came, and there he was on the cross That was his Waterloo But the difference is that Napoleon's Waterloo ended with Waterloo (*Amen*) Jesus's Waterloo ended transforming Waterloo (*Amen*) And *there* came that third day And this was the [*time?*] that he was able to reign supreme His Waterloo couldn't stop him He stopped Waterloo And this became the *beginning* of his influence This became the most powerful moment of his life (*Yeah*)

[*As?*] I walked away from that building, I could hear choirs singing everywhere On this side, it seemed that I could hear somebody saying

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<sup>25</sup> For an example of Judas' betrayal of Jesus, see Luke 22 For an example of Peter's denials of Jesus, see Matthew 26 69-75

<sup>26</sup> Cf Ephesians 6 11-17

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All hail the power of Jesus's name!  
Let angels prostrate fall, (*That's the truth*)  
Bring forth the royal diadem,  
And crown him Lord of all <sup>27</sup> (*Yeah*)

Then I could hear another choir on the other side, singing

Jesus shall reign *where'er* the sun  
Does his successive journeys run, (*Yes he will*)  
His kingdom spread from *shore* to shore  
Till moons shall wane and wax no more <sup>28</sup> (*Amen*)

And then I could hear another choir over here singing

In Christ there is no east or west,  
In *Him* no north or south,  
But one great brotherhood of love  
Throughout the whole wide world <sup>29</sup>

And then off from the distance, I could hear something else singing, "Hallelujah, hallelujah! He's King of Kings and Lord of Lords, hallelujah, hallelujah!" (*Yeah*) And then I could hear the echo singing, "He shall reign forever and ever (*Yes Lord*), hallelujah, hallelujah!"<sup>30</sup> (*Yeah*)

This is the Easter message, this is the question that it answers. It says to us that love is the most durable power in the world (*Yeah*) than all of the military giants, all of the nations that [*base*?] their way on military power. I wish this morning that you would go tell Russia, go tell America, go tell the nations of the world that atomic bombs cannot solve the problems of the universe. Go back and tell them that hydrogen bombs cannot solve the problems of the world, but it is only through love and devotion to the justice of the universe that we can solve these problems. And then we can go away saying in terms that cry out across the generations that "God reigns, he reigns supreme, the Lord God omnipotent reigneth"<sup>31</sup> He reigns because he established his universe on moral principles. And through the love that he revealed through Jesus Christ, things move on. These are the questions that Easter answers. God grant that as you seek to answer them you will catch the spirit of Jesus in Easter and live life with an exuberant joy.

Oh God, our gracious Heavenly Father, we come on this Easter morning, thanking Thee for revealing to us the ultimate meaning and the ultimate rationality of the universe. We thank you, this morning, for your Son, Jesus, who came by to let us know that love is the most durable power in the world, who came by to let us know that death can't defeat us, to take the sting out of the grave and death and make it

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27 King quotes the hymn "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name" (1779)

28 King quotes Isaac Watts's hymn "Jesus Shall Reign Where'er the Sun" (1719)

29 King quotes John Oxenham's hymn "In Christ There Is No East or West" (1908)

30 King quotes excerpts from the "Hallelujah Chorus" of George Frideric Handel's 1741 oratorio *Messiah*, see also Revelation 19:16, 11:15

31 Cf. Revelation 19:6

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possible for all of us to have eternal life We thank you, oh God And God grant that  
we will be grateful recipients of thy eternal blessings In the name and spirit of Jesus,  
we pray Amen

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At MLKEC ET-20