



LETOURNEAU UNIVERSITY

OFFICE *of the* PRESIDENT

Easter 2026 Message

Dear Members of our University Community,

The Book of Isaiah is a story punctuated and structured by the *death of kings*. In one of Scripture's most famous passages, in which seraphim proclaim the Lord "Holy, Holy, Holy" and the prophet declares, "Here I am, Lord, send me," the chapter begins: "*In the year King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting on the throne*" (Isaiah 6:1).

The following chapters reflect the drama surrounding Uzziah's grandson, Ahaz. In chapter 14 the text says, "*In the year that King Ahaz died came this oracle...*" (Isaiah 14:28). In chapter 38, we read of the miraculous story of Ahaz's grandson, Hezekiah, whose prayer saved him from death so that God reveals, "I will add another 15 years to your life" (v.5). While spared for a time, Hezekiah and his descendants will not survive the Babylonian destruction, and as the first half of Isaiah ends (chapter 39) and the second begins (chapter 40), approximately 150 years have passed since the death of the old generation of rulers.

This is how Isaiah tells time. He marks history by a particular timestamp—*when a king passes away*.



In my own story, the year 2025 will always begin with, "*In the year Tiger Dawson died...*" Tiger wasn't an actual king with a crown, but ever since he led me to Christ when I was 16 years old, he served as spiritual royalty. Meeting Tiger changed my life—my purpose, my trajectory, my heart—and I would not be doing what I do today had the Lord not brought Tiger into my life. His death in December from cancer will always be a timestamp, marking the end of an era and the beginning of a new season in my faith walk with Jesus. Maybe you tell time, and your story, the same way—counting by the year your mother passed away, or a child, or a spouse, or a best friend.

Easter is a great reminder of how our stories will truly end. And, that in the meantime, we can cling to great truths from Scripture to give us hope for everlasting life and a blessed reunion with our loved ones. This year, I cling again to:

"...To live is Christ and to die is gain." (Philippians 1:21)

"To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord." (2 Corinthians 5:8)

"I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die. And whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?" (John 11:25-26)

Our hope is secured by the last king who passes away in the Book of Isaiah. By the wounds of the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53 we are healed (v.5). And though it was the Lord's will to crush him, he will see his offspring (v.10), he will see the light of life (v.11), and he will be exalted (v.12). This suffering king, Jesus, secured an everlasting covenant for you and me, so that we can take part in everlasting royalty, just like God's mercies toward King David (55:3).

May the reign of Christ, who conquered death on our behalf, be our strength and comfort this Easter as we await a reunion with our loved ones in the Lord! Happy Easter LeTourneau University family and friends!

Steven D. Mason, Ph.D.
President



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