

## He is Risen

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### Scriptures:

Matthew 28

Mark 16

Luke 24

John 20

Fear. Agonising, crippling fear. You could feel it in the room, it was almost physical, an entity eddying around, filling every space. Draining every shred of hope from us all, just as the blood had drained from Him, running down the rough wood and soaking into the ground. Just as the water had drained from His side, so our hope was ebbing away.

And that darkness, the earthquake, the whole of creation crying out in unison with Him – IT IS FINISHED. So was this it? Was this the end of that wonderful journey we had shared with Him? Had it all been just a dream?

Sleep was impossible, the pain and heart rending grief overflowed in broken sobs and endless tears. Sabbath had passed, we could go now and do the only thing we were able to. We prepared the spices to anoint Him and, in the darkness, we crept out of the room. We made our way to the tomb, not wanting to believe it, but we had seen it. He had died, hanging from that cross, He had died. And now, what was left of Him lay in a borrowed tomb.

The stone!! How would we move the stone? Would the Roman guard even allow us to perform the burial rituals? Oh Yahweh, where are You, why oh why have you deserted us?

No, oh no, this cannot be. The guards lay like dead men outside the tomb. The stone, that huge, heavy stone, had been rolled aside. The entrance to the tomb was open. Desperately afraid, we crept inside. Suddenly the tomb was full of light, we saw an angel beside the grave clothes that were folded with the head covering on its own. Then, the angel spoke to us: *"Why do you seek the living among the dead? 6 He is not here, but is risen! Remember how He spoke to you when He was still in Galilee, 7 saying, 'The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.' "*

Then he told us to go and tell the disciples, and he deliberately told us to tell Peter, what we had seen. I don't think I have ever run so fast. We hammered the locked door, and somehow managed to get the words out. The Master is risen, it's as He told us, He is risen.

Peter and John just sped off, they were gone in an instant. I had to go back, I needed to see it again, just to be sure. And there it was, the empty tomb. My mind felt numb, my heart longed to believe, but I had seen them taking His lifeless body down from the cross. I had followed and watched as they lay Him in the tomb.

Once again, I approached the tomb, I turned and saw a gardener. I begged Him to tell me where my Lord had been taken, and He spoke. Just one word, that was all, just one word. *"Mary"*.

I looked up into those love filled eyes, "*Rabboni*". I reached out, but He wouldn't let me touch Him. "*Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, 'I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.'*"

Later that day, when we were locked back in that room, still fearful of the wrath of the Jews, He was suddenly standing in the middle of the room. He showed us His Hands, the nail wounds that bore our names, our sinful names. And His wounded side. Gently He breathed on us, we felt His breath dispelling the fear as we received the Holy Spirit.

He told us to wait in Jerusalem until we were filled with Holy Spirit's power, but that is a story for another day.

For now, it was enough. To know that this Jesus we had followed and lived with was indeed the Risen Christ. The resurrected Son of God. We saw Him, we ate breakfast with Him on the beach and we believed that all He had told us about Himself was true.

But do you know what is so beautiful, what is so amazing? Jesus, the Risen Christ, the Son of God, told us that you, yes you who are reading this right now, you are blessed beyond measure. Why? Because you have not seen and yet you believe.

**Prayer:** Abba Father, Christ our Lord is alive, He rose on that Resurrection Sunday to bring us home to You. We have no other words but "Thank You". Christ truly is our Hope in life and death. Amen.

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