

The Empty Tomb

“Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance. So she came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved and said, ‘They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don’t know where they have put Him!’ So Peter and the other disciple started for the tomb. Both were running, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first, he bent over and looked in at the strips of linen lying there but did not go in. Then Simon Peter, who was behind him, arrived and went into the tomb. He saw the strips of linen lying there, as well as the burial cloth that had been around Jesus’ head. The cloth was folded up by itself, separate from the linen. Finally the other disciples, who had reached the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed. (They still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead)” – John 20:1-9

Grace and peace to you, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. The writer of the Scriptures above saw the empty tomb and believed: *“Jesus has risen, just as He said.”*

After the crucifixion of Jesus, His death on the cross and burial into the tomb, the women and the disciples were full of frustration because the Saviour whom they put on Him their hope was already dead. The women went to visit the tomb and in their mind they set that they would go to see the dead body of Jesus. When they reached there, *“They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they entered there did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightening stood beside them. In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to men, ‘Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, He has risen! Remember how He told you, while He was still with you in Galilee: ‘the son of man must be delivered in to the hands of sinful men, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.’ Then they remembered his words.” (Luke 24:2-8)*

When Jesus was arrested, His disciples left Him alone. They withdrew away from Him because of the fear that was in their heart. For more than 3 years they had been following Him and had committed themselves to be with Him but they stumbled with the event that had happened. His arrest, His cruel and brutal death on the cross had terrified the disciples and brought their hope and their vision down. But praise be to God who raised Him from the dead, that brought back their hope, their vision, their future and all what is seems lost.

The women who went to the tomb wondered and were terrified because they did not find the body of Jesus, but *“The angel said to the women, ‘Do not be afraid for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as He said. Come and see the place where He lay. Then go quickly and tell His disciples: ‘He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see Him.’ Now I have told you.” (Matthew 28:5-7)*

The angel said to the women, *“He is not here; He has risen, just as He said.”* This is the good news; death has no power over Jesus. For He put all His enemies under His feet and the last to be destroyed is death. Jesus has defeated death and has risen in victory from the dead. Therefore, for such good news the angel asked the women, *‘Go quickly and tell His disciples: ‘He has risen from the dead.’* This good news will calm those who believe in Him. Their fear will be removed and the good news will give them the assurance that Jesus is in control of everything. Whatsoever is lost Jesus can compensate it all. If He has turned death into life, He can also turn sorrows into joy, disappointments into hope and fulfilled promises. He can turn all things including bad news or harmful events to work together for good for those who love Him, for those who follow Him, for those who are called according to His good purpose.

After Jesus resurrected from the dead doubts were removed from the hearts of many of His disciples. He appeared to them and He showed them His wounds on His hands and on His side. *“Now Thomas (called Didymus), one of the twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. So the other disciples ask Him, ‘We have seen the Lord!’ But he said to them, ‘Unless I see the nail marks in His hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe it.” (John 20:24-25)*

“Week later all of His disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Jesus came and stood among them and said, ‘Peace be with you!’ then He said to Thomas, ‘Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.” Thomas said to Him, ‘My Lord and my God!’ (John 20:26-27) the resurrection of Jesus from the dead and His appearances to many has removed doubts from the minds of those who believe and follow Him. He has confirmed to them His identity being the King of kings and the lord of lords. *He is the Christ who is God over all forever praise! Amen.*

My dear and beloved: The Lord’s death on the cross and His resurrection from the tomb had brought the victory over Satan and over death. The empty tomb was the sign of life and victory. The disciples of Jesus had accepted His resurrection with gladness and joy, and that event had revived them and given them power and authority to tell others about Him. Now, it is your turn and my turn to tell others how He has risen; what you and I have seen and heard and believed.

“Heavenly Father, we rejoice because Jesus died for us on the cross to give us eternal life. We rejoice because He has risen from the dead and we will also rise from death with Him as He promise: ‘I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die.’ Oh Lord Jesus, I believe in You. Enable me, Lord, to tell others about your love, your power, and your mighty resurrection, that they may hear and believe and have life in your name. Lord Jesus, thank You for you love and sacrifice for me. I will continually praise You and tell others about You. In Jesus’ name I pray, Amen.”