

## Crumbs – Good News for the Diaspora!

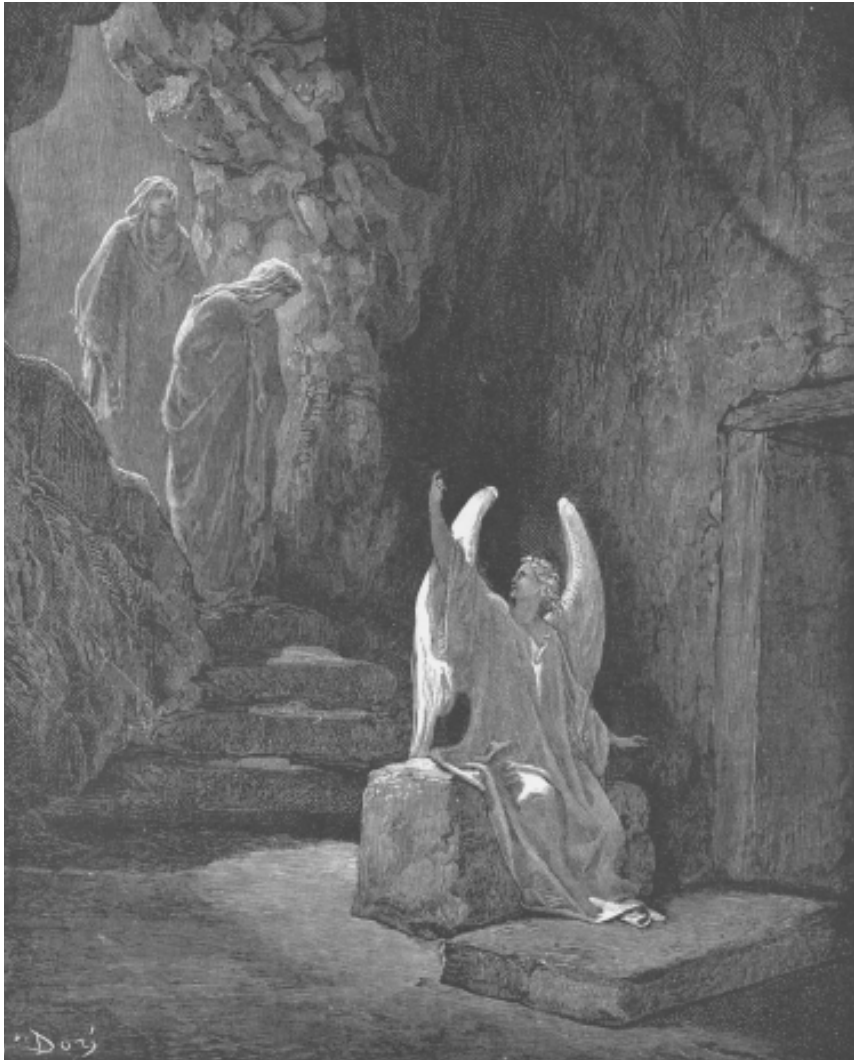


Illustration: The Angel at the Sepulcher

### A Devotional for the Week of Easter Sunday.

## SUNDAY.

*He is risen. – Matthew 28:6.*

When it began to dawn on Easter Sunday morning, Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of James, and Salome, and Joanna, and a small company of other women that came with Jesus from Galilee, went toward the sepulcher of Jesus, bearing spices to anoint His holy body. – At the same time there was a great earthquake; for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came to the sepulcher, and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow; and for fear of him the keepers did shake and became as dead men. – And the women said among themselves: "Who shall roll away the stone from the door of the sepulcher?"

Mary Magdalene outran the others and was the first one to come to the grave. The others followed more slowly. And when they looked toward the sepulcher, they saw that the stone was rolled away. That was easy to see as it was a very big stone. When Mary Magdalene saw the open sepulcher, she straightway ran back to Jerusalem to tell the disciples of it. But some of the women entered the tomb. And they did not find the body of the Lord. But they saw there a young man sitting on the right hand clothed in a long white garment. It was the above-mentioned angel of the Lord. And they were affrighted. But the angel said to them: "Fear not; for I know that ye seek Jesus, who has been crucified. He is not here; for He is risen, even as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell His disciples and Peter that He is risen from the dead. And, behold, He goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see Him: lo, I have told you."

Meanwhile the other women also came into the tomb, and they were much perplexed because they did not find the body of Jesus. And, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments. And they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth. Then the angels said: "Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen. Remember how He spake unto you when He was yet in Galilee, saying: The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again." And they remembered His words. And all the women departed quickly from the grave with fear and great joy. They fled from the

sepulcher; for they trembled and were amazed: neither said they anything to any man there: for they were afraid. – This was the first news of Jesus' resurrection. "He is risen!" So much of the glad tidings for to-day.

*PRAYER.* – Almighty God, who by the death of Your Son has abolished sin and death, and through His resurrection has restored innocence and life immortal, that we, being delivered from the power of the devil, might live in Your kingdom: grant that I may believe this with all my heart, and that, remaining steadfast in such faith, I may glorify and thank You always, through the same, Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Hymn 224, 1-3.

IN death's strong grasp the Savior lay,  
For our offences given;  
But now the Lord is risen today,  
And brings us life from heaven.  
Therefore let us all rejoice,  
And praise our God with cheerful voice,  
And sing loud hallelujahs. Hallelujah!

No son of man could conquer Death,  
Such mischief sin had wrought us,  
For innocence dwelt not on earth,  
And, therefore, Death had brought us  
Into thralldom from of old,  
And ever grew more strong and bold,  
And kept us in his bondage. Hallelujah!

But Jesus Christ, God's only Son,  
To our low state descended,  
The cause of Death he has undone,  
His power forever ended,  
Ruined all his right and claim,  
And left him nothing but the name, –  
His sting is lost forever. Hallelujah!

## EASTER MONDAY.

*Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.*  
– 1 Corinthians 15:33.

Is this a fitting text for Eastertide? It seems not. But learn what happened on Easter Day. -Some of the guards, on recovering from their faint and fright, hurried into the city and told the chief priests all the things that had come to pass. These then assembled with the elders and took counsel. And as a result of their deliberations they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers, saying: "Say ye: His disciples came by night, and stole Him away while we slept. And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you." The soldiers took the money and did as they were taught. This, then, became the common report among the Jews. And this or a similar report has been adopted by unbelievers of all times.

In our day, too, there are such unbelievers. Even numberless pastors and professors and high officers of the Church preach, teach, and stoutly maintain that Jesus has not risen from the dead. And they gloss their Jewish, anti-christian, and Scripture-profaning teaching with many a specious tale. And the superficial masses flock after them. But do not be deceived, my dear Christian! Scripture says: "Evil communications corrupt good manners," or morals. If you lend your ear to such communications, your faith will be corrupted, your faith in the Word of God and in your Savior, Jesus Christ. For a dead Savior cannot save. In this Eastertide you will hear much of what the Scriptures have recorded of the resurrection, the bodily resurrection, of Jesus. Lend your ear to these precious truths. There strengthen and quicken your faith.

*PRAYER.* – My Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, You did take my sin and death upon You, and did completely overcome and destroy it, and did rise from the dead – a Conqueror and the Prince of Life – and did give to me righteousness and eternal life: I pray You so to strengthen and to steel my poor soul by Your Word and Holy Ghost that all evil communications will rebound from it, and that I may firmly believe in You who did rise and lives, a true Savior. Amen.

Hymn 229, 1. 2.

I KNOW that my Redeemer lives!  
What comfort this sweet sentence gives!  
He lives, He lives, who once was dead,  
He lives, my ever-living Head.

He lives triumphant from the grave,  
He lives eternally to save:  
He lives all-glorious in the sky,  
He lives exalted there on high.

TUESDAY.

*For as yet they knew not the Scripture, that He must rise from the dead. – John 20:9.*

Mary Magdalene found Peter and the other disciple, whom Jesus loved (John), and said to them: "They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulcher, and we know not where they have laid Him." Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and they came to the sepulcher. And both ran; and the other disciple outran Peter, and came first to the sepulcher. And stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths lying; yet went he not in. Then cometh Simon Peter, following him, and went into the sepulcher, and seeth the linen cloths lie, and the napkin that was about His head, not lying with the linen cloths, but wrapped together in a place by itself. Then went in also that other disciple who came first to the sepulcher, and saw, and believed.

What did he believe? "That He was taken away, as Mary Magdalene had told them," says Dr. Luther. "For as yet they knew not the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead." Then the disciples went away again unto their own home.

– God kindles and preserves true faith through His Word. If this is lost sight of, the cheerless appearance of things overpowers one. So it was with the disciples. Indeed, they knew the Scripture that Christ must rise from the dead; Christ had told them that repeatedly. But this very Word had never become a living knowledge with them. Hence the terrors of the cross and the horrors of the grave and of death so clouded their vision that from the vacant tomb they learned only that the body was gone, and not

that Jesus was risen. Christian, let the Scripture illumine you, or you will see nothing but darkness!

*PRAYER.* – O God the Holy Ghost, Spirit of Christ, our Savior, who through the Word does illumine the hearts of Your believers to know the divine truth and to comfort themselves with it, illumine my heart also, that I may comfort myself abundantly with the Resurrection of our Savior, and that I may have the full assurance that He has completely overpowered sin, death, and the grave for my benefit, and has procured for me righteousness, life, and eternal salvation, until I shall reach those blessed abodes where believing will be changed to seeing. Amen.

Hymn 224, 4.

It was a strange and dreadful fray  
When Death and Life contended;  
But it was Life that won the day,  
The reign of Death was ended.  
Holy Scripture plainly saith  
That Death is swallowed up by Death,  
Made henceforth a derision. Hallelujah!

WEDNESDAY.

*Rabboni. – John 20:16.*

And Mary Magdalene stood without at the sepulcher weeping; and as she wept, she stooped down and looked into the sepulcher, and saw two angels in white sitting, the one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. And they said to her: "Woman, why weepest thou?" She said to them: "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him." And when she had said this, she turned back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her: "Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou?" She, supposing Him to be the gardener, said to Him: "Sir, if thou have borne Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away." Jesus said to her: "Mary!" She turned and said unto Him: "Rabboni!" which is to say: "Master!" Jesus said unto her: "Touch Me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father; but go to my brethren and say unto them: I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God."

– Thus did the Savior, when He had risen early the first day of Easter-week, appear first to Mary Magdalene, from whom He had cast out seven devils. And highly enraptured, she said: "Rabboni!" -But He refused to be detained, to continue with His own as before, visibly and in humiliation. No, He wanted to ascend to His Father. But just then and thus would He be with His disciples, better, more intimately, and more closely united; and by His Holy Spirit He would enlighten them truly to know the blessed union with Him, and through Him with God the Father. And this grace we all possess. Knowing the risen and ascended Lord through His Word, and knowing Him to be present, rich in mercy, we, too, may say in rapture: "*Rabboni!*"

*PRAYER.* – Rabboni! Lord Jesus, You live and are with me, full of grace. You have procured salvation for me. Your Father is my Father, Your God is my God. I am blessed. Grant me grace, O Lord, to love You and to rejoice in You. With Your kind saving hand lead me through death to where I may see You bodily, and where in never-ending rapture I may exclaim: "Rabboni!" Amen.

Hymn 229, 3. 4. 7.

He lives to bless me with His love,  
He lives to plead for me above,  
He lives my hungry soul to feed,  
He lives to help in time of need.

He lives to grant me rich supply,  
He lives to guide me with His eye,  
He lives to comfort me when faint,  
He lives to hear my soul's complaint.

He lives, and grants me daily breath;  
He lives, and I shall conquer death;  
He lives my mansion to prepare;  
He lives to bring me safely there.

THURSDAY.

*And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not. – Luke 24:11.*

What became of the other women who had fled from the grave? As trembling they went their way, behold, Jesus met them, after He had appeared to Mary Magdalene, and said to them: "All hail!" And they came and held Him by the feet and worshiped Him. Then He said to them: "Be not afraid: go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there they shall see Me." And they went and told all these things to the eleven Apostles, and to all the rest of them that had been with Jesus, as they mourned and wept. And lo, Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that He had spoken this to her. But the Apostles and the other disciples, when they heard that Jesus lived, and had been seen of the women, did not believe. "And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not." Their hearts were too badly crushed beneath the temptation of the cross. They could not comprehend these things. But soon the Savior came to them to cheer them, and to rescue them from the fatal sadness, and to grant them grace to know Him and His salvation. After all, they were His own.

– O Christian, you, too, will live to see times of sore trial and great sadness, and it will seem to you that you have lost your Savior, and Satan will insinuate to flesh and blood that the Gospel truths are idle tales. But hold fast to the Word, and wait on the Lord. He will deliver you, and make you rejoice in the knowledge of Him. Be not terrified when afflictions come. Must they not come because your flesh is evil and Satan is waylaying you?

*PRAYER.* – Deliver me, my Lord and Savior, for in You do I hope ! Let me not be ashamed, for I put my trust in You, my almighty and faithful Shepherd. My flesh is evil, and Satan is too powerful for me. How will I be able to keep my faith? O risen Lord, let me, a miserable worm, feel the almighty power of Your life in me, and preserve me in true faith to a blessed end. Amen, even so, You will perform it. Amen.

Hymn 224, 6.

So let us keep the festival  
    With heartfelt exultation.  
Christ is Himself the Joy of all,  
    The Son of our salvation.  
By His grace He doth impart  
Eternal sunshine to the heart;  
    The night of sin is ended. Hallelujah!

FRIDAY.

*And their eyes were opened, and they knew Him. – Luke 24:31.*

In the afternoon of Easter Day two of the larger circle of disciples went from Jerusalem to a village called Emmaus, about three hours' walk. And they talked together of all these things which had happened. And it came to pass that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus Himself drew near and went with them. But their eyes were held so that they should not know Him. And He said to them: "What manner of communications are these that ye have one with another as ye walk, and are sad?" And one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering, said to Him: "Art Thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?"

And He said to them: "What things?" And they said to Him: "Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people; and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and have crucified Him. But we trusted that it had been He who should have redeemed Israel. And besides all this, to-day is the third day since these things were done. Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, who were early at the sepulcher; and when they found not His body, they came, saying that they had also seen a vision of angels, who said that He was alive. And certain of them that were with us went to the sepulcher, and found it even so as the women had said; but Him they saw not."

Then He said to them: "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not Christ to have suffered these things,

and to enter into His glory?" And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. And they drew nigh unto the village whither they went; and He made as though He would have gone further. But they constrained Him, saying: "Abide with us; for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent." And He went in to tarry with them. And it came to pass, as He sat at meat with them, He took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew Him. And He vanished out of their sight. And they said one to another: "Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us by the way, and while He opened to us the Scriptures?"

How? Should anything be added to this beautiful story, which is ever new? No, indeed! Do but always seek your living Savior in His *Word*; then will your eyes be opened ever more, and ever better and ever more clearly will you know Him, and ever more firmly will you believe in Him.

*PRAYER.* – Lord God, Heavenly Father, who did reveal Your Son Jesus Christ to the two disciples of Emmaus, I pray You also to illumine my heart by Your Word and Holy Spirit that I may grow strong and firm in faith, continuing faithfully, steadfastly in Your Word, gladly speaking of it, and diligently seeking its companionship to the end that here on earth I may have true comfort through Your Word, until, after this life, through Your son, I may be raised to enjoy eternal bliss. Amen.

Hymn 40, 1. 3. 8.

Abide with me! fast falls the eventide;  
The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide!  
When other helpers fail, and comforts flee,  
Help of the helpless, O abide with me!

Not a brief glance I beg, a passing word,  
But as Thou dwell'st with Thy disciples, Lord,  
Familiar, condescending, patient, free,  
Come, not to sojourn, but abide with me.

Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing eyes,  
Shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies:  
Heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee;  
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me!

SATURDAY.

*The Lord is risen indeed. – Luke 24:34.*

When the disciples of Emmaus had recognized the Risen One, they rose up that same hour, and returned to Jerusalem with haste, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them. And immediately they were met with the cry: "The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon!" And they told those assembled there what things were done in the way, and how He was known of them in the breaking of the bread. But even so they did not all believe that the Lord had actually risen. And while they spoke, and the doors being shut for fear of the Jews, lo, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them and said: "Peace be unto you!" But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they beheld a spirit. And he said to them: "Why are ye troubled, and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet that it is I myself: handle Me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have." And when He had thus spoken, He showed them His hands and His feet and His side with the prints of His wounds. And while they yet believed not for joy and wondered, He said to them: "Have ye here any meat?" And they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and of a honeycomb. And He took it and ate before them. Then, finally, were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord. Now they all knew that He had risen indeed.

Such knowledge is peace. For since Christ is risen, we know that He is the Savior indeed, and has truly saved us, so that now we are children of God, reconciled through Him, and heirs of eternal life. Such knowledge is peace. Do you possess this knowledge, this peace?

*PRAYER.* – O Jesus, grant to me, too, at all times, through Your Word and the Holy Spirit, the living knowledge that You are the true and risen Savior, to the end that I may take comfort in You, and firmly believe that through You I have been redeemed and am a child of God and an heir of eternal life. Give me Your peace, O Jesus! Amen.

Hymn 221, 1. 2. 6.

"Christ, the Lord, is risen today."  
Sons of men and angels say,

Raise your joys and triumphs high;  
Sing, ye heavens, and, earth, reply.

Love's redeeming work is done,  
Fought the fight, the battle won;  
Lo! Our Sun's eclipse is o'er;  
Lo! He sets in blood no more.

Hail the Lord of earth and heaven!  
Praise to Thee by both be given;  
Thee we greet triumphant now;  
Hail, the Resurrection Thou!

These devotions are adapted from *Crumbs* by C. M. Zorn (1914).  
The hymn stanzas are from *Evangelical Lutheran Hymn-Book* (1918).  
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