



The ache inside feels as if it will never go away, a pain as raw as an open wound. Jesus—the One who delivered me from the demons. Jesus—the One who taught us such wonderful things, Jesus—the One who healed the sick and blessed the children, Jesus is gone. Dead!

Oh, the agony of these last few days! He was praying in the Garden when a group of men and officers came and took Him away. I was not there, but some who witnessed His trial before Caiaphas the High Priest and Pilate, said it was nothing but a mockery. How can anyone be tried for being good? What had my blessed Jesus ever done to deserve such treatment? Eventually they did find two false

MY LORD IS RISEN

LESSON 136 → John 20:1-18

The pain inside was almost too much to bear, but then I realized Jesus was alive!

witnesses. And the chief priests persuaded Pilate to let Jesus be crucified. Even the people cried out that He should be put to death, and the murderer Barabbas released!

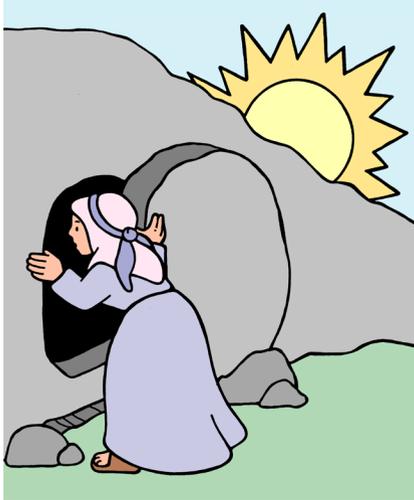
Crucified! I can still hear the ringing of the hammer as the Centurion pounded those spikes into His hands and feet. Those precious hands with the gentlest touch! I can still feel the darkness which covered the city. We heard Him cry out to His Father, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” We saw Him die. Oh, how can it be? Our very own Jesus, dead!

We watched as Joseph of Arimathaea and Nicodemus put Him into the grave. We women hurried out to buy the necessary spices. We wanted at least to anoint His poor body and we couldn't do this on the Sabbath. So this



JESUS IS RISEN!

He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.
— Matthew 28:6



morning we arose while it was still dark, and hurried here to the tomb just as the first streaks of dawn were in the sky. On our way we asked each other how we were going to move the

huge stone that closed the tomb. To our surprise we found the stone had already been moved—it was resting beside the entrance. The tomb was empty! Who could have done this?

I ran quickly to tell Peter and John. They also came and saw that the stone had been moved and the tomb was empty.

Everyone has gone now, but I cannot leave this place. I weep to think of the last hours. Now even His precious body is gone! Someone has stolen our Lord so we cannot even anoint Him. My tears feel as though they could flow forever.

As I weep, I stoop down and look once again into the sepulcher. What is this? Inside are two glorious beings bathed in a white glow. One is sitting at the head and the other at the feet, where His body had been. In the most compassionate tones they ask me, “Woman, why weepest thou?”

Though my heart is pounding in fear, I reply, “Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.”

They say no more, so I turn again to stand outside the tomb. And then I see a man. He must be the gardener. He says to me, “Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou?”

Maybe this is the man who moved the body. So I tell him, “Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.”

He does not answer my question. Instead, he says to me, “Mary.”

Ah, can it be? No one else says my name that way: “Mary.” A thrill shoots through me. It is my Lord. He is alive! My tears turn to joy that I cannot contain. I fall at His feet and say, “Master.”

As I reach out to touch Him, He says, “Touch me not . . . but go to my brethren.”

My feet cannot seem to run quickly enough. Oh, the pure joy—He is risen! He is risen! The glory of it!

As the days go by, I relive again and again that moment when He spoke my name. I shall never forget it. To think that He let me be the first to see Him. My thanksgiving will never end.

Now I understand that He had to die to atone for my sins. Then He arose to gain the victory over death. Because His Blood has covered my sins, I shall live eternally. Even though someday my body will die, I will rise again with a glorified body just as Jesus did.

In those dark hours of Calvary, we did not understand that this was all part of God’s plan to save us. We loved Jesus when we had walked and talked with Him. He had changed us. But now as we look back, we see the magnitude of the plan. And we appreciate how much Jesus suffered, for He took the sins of every generation on Himself that day.

Each day as I awake, in my heart I hear again, “Mary.” And my soul anticipates the day when I shall again see Him, and hear Him say my name.

THE EASTER STORY

Isn't it wonderful to know that Jesus arose from the grave for us? Below is an illustrated story of Easter morning. The speech balloons are empty so you will have to write in the words you think belong with each picture.

