



Scriptural Background: Mt 28

"1 Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb... 5 But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. 6 He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay." Mt 28:1, 5–6

Chills. Chills are what I get when I read these words. And often tears. Someone these women loved had died. Not just the emotional connection, this was One on whom all their hopes had been coming to rest. And He had been slaughtered. Died like everyone else, only worse. How do you make sense of the world after that? Can you feel the weight of the darkness they had not just Friday but that entire Passover Saturday? And then they come to the tomb on Sunday morning, not apparently expecting anything, but to pay their respects to One who had been their Leader, to honor and dignify His body. And the tomb is empty. The Tomb Was Empty! It wasn't that He had been moved; He wasn't dead anymore! It was the undoing of Death, Death had started working backward, He had beaten death. If you've ever been more emotionally moved by a dramatic sports victory than this story, you just haven't understood—*felt*—yet what this is about. Everything wrong in the world, everything broken, everything sad was defeated—started coming untrue there in the empty grave of Jesus Christ!¹ The fact Jesus resurrected proved He was who He said He was (Jn 10:18), *and* the fact Jesus resurrected was the actual start of a new kind of life (2 Cor 5:17). It's proof, but it's more than proof; it's a new beginning. The solution to everything you're longing for flows through that vacant hole in the ground. So look at the empty tomb and know that Jesus is alive and reigning now. Look at it and see that God is infinitely skilled at using the worst situations in this world as the means of accomplishing His perfect purpose. Look at it and let it fill you with *hope* as you face the remainder of your life in this world and look forward to the next. And together let's give Him every ounce of worship and praise we have, saying, "My LORD and my God! Worthy is the Lamb who was slain and who has risen again!"

¹To use the wording Tolkien expressed through Sam at the end of *The Lord of the Rings*.

Prayer:

LORD Jesus, impress upon our minds the enormity of the victory You have won. Let it move us more than anything else in this world. May our hearts be changed because You are working Your new creation in us. Shed abroad Your love—Your unflinching, death-defying love—in our hearts by Your Holy Spirit. Do it especially this Resurrection Sunday, we pray. Amen!