

## Hope Rose with the Dawn

Matthew 28: 1-10

Today we have gathered to celebrate the greatest event in human history. For many Easter Sunday is more about eggs and bunnies. Others mark it as the beginning of the long vacation season. For the believer Easter is a celebration of the glorious resurrection of our Lord. That single event established the foundation of our faith.

We know Jesus came to earth with purpose. He came to die for the sins of humanity. Had He not suffered the death of the cross there would have been no payment for sin. Had He not died we would not have been offered life. However, His death was not the end of the story. In fact, had His death been the end we would have no hope this morning. Had Jesus not risen from the grave, He would've been like all other men. His resurrection sets Him apart from all who came before Him. His resurrection is the source and assurance of our hope this morning! Because He lives, those who belong to Him are promised life eternal in Him.

Our text records the events of Resurrection Sunday. I want to look in on these [events](#), a very familiar account to most of us, as we consider the thought: [Hope Rose with the Dawn](#).

**I. A Time of Weeping** (1) – [In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre.](#) We find the women came very early on Sunday morning to the sepulcher. The other gospels speak of them bringing spices to anoint the body. They were expecting to find the Lord still in the grave.

- Likely we all have experienced the loss of a loved one and the grief it brings. These women had believed Jesus was the Messiah. Their hopes were shattered as He bled and died upon the cross. I'm sure this was a difficult journey to the tomb that morning.

**II. A Time of Wonder** (2-6) – As the women made it to the sepulcher, they did not find what they expected. This moment of weeping quickly became a moment of wonder. Consider:

**A. The Stone** (2) – [And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.](#) As they made their way that morning, there was a great earthquake. Surely they experienced the earth trembling and shaking as they walked. Upon arriving at the tomb, the stone was rolled away from the door. This would've created great wonder. The stones were placed at the door to secure the grave from robbers and thieves. Typically a groove was hewn in the entrance of the tomb, and a large, circular rock weighing several tons was rolled in place. They were often sealed with mud or wax as well.

- Clearly the women did not possess the ability to move the stone, and upon their arrival they realized it was already rolled back from the door. The sepulcher was open when they arrived. This wasn't done to let Jesus out, but to allow them to view His absence in the tomb.

**B. The Splendor** (2a-4) – for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. <sup>[3]</sup> His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: <sup>[4]</sup> And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead *men*. The women did not find what they expected when they arrived. Not only was the stone rolled away, they also encountered a heavenly visitor at the tomb. The guards, no doubt the best Pilate had, were passed out in fear of the angel. He had rolled the stone from the door and was seated upon it. His heavenly countenance shone bright as lightning, clothed in a garment white as snow.

- The angel's appearance was not what western culture has depicted. This wasn't a little, half-naked baby with wings. This was one of the angelic hosts, the angel of the Lord. This was the moment of triumph for Christ and the angel of the Lord had come to share the good news of the resurrection with the women. Christ had risen victorious and God sent a messenger of truth!

**C. The Sepulcher** (5-6) – And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. <sup>[6]</sup> He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. Really the absence of Christ in the tomb should've been no surprise to the women, but they came fully expecting His lifeless body to have remained there. The angel confirms he knew they sought Jesus who was crucified, but He had risen from the dead just as He said He would. They were invited to examine the sepulcher and see the place where Jesus had lain. He was no longer there. He had tasted death, but rose in victory!

- That is the glorious message of Easter. Jesus died for the sin of the world, but the grave couldn't hold Him. He willingly laid down His life for our sin, but He rose triumphant over sin, death, and hell. We have hope and assurance today because He lives!

**III. A Time of Witness** (7-8) – As wonderful and exciting as the events at the sepulcher were, the women could not remain at the tomb. Christ had risen and they must share the good news! Consider:

**A. The Proclamation** (7a) – And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; The women had witnessed the empty tomb and they were charged to share the news with the disciples. Jesus had died, but He lives again. Hope may have

seemed lost at the cross and buried in the tomb, but it had risen with the dawn as Christ came forth victorious!

- The women were the first to share the good news of the gospel, but they were not the last. We too must witness to the resurrection of Christ. The saved have received the gospel message. We know our Lord lives and continues to save. We must proclaim His glorious resurrection to the world. The tomb is empty; Christ rose from the grave! He triumphed over sin and death. There is hope and salvation in Him!

**B. The Expectation** (7b) – [there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you](#). Try to imagine the hurt and grief the women and disciples felt during this time. They had believed in Jesus as the Christ. They were confident He was the Son of God, Savior of the world. Their hopes were shattered at Calvary. Here they discover hope was not lost. They would see Christ again. He planned to meet them in Galilee. They would see their Lord again.

- This truth thrills my heart. I never met Jesus in a physical body. I didn't walk with Him as these did, but I have met Him by faith. I am confident He is who He claimed to be. I know Him as my Lord and Savior. He is now seated at the right hand of God, but He is coming again for the church. The saved by grace will one day meet the Lord in the air as He returns for His bride! We will be ushered into the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. We will enjoy His glorious presence in heaven throughout eternity!

**C. The Jubilation** (8) – [And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word](#). This is the moment it "clicked" for the women. Doubt and fear met hope and assurance. They came expecting to anoint a dead body, but left with the promise of meeting a living Lord. They ran with fear (*reverence and honor*) and great joy. They couldn't wait to share the good news with the disciples. Jesus had risen; He was alive!!

- Life brings its share of difficulty. We have gathered this morning, on Resurrection Sunday, to worship the Lord, but many are burdened even today. Our troubles may not melt away, but we have the assurance that Jesus lives. We have the guarantee of eternal life in Him. There is reason for fear and great joy today. Our Lord lives. He is preparing a place for the saved in heaven. He is coming again. The saved will one day enter His presence and we will never leave!

**IV. A Time of Worship** (9-10) – The events of that faithful morning culminated in a time of worship. It is possible for us to have a similar experience. Notice:

**A. Jesus' Appearance** (9a) – *And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail.* As the women made their way back to town, they encountered the risen Lord. He met them in the way and spoke to them.

- I rejoice for the day that I encountered the risen Lord. I didn't see Him in bodily form, but I met Him through the Spirit. He met me in the journey. I wasn't expectant as the women were. I wasn't looking for Him, but He came seeking me. He spoke to my heart, revealing my need, and saved me by His marvelous grace!

**B. Their Adoration** (9b) – *And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him.* The women were overcome with His presence and worshipped Him. This was not a "knee jerk" reaction. I am convinced they were compelled to worship. The One they sought was before them. They had seen His lifeless body removed from the cross, and now He stood before them alive. All He had said was true. He was the Christ, their Savior and Lord. Worship came natural.

- Of all days we gather, today ought to be a day of worship. If you are saved, you know Christ as these women did. Christ is worthy of our worship every day, and especially today as we celebrate Easter! Our Lord lives. He paid the debt for sin that we owed. He gave His life a ransom for us. There is hope, salvation, and life in Him. We must praise and worship Him!

**C. Jesus' Affirmation** (10) – *Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.* Certainly Jesus promised the disciples would see Him in Galilee, but He also reveals a great truth here. This wasn't just about a bodily meeting to come. He confirms that He is who He said He was. He had fulfilled the plan and will of God. He had finished the work He came to perform. If there was any doubt, all doubt should be put to rest!

- Today I am reminded of Jesus' finished work. I have experienced it by faith, and I am confident in my Lord. He took my place on the cross. He bore my sin and shame. He tasted death for my redemption. He rose again victorious, becoming the first-fruits of resurrection to come. I have placed my faith in One that will never fail. He has gone away, but He is coming again!

**Conclusion:** Today is a wonderful day of celebration and worship. It has been an honor to revisit the events of that glorious morning. Hope rose with the dawn in Christ. He is my Lord, Savior, and Anchor in this life. I have hope through Him.

Easter is a celebration for the saved, but it is likely not that significant to those apart from Christ. He desires to save you today if you are unsaved. Come to Him today and be saved!