

Sunday 11th April 2021

I do believe. Help me overcome my unbelief (Mark 9:24)

(the first Easter Sunday)

Dear journal,

It's me – Thomas. I know it's been a while, but my mind's all over the place. I'm in a whirl of emotions, and I don't know where to start.

There was that overwhelming joy and excitement as Jesus rode into Jerusalem. I thought he was the promised Messiah, who had come, and everything would change. I just can't explain everything I was thinking and feeling – it was amazing and wonderful to be there with him. And then it all went so horribly, terribly wrong.

I can't believe it. In fact, I still can't, even though I know it's true. Judas, one of us, one of Jesus' chosen disciples, betrayed him for 30 bits of silver. After all we had been through, after all we had seen and heard. He betrayed us all, why would he do such a thing? How could he?

The people turned on us, shouting and screaming, "Crucify him, Crucify Jesus." My friend! And that's what they did. Why didn't he save himself? All that power, and he just let them kill him, I can't understand.

The pain cuts so deep, He's gone. How can that be?

I still feel that hatred. I'm so fearful that they will turn on the rest of us. What will I do now? I just can't handle this confusion, this disappointment and the shock of it all. I just can't take it in. everything has changed. Jesus is gone; my hope is gone. He promised so much. All I feel is emptiness ...

As if that was not enough, this morning poor Mary came back babbling about having seen our Lord, that he was alive, which he can't be. I saw him die with my own eyes, we all did. Killed like a common criminal. Grief can do funny things to people.

So Peter and John went to see anyhow, I can't imagine what they thought they'd find, but now they're saying that the tomb is empty and the Roman soldiers have fled. I'm no fan of the Empire, but a soldier would never leave his post. It's unthinkable.

Where is Jesus' body? Who would steal a dead body? It just makes no sense. Round and round it all goes in my head. Could Mary be right? Of course not, it's ridiculous, but where on earth is Jesus' body?

What if people say we stole it? Surely that would be a crazy idea, the soldiers would never have allowed it. Are we all going to end up dead? Who else would gain from moving his body?

No, he must be alive. Mary must be right. After all, he did raise Lazarus from the dead. But no I saw him die.

Round and round it all goes in my head, I need it to stop. I just want to know what's happening ...

And so dear journal I went for a walk to clear my head, to find something normal, something/ anything that made sense. I walked those same streets I've walked so many times. Nothing seemed

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to have changed – people are going on with their lives as if they didn't care about Jesus and what had happened to him. As if they do not care about the truth. Forgotten already. I wanted to scream and shout. But I want to run and hide too.

I just want to know what the point was. Why had he come? Why had he died? What is going on?

When I returned to the others exhausted, they claimed Jesus had been there with them, talked with them as large as life – real, flesh and bone! They were filled with a joy and a peace, I didn't have. They were different, they were changed.

Oh, why had I gone for that walk? Why had Jesus turned up when I was out? Why did I miss him? How can it be real? I just can't believe it, I won't believe it. I don't know what to think. I've never been so confused, so frustrated. I just need some sleep.

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(one week later)

Dear journal

They were right, all of them. My Lord, my Master, my Jesus. He is ALIVE!

I know it seems impossible, but I know it's true. I saw him, I spoke to him, I even touched him. Flesh and blood – just as always – except you could see the marks in his hands, his feet, his side. It's amazing, I can't take it in, but I know he's alive!

It was embarrassing as well. He knew what I'd said to the others. Just like always, he knew everything, but it doesn't matter. He is alive.

I'm so excited! I can't write any more. I can't even stay still. He is alive!

Prayer for the Week

Dear Lord,
you are our hope and our joy,
yet sometimes we lose sight of you.
Enter into our confusion and fear,
and grant us your peace.

Lord sometimes our faith waivers,
help us to hold tight to you in the storms of life
and bring us safely into your kingdom.

Help us to share with others
the good news of Easter
– that you are alive,
that you are our Saviour and Lord
and that you will come again. Amen.

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