



## Jesus is Risen and the World is Saved!

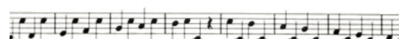
**John 11:25: (KJV) *Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:***



Life, death and taxes -those are three things that we as a race have all come to experience. It is a cycle that we accept and a process we adapt to even though the ending is not to our liking. About 2,000 years ago a man, born of a woman, came to change all of that. He was Jesus of Nazareth, born to live so that he could die, so that we - all of us - can live again - beyond the cycle that all of human history has documented. Stay with us as we honor his life, his death, and his kingship!



### Chapter One: Sorrow and Hope



#### "The Miracle," (Verse 1) Shawna Edwards

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son  
That whosoever believeth in him shall not perish but have everlasting life  
Jesus walked upon the water  
He stilled the storm and calmed the angry sea  
With his hands he healed the leper  
He made the lame to walk; the blind to see  
He fed a thousand people with a loaf or two of bread  
And when the ruler's son had died  
He raised him from the dead

Among the many miracles that Jesus performed, perhaps the most dramatic were those where he raised people from the dead. As with all of Jesus' miracles, these were to show a glimpse of the future age when sorrow and death would be no more. Yes, they were a glimpse, but only a glimpse - a fleeting moment to again cherish a life that had been lost to the grim darkness of death, the proclaimed penalty for the sin of mankind...

**Genesis 3:17-19: (NASB)** <sup>17</sup>*Then to Adam He said, because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, you shall not eat from it; Cursed is the ground because of you; In toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. <sup>18</sup>Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; And you will eat the plants of the field; <sup>19</sup>By the sweat of your face you will eat bread, till you return to the ground, because from it you were taken; For you are dust, and to dust you shall return.*

Death does not only rear its ugly head at the moment when life ceases. No, it lives with us, for we experience the dying process and all its baggage - sickness, sorrow and pain, throughout our daily lives.



### "Death, His Sting and Defeat," (Verse 1) David Bowen

And I saw him  
Death, with his mighty sting, exhaling in every breath the plight he brings.  
To the grave he gave victory  
Triumphing over life with the fear of endless sleep.  
Endlessly we hide from our mortality.  
Mortally wounded from birth  
We lie to ourselves from infancy  
Innately investing time in a life that will  
Inevitably be taken by  
this incredible creature that stands before me: Death  
He manifests himself on ordinary days  
His six-foot stomach growls with hunger pangs.  
For his meal, he cannot wait.  
So we are forced to taste him even before the grave  
We are all dying, there's no other way  
I see him in Haitian and Japanese earthquakes.  
He's hating the escapees of his cruel wakes.  
I see him in poverty  
impoverishing the quality of life for regions that are reachable,  
and in those with the reach who and reason not to  
reach out to treat what is treatable.  
I see him in disease taking life out of uninfected yet affected families.



Death truly is an unwelcome guest. God from the beginning knew that to be so. In His wisdom and foresight regarding His beloved human creation, He answered the question of death before it even occurred. Hope was there...it was always there.

**Genesis 3:13-15: (NASB)** <sup>13</sup>Then the LORD God said to the woman, what is this you have done? And the woman said, the serpent deceived me, and I ate. <sup>14</sup>The LORD God said to the serpent, because you have done this, cursed are you more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field; On your belly you will go, and dust you will eat all the days of your life; <sup>15</sup>And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel.

God's ages-long preparation included a prophecy of hope even with this first sin!

Time passed and God's favor would find Abraham who would prove himself to be a dramatic example of "choosing God first." This time the results for human choice and action were blessing and promise.

**Genesis 22:15-18: (NASB)** <sup>15</sup>Then the angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven, <sup>16</sup>and said, By Myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, because you have done this thing and have not withheld your son, your only son, <sup>17</sup>indeed I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies. <sup>18</sup>In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.

Time and favor would pass from Father Abraham to son Isaac and to grandson Jacob as God prepared a generational trust in His name and His will. Now God's preparation would focus on a nation born of Jacob. This nation of Israel would need a law to guide them.



**Galatians 3:19: (NASB)** *Why the Law then? It was added because of transgressions, having been ordained through angels by the agency of a mediator, until the seed would come to whom the promise had been made.*

So, the Law was there so sin could be identified until the promised seed would come. Moses was there so the people could choose to understand God through him, and yet as great a leader as Moses was, he too was but another step in the ages-long preparation of God's plan.

#### **Moses himself said:**

**Deuteronomy 18:17-19: (NASB)** *<sup>17</sup>The LORD said to me, they have spoken well. <sup>18</sup>I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. <sup>19</sup>It shall come about that whoever will not listen to My words which he shall speak in My name, I Myself will require it of him.*

Fast forward several thousand years and enter Jesus, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

#### **His mission would be clear:**

**Isaiah 6:8: (NASB)** *Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then I said, here am I. Send me!*

First he would be sent from his heavenly seat of power to the lowly confines of humanity. He would be sent because he wanted to be sent, for in so doing, he would bring glory to his Father.

**Matthew 8:16-17: (NASB)** *<sup>16</sup>When evening came, they brought to him many who were demon-possessed; and he cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were ill. <sup>17</sup>This was to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet: He himself took our infirmities and carried away our diseases.*

Having become a man, he would now - with the very spirit of God upon him - preach the good news of salvation and heal all manner of sickness to evidence God's power and presence in his hands.

**Isaiah 53:4-7: (KJV)** *<sup>4</sup>Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. <sup>5</sup>But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. <sup>6</sup>All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. <sup>7</sup>He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.*

And then he would suffer - suffer mightily - as he would bear the sins of the world upon his own shoulders and carry those sins to the cross where he would voluntarily lay down his life as the ransom price for Adam and therefore as the ransom price for the whole sin-sick world.

This was the mission, the necessary mission to redeem the entire race of humanity from the clutches of death and from the iron grip that Satan had upon them as the Prince of this World. So we see Jesus prepared for the fight of his life, which would essentially be the fight for all of our lives.

We now move forward to the night before his crucifixion, a night of final preparation, prayer and then persecution.



### **Jesus is spending his final hours of freedom with his beloved disciples:**

John 13:33-35: (NKJV) <sup>33</sup>Little children, I shall be with you a little while longer. You will seek me; and as I said to the Jews, Where I am going, you cannot come, so now I say to you. <sup>34</sup>A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. <sup>35</sup>By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.



## **Chapter Two: The Fury of Darkness**

There is always a quiet before the storm and this night would be no exception. Jesus would share a deep and meaningful time with the twelve. As he always did, he would make the most of it.

John 13:3-9: (NKJV) <sup>3</sup>Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, <sup>4</sup>rose from supper and laid aside his garments, took a towel and girded himself. <sup>5</sup>After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which he was girded. <sup>6</sup>Then he came to Simon Peter. And Peter said to him, Lord, are you washing my feet? <sup>7</sup>Jesus answered and said to him, what I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this. <sup>8</sup>Peter said to him, you shall never wash my feet! Jesus answered him, if I do not wash you; you have no part with me. <sup>9</sup>Simon Peter said to him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!

This simple lesson of the washing of their feet was most profound. Jesus being their leader, their teacher and mentor should have had his feet washed by somebody. Yet they all deemed themselves of too high a station to perform such a task. So Jesus did it. He humbled himself to the lowest position among them to show them that they too could find the greatness of God's favor if only they would be small in their own eyes - if only they would stop worrying about what others might think - if only they would seek God's approval over the approval of men - if only they would serve one another.

This lesson would serve as a basis for the experiences to follow: Jesus would reveal his betrayer, institute the Memorial Supper, teach, encourage and warn. Now it was time. The storm was approaching, so Jesus brought them to the Garden of Gethsemane for one last period of prayer before he would suffer.

### **Jesus went to pray:**

Matthew 26:37-42: (NKJV) ...and he began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed. <sup>38</sup>Then he said to them, my soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with me. <sup>39</sup>He went a little farther and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will. <sup>40</sup>Then he came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, what! Could you not watch with me one hour? <sup>41</sup>Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. <sup>42</sup>Again, a second time, he went away and prayed, saying, O My Father, if this cup cannot pass away from me unless I drink it, Your will be done.

Just as a storm rises over Galilee, the storm of trial came quickly upon Jesus, as he knew that betrayal was imminent. His instincts had led him to pray for the physical strength and the spiritual courage necessary to overcome. And pray he did, over and over and over...





Luke 22:43-44: (NRSV) <sup>43</sup>*Then an angel from heaven appeared to him and gave him strength. <sup>44</sup>In his anguish he prayed more earnestly and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down on the ground. <sup>43</sup>Again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. <sup>44</sup>So leaving them again, he went away and prayed for the third time, saying the same words. <sup>45</sup>Then he came to the disciples and said to them, are you still sleeping and taking your rest? See, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. <sup>46</sup>Get up, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand.*

While Jesus was yet speaking to his followers, a crowd came to the garden. This crowd was led by a trusted friend, Judas, one of his twelve closest followers; one who had been deeply involved in his teaching and who had seen many miracles.

Luke 22:47-48: (NRSV) <sup>47</sup>*...Judas approached Jesus to kiss him; <sup>48</sup>but Jesus said to him, Judas, is it with a kiss that you are betraying the Son of Man?*

John 18:3-9: (NRSV) <sup>3</sup>*So Judas brought a detachment of soldiers together with police from the chief priests and the Pharisees, and they came there with lanterns and torches and weapons. <sup>4</sup>Then Jesus, knowing all that was to happen to him, came forward and asked them, whom are you looking for? <sup>5</sup>They answered, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus replied, I am he. Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. <sup>6</sup>When Jesus said to them, I am he, they stepped back and fell to the ground. <sup>7</sup>Again he asked them, whom are you looking for? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth. <sup>8</sup>Jesus answered, I told you that I am he. So if you are looking for me, let these men go. <sup>9</sup>This was to fulfill the word that he had spoken; I did not lose a single one of those whom you gave me.*

Even now the power of God flowed through Jesus. He could have easily walked away but he chose not to.

John 18:10-11: (NRSV) <sup>10</sup>*Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it, struck the high priest's slave, and cut off his right ear. The slave's name was Malchus. <sup>11</sup>Jesus said to Peter, Put your sword back into its sheath. Am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?*

Luke 22:51-53: (NRSV) <sup>51</sup>*... No more of this! And he touched his ear and healed him. <sup>52</sup>Then Jesus said to the chief priests, the officers of the temple police, and the elders who had come for him, Have you come out with swords and clubs as if I were a bandit? <sup>53</sup>When I was with you day after day in the temple, you did not lay hands on me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness!*

So Jesus allowed himself to be arrested as he arranged for the freedom of his disciples. The soldiers, their officer and the Jewish police bound him and took him away.

Jesus was now on his way to Annas, the son-in-law of Caiaphas the high priest. Following behind in the distance were Peter and John, no doubt bewildered and unsure. Judas? Their friend Judas betrayed him? What was going to happen? Surely this must be some kind of misunderstanding! Once they got to the courtyard of the high priest, John had to arrange for Peter's entrance with the woman by the gate.

**Once inside, Peter settled by a fire with others to keep warm:**

John 18:13-27: (NRSV) and Luke 22:54-65: (ASV) <sup>56</sup>*And a certain maid seeing him as he sat in the light of the fire, and looking steadfastly upon him, said, this man also was with him. <sup>57</sup>But he denied, saying, woman, I know him not.*



Peter must have surprised himself. Sure, he was scared and sure he wanted to stay as close to Jesus as possible...but deny that he knew him? How *could* he? Perhaps he rationalized that anonymity was necessary to stay close by. So, Peter sat quietly, maybe feeling a bit more self-conscious than before.

**He watched from a distance as Jesus was being questioned about his teachings:**

<sup>25</sup>Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. They asked him, you are not also one of his disciples, are you? He denied it and said, I am not.

Again he denied Jesus! What was he thinking? Where was his courage? Where was the Peter who had boldly left all to follow Jesus? ...The Peter who would speak for his fellow disciples? ...The Peter who would stare fear in the face, especially when with Jesus?

<sup>59</sup>And after the space of about one hour <sup>26</sup>One of the slaves of the high priest, confidently affirmed, saying, of a truth this man also was with him; for he is a Galilaean. <sup>60</sup>But Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest. And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew. <sup>61</sup>And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how that he said unto him, before the cock crow this day thou shalt deny me thrice. <sup>62</sup>And he went out, and wept bitterly.

All at once Peter's life had fallen to pieces, shattered upon the rocks of his own foolish pride, ground to dust by his own fear and blown to the four corners of the earth by the winds of despair. Once not so long ago he had stood side-by-side with his Master, willing to do anything, willing to go anywhere at Jesus' bidding. Now he could not even so much as acknowledge his discipleship. Jesus knew. Jesus saw him deny. He heard him deny and now it was too late. All that was left for Peter was the bitterness of the tears of regret. It was too late...

<sup>63</sup>And the men that held Jesus mocked him, and beat him. <sup>64</sup>And they blindfolded him, and asked him, saying, Prophecy: who is he that struck thee? <sup>65</sup>And many other things spake they against him, reviling him.

It is hard for us to imagine the scope of the suffering, insult and ignominy that Jesus experienced that night. It was pretty much nonstop through the night as the religious trial - the *illegal* religious trial - he would undergo would begin its first phase before Annas at some point after midnight. He would then be bound and led to Caiaphas who, at between one and two in the morning, had assembled all of the chief priests, elders and scribes along with false witnesses. Once they were through with him, Jesus was beaten, spit upon, insulted and led to appear before the Sanhedrin around four in the morning. Next he would be brought before Pilate who wanted nothing to do with him. He sent Jesus to Herod who arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, mocked him and sent Jesus back to Pilate. After having Jesus whipped, Pilate gave the people a voice and the Pharisees led the shouts of, "Crucify him! Crucify him!"

John 19:14-15: (NASB) <sup>14</sup>Now it was the day of preparation for the Passover; it was about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, Behold, your King! <sup>15</sup>So they cried out, away with him, away with him, crucify him! Pilate said to them, shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, we have no king but Caesar.

Matthew 27:24-25: (NASB) <sup>24</sup>When Pilate saw that he was accomplishing nothing, but rather that a riot was starting, he took water and washed his hands in front of the crowd,



saying, *I am innocent of this man's blood; see to that yourselves.* <sup>25</sup>*And all the people said, his blood shall be on us and on our children!*

Luke 23:23-24: (NASB) <sup>23</sup>*But they were insistent, with loud voices asking that he be crucified. And their voices began to prevail.* <sup>24</sup>*And Pilate pronounced sentence that their demand be granted.*

And so Jesus was led away to be crucified.



### Chapter Three - Crucifixion

John 19:17: (KJV) *And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha:*



"Via Dolorosa," Sandi Patti



Down the Via Dolorosa in Jerusalem that day  
The soldiers tried to clear the narrow street  
But the crowd pressed in to see  
A man condemned to die on Calvary  
He was bleeding

from a beating, there were stripes upon his back  
And he wore a crown of thorns upon his head  
And he bore with every step  
The scorn of those who cried out for his death

Down the Via Dolorosa called the Way of Suffering  
Like a lamb came the Messiah, Christ the King,  
But he chose to walk that road out of his love  
For you and me.

Down the Via Dolorosa, all the way to Calvary.

The blood that would cleanse the souls of all men  
Made its way to the heart of Jerusalem.

Down the Via Dolorosa called the Way of Suffering  
Like a lamb came the Messiah, Christ the King  
But he chose to walk that road out of his love  
For you and me

Down the Via Dolorosa, all the way

Imagine the horror of the scene: Here was Jesus: the most gentle and godly man the world had ever seen on his way to the most humiliating death imagined by the Romans of that day. Here was Jesus: miracle worker, teacher and leader having just gone through a night of trials, beatings and mockery - all unjustified and all uncalled for. Here was Jesus: the very Son of God having come to redeem all men and those whom he came to redeem shouted out to crucify him! Here was Jesus: willingly walking this road because he loves us.

Here was Jesus...

Luke 23:26-28: (KJV) <sup>26</sup>*And as they led him away, they laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenian... and on him they laid the cross that he might bear it after Jesus.* <sup>27</sup>*And there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented*



him. <sup>28</sup>But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children.

John 19:19-22: (KJV) <sup>19</sup>And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS. <sup>20</sup>This title then read many of the Jews: and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin. <sup>21</sup>Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am King of the Jews. <sup>22</sup>Pilate answered, what I have written I have written.

Mark 15:27: (KJV) And with him they crucify two thieves; the one on his right hand, and the other on his left.



Matthew 27:39-44: (KJV) <sup>39</sup>And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads, <sup>40</sup>And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. <sup>41</sup>Likewise also the chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and elders, said, <sup>42</sup>He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. <sup>43</sup>He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God. <sup>44</sup>The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth.

Luke 23:36-37: (KJV) <sup>36</sup>And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar, <sup>37</sup>And saying, If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself.

John 19:25-27: (KJV) <sup>25</sup>Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. <sup>26</sup>When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! <sup>27</sup>Then saith he to the disciple, behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.

Luke 23:39-43: (KJV) <sup>39</sup>And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. <sup>40</sup>But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? <sup>41</sup>And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. <sup>42</sup>And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. <sup>43</sup>And Jesus said unto him, verily I say unto thee today, shalt thou be with me in paradise.

### **We read from Isaiah:**

Isaiah 53:3-4: (NASB) <sup>3</sup>He was despised and forsaken of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and like one from whom men hide their face he was despised, and we did not esteem him. <sup>4</sup>Surely our griefs he himself bore, and our sorrows he carried; yet we ourselves esteemed him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

Mark 15:33-36: (KJV), John 19:28-30: (KJV), Luke 23:46: (KJV) <sup>33</sup>And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. <sup>34</sup>And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? Which is, being interpreted, my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? <sup>28</sup>After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst. <sup>35</sup>And some of them that stood by, when they heard it, said, Behold, he calleth Elias. <sup>36</sup>And one ran and filled a sponge full of vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink, saying, Let alone; let us see whether Elias will come to take him down. <sup>30</sup>When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he bowed his head, and gave up the spirit.





Matthew 27:5: (KJV) *And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent;*

Matthew 27:54: (KJV) *Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earth-quake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God.*

Mark 15:40-41: (NRSV) <sup>40</sup>*There were also women looking on from a distance; among them were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joses, and Salome. <sup>41</sup>These used to follow him and provided for him when he was in Galilee; and there were many other women who had come up with him to Jerusalem.*

It was in this manner that Jesus the Christ was crucified and it was in this manner that Jesus the Christ did die...

Isaiah 53:6-7: (NASB) <sup>6</sup>*All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; but the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on him. <sup>7</sup>He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; like a lamb that is led to slaughter, and like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, so he did not open his mouth.*



#### "Someday," (Verse 1) Celtic Woman

Someday when we are wiser  
When the world's older, when we have learned  
I pray someday we may yet  
Live to live and let live

Someday life will be fairer  
Need will be rarer and greed will not pay  
Godspeed this bright millennia  
On its way, let it come someday

So many of us dream about a someday, a someday when the world will be a better place. So many of us wish things could change and after wishing, we go back to our quiet lives and somehow accept the desperation of the world as "just the way it is." Jesus didn't *dream* about the world as a better place; he came and died to *make* it a better place. Jesus didn't *wish* things could be better; he sacrificed his life to *make* them better. Jesus changed the desperation of the world into inspiration towards a future world and that will be the story for our second hour.



#### Chapter Four: Resurrection

There are so many personal stories of those who had been touched by Jesus, healed by him and taught by him that we do not know. Think of the gut-wrenching sorrow of those individuals who watched the crucifixion scene and the sense of bewilderment and loss they would have carried. Think of his mother Mary and the struggle as she watched her son's life slip away.



**“New Again,” (Verse 1) Brad Paisley and Sara Evans**

Mother do not cry for me  
All of this is exactly how it's supposed to be  
I'm right here. Can you hear my voice?  
My life, my love, my Lord....my baby boy  
As they nail me to this tree  
Just know the Father waits for me  
God how can this be Your will?  
To have Your son and my son killed?  
Whatever happens...whatever you see...  
Whatever your eyes tell you has become of me  
This is not...not the end...  
I am making all things new again

(The following summation is based on John 19:31-42 and Matthew 27:60-66.)

There was a sense of urgency to end the crucifixion scene. The urgency was not driven by any form of compassion or mercy but by the fact that sundown was the beginning of both the Sabbath and the Passover, which made this particular Sabbath a higher and holier celebration than normal. With the tens of thousands of extra people in Jerusalem for the Passover, the spectacle of bodies on crosses - especially that of Jesus - had the potential to cause a stir amongst the people that the Pharisees did not want to deal with. Thus the urgency to “hide the evidence” was only for the Pharisees’ protection.



So Jesus was taken down to be buried in a new tomb, belonging to Joseph of Arimathea. Joseph and Nicodemus respectfully wrapped the lifeless body with myrrh and aloes in linen cloths and laid it to rest. They then rolled the stone over the door.

All was now quiet and the following day at the request of the Pharisees the guards arrived, sealed the tomb and watched lest someone should steal the body and claim resurrection.



**"New Again," (Verse 2) Brad Paisley and Sara Evans**

I remember when you were born  
In that manger where I first held  
You in my arms  
So many miracles and lives you've changed  
And this world repays you how?  
With all this pain  
As they nail me to this tree  
Just know the Father waits for me  
God how can this be Your will?  
To have Your son and my son killed?  
Whatever happens  
Whatever happens  
Whatever you see  
I don't wanna see  
Whatever your eyes tell you has become of me  
This is not...  
Tell me it's not  
Not the end...  
I am making all things new again

Mark 16:1-8: (KJV) and Luke 24:5-7: (KJV) <sup>1</sup>And when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him. <sup>2</sup>And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulcher at the rising of the sun. <sup>3</sup>And they said among themselves, who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulcher? <sup>4</sup>And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away: for it was very great. <sup>5</sup>And entering into the sepulcher, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were afraid. <sup>6</sup>And he saith unto them, Be not afraid: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee, <sup>7</sup>Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. <sup>8</sup>And they remembered his words, <sup>7</sup>But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you.





Here was to begin a new frenzy of activity, for the resurrection of Jesus would not only energize the fragile followers he left behind, it would send a shock wave throughout the entire nation! Mary would be the first to actually speak to the risen Lord. Peter and John would soon race to the sepulcher, only to find it empty. Now the realization of what Jesus had said all along would begin to sink in...He IS the Son of God! He IS risen! He IS the long awaited Messiah!

### The Carpenter's Cloth

During Jesus' time, there was one way a carpenter let the contractor know a job was finished. A signature, so to speak.

Imagine a hot afternoon in Galilee. Jesus has completed the final pieces of a job he has worked on for several days. The hair of his strong forearms is matted with sawdust and sweat. His face is shiny with heat. He takes a final—and welcome—drink of cool water from a leather bag.

Then standing to the side of his work, he pours water over his face and chest, splashing it over his arms to clean himself before his journey home. With a nearby towel, he pats his face and arms dry.

Finally, Jesus folds the towel neatly in half, and then folds it in half again. He sets it on the finished work and walks away. Later, whoever arrives to inspect the work will see the towel and understand its simple message. The work is finished.

Christ's disciples, of course, knew this carpenter's tradition. On a Sunday of sorrow, three years after Jesus had set aside his carpenter tools, Peter will crouch to look into an empty tomb and see only the linens that the risen Lord has left behind.

A smile will cross Peter's face as his sorrow is replaced by hope, for he will see the wrap that had covered Jesus' face. It has been folded in half, then folded in half again and left neatly on the floor of the tomb.

Peter understands.

The carpenter has left behind a simple message.

It is finished.

There is hope! Against all odds, there is hope!



### Chapter Five: A New Start



"New Again," Brad Paisley and Sara Evans

Whatever happens...whatever you see...  
Whatever your eyes tell you has become of me  
This is not...  
No  
Not the end  
I am making all things new again





For us, the resurrection of Jesus truly does represent a new start, for it was the physical outward signal that Jesus had not only overcome the horrific obstacles and suffering that was necessarily placed before him, it also signified that God's plan was moving inexorably forward. The plan was not only cast in stone because the Old Testament prophecies had proclaimed it that way, it was now able to be seen with the naked eye, to be heard and to be felt! This sealed God's plan in a special way.

For those who lived at Jesus' time, it was all of this and much more, for it gave each individual who had been touched by Jesus a fresh and invigorating start to their Christian experience.

Jesus would appear several times to his disciples over the next forty days. Each of these appearances would add another dimension of his power, wisdom and glorious victory. Each appearance would help to reconcile his followers to the new realities they would now face. This would be particularly true of Peter, as he would come to exemplify this new start for all of us. He would have to be courageous enough to look his failures in the eye, find the forgiveness that was waiting for him and boldly move forward from there. Jesus, as he had always done, would make sure this could happen in a life-changing way.

Peter's last communication with Jesus before his crucifixion was not verbal. In a way that seems fitting considering Peter's action-oriented character and it certainly did not diminish the power of the interchange.

### **Remember this?**

Luke 22:60-62: (NASB) <sup>60</sup>But Peter said, Man, I do not know what you are talking about. Immediately, while he was still speaking, a rooster crowed. <sup>61</sup>The Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had told him, before a rooster crows today, you will deny me three times. <sup>62</sup>And he went out and wept bitterly.

In Peter's own mind the mark of cowardice upon his soul was indelibly written, for he had been the most forward and outspoken of all of the Master's followers and yet when it came down to the moments that truly mattered, he ran and hid like a scared rabbit. To Peter this must have been an impossible mountain to climb, but to Jesus this was a mountain *begging* to be climbed!

### **Until Peter could understand and accept this mountain, he went back to his old life:**

John 21:2-8: (NASB) <sup>2</sup>Simon Peter, and Thomas...and Nathanael...and the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples were together. <sup>3</sup>Simon Peter said to them, I am going fishing. They said to him, we will also come with you. They went out and got into the boat; and that night they caught nothing. <sup>4</sup>But when the day was now breaking, Jesus stood on the beach; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. <sup>5</sup>So Jesus said to them, children, you do not have any fish, do you? They answered him, no. <sup>6</sup>And he said to them, cast the net on the right-hand side of the boat and you will find a catch. So they cast, and then they were not able to haul it in because of the great number of fish. <sup>7</sup>Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, it is the Lord. So when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put his outer garment on... and threw himself into the sea. <sup>8</sup>But the other disciples came in the little boat, for they were not far from the land, but about one hundred yards away, dragging the net full of fish.



When we don't know what to do, we always revert back to our truest self and for Peter that meant fishing, for he did not know how to follow the Master since his denial. Upon the shore Jesus had prepared breakfast, for he was waiting for his beloved followers to come to him. They came to the shore and fellowshiped together.

### Then Jesus turned to Peter:

*Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon son of John, do you love me more than these? He said to him, yes, Lord; you know that I love you. Jesus said to him, feed my lambs. <sup>16</sup>A second time he said to him, Simon son of John, do you love me? He said to him, yes, Lord; you know that I love you. Jesus said to him, tend my sheep. <sup>17</sup>He said to him the third time, Simon son of John, do you love me?... And he said to him, Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you. Jesus said to him, feed my sheep...*

The conclusion of this interchange was unmistakable. Not only had Peter's cowardice been forgiven, Jesus was now in no uncertain terms telling Peter there was a whole new level of work to be done and he, Peter, was to be instrumental in its accomplishment! For Peter, this must have been an overwhelming relief as well as an overwhelming sense of responsibility. He was being raised up by the risen Lord himself to do the work of the Gospel, to learn and to live his new name! This truly is forgiveness! This truly is what Jesus means for all of us.



### "You Raise Me Up," Celtic Woman

When I am down and, oh my soul, so weary  
When troubles come and my heart burdened be  
Then, I am still and wait here in the silence  
Until you come and sit awhile with me  
You raise me up, so I can stand on mountains  
You raise me up, to walk on stormy seas  
I am strong, when I am on your shoulders  
You raise me up: To more than I can be

Personal forgiveness is a most powerful experience. Properly accepted it will change your life, it will make you better and it will provoke you to be *forgiving* in the same way that you are *forgiven*. But personal forgiveness is only the beginning, the introduction, the prelude to what the forgiveness of the Cross brought to us.

Romans 6:22-23: (NASB) <sup>22</sup>*But now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life. <sup>23</sup>For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

So, who sins and who pays the penalty for sin?  
All of us!





## Forgiveness in Christ is bigger than your sin and mine:

1 Corinthians 15:21-22: (NRSV) <sup>21</sup>*For since death came through a human being, the resurrection of the dead has also come through a human being;* <sup>22</sup>*for as all die in Adam, so all will be made alive in Christ.*

What does it mean here when it says *all*?

There are a myriad of prophecies that speak of worldwide restitution, worldwide peace and harmony - these are the real stories of the Cross. Personal forgiveness is good - these prophecies fulfilled are better!



## Chapter Six: The Death of the Curse



### Verse One - Someday, Celtic Woman

Someday when we are wiser  
When the world's older, when we have learned  
I pray someday we may yet  
Live to live and let live  
Someday life will be fairer  
Need will be rarer and greed will not pay  
God speed this bright millennia  
On its way, let it come someday

Everyone wants the same thing - peace on earth good will towards men - most of us simply wish for such a day. What is in the way of such wishes? Death!

We live under the severe penalty of death. This penalty was set in place from the time of the first sin and it has wreaked havoc ever since...

Genesis 3:17-19: (NASB) <sup>17</sup>*Then to Adam He said, because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, you shall not eat from it; Cursed is the ground because of you; In toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. <sup>18</sup>both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; And you will eat the plants of the field; <sup>19</sup>By the sweat of your face you will eat bread, till you return to the ground, because from it you were taken; For you are dust, and to dust you shall return.*

Death not only takes us at life's end; it plagues us throughout our entire existence!



### "Resurrection and Glory," (Verse 2) - Christ is Risen, Matt Maher

I see him in oppression, pressing down on the oppressed and the oppressor.  
I see him in depression, in Prozac and pain pills, in razor blades and bedside wills.  
I see him in abuse: physical, mental, emotional misuse  
I see him in spiritual confusion, material obsession, physical possessions.  
I see him in marital transgressions, childhood remorse from an ugly divorce.  
I see him in our slavery to appearances,  
appearing to care more about our images than those in dying villages.  
I see him in our ignorance, ignoring truth for some comfortable inference.



I see his emergence in our churches as we pull out emergency verses as deterrents to religious differences, going on the defensive, defending our way of worship, making community worthless. Death is killing us before we even enter the surface of the earth. We are in the service of his words, "It is finished" the end of our birth. We cannot hide from his wretched curse For death and his grave we constantly rehearse.

Death surely has ruled. But because of Jesus and his sacrifice, the domain of death will dissolve!

1 Corinthians 15:20-22: (NRSV) <sup>20</sup>*But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died. <sup>21</sup>For since death came through a human being, the resurrection of the dead has also come through a human being; <sup>22</sup>for as all die in Adam, so all will be made alive in Christ.*

How was this to be made so? First, God made a veiled promise that Satan would be destroyed by the seed of the woman. That seed was Jesus.



**As human history developed, that promise gained clarity as it was expressed to Abraham:**

Genesis 22:17-18: (NASB) <sup>17</sup>*indeed I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies. <sup>18</sup>In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.*

This promise of blessing to all mankind would be repeated to generations to follow. Galatians tells us Jesus is that seed of Abraham who would bless the world. How? What would the blessing look like? God gave us the many, many prophecies that paint a word picture of such clarity, beauty and detail that they are unmistakable in the story of redemption they tell!

Isaiah 51:3: (NRSV) *For the LORD will comfort Zion; he will comfort all her waste places, and will make her wilderness like Eden, her desert like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and the voice of song.*

The perfection of Eden was lost but Isaiah is saying that the waste places of earth will look like it? See? Redemption brings restitution!

Micah 4:1-5: (KJV) <sup>1</sup>*But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. <sup>2</sup>And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.*

These are specifics about the future of earth! There will be many nations and they will ALL be seeking after God. They will walk in godly paths with Israel as their example...





<sup>3</sup>And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. <sup>4</sup>But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the LORD of hosts hath spoken it. <sup>5</sup>For all people will walk every one in the name of his god, and we will walk in the name of the LORD our God forever and ever.

God will teach the world the ways of peace - swords to plowshares... spears to pruning hooks - no more war - rather they will all dwell in peace - each with the ability to provide for themselves and all while living under the just and merciful hand of God!

So the prophecies tell us about the *nations* coming to God. What about the people as individuals? What kind of circumstance will they experience?

Isaiah 35:5-10: (NRSV) <sup>5</sup>Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; <sup>6</sup>then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; <sup>7</sup>the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes. <sup>8</sup>A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it but it shall be for God's people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray. <sup>9</sup>No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. <sup>10</sup>And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

This is real! God said it and He meant it!



**"Someday," (Last Verse) Celtic Woman**

Someday life will be fairer  
Need will be rarer and greed will not pay  
God speed this bright millennia  
Let it come if we wish upon the moon

**"One Solitary Life," an adaptation from a James Allen Francis sermon circa 1926**

*He was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant.  
He grew up in another village, where he worked in a carpenter shop until he was 30.  
Then, for three years, he was an itinerant preacher.*

*He never wrote a book. He never held an office.  
He never had a family or owned a home.  
He didn't go to college. He never lived in a big city.  
He never traveled 200 miles from the place where he was born.  
He did none of the things that usually accompany greatness.  
He had no credentials but himself.*

*He was only 33 when the tide of public opinion turned against him.  
His friends ran away. One of them denied him.  
He was turned over to his enemies and went through the mockery of a trial.  
He was nailed to a cross between two thieves.  
While he was dying, his executioners gambled for his garments, the only property he had on earth. When he was dead, he was laid in a borrowed grave, through the pity of a friend.  
Twenty centuries have come and gone, and today he is the central figure of the human race.  
I am well within the mark when I say that all the armies that ever marched,*



*all the navies that ever sailed, all the parliaments that ever sat,  
all the kings that ever reigned--put together--  
have not affected the life of man on this earth as much  
as that one, solitary life.*



**"How Can I Keep From Singing," SheDaisy**

How can I keep (how can I keep)  
How can I keep from singing  
My life flows on in endless song  
Above earth's lamentation  
I hear the sweet (I hear the sweet)  
The far off hymn (the far off hymn)  
That hails a new, a new creation  
Through all the tumult and the strife  
I hear the music ringing  
It finds an echo (echo)  
In my soul (in my soul)  
How can I keep from singing  
The piece of Christ makes fresh my heart  
A fountain ever springing  
All things are mine since I am his  
How can I keep from singing  
Since Christ is Lord (since Christ is Lord)  
Of heaven and earth (of heaven and earth)  
How can I keep from singing

This is the story of Jesus, the man who lived, died and was raised again so that we could have the opportunity for life. Let us make sure that we look at this story and appreciate it personally, share it with others and put ourselves in the position to be like him. May God bless you as you celebrate this Resurrection Sunday.



***Jesus is Risen and the World is Saved!  
For Jonathan and Rick (and Jewel!)  
and Christian Questions...  
Think about it...!***

I