Dear Open Door Family,

As much as I love chocolate bunnies and Cadbury eggs - that is NOT what Easter is all about. Easter is a celebration that has its roots in the shadow of cross. The blood stained cross where the despair and anguish of Jesus' Mother and His disciples was absolute. The one they loved, the one they followed, the one they were sure was the Messiah WAS DEAD. Jesus was quickly buried and the disciples all went into hiding for fear that the religious leaders. Friday night, all day Saturday and through that night the cloud of hopelessness and desolation hung over them. Then Sunday morning out of sense of love and duty some women went to finish the gruesome task of embalming Jesus body.
Sunday morning - EVERYTHING changed.

Matthew 28:1-4 *(NIV) After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. [2] There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. [3] His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. [4] The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.*

Several women went out to finish the burial process of Jesus which had been very rushed on Friday evening. Mark 16:3 says that they were concerned with moving the stone away from the tomb. Either just before they got there or as they arrived an earthquake shook everything. An angel arrived and rolled away the stone from the entrance to the tomb. WHY? Jesus was NOT there He had been raised from the dead. Jesus did not need the stone to be moved so that He could get out. **The stone was moved for ALL the WORLD to SEE that the tomb was EMPTY!**

Death cannot keep its prey, Jesus my Savior;
He tore the bars away, Jesus my Lord!
Up from the grave He arose;
with a mighty triumph over His foes;
He arose a victor from the dark domain,
and He lives forever, with his saints to reign.
He arose! He arose! Hallelujah! Christ arose!

PERSONAL: Lord, You rose with POWER destroying death and its power over me. You broke Satan's grip over me. Thank You for DYING and for LIVING for me. Thank You for making it clear for all the world to see that YOU are a RISEN SAVIOR.

Pastor Mark Kieft
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