

Interrupted

Luke 24:1-12

Hello, my name is Susanna, which means “Lily.” I am one of the women followers of Jesus. I ministered to Jesus with my resources, along with Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary, the mother of James and John- Salome and other women. It was like a sisterhood, where we were safe and helpful and treated with respect. Now I know this sounds strange, especially since most women I know don’t have much control over their families’ resources. Nor is it common for women to travel with a rabbi. In some groups the rules are so strict that some rabbis distant themselves from women, so much so that in our day a rabbi is not even to speak to this wife in public. But Jesus was different. He never discouraged us from being his followers. We listened to His teaching and we accompanied Him in His travels. We stood by Him at His crucifixion...and now I stand here to give witness to his resurrection!

I want to give my testimony to the great interruption.

But I get ahead of myself. I met Jesus early in his ministry. We heard about how he healed the sick, and cured people with demons, he proclaimed good news, release of captives, and the year of the Lord’s favor. My friends and I heard that he had healed a woman who had been hemorrhaging for twelve years. She was healed by touching hem of his robe. Rather than being angry like any other rabbi who would have stoned her for making him unclean, Jesus blessed her and announced her well. He brought a 12 year old year back to life, he was even concerned that she had not eaten for many days. We heard about how he gave life to a poor widow’s son, who was her only means of protection and support in this world. We were there in the synagogue when he healed the woman who had been

bent over for 18 years, whether it was from some psychological cause or scoliosis or osteoporosis, we witnessed the healing.

When we followed him and asked if we could help, he did not reject us, did not belittle us, did not make us feel that we did not belong or were unworthy to be his followers. He always taught openly and included us in the conversation. He told as many stories about cooking and housekeeping as he did about farming and fishing.

On Thursday we shared Passover with him and the disciples. Afterward he went to the garden to pray...that is where he was arrested and taken to trial. He was taken from judgment hall to judgment hall and then sentenced to death by crucifixion. The execution took place on Friday and he died quickly. But even in dying he taught of God's great love and forgiveness. The soldiers took him down from the cross in time for us to quickly prepare his body. Our plan to do a more thorough job on Sunday morning, as it was not proper for us to do so on the Sabbath which began just after they laid him in the tomb.

We thought that day was strange. For three years of ministry, the Sabbath had been a day of worship and rest, of meditation on the Torah and the lessons that Jesus gave. Sometime it became the day of healing because people knew that Jesus would be in the synagogue on the Sabbath.

Mary, Joanna, Salome and the other women planned how we would go and properly prepare his body. We knew exactly what we would spend our day doing, however we were interrupted...in the same way our lives had been interrupted when we became followers of Jesus. So this morning, as the sun was rising we went to the tomb. We found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when we went in, we did not find the body. While we were perplexed about this, suddenly two men in dazzling clothes stood beside us. We were terrified and bowed our

faces to the ground, but the men said to us, "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen. Then the men in dazzling clothes reminded us how Jesus told us, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again." Then we remembered his words. We remembered and understood that his dying was the way of saving us from our sins. We remembered that he said he would rise again and that our lives would never be the same! We returned from the tomb, and told all this to the eleven and to all the rest. But our words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe us. They looked at us as if we were ranting like persons suffering from group hallucinations and confusion! But finally Peter got up and ran to the tomb. When he came back he reported he didn't find the body either, only the linen cloths by themselves; he was amazed at what had happened.

We knew. We remembered. We believed. We now tell everyone who will listen: "Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!"

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