

Easter Bible Study

by Rev. Dr. John C. Tittle

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 28:1-10 (NRSV)

After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. And suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men. But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples, 'He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.' This is my message for you." So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."

BIBLE STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What comments or observations do you have about the Easter gospel reading?
2. Easter reminds us that God has taken one of the worst things in the world (the Roman cross) and refashioned it into one of the best things (the Tree of Life). *How else does Easter and the hope of the resurrection help you?*
3. "Be not afraid" is the most oft repeated command in Scripture. Why?
4. "You can be scared—just don't be afraid." *What is the difference between being scared and being afraid?*
5. What fears have you experienced during this pandemic? What has helped you overcome them?
6. What do you think this Hebrew prayer means:
The world is a narrow bridge, the important thing is not to be afraid.
7. What do you think author Anne Lamott meant when she said that "we are an Easter people in a Good Friday world?"
8. The Angel of the Lord gave the message to the women that Jesus is going ahead of you. You will find him by looking ahead of you. Don't look back to where Jesus isn't—the grave. Go where he is—ahead of you. *How does this help us when we're going through times of difficulty?*
9. How is Christ summoning you to "rise up" this Eastertide?