

Jesus IOI

“Grace Thoughts”



A short devotional to help get you excited about Jesus!

“And behold, a severe earthquake had occurred, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and . . . rolled away the stone and sat upon it.” –Matthew 28:2

It was time for my dad and I to choose the words to be engraved on my mother’s tombstone. We chose the text of Isaiah 43:1, “Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are Mine!” Both of us were comforted by God’s assurance of redemption, His tender reminder that He knows each of us by name, and that we are His! A few months later, my dad was sleeping in Jesus under the same tombstone. Both of my parents passed away with the assurance that Jesus had accomplished their eternal life through His death.

Matthew’s narrative of the resurrection is the most dramatic of all four Gospels. He adds unique details that become visualizations of the salvific work of Jesus. For example, Matthew mentions that the earth shook when Jesus died, opening the tombs (Matthew 27:51, 52), and that there was also a great earthquake (*seismos megas*) when the angel of the Lord descended on the resurrection morning (John 28:2). “An angel of the Lord... rolled away the stone *and sat upon it*” (verse 2). The angel *sat* on the stone of Jesus’ tomb! As if saying, with defiant body language: *any questions, anyone? Jesus has conquered death!* Yes, Jesus’ death had triumphed over death, and now Jesus Himself had risen, and the stone placed on the tomb to guard it became the angel’s stool ... I love it! Countless times, when facing problems that were greater than my abilities to solve them, I pictured the angel sitting on the stone! God sits on our problems, in total control. But there is one more *shaking* in this scene: “The guards *shook* for fear of him and became like dead men” (verse 4). How paradoxical is that? The men who had been placed to guard Jesus’ body were now shaking and becoming like dead bodies, while the One who had been dead was now alive! If you, or someone you love, have to face the valley of the shadow of death, remember Jesus’ accomplishment: victory over death! I can’t wait to see my parents again on resurrection morning; the angel will remove their tombstone and *sit on it!*

Talbot, Elizabeth *Jesus Wins! Daily Devotional*, p. 143