

# That Must Have Been a Really Long Day



Who is your dearest friend?

What makes them so special to you? Is it a kinship or brotherhood that bonds you? Do you have the same ideas and mannerisms? Do they make you laugh? Inspire you to be a better person? Make you feel understood?

Do they live close by or not near enough? Maybe you should take a moment to let them know you're thinking of them. Go ahead. . . I'll wait. ☐

## The Lamb That was Slain

This past week, you may have had the chance to see those most dear to you while celebrating Easter.

Traditionally, the week before Easter is known as Passion Week. For the past couple years, I have revisited those seven days by reading through the **Chronological Bible**. It is amazing how much deeper your understanding grows when you see all of the gospel accounts sorted by when they happened and read the events side by side.

Near the end of the week, I came upon the telling of the last supper the disciples had with Jesus. These followers had given up their livelihood and families to follow Jesus. They served Him and stayed close, even when He told them they would have to eat His flesh and drink His blood.

On that last night with His disciples, Jesus knelt and washed each foot of his dearest friends. One can only imagine how unworthy a person would feel as the King of all Creation stoops before you to scrub your bunion.

Jesus had their devotion. Peter himself declared in front of everyone that he would never leave His side. I truly believe Peter meant it, but what Peter expected to happen was very different from what Jesus knew would happen.

*Now with blazing torches, lanterns, and weapons, (the leaders) arrived at the olive grove.*

*Jesus fully realized all that was going to happen to him, so he stepped forward to meet them.*

*"Who are you looking for?" he asked.*

*"Jesus the Nazarene," they replied.*

*"I AM he," Jesus said. . .*

*Then Simon Peter drew a sword and slashed off the right ear of Malchus, the high priest's slave.*

*But Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword back into its sheath. Shall I not drink from the cup of suffering the Father has given me?" John 18:3-11*

Even as I think of it, my face mirrors Peter's with a shocked and confused expression forming. The Jews during this time were eager and ready for a savior, fantasizing about a mighty warrior from the Torah. One who would come in power to vanquish Roman oppression and reunite the Hebrew brethren. The disciples acknowledged Jesus was King and lived ready to die for Him. When He asked them not to fight, they didn't know what else to do.

So they fled.

*Jesus asked, "Do you finally believe? But the time is coming – indeed it's here now – when you will be scattered, each one going his own way, leaving me alone..." John 16:31-32*

Peter and John did return later to find out what happened to Jesus, but for fear of association, Peter denied Him three times.

*At that moment the Lord turned and looked at Peter. Suddenly, the Lord's words flashed through Peter's mind:  
"Before the rooster crows tomorrow morning, you will deny three times that you even knew me."  
And Peter left the courtyard, weeping bitterly. Luke 22: 61-62*

This wasn't how he thought things would turn out. The disappointment, confusion, and frustration must have made their hearts sick as the disciples learned their King was beaten, bloodied and hung out to die.

And after all that. . . the Sabbath was coming.

Jewish law requires that you don't do physical work or leave a dead body exposed for the day, so they took the body down from the cross immediately, wrapped it and placed it in a tomb. There wasn't even time to properly prepare the body for burial. They would all have to wait until the Sabbath was over to properly grieve their loss.

**I wonder what it was like for the disciples the day after Jesus was crucified.**

What sort of questions kept them from sleeping that night, from eating anything through the next day? They did gather

together again, but the silence must have been stifling. The disappointment at what they had hoped for tore at their hearts. Jesus was their dearest friend, their brother, their King, and now he had been wrongly judged, convicted and murdered mockingly to his last breath.

And all this time, Heaven was silent.

## **That must have been a really long day.**

Have you ever known what it is like when disappointment rages and yet all around you is silent?

I have to admit . . . This last week, I got my hopes up.

I see now it was for the wrong reasons, although they were understandable.

You see, about a month ago, I heard about the asteroid that was coming. My ears perked up because of a verse in the Bible that talks about a mountain falling from the sky. (Revelation 8:8)

As the "Rock of Gibraltar" size asteroid drew near, tensions grew between powerful countries with nuclear weapon capabilities. I was starting to put two and two together (Somebody please let me know when you get that figured out.) when I came across an article online of a young boy who had a vision. He saw in his imagination a map of the earth with asteroids and bombs sprinkling the surface.

Even though the video was intriguing, I wasn't about to put my faith in the imaginings of a nine-year-old boy. But it did tickle my thoughts. *Hmmm, this would be the perfect opportunity, God.*

That's when I envisioned what it would be like if there were only 4 days left on Earth. What if this was all we would ever know of struggle, weakness, pain and suffering?

I could definitely bear it. Only four more days, and then forever with Jesus in heaven? Piece. Of. Cake.

During those days, my spirit lifted with renewed perspective. Things that seemed so burdensome and demanding before didn't have much weight anymore. I spent more time delighting in what it will be like to finally be in heaven. I prayed for those I love and want to be with me there. It was exciting.

As you know, because you are here now reading this with me, the asteroid whizzed by just like NASA said. Things are still tense between the nuclear powers, but I can name at least four other times that was the case in the last 100 years.

As I woke up the next day, my old nagging friend Disappointment was there to meet me. *Wasn't that it, Lord? How much longer will it be? How much longer will I have to wake up each morning fatigued before I even get out of bed, hands and feet tingling with neuropathy, wondering if the battles of the day will be the same old ones or something out of left field?*

## **Watching and Waiting**

I learned a few weeks ago about this place called "Liminal Space". The word is Latin for "threshold" and describes the time between the 'what was' and the 'next.' It is a place of transition, waiting, and not knowing.

We are living in that in between time right now. Jesus exited the building, and we are often left looking up into the clouds and scratching our heads.

By the almighty grace of God, we have His Word and His Spirit to fill us with power to become more and more like Christ each day. But again, we find ourselves hiding from the "officials" and laws that are taking our freedoms away. The wondrous work of the Spirit in the Bible seems like a very long time ago. We can grow weary in waiting, worn down by disappointment in how things don't often go as we had hoped.

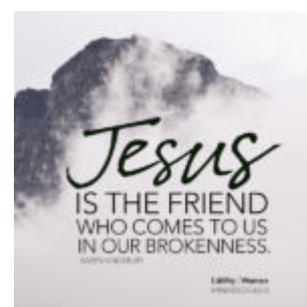
The liminal space after Christ's death was hard for Peter, so he decided to go back to what he was familiar with.

*Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of His disciples were together. Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing."*

*They said to him, "We are going with you also."*

*They went out and immediately got into the boat, and that night they caught nothing. John 21:2-3*

Peter had no idea what to do next, so he returned to his hometown (70 miles away). That must have been such a hard walk back.



He found his old boat and his own nets and decided to do what he knew had worked in the past. Fishing.

The thing I love most about this story is that **Jesus found him there**. On the beach, He appears and tells them how to fish, just like He did the first time they met.

I hate to say it, but we are supposed to be disappointed with this life.

**“. . . we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.”  
Romans 8:23**

As we struggle with having to be here and having to wait, we can have confidence that God will meet us where we are with hope and joy for the new day. Thinking through the wrestlings in my heart, I realized that God must have had good reasons why it's not over yet. I thought about the chances we still

have to see Him work in amazing ways and change the hearts of those close to us. I began to grow in a renewed purpose of living to accomplish God's work in and around me before He comes again.

Because, you know what came after Saturday night?

Sunday morning!