

**Matthew 28:1-10**  
**Easter— April 9, 2023**

In 1883, on an August morning, the earth broke open and made the loudest sound ever heard. Ever. It happened on an island (Krakatoa) in Indonesia. The sound of that event could be heard at astonishingly great distances. People reported hearing it in Islands 1300 miles away. It was heard in Western Australia, 2000 miles away. In the Indian Ocean, they heard what sounded like the distant roar of heavy guns. That is 3000 miles away from the island in Indonesia.

Just think about that for a second. That's crazy. That is the distance from New York City to San Jose, California. If someone told you that a sound could be heard on the East Coast and would travel the 2,990 miles across the country. People all over the Pacific that day scratched their heads and asked, "*What was that?*" They heard thunder, but the sky was blue. They heard cannon fire, but no navy was nearby. Sailors looked for signs of impending storms but found none. What was that? It had to be something big...

1800 years earlier, people in Jerusalem were asking the same question. It was early Sunday morning, and the events of the past few days had the city on edge. The Teacher, Jesus of Nazareth, had been crucified. His followers thought he was the Messiah, the Son of God in the flesh. But then he died. And a dead messiah is no Messiah at all. Then, everyone in Jerusalem felt it on Sunday morning - an earthquake—a big one! The ground shook, and everyone looked around and asked "*What was that?*" Early on that Sunday morning, in the dark, two women were making their way to the tomb. Their arms were full of spices. Their biggest question was: *Who's going to roll the stone away in front of the tomb?* God had something much bigger in mind. It was something really big.... announced by an earthquake.

The sound that was heard around the world, on that day in 1883, was caused by a massive volcanic eruption in Indonesia. Basically, a huge mountain blew itself to pieces. What had been an island mountain rising over 2,600 feet above sea level was reduced to nothing. It is said that it was one of the most significant events in the world.

But what shook Jerusalem was no volcano. God was sending a messenger to earth to carry out the task of rolling the stone away. He didn't roll that stone away so Jesus to get out. He wanted the world to see that the tomb was empty. He had a simple message: "**Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said.**" They had come looking for a dead Jesus, but a dead Jesus would do no one any good. But a resurrected Jesus changes everything. But a living Jesus, that would be not only heard around the world, but would send a message that would be heard for all time.

Mankind's brokenness couldn't be fixed or forgotten. No human could fix it. But there was one who could fix it, and his name was Jesus. That what Jesus had come to earth to do. He came to suffer and die in our place. He came to take away any fears that this world might have. He came to give us forgiveness of sin and freedom from our guilt. Do not doubt. He lives! Just as he said.

We should fear standing in front of the Judge in this world. Sinners ought to die for their sins. The grave should be the place of ultimate defeat for mankind. Yet, on this day (Easter), Satan's head was crushed. The dark prince of this world was defeated. As a result mankind is redeemed. That means every one of God's promises that he made to this world, is true. Jesus says to us this morning as well: *Don't be afraid.*

So, what do the women do with this message? The women ran from the tomb, afraid, yet filled with joy. The most significant event in history had happened, and they ran to tell someone. But God was going to make sure they knew exactly what to say. So, they ran right into him: Jesus. Jesus, back from the dead. Matthew tells us: "**Suddenly Jesus met them. "Greetings," he said. They came to him, clasped 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."**

*My brothers.* Those words of Jesus remind us that his resurrection fundamentally changes our relationship with God forever. Remember, these are the disciples who had abandoned him, denied him, one of their group had even betrayed him. Jesus had good reason to remind those men of their desertion. He had good reason to remind them that they ought to be nothing but servants. Instead, he took this moment to call them "*my brothers*" for the very first time. The

living Son of God had made full payment for sin so that he could call us brothers. Mankind is redeemed; death is defeated; fear is conquered. Christ looks upon us forgiven sinners and calls us his brothers. That is the news that Jesus sent those women to tell, to share with his disciples. It's the same message that Christ send us out into the world: *"Go, tell: He lives!"*

If you had lived in America in 1883, you wouldn't have heard the explosion of that mountain in Indonesia. Someone would have had to tell you about the loudest sound ever heard. Even you're not hearing it, didn't make it less real. Even if you would not have heard, it's impact was measured around the world by instruments. Even though we have not heard the earthquake that was felt in Jerusalem, the message is the same. He is risen. He's alive. Even though we have not held on to the feet of Jesus, we trust that he is alive the same. We hold on to him through the eyes of faith.

This Jesus is not dead. A dead Messiah would do us no good. But a resurrected Jesus changes everything. Today we are reminded that Jesus' resurrection is as real as the sunrise. He sends us out into this world to tell all that sin no longer convicts us. It tells us to go and tell that Satan no longer controls us. Let's go out and tell this world: He Lives! Amen.