

IT'S A MIRACLE!

Jesus and His disciples walked all over Israel. Everywhere they went, big crowds would gather to see Jesus.

He talked a lot about the kingdom of God. But He didn't just **TALK** about the kingdom of God; Jesus also **SHOWED** people what the kingdom of God was like.

How? By doing amazing things. Unbelievable things! Jesus called them "signs" that pointed to the kingdom of God. Today we call them **MIRACLES**.

In Jesus' day, many people were **AFRAID** of the sea. Fishermen and sailors had to go out on the sea, which often put them in danger. Today we have satellites that tell sailors when big storms are headed their way, but back in Jesus' day, it was hard to know when a big storm was coming. The sea was scary!

One night, Jesus was on a boat with His disciples when a **HUGE** storm took over the sea. Their boat was going to sink, and the disciples were afraid they would die. Meanwhile, Jesus was asleep in the boat.

The disciples woke up Jesus and said, "Hey! Did You notice the storm? We're going to die!"

Jesus opened His eyes, looked at them, and said, "Why are you so afraid?"

Then He turned to the storm—the **GIANT** storm that was sinking their boat—and said, "Stop it!"

And guess what? The storm stopped! Completely.

The disciples couldn't believe what had just happened. *Who can talk to a storm and the storm obeys Him?*

Jesus was giving them a **SIGN**. In the kingdom of God, there was no danger from the sea, because Jesus was the King of everything! Even the big, scary sea listened to Jesus.



Another time Jesus was surrounded by thousands of people who had followed Him far away from town with no food to eat.

The disciples got nervous. “What will we give them to eat?” they wondered.

One little boy had **FIVE** loaves of bread and **TWO** small fish. He gave them to the disciples.

“Will this help?” he said.

The disciples thought it was silly. You can’t feed thousands of people with two loaves of bread and five little fish!

Or can you?

Jesus took the boy’s gift and prayed over it. Then He started breaking pieces off and giving them to people.

And there were more pieces . . .

And more pieces . . .

And **MORE** pieces . . .

So many pieces that every person got to eat as much as they wanted.

The disciples couldn’t believe their eyes!

“Why are you so surprised?” Jesus asked.

He was giving them another sign. In the kingdom of God, there is **ALWAYS** enough. Enough food, enough warmth, enough love. Where Jesus is King, we will never run out of anything!



Jesus also **HEALED** people. This was a sign that Jesus was King over sickness and disease. In the kingdom of God, there is no sickness!

But even more amazing, one time when a sick little girl died before Jesus could get there to heal her, Jesus said to her parents, “Don’t worry. She’s okay.”

And the little girl came back to life, got up, and walked **RIGHT** out of her room! Even though she had died. Even death has to obey Jesus in the kingdom of God.

Everyone was amazed by the things Jesus did. The crowds that followed Him got bigger, and bigger, and **BIGGER**. Everyone was excited to see Jesus!

IT'S A MIRACLE!

FAMILY CONNECTION

MARK 4:35-41; MARK 6:30-44;
MARK 5:21-43

Except the Pharisees. *Remember them?* They thought Jesus was getting **TOO** popular. **TOO** many people were following Him around, and some of those people even said they thought Jesus should be king!

The Pharisees went to the Sadducees to talk about Jesus.

Who were the Sadducees? They were the group of Israelites who were in charge of punishments. The Pharisees kept track of all the rules, and the Sadducees were in charge of **PUNISHING** the people who broke the rules.

“This Jesus guy is breaking rules and causing trouble!” said the Pharisees.

Hmm, thought the Sadducees, We might have to do something about that.

So the Sadducees began looking for a way to arrest Jesus.



FUN FACTS

There are thirty-seven miracles of Jesus recorded in the Gospels. Jesus healed someone twenty-four times, he performed a miracle of nature ten times, and He raised someone from the dead three times! The Feeding of the 5,000 is the only miracle recorded in all of the Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John).



TALK

What do Jesus' miracles tell us about the kingdom of God?

What amazing thing have you seen that could be a miracle?

Dear God ...

PRAY

Dear God, thank You for the amazing signs You give to show us what Your kingdom is like. Amen.



THE LAST SUPPER

Jesus and His disciples walked to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover.

What was Passover?

*Remember when God rescued the Israelites from Egypt by sending plagues of frogs and flies and darkness? Remember the angel God sent to kill the firstborn sons of the Egyptians, when Pharaoh refused to let the Israelites go free? That angel “passed over” the homes of the Israelites if they had the blood of a **LAMB** over their doors. The sons of Israel were saved by the blood of that lamb.*

Ever since that day, Israelites have celebrated Passover with a **SPECIAL** meal, just like the one they had that night in Egypt many years earlier. So Jesus and His disciples traveled to Jerusalem for Passover. Lots of other people came, too, and many of them had heard stories about Jesus.

As Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey, a big crowd of people came out to meet Him. They laid down palm branches in front of Him, which was a sign of royalty. They shouted, “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!” and “Blessed is the coming kingdom of David!” It was like a parade for a **KING**.



This made the Pharisees and Sadducees **VERY** nervous. Since Israel was a part of the Roman Empire, the Israelites weren't allowed to have their own king. The king of the Romans was Israel's king. Any time someone in Israel said, "Let's have a new king," the Romans would send in soldiers and throw a bunch of people in **PRISON**—or worse!

The Pharisees and Sadducees had to do something to stop all the commotion about Jesus and this talk of a "new king." And they had to do it fast! *But what could they do?*

Jesus and His disciples got together to eat the Passover meal, just like they did every year. But this year, Jesus did something **DIFFERENT**.

First, Jesus told His disciples that **ONE** of them was going to turn against Him by helping the Pharisees and Sadducees arrest Him and take Him away!

All the disciples looked at each other. "Who could it be?" they wondered.

Then Jesus picked up a piece of **BREAD** and said, "This is My body, which is given for you."

After that, He picked up His **CUP**, and said, "This cup is the new covenant of My blood, poured out for you."

A **COVENANT** is a "promise," like the promises that God had made to Abraham long, long before.

The disciples were confused. It sounded like Jesus was saying God was making a new promise—a new way to bless them and save them—and it had something to do with Jesus' blood and body. It had something to do with Jesus . . . dying?



THE LAST SUPPER

FAMILY CONNECTION

**MATTHEW 21:1-11;
MATTHEW 26:17-50**

The disciples couldn't believe their ears. *Was Jesus saying that He was the new Passover lamb? That He was going to die to save them? But **HOW** could Jesus be king if He wasn't even alive?*

Everyone was confused.



After dinner, Jesus went out to a garden to **PRAY**. He knew what He had to do next, and He knew it wasn't going to be easy.

When He finished praying, Jesus turned to His friends and said, "The hour has come."

And just at that moment, His disciple Judas walked into the garden, leading a group of soldiers sent by the Sadducees to arrest Jesus.

TRICKY BITS

WHAT is Communion? Communion is a practice of the Last Supper message of Jesus.

WHO can take Communion? Followers of Jesus.

WHAT do we take? A piece of bread, to represent Jesus' body, broken for us. A cup of wine, to represent His blood, shed for us.

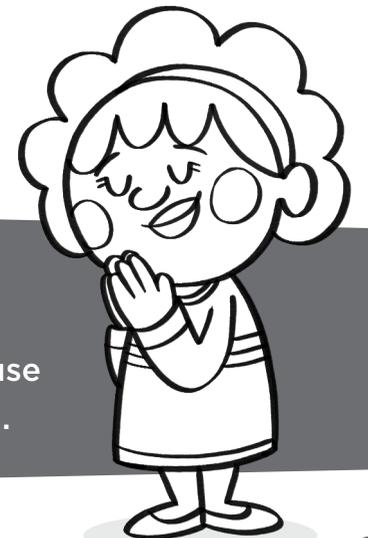
WHY do we take it? To remember Jesus' sacrifice.

TALK

What *covenant* or "promise" did Jesus make to His disciples during their Passover meal?

What do you think it means that Jesus was the new Passover lamb?

Dear
God...



PRAY

Dear God, thank You for the hope we have because Jesus was willing to be our Passover lamb. Amen.

JESUS' DEATH



The soldiers who arrested Jesus

brought him to the Pharisees and Sadducees.

“You think You are equal to God?” they asked Him. But Jesus wouldn’t say anything.

The Pharisees didn’t care if He answered or not. “Guilty!” they shouted. “He is guilty of blasphemy!”

And the penalty for **BLASPHEMY**—for saying you are equal to God?

DEATH.

There was a problem, though. Even if the Pharisees and Sadducees said Jesus was guilty, they weren’t allowed to kill anyone. Only the Romans could do that. So they dragged Jesus to the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate.

Pontius Pilate looked at Jesus and asked, “What have You done that has made everyone so angry?”

But still, Jesus wouldn’t say **ANYTHING**.

“I don’t see anything wrong with this man!” Pilate said to the Pharisees and Sadducees.

But they all yelled back, “According to our rules, He needs to die!”

Pilate didn’t know what to do. He didn’t think Jesus deserved to **DIE**, but he didn’t want the Pharisees and Sadducees to complain about him to the other Roman leaders. Staying out of trouble was the best way to keep your job as a Roman governor. Maybe the troublemaker had to go.

So Pilate gave in. He washed his hands in front of the crowd, which was a way of saying, “This isn’t my fault.”

Then he had Jesus killed on a wooden **CROSS**.

As Jesus was dying, He looked up to heaven and said, “Father, forgive them. They don’t know what they are doing.” Even at that moment, Jesus was forgiving. Even at that moment, He was loving.

The sky turned **DARK**. Jesus died. Then the ground began to **SHAKE!** A Roman guard standing near Jesus saw everything that happened and said, “This man must have been the Son of God!”

But it was too late. Jesus was dead.

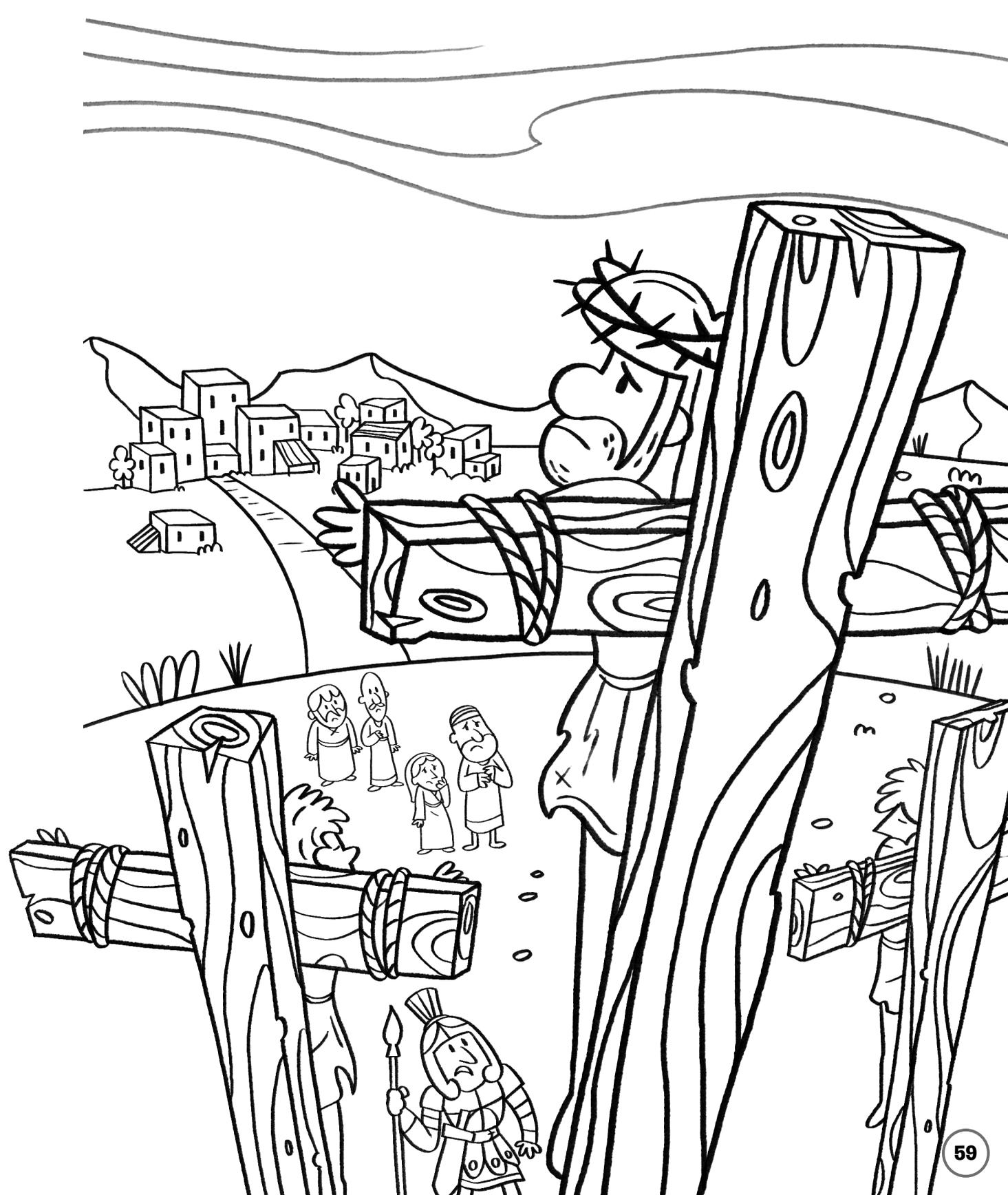
Jesus’ friends didn’t know what to think. *How could Jesus be the Messiah, the blessing for the whole world, if He wasn’t even alive?*

Jesus had done some **AMAZING** things while He was living. He’d shown everyone what God the Father was like. Incredibly loving. Incredibly good. Incredibly powerful. The life of Jesus had taught people who God is.

Jesus had also announced the **KINGDOM OF GOD**. Before Adam and Eve sinned, they’d lived with God, the way things were supposed to be. There was no sickness, no hunger, no hurting, and no death.

Jesus had said the kingdom of God was back. He’d given everyone a taste of that kingdom through His miracles. Jesus showed us that in this kingdom of God, there is nothing to be afraid of—not even death!

Jesus also explained that the kingdom was starting small, like a seed. Jesus’ miracles were like tiny green shoots from a seed, poking up through the soil. Those shoots would grow bigger and bigger, until finally the day would come when Jesus is King, and the kingdom of God would be **EVERYWHERE!** When the whole world would be made new again, the way God always wanted it to be!

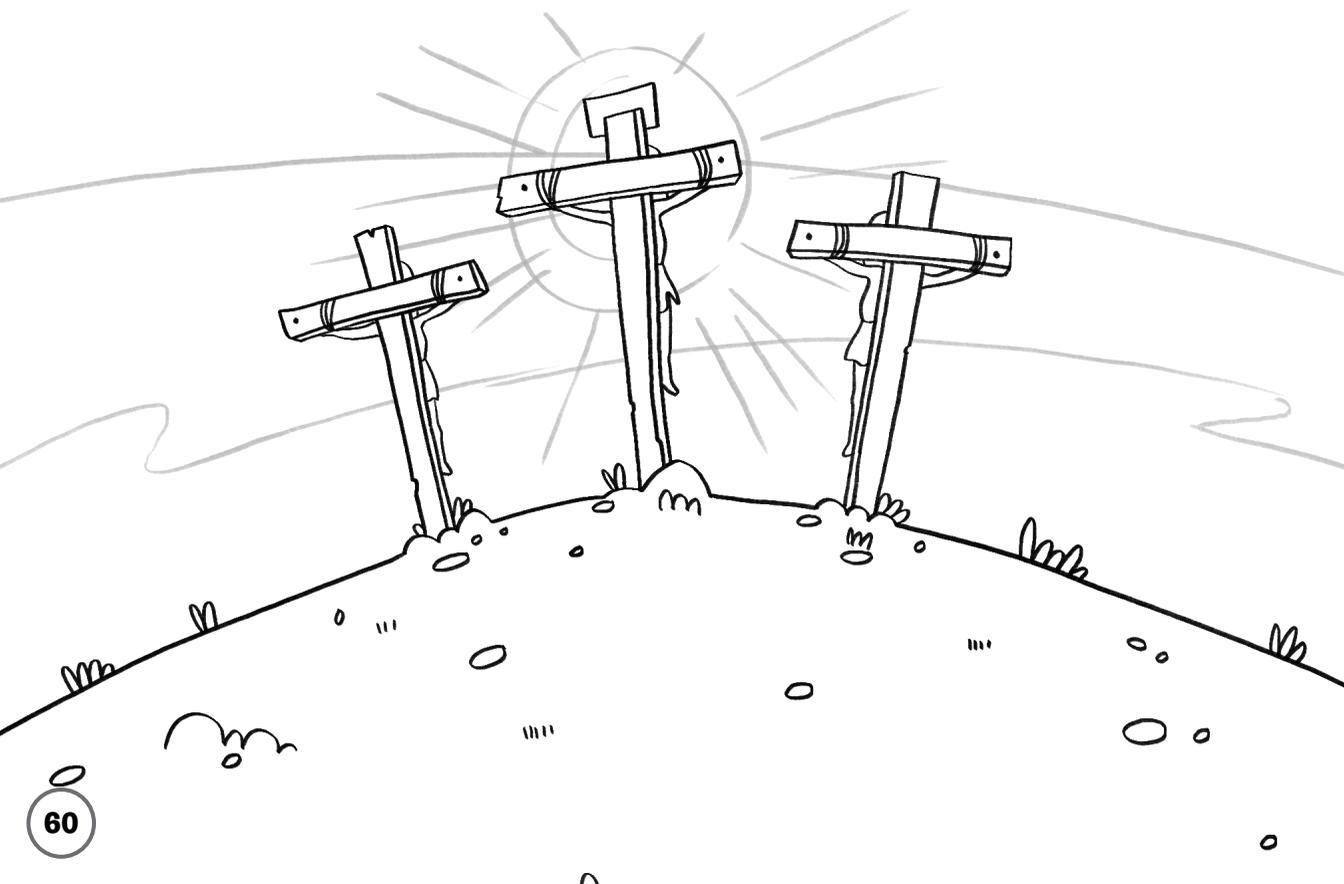


But what about sin? What about the selfish and mean things we do that keep us far from God? Did Jesus do anything about that?

He sure did. As Jesus was dying on the cross, God saw all the bad things we've ever done, the **STAIN** of our sin, appear on Jesus. Jesus became "dirty" with all that sin so that we would have a chance to be clean. So that we could be with God again.

Jesus died so we wouldn't have to. Jesus died so we could live with God in a world without sin, without sickness, without death. A world where Jesus is King.

You're probably asking: *If Jesus died, how can He be King?* That's a good question—with an even better answer. Because Jesus didn't **STAY** dead!



JESUS' DEATH FAMILY CONNECTION

MATTHEW 27:32-54



EVERYDAY TRUTH

**I can live with
God because Jesus
died for me!**

TALK

Why did Jesus die on the cross?

What happened to the "stain" of our sin when He died?

Dear
God...

PRAY

Dear God, thank You for sending Your Son, Jesus, to die on the cross for our sins and for inviting us to be children of the King! Amen.



HE IS ALIVE!

There was a rich man named Joseph

from a town called Arimathea. He wasn't the same Joseph that was married to Jesus' mother, Mary, or the Joseph with the coat of many colors. Joseph was a popular name back then.

Joseph was a **FOLLOWER** of Jesus. He loved Jesus. Like all of Jesus' followers, Joseph was very sad when Jesus died. He wanted to do something nice for Jesus, to show how much he **LOVED** Him.

So Joseph went to Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor, and asked if he could take care of Jesus' body. And Pontius Pilate said yes.



When important people died in Israel, they weren't buried in the ground. Instead, their bodies were placed in special **TOMBS** that were carved out of solid rock, like small caves. Joseph had a special tomb that he had made to use when he died someday. But he decided to give it to Jesus instead.

Jesus' body was placed inside Joseph's special tomb. A big **ROCK** was rolled in front of the cave, so no one could get in.

Some of the Pharisees and Sadducees went to Pilate and said, "What if Jesus' friends move the rock and take His body, and then say Jesus is alive again? That would cause a lot of trouble for you!"

That **WOULD** cause a lot of trouble, Pilate thought. So Pilate put guards outside the tomb to make sure no one moved the stone.

Jesus died on a Friday. All day Saturday His body lay in Joseph's tomb, and His friends were very, **VERY** sad.

Early Sunday morning, two of Jesus' friends came to visit the tomb. They were both women named **MARY**. Neither of them was Jesus' mother though. Mary was a popular name back then too.

The two Marys were very sad. They missed Jesus very much. They had brought **SPICES** and **PERFUME** to put on Jesus' body, which is something people did long ago.

"But how will we roll away the heavy stone?" they wondered.

Just as the two Marys were wondering what to do, **BOOM!**

The ground shook. Then an angel appeared right in front of them. The angel rolled the stone away from the grave. He looked toward the Roman guards, who were so scared they probably fainted and fell on the ground!



Then the angel looked at the two Marys and **SMILED**.

"Don't be afraid," he said. "I know you are looking for Jesus. But He isn't here. Jesus isn't dead anymore. He is alive!"

The two Marys couldn't believe what they were hearing!
Jesus was alive?

As they turned to go tell everyone what had happened, the two Marys bumped right into someone.

It was **JESUS!** Seeing Jesus filled their hearts with joy!

"Don't be afraid," Jesus said. "Go tell My disciples that I am alive again! Tell them they will see Me too!"



And that is exactly what happened. Jesus appeared to **ALL** His disciples. He explained to them why He'd had to die. He told them the great news that death had no power in God's kingdom.

Then Jesus told His friends it was time for Him to leave. From now on, spreading the kingdom of God would be **THEIR** job.

"But we need Your help!" His friends said.

Jesus smiled. "You will have My help. I will send you a Helper, who will fill you with **POWER**. The power of God! And you will do the kinds of amazing things you've seen Me do!"

And then Jesus rose up into the sky and disappeared!

The disciples were amazed. **AND** a little confused. *How would they spread the kingdom of God without Jesus? Who was this "Helper" Jesus was going to send? And how would he help?*

Jesus' friends didn't have answers to any of these questions, but they were about to get them in a big, big way.

HE IS ALIVE!

FAMILY CONNECTION

MATTHEW 28



EVERYDAY TRUTH

**Because Jesus is alive,
death has no power in the
kingdom of God!**

TALK

How do you think Jesus' friends felt when they saw Him again after His death?

What do you think it means to be filled with God's power?

Dear God ...

PRAY

Dear God, thank You that Jesus is alive and can be our friend even today. Help us to see Your power in our lives as we follow Him. Amen.

