



## **EASTER MESSAGE**

**2021**

It's not unusual for me to wake up in the middle of the night, be fully awake, and ready to start my day. Last night was one of those nights, but what happened was kind of strange. I woke up at three o'clock in the morning with these words on my mind: *there's someone at the door!* I must say that I felt a bit unsettled. Was it a warning that someone was actually at my door? Or, was it my mind playing tricks on me? For my peace of mind, I went to check it out, and no one was there. Relieved, I went back to bed.

Obviously, with all this activity, I couldn't go back to sleep. With my mind racing a mile a minute, I began to ponder over these words... For some reason, at some point it became clear to me that it might be a great title for the Easter message I was planning to write during the week. In my eagerness to find out if a story could actually be written with it in mind, I jumped out of bed and retrieved my laptop which I left on the dining room table the previous day. I sat down, took a few minutes to earnestly ask God for His inspiration, and I began to write...

### **THERE'S SOMEONE AT THE DOOR!**

It is Easter morning. Helen is at home alone, busy preparing lunch for her family. Her husband and her three sons are at church, celebrating this event. She doesn't believe in this fable of a man named Jesus who died on a cross, and was resurrected. She never believed in it, and most probably never will. For years now, she's been too busy taking care of her family, and working as an Administrative Assistant for a large Company in town, to even try to find out if there's some truth to this story. Anyhow, so far she's happy with her life. She doesn't feel the need 'to come to Jesus, and surrender her life to him', as her husband would like her to.

Lost in thought, a knock on the door startles her. She wipes her hands with the kitchen towel, and goes to find out who it is. Before opening the door, however, she takes a peek through the small window at the top of it. She sees a man, probably in his early thirties, with long brown hair and a beard, standing on her porch. She doesn't know him... She decides to ignore him, and walks back to her kitchen.

A minute or so later, she hears a knock again. It can't be her family coming back from church already... and they have a key. Nah... She figures it must be that man again. She's thinking that if he's smart, after a while he'll realize there's nobody home, and leave. She's wrong...

She hears a knock again for the third time. She can't believe it! She finally decides to get rid of this man once and for all. Somewhat annoyed by then, she walks briskly toward the door, and without opening it, she begins to engage in a brief conversation with him.

"Can I help you?"

"I'd like to speak with you for a moment, if I may."

"I'm sorry, but I don't open the door to strangers."

"I understand your reason for being cautious... But, I'm no stranger."

"Yes, you are! I saw you from my window, and I don't know you!"

"In a way, it's true, you don't... But I **do** know you."

"Impossible!"

"My dear Helen, would you believe me then if I say something about you that no stranger would know?"

Surprised that he knows her name, she hesitates before answering.

"Nope... Well, maybe?"

He then starts telling her about her childhood, some special moments that happened in her life, and even some things that she still keeps secretly in her heart; that nobody knows, not even her own husband... She always wanted it this way, too ashamed for what she had done in the past.

Dumbfounded by these revelations, she hesitates, but finally cracks the door open. The man smiles at her with such a dazzling smile, that it leaves her momentarily speechless.

"Why are you here?" she finally asks.

He doesn't answer, but simply looks at her as if he's looking right through her; deep into her soul, her heart... She can only see love, compassion, and tenderness in his eyes. The moment passes..., and then he asks: "Can I speak with you? Can we sit here on this step, and just talk for a moment?"

She isn't sure what to do, but since they'll be on the porch, she figures if something happens to her, she'll be able to yell and, hopefully, somebody will hear and come to her rescue... And she slowly steps outside. They both sit down, and he begins to tell his story...

"What I'm about to say may sound farfetched, and even unreal to you; but this is truly what happened... It all started on Friday when I was arrested, and accused of things I didn't do. I was brought by armed soldiers in front of my accusers, and as I stood there, listening to all the allegations against me, I didn't say a word... No one was there to defend me, and none of my friends were standing by my side; except one who was sitting outside in the courtyard.

But eventually, this friend denied me three times... After a short trial, a final verdict was rendered, and I was condemned to die on a cross...

"No one can imagine the pain I went through when they finally released me back into the hands of the soldiers... I was beaten so badly that, apparently, I was unrecognizable... As if the pain wasn't enough, they put a crown of thorns on my head, and sarcastically called me 'king'... I was mocked, ridiculed, and spat on... Bored with their little games, the soldiers eventually had me carry a heavy, wooden cross to the place where I was going to be crucified..."

At this point, he stops for a few seconds, breathes heavily, and goes on with his story. This time, however, she can see the pain written all over his face...

"I was laid on that cross... Nails were driven into my hands and feet... The cross was lifted up, and put into the ground with me hanging on it in total agony... I was mocked again and again by the soldiers, and the people standing at the foot of the cross... At some point, I was given vinegar to drink, but I refused it... After many agonizing and painful hours, I finally breathed my last breath, but not before I asked God, my Father, to forgive my enemies and murderers, because they didn't know what they were doing..."

Stunned, she now looks at him, her face showing mixed emotions: awe, and disbelief. However, she knows enough about this story to picture in her mind the next scene... They pierced his side with a spear. And in the end, his bruised and dead body was taken down from the cross, and was laid in a grave which was then sealed, and guarded...

She now realizes that this man, who's actually sitting next to her, pretends to be Jesus himself! But, who can tell if he's an impostor or not? Most people know about this story after all...

"What are you saying?" she finally exclaims. "This doesn't make any sense at all! If you're telling me the truth, which is hard to believe by the way, what are you doing here? It's impossible! You should still be in the grave!"

"I know I should, but I'm not..." he answers calmly. "It's true that I was dead, but I did what I told and promised before all this happened; that I would die, and rise the third day after my death. Trust me... I was dead, but I am indeed risen! And I am now here with you... You're not having a vision! See, and touch the scars on my hands, my feet, and on my side."

She looks at the scars, but is afraid to touch them... Who could prove that they're from his crucifixion? Could he have done this to himself? If so, then why? So many questions haunt her, but she can't explain why..., she just wants to believe him...

He continues. "I say to you, and to all who want to hear it, that if you confess me with your mouth, and believe in your heart that God raised me from the dead, you will be saved. God

will forgive you of your sins and, as He promised, He will give you eternal life... He also promised peace and joy, like you've never known before. You see, my mission on this earth was to take the place of every sinful human being on this planet that deserves the wrath of a holy God. In fact, everyone who believes in me, and in my sacrificial death, are made right with God. Only I could do this... No one else. No good works, none of your efforts to show yourself approved of God, and no religion can accomplish this. I came on this earth to show the way to the Father, to make known His love, and will for humanity. And today is the celebration of the ultimate accomplishment of God's plan... MY RESURRECTION!"

He startles her as he shouts these last two words. It sounds like a 'victory cry' over an enemy he just clearly defeated, and a war that is now finally over!

In the end, his words are so powerful and overwhelming, that tears are slowly rolling down her cheeks. She feels her heart beat so hard, that she thinks it might come out of her chest... Most of all though, she feels convicted by his words... She feels the need to ask him to forgive her for having been so stubborn, so proud, and so selfish; for having ignored him all those years; for having rejected him; for not having believed in him; for the things she's done that she isn't proud of... She can't stop... She's now babbling through tears that are now rolling down her face... She then asks him if he could give her this new abundant, and eternal life that he's talking about... Smiling tenderly at her, he puts his arm around her shoulders, and says: "All is well between us, Helen... From now on, learn of me and follow my teachings... Share this good news with those around you... Spread the light in this dark, and gloomy world... Do not worry or fear, for I am with you now, and forevermore. Put your faith and trust in me... Surrender your entire life to me."

"That's a lot to digest, and to understand..." she says with emotion in her voice. "Will you help me do this?"

"I will..., and be sure that I will always love you. And rejoice! We'll see each other again one day!"

She wipes her tears with the back of her hand. A peace and a joy like she's never known before fill her entire body. What an amazing feeling she's experiencing at this very moment.

However, Jesus now realizes that it's time for him to leave. Therefore, without saying another word, he stands up, embraces her, and slowly walks away. She watches him until she can't see him anymore... Still in a daze, she goes back inside, and despite all the feelings and emotions bubbling up inside of her, she finishes to prepare lunch.

A few minutes later, the door opens with her sons running in, laughing, and teasing each other, and with her husband following right behind them. The meal is now ready, and they all gather around the table. As usual, her husband begins to pray, but she interrupts him...

"If you don't mind, my love, I'd like to pray this time."

Surprised, they all look at each other.

"Of course, honey!.. But, I'm sure the boys will agree with me; we're a bit shocked right now!.. Did something happen while we were gone that we should know about?"

"YES!.." she answers with the most dazzling smile on her face. "You probably won't believe it..., but this morning Jesus was at our door!"

And she begins to tell her story...

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