



REFLECTIONS

March 31, 2013

**"Where, O death, is your victory?
Where, O death, is your sting?"**

1 Corinthians 15:55

Empty Cross

The morning darkness enveloped the empty cross that still stood on the rock laden hill called Golgotha, the Skull. The cross was empty, but the vivid image of Jesus' bowed head atop of it stirred restlessly in the mind. The marks across his face from the lashes that had ravaged his body were smeared by the tears He shed. And the image of his mother, watching in heart wrenching grief at his suffering, sat beneath it. Perhaps she even felt relief when she heard his voice speak those final words, "It is finished," and He gave up his spirit to breathe his last.

The crossbar that once held his outstretched arms hung empty, but jagged holes in it served as reminders of the nails torn through his hands to hold him there until his agonizing death. Beneath the crossbar, his legs once struggled to lift his body in desperate search of breathe until they could lift no more.

No one was near the cold walls of the dungeon where his arms had been chained and his body shredded with cuts and gashes from lashes of a scourging whip. And no one remained on the rock laden hill called Golgotha where the empty cross still stood.

The cross stood empty, but the memory of the trembling earth, the torn curtain, and the blackness that fell that Friday afternoon still darkened the mind. Not so far away, the tomb, secured by a large rolling stone, contained more than the body placed there. Hope was buried there too.

Then the golden glow of dawn began to rise silently behind the Mount of Olives. Its soft Light haloed the empty cross; and it revealed something more. The tomb was empty too. And the darkness was overcome by the radiance of a new day. Light spread its hope onto a glorious Easter Day.

"Where, O death, is your victory?

Where, O death, is your sting?"

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 15:55-57)

Christ has risen! He has risen indeed!

You are the light of the world,

Richard +

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