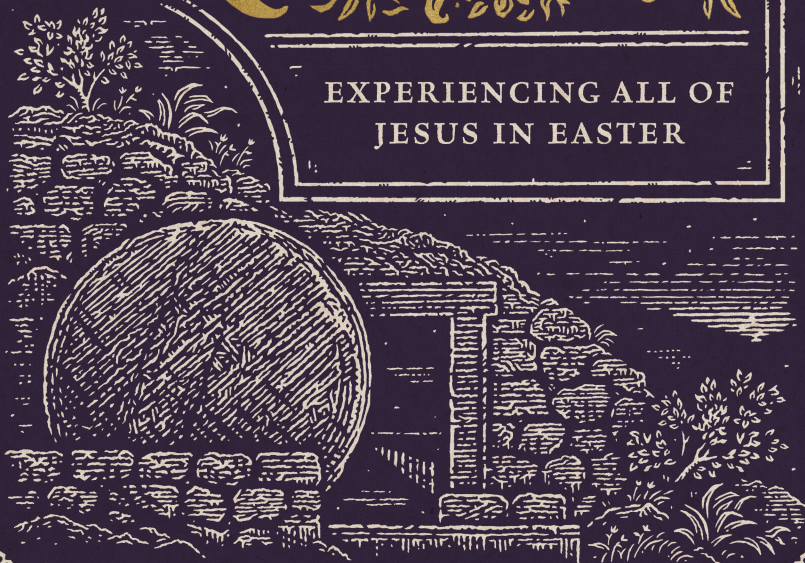




SCOTT JAMES

The **RISEN** *One*

EXPERIENCING ALL OF
JESUS IN EASTER



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 *One* 

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FOREWORD BY MATT MASON

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For my daughter, Bethan.
In Christ, love's redeeming work is done.

THE ORDER OF THINGS



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FOREWORD



BY MATT MASON

As you probably know, the New Testament book called “the Acts of the Apostles” captures the rapid expansion of the gospel in the Roman Empire. Wherever the gospel went, Luke records, “there was great joy in that city” (Acts 8:8). Followers of the Way were marked by joy, hope, holiness, sincerity, generosity, and compassion. Because of their Spirit-empowered witness, an explosion of gospel power would be felt throughout the known world, ground zero of which was a bloody cross outside Jerusalem on Good Friday and an empty tomb on Easter Sunday. Despite the best laid efforts of Satanic powers and principalities, the world was turned upside down by this fledgling band of

believers, who came to embrace an emphatic cry and creed that still rings in the air today: Christ has died, Christ has risen, Christ will come again!

To put it more personally, the apostle Paul would say it this way:

The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. (Gal. 2:20)

He loved me and died for me—that’s why I live this life of faith! Here’s the upshot: If the knowledge of the gospel leads to a life of faith and perseverance and mission—and it does—then we cannot possibly know the Easter story too well. Enter, this little book. It’s a tool meant to help you, perhaps along with family or friends, to remember the Story of the One who loved us and gave himself for us—to feel the still potent tremors of “It is Finished” and “He is Risen.”

Scott James faithfully serves as an elder at The Church at Brook Hills. One of his areas of passion

and gifting is to dazzle young hearts with the glory of Jesus and equip parents to do the same. This is why the devotional thoughts and discussion questions in this book, while useful to Christians of any maturity level, are written in a way to invite those who are young in faith or young in heart to join the conversation and gain understanding.

I hope the “great joy” that came to every city back in the time of Acts will be felt anew, right here and now, in every place where Holy Week is celebrated. I hope this little book will help you and yours find your voice in that ancient cry and creed: Christ has died, Christ has risen, Christ will come again. ✦

INTRODUCTION: “HE IS RISEN!”

Easter is about the triumph of something unique to Christianity: the resurrection. Each year on Easter morning we have the privilege of celebrating Jesus Christ, the Risen One, who has conquered sin and death on our behalf. One way to fully experience the joy of that glorious Resurrection Day is to remember and rehearse the pathway that led Jesus to the cross, the grave, and beyond. As we reflect on the full scope of Jesus’ life and ministry, it is my hope that we can grow in our appreciation of how He fulfilled God’s plan to reconcile all things to Himself (Col. 1:20).

This book will give you a glimpse of the path Jesus walked as He made His way to the cross. The

weekly devotionals pick up just after the arrival of the long-expected Savior, following Him as He reveals the good news of His kingdom, prepares Himself and His disciples for the sacrifice ahead, endures the agony of the cross, and triumphantly emerges from the grave in victory. Then, we'll see the Risen One unleash His people to testify in His name through the power of the Holy Spirit. You may recognize these themes as Christmastide, Epiphany, Lent, Easter, and Pentecost—seasons of the church calendar designed to guide us through the progression of God's unfolding plan of salvation.

The Risen One consists of twelve family-friendly weekly devotionals. Though the dates will change from year to year, if you use Easter Sunday as an anchor point and start this book ten weeks before, these devotionals will guide your family through the themes of Jesus' pathway to the cross in the months leading up to Easter, loosely coinciding with the seasons of the church calendar. Each

week includes a key passage of Scripture, a brief explanation to help you follow along, discussion questions (and suggested answers) to help you connect with kids, an additional question to help you dig a little deeper, and a suggested prayer point based on the theme of the week. There are also suggested passages for daily readings, which will help round out the themes of each week's devotional. Taken together, the weekly devotionals and daily readings form a three-month reading plan that will be sure to enrich your Easter celebration.

Perhaps you're picking this book up because you're familiar with *The Expected One: Anticipating all of Jesus in the Advent*. While *The Risen One* serves as a companion to—and continuation of—*The Expected One*, you should also feel free to use it on its own. Either way, I pray that it serves you as a faithful guide into the riches of God's Word during the months leading up to Easter. ♦



PART ONE

CHRIST

Has

COME



W E E K 1

LUKE 2:25-35

There was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon. This man was righteous and devout, looking forward to Israel's consolation, and the Holy Spirit was on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he saw the Lord's Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, he entered the temple. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to perform for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him up in his arms, praised God, and said,

Now, Master,
you can dismiss your servant in peace,
as you promised.
For my eyes have seen your salvation.
You have prepared it
in the presence of all peoples—
a light for revelation to the Gentiles
and glory to your people Israel.

His father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and told his mother Mary, “Indeed, this child is destined to cause the fall and rise of many in Israel and to be a sign that will be opposed—and a sword will pierce your own soul—that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.”

THE WAY TO THE CROSS

Long ago, God made a glorious promise. To a wayward people, lost in rebellion and sin, God extended a gracious hand and promised rescue. A Savior would come—the consolation and comfort of Israel. Today’s passage gives us a glimpse of what it must have been like for God’s people as they awaited this Savior. Generation after generation, they had been expectantly watching for their Messiah, the one who would rescue them from their sin. In Luke 2, Simeon represents the hope of an entire nation. But now, as he holds this baby in his arms, Simeon sees God’s promise fulfilled. Guided by the Holy Spirit, Simeon sees his salvation and rejoices—Hallelujah, Christ has come!

This long-expected Rescuer was Israel’s consolation and glory, but His saving work

would not be held in by Israel's borders. Simeon tells us this Savior would be a light to *all* nations. God's glorious promise of salvation had always been intended for Jews and Gentiles alike, and now Simeon rejoices at the arrival of Jesus, the Savior of the world. As he celebrates this joyful moment, however, Simeon reminds us that Jesus would accomplish this salvation through opposition and agony. Even as a baby, the shadow of the cross hung over Jesus' life; His saving sacrifice would be like a sword piercing his mother's very soul.



CONNECT
WITH
KIDS

Simeon had been watching for the Messiah, but who actually led him to Jesus?

The Holy Spirit—God Himself led Simeon to recognize his Savior.

What do you think Simeon meant when he said Jesus would cause the rise and fall of many?

Those who trust in Jesus will be saved from sin and death, but whoever rejects Him will remain lost in those things.

Simeon told Mary a sword would pierce her soul. Why would he bring up a painful thing like that in the middle of a happy moment?

To show us that Jesus' sacrificial death was part of God's rescue plan from the very beginning.

FURTHER REFLECTION

After years of darkness, the Holy Spirit led Simeon to recognize the Light of the world. How is the Spirit leading you to see and share the light of Jesus?

PRAYER POINT



Praise God for keeping His promise to send a Savior. Ask Him to help you be a part of His work as He reveals the light of salvation to all nations. ♦



DAILY READINGS

PSALM 24

ISAIAH 9:1-7

PSALM 135

JEREMIAH 31:1-14

GALATIANS 3:27-4:7



How is your family preparing for **EASTER?**

Through this short and sweet devotional (especially helpful if you're teaching little ones with short attention spans), Scott James brings to light the many things that the Easter story means for us not only through the season of Lent, but all year long.

Designed for both family and individual use, these twelve weekly devotions are timeless, biblical, and moving reminders of the miracle of Jesus' life, ministry, death, and resurrection. *The Risen One* is a perfect—and doable!—gift for any growing family or beloved friend who needs to be encouraged by all that Jesus has done for them (and what His empty tomb means for today) during the busy and the bustle of the Easter season, setting Him back in the center of it all. ✨

SCOTT JAMES serves as an Elder at The Church at Brook Hills. He and his wife, Jaime, have four children and live in Birmingham, Alabama, where he works as a pediatric physician. He is the author of the family worship books *The Expected One: Anticipating All of Jesus in the Advent*, *Mission Accomplished: A Two-Week Family Easter Devotional*, as well as the illustrated children's books *The Littlest Watchman* and *Where Is Wisdom?*

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