

Susanna

“After this, Jesus traveled about from one town and village to another, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God. The Twelve were with him, and also some women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases: Mary (called Magdalene) from whom seven demons had come out; Joanna the wife of Cuza, the manager of Herod’s household; Susanna; and many others.” Luke 8: 1-3

My name is Susanna, I am the lesser-known woman mentioned above but what Jesus did for me, and what he can do for you dear sisters, was the same miracle Mary Magdalene and Joanna experienced and just as important. My name means “white lily” which historically was an important symbol in early Biblical times. When Solomon built the temple of the Lord, *“the capitals on top were in the shape of lilies”* (1 Kings 7:22). The flower was used in the Bible to describe the depth of love *“I am a rose of Sharon, a lily of the valleys. Like a lily among thorns is my darling among the maidens...My lover is mine and I am his; he browses among the lilies...His lips are like lilies dripping with myrrh”* (Song 2:1, 16; 5:13)

White of course is a symbol of purity, which can only be attained through the saving Grace of Jesus who died on the cross and cleansed us from all sin. *“Then one of the elders asked me. “These in white robes—who are they, and where did they come from?... These are they who have come out to the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb”* (Rev 7:13, 14)

Scripture does not mention me by name, other than the single verse in Luke 8. It is not known beyond Jesus’ ministry if I was there, but scripture tells us what my sister-in-Christ, Mary Magdalene along with *“some of our women”* (Luke 24:22) did during Jesus’ ministry, holy week and the first Easter morning. Let me share with you a little bit of what happened after Jesus’ resurrection.

After Jesus’ glorious resurrection Easter morning, the job of the early Christians, men and women, was just beginning. Jesus left the all-important work to *“go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age,”* (Matt 28:19-20) to all Christians of all time, including each and every one of us. Jesus stayed on earth for about forty days after he rose from the dead. At that time, he left this earth, ascended to his throne in heaven, and is now seated at the right hand of God the Father, reigning over heaven and earth, until he returns at the last day to judge the living and the dead.

Did he leave his disciples alone and helpless in this sin-filled cruel world? Did he leave today’s Susannas (yes, you and me) alone and helpless in the sin-filled cruel world? No, he sent the Holy Spirit to be with us and in us, as we live our lives here on earth. Before leaving he promised, *“You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes*

on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8)

The apostles returned to Jerusalem where *“they all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.”* (Acts 1:15) Not long after, the day of Pentecost arrived, we were all assembled together and were *“filled with the Holy Spirit”* (Acts 2:4). Together this assembly listened as the apostle Peter delivered a stunning sermon. Afterward the Holy Spirit moved the hearts of three thousand people who repented and were baptized in the faith of God’s Son, the one and only Savior, Jesus Christ. From this time on, the believers, *“devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer”* (Acts 2:42). This was the birth of the early church dear sisters, our church, which continues to grow by the power of the Holy Spirit to this day.

My prayer for you dear sisters in the modern church is that you spend time in Scripture, get to know our Lord and Savior Jesus as he reveals his Truth in his Word. Walk beside him in his ministry, learn the details about what happened during holy week, follow him to the cross, and witness to his resurrection! The foundation of our faith.

Soon we will celebrate Pentecost and the Ascension. Spend time reading and meditating on all that happened in Acts 1 and 2. Richard Balge in The People’s Bible: Acts comments: “Our Savior did not retire when He ascended to heaven. He has not deserted us. He is involved and He is in charge. The apostles, Acts, and the Church’s work in every generation are His doing. This work is not only done for Him. It is done by him. He will return from heaven visibly, say the angels.”

Look, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced him. All the peoples of the earth will mourn because of Him. So shall it be. Amen. (Rev 1:7)

