

THE DAWNING OF FAITH

by Bradley N. Hill



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LAZARUS (m)(5 lines)
 ADELE (f)Child – Jairus’ daughter. (4 lines)
 TALIA (f).....Child –Daughter of Mary of Clopas. (4 lines)
 GALIL (m).....Skeptical visitor from Jericho. (3 lines)
 NICODEMUS (m)(4 lines)

(ALL LINE COUNTS ARE APPROXIMATE)

DURATION: 45 minutes

PRODUCTION NOTES

The scene is the upper room on Saturday night, the day after Jesus was buried. In attendance are some who had fled and some of the disciples, friends, and relatives, with a couple of unexpected others. They are bewildered by what has happened. Some are in grief, others angry. Everyone wonders, “What’s next?”

SET: The set is simple. The audience will see the inside three walls of the upper room. If desired, a simple framework may be constructed with a window and a door, but this is not a must. Candles and lanterns light the room. Cushions are placed around the stage for characters to sit on, as well as a few bar stools. A table is at Center Stage.

COSTUMES: Costuming is a simple “first century Palestine” look. Most churches have ample material in their storage. Robes, sandals, and headpieces are fine.

STAGING: Run time is about fifty minutes as written. However, this drama is written so that with relatively little effort, the director can delete an actor’s part. Most of the parts have one major speech and one or two small interactions.

SCRIPTURE: Bible references are included. These verses have been paraphrased by the author, in keeping with the dialogue and characterizations.

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PROPS

- ☐ bundles for spices
- ☐ plates
- ☐ bottles
- ☐ baskets of food (*including bread*)
- ☐ a simple tunic
- ☐ seven WWJD bracelets (*for the children and Martha*)

1 **AT START:** *ALL are On-stage when the play begins except*
2 *PETER, JAMES, and JOHN. Once the CAST is ready, the stage*
3 *lights go up while the audience remains in subdued lighting. The*
4 *CHILDREN play quietly on the floor at Downstage Center. Food and*
5 *bottles and other signs of a long evening are evident. The*
6 *conversations and movements are subdued. MOTHER MARY is*
7 *seated. She is obviously sad, with her head in her hands. All the*
8 *children begin to move about, looking out. They ad-lib saying,*
9 *“Where are they?” and “I hope they are coming.” Then PETER,*
10 *JAMES, and JOHN walk up the aisle from the rear of the auditorium.*
11 *NAVA and CHAVIVA react with excitement as they get closer.*

12
13 **NAVA:** I see them! It's Peter!

14 **CHAVIVA:** And Uncle James and John. They're here!

15
16 *PETER, JAMES, and JOHN enter. The CHILDREN hug them.*
17 *Others welcome them with a typical Jewish kiss. The three join the*
18 *group. There is informal chatter for a moment.*

19
20 **SALOME:** *(Stands up and approaches PETER, JAMES, and*
21 *JOHN.) John, I want to thank you for making sure we could come*
22 *back to this same upper room. It's so hard to think that you all*
23 *ate that last supper with Jesus here just a few days ago. (She*
24 *crosses to MOTHER MARY, who has her head in her hands,*
25 *crying silently. SALOME kneels beside MOTHER MARY and*
26 *puts her hands on her shoulders.) Mary, Mary... this is just so*
27 *hard, with your son in the grave behind that huge boulder.*

28
29 *SALOME is speaking hard words here. The other WOMEN comfort*
30 *MARY, and everyone needs to react appropriately to these words.*

31
32 It is all just so unbelievable—that shameful trial, the scourging,
33 the dreadful walk up the hill. I just thank Simon of Niger for
34 carrying that cross for poor Jesus. Mary, I'm amazed that you
35 watched as they drove in the nails and hoisted him high. I
36 couldn't. I didn't have the courage. It was horrible! But God was
37 there on that Hill of Skulls. Didn't you sense him in the breeze,

1 in the darkness that came at noon? The wind of the Spirit was
2 blowing across that hilltop!

3 **MOTHER MARY:** Yes, Salome. I know it, even if I don't yet feel it.
4 John, thank you for all you've done. You are already looking after
5 me as Jesus told you to. I want to thank you too, Joseph, for
6 lending us your own personal tomb, but forgive me if my
7 gratitude feels forced. Why oh why did my son have to go back
8 to Jerusalem? He knew this was going to happen. Nobody—
9 certainly none of you—seemed able to dissuade him. It was as
10 if his face was set like flint to go to Jerusalem. Why couldn't that
11 crowd chant "Jesus, Jesus" instead of "Barabbas, Barabbas"?
12 What came over them? Why, it had only been a week since they
13 had shouted, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name
14 of the Lord!" (*Matthew 21:9*). Fickle crowd. My son said that not
15 one stone would be left on top of another. This whole place
16 deserves to be destroyed by God himself. So here we are at the
17 close of the Sabbath. What are we all supposed to do now?
18 What are we waiting for?

19 **JOHN:** Mother. (*He is hesitant about using this word. He too comes*
20 *over and puts a hand on MOTHER MARY's shoulder.*)

21
22 *SALOME goes back to her place.)*
23

24 For any of you who don't know, Jesus told us, "Woman, behold
25 your son; John, behold your mother" (*John 19:26*). I remember—
26 uh, Mom—how you told us the story of that old prophet Simeon,
27 back when you took baby Jesus to the temple to be blessed.
28 That old prophet said a sword would pierce your soul, and it has.
29 (*He looks around the room.*) I am amazed that so many of you
30 are here, but I don't know all of you. (*He gestures to HADAR.*)
31 You are welcome here, but who are you? Were you at the cross?

HADAR: Yes, I was there at the place of crosses. I am Hadar, the brother of the man who hung on the cross next to Jesus. Is my brother in paradise with Jesus? And what about all the things Jesus said while he was dying? I couldn't believe my ears. He forgave those who were killing him. He blessed my brother and gave him such great consolation. You could see it on his face. He talked to God like he was family. "Father, I surrender my spirit to you!" Nobody talks like that when they are dying in such agony. I need to know more! Forgive me if I have intruded. I just followed you all from a distance and ended up here. I don't know anybody except that centurion. (*He points to the CENTURION.*) Everybody in Jerusalem knows and fears him. The centurion, the soldiers, the Romans—everybody knew Jesus was innocent. (*Speaking to the CENTURION with ire*) So you were just following orders, I suppose?

CENTURION: Yes, I was! Your brother was a common thief. He deserved what he got. In fact, he said so himself!

ALL react negatively.

I don't try people or sentence them. That is above my pay grade. Rome brings law and order. It brings civilization even if this rabble of Jews doesn't understand or appreciate it.

CENTURION takes a breath. ALL react negatively again.

I do apologize. I think I might be the only non-Jew here. I will leave if you wish.

HADAR: So leave already.

MOTHER MARY: No, let him stay. I sense he has more to say.

CENTURION: I heard what Jesus said about forgiving those who didn't know what they were doing. He was looking right at me. I told a soldier to give him some wine to drink, thinking he'd appreciate it, but—well, he didn't, did he? Not at first. Anyway, the darkness that fell, it scared me. It was not natural. Perhaps it was from Zeus or Thor.

ALL react to the names of these pagan gods.

CENTURION: *(Continued.)* The gods were angry, and the shattering storm descended on us. I have been in many battles. I have been wounded almost unto death more than once. I have watched men die. I have even killed many. But I've never once been afraid until that suffocating blackness enveloped the earth. I have never seen a man die like this Jesus, as you call him. Surely he was innocent, a son of gods. When it lifted, I speared him in the side to make sure he was dead.

ALL react.

I had to convince our procurator, Pontius Pilate himself, that he was really gone. He could hardly believe it. But Mother Mary, I have something for you. Out of respect for the honorable way Jesus died, the grace upon his dying lips, and because I fear the gods, I took this tunic away from my soldiers. I thought you might like to have it as a remembrance of your son.

He brings the tunic over to MOTHER MARY, who receives it in disbelief and cries over it.

CHAVIVA: *(Crossing to MOTHER MARY, she feels the tunic.)* You made this, Mama Mary?

MOTHER MARY nods.

It's beautiful! I can't even see one seam in it anywhere. It must have taken you a long time to make it. You made one for Uncle James too, didn't you?

MOTHER MARY nods.

I hope I can learn to sew this well when I get older. If I have sons, I want to give them something like this before they leave home. Thank you, Mr. Centurion, for giving this back. You can't be as bad as everybody says you are.

MOTHER MARY: *(Reprimanding.)* Hush, Chaviva!

1 **CHAVIVA:** Oh, my. So sorry.

2 **CENTURION:** No offense taken. *(Pause.)* I've got to ask, why are
3 we all here? What happens next?

4 **MARY MAGDALENE:** Next? There is no "next." It is finished. Didn't
5 you hear him? The tunic—may I see it? *(She crosses to*
6 *MOTHER MARY and holds the tunic to her cheek.)* But how—I
7 saw your soldiers gambling over it. How did you get it?

8 **CENTURION:** *(With irony.)* My soldiers tend to do what I tell them
9 to do. They also "just obey orders."

10 **MARY MAGDALENE:** Mother Mary... *(Pauses, at a loss for*
11 *words.)*

12 **MOTHER MARY:** Yes, Mary of Magdala? What is on your heart?

13 **MARY MAGDALENE:** Mary, you spent so many hours weaving
14 this for Jesus. *(She pauses.)* As one who followed him. I saw
15 this tunic on him all the time. This will be a reminder of those
16 days. I owe him, or rather owed him, everything. But when I first
17 met Jesus, I was, well, demon-possessed. There was this alien
18 power in me that poured terrible thoughts into my head and
19 threw me into depression and rages. As time went on, it only got
20 worse. I was headed for a dismal death. Then Jesus called them
21 all out, and I was free! *(Pause.)* I hope it was a consolation to
22 Jesus that at least some of those who loved him were at the
23 cross when he was dying: his mother; you, John; and some of
24 us women. Just twenty-four hours ago. It seems like an eternity
25 already since we watched them take his body down and followed
26 Joseph here to his tomb. It happened so fast, we really didn't
27 have a chance to care for his body very well. Maybe those of us
28 who were actually there should go back in the morning and do it
29 right. What do you think, Peter?

30 **PETER:** I hear you loud and clear: "Those of us who were actually
31 there." Thanks, Mary. I wasn't at the cross. Yes, I have been
32 called the Rock. Ironically, it seems. You are all right about me.
33 I was so full of bravado. I said I would never deny him, that I
34 would die for him. In my defense, I am the only one who drew a
35 knife to fight for him, but he told me to put it away. After almost
36 beheading the servant of the high priest, what was I supposed
37 to do—just let them spear me? I did follow him into the courtyard,
38 but as you all know by now, I denied ever knowing him—just as

1 Jesus said I would. When the cock crowed, Jesus fixed me with
2 those penetrating eyes of his and looked right into my soul. I was
3 undone. I hear Judas hung himself. If I were not such a coward,
4 I might just do the same—but that would not allow me to have a
5 truly Jewish burial. I am here because I need you all. I loved him
6 too. I had faith in him. I even walked on the water! How about
7 you, John? *(In good humor.)* You ever do that—walk on water?

8
9 *JOHN shakes his head, smiling.*

10
11 **PETER:** *(Continued.)* Speak up. What? No, I didn't think so. I
12 watched those miracles just like you all did. I ate that miraculous
13 bread and fish. I need you all because I failed so miserably.
14 Please, Mary, John, Salome, can you forgive me? I only wish I
15 could make it up to Jesus somehow, that he could touch me and
16 restore me. He said I'd be a fisher of men, but I am myself just a
17 drowned carp. Soon it will be light, the first day of the week. Then
18 we should probably disperse. The soldiers and spies will be
19 looking for us.

20 **MARTHA:** Oh Peter, hush. Just listen to you. Of course we forgive
21 you! Stop groveling. WWJD, Peter. WWJD.

22 **PETER:** Martha, what's WWJD?

23 **ALL CHILDREN:** *(In unison, holding up wrists to display their*
24 *bracelets.)* It means, "What Would Jesus Do?"

25 **MARTHA:** *(Holds up her wrist.)* See? Even I have it on a bracelet.
26 What would Jesus do? He would touch you and say he forgave
27 you and say something like, "Go and sin no more." We loved
28 having Jesus come to our home—Mary over there, and Lazarus.
29 By the way, how are you feeling, brother? You sure cleaned up
30 nicely! Our home was Jesus' home! He was more welcome there
31 than at his own home. His brothers and sisters thought he was—
32 shall we say—odd. So he came to us at Bethany. I too sat at his
33 feet and listened to him. I cared for him and cooked for him.
34 Right, Mary?

35
36 *MARY nods.*

1 **MARTHA:** *(Continued.)* Right. Lazarus, when you died, I was angry
2 with Jesus. He took his own sweet time to get there. But when
3 he took me by the shoulders and said, “I am the resurrection and
4 the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live,
5 and everyone who lives and believes in him will never die. Do
6 you believe this?” he asked me. And I said, “I believe you are
7 the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into this world”
8 *(John 11:25-27)*. And just as he said, “If you believe, you will see
9 the glory of God,” *(John 11:40)* he called you out of that foul-
10 smelling grave, Laz. So, where does that leave me now? I still
11 believe *in* him, but I don’t know what to believe *about* him. How
12 can it be that he who could call my brother out of the grave could
13 not even save his own life? *(Teasing LAZARUS.)* By the way,
14 brother, this just means you have to die all over again.

15 **LAZARUS:** Thanks for reminding me, sis. If it were up to the chief
16 priests, it would be sooner rather than later. Remember our
17 dinner? Jesus was there. A big crowd gathered. I guess they
18 were curious to see me.

19 **CHAVIVA:** Of course! How many times do people get to see a
20 zombie? *(She walks toward him like a zombie.)* But you don’t
21 seem like a zombie. You seem pretty normal. When Jesus
22 brought you back from the dead, he didn’t just make you un-
23 dead but truly normal, right?

24 **LAZARUS:** *(Laughing.)* Right, Chaviva. Just a normal man with a
25 near-death experience. Wait—a *real* death experience. Anyway,
26 the chief priests still want me gone. I guess I am living testimony
27 that Jesus had the power to raise the dead. Maybe he still does.

28 **MARTHA:** In that case, how can it be that Jesus who seemed to
29 have power over death itself is now dead? What will happen
30 now? Maybe nothing. Maybe there is more to come. Who
31 knows? *(She pauses and looks out, as if through a window.)* It’s
32 almost light. Mary, you’re right. We should probably take those
33 spices and head up to the grave.

34 **CENTURION:** You might have a problem there. That tomb is
35 sealed off. You’d be arrested if you tried to do that. And the
36 legate, my superior, has posted a guard there. You’d never even
37 get close.

1 **MOTHER MARY:** Joseph, maybe you could try talking to Pilate
2 about it.

3
4 *ALL murmur opinions.*

5
6 **JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA:** Well, we'll see. Maybe I could. He
7 seems suddenly amenable. It might be because his wife warned
8 him about all this. I am still, after all, a prominent member of the
9 Sanhedrin.

10
11 *Negative murmurs from ALL.*

12
13 Yes, yes, the Sanhedrin. The very group that voted to condemn
14 Jesus to death. The very group that sent the temple guard to
15 Gethsemane to arrest him. The very group that paid Judas thirty
16 pieces of silver to betray him with a kiss. I just want you to know
17 that I wasn't there when they voted. They met in secret at night,
18 which is illegal. They did it anyway. I guess I didn't get the memo.
19 A Pharisee friend of mine, Nicodemus here, had told me about
20 Jesus. He was intrigued, so I went out a couple times to hear
21 him teach.

22 **NICODEMUS:** I had heard him teach a few times. He spoke with
23 authority like none I had ever heard before. My colleagues, the
24 Pharisees, always tried to trap him with trick questions like, "To
25 whom should we pay taxes?" Or, "What should we do with this
26 woman caught in adultery?" But he always seemed to turn the
27 tables on them. I saw in him true authenticity. I watched as he
28 healed people, fed them, touched them. He wasn't afraid of
29 being unclean. When he died, I knew that a just and righteous
30 man had died a wrongful death, and so I helped Joseph with
31 some spices and other supplies.

32 **JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA:** Thanks for that, Nicodemus. When he
33 came to Jerusalem this last week, I was appalled at first. He
34 charged into the temple and declared to the money changers
35 that the temple was to be a house of prayer for all people. Then
36 I applauded! I laughed out loud in delight when I heard this! I had
37 long thought that this holy place had simply become a den of
38 thieves. In one fell swoop, he changed it all—at least for the

moment. Probably by tomorrow they will all be back, now that the threat of Jesus of Galilee is gone. Why am I here? News of what I have done is making its way through the Sanhedrin. They are asking, "Why would a rich man like Joseph here put such a poor, condemned, subversive heretic in his own personal tomb?" That is a hard one to answer. Perhaps it was because I knew this trial was a mockery of justice and the essence of Judaism. Perhaps because I knew Jesus was not guilty of anything. Perhaps it is my protest against these wretched Romans! Excuse me, centurion. Present company not included. Just my way of fighting back, I guess. But by tomorrow, I will be cast out of the Sanhedrin. My business in Jerusalem will be destroyed. I have nowhere else to go. So here I am with you, waiting and wondering. What's next?

Loud knocking on the door causes consternation among ALL. Finally PETER goes to the door, looks through a crack, and opens it.

PETER: Relax, everyone. It's just Elizabeth.

The CHILDREN are excited and go to meet her too.

ELIZABETH: What do you mean, "just Elizabeth"? I've been walking all night to get here. I'm not so young anymore, you know! Poor Zacharias. With his bad knees and feet and, well, pretty much bad everything, he couldn't come with me. With the directions you gave me to this place, Salome, I probably couldn't find my own head!

Ad-lib murmurs of "Welcome," "Glad you are here," "Shalom," etc.

When I heard that my nephew Jesus was executed like a criminal, I just had to come. Mary, I for one know how you might feel. My son John was also executed—beheaded by the whim of some promiscuous princess living with the self-proclaimed King of the Jews, Herod. This is not right. *(Struggles for words.)* It is despicable, horrid, unrighteous, unjust. The Lord God above

will not let these deaths go unavenged! Like David prayed in the Psalms, "Let death take my enemies by surprise; let them go down alive to the grave" (*Psalm 55:15*). "O God, break the teeth in their mouths" (*Psalm 58:6*). And worse! (*Takes deep breaths, gets control.*) But Mary and all the rest of you, listen to me. My son went to his grave believing Jesus was the promised Messiah. He believed like David said, "You do not give me up to Sheol, or let your faithful one see the pit" (*Psalm 16:10*). Didn't he say that after three days he would rise from the grave? Didn't he? James, you are his brother. Didn't he say that?

JAMES: Well, something like that. We are not sure what he meant. Maybe he meant the temple would be restored, or that God would take him up to heaven like Elijah or Enoch or something. We've talked about that. We think he was probably talking in a parable again.

ELIZABETH: Well, I guess we will find out soon enough what those words mean or don't mean, won't we? In the meantime, let me sit down. These old bones are tired out. Is there anything to eat around here?

MARTHA: Kids, could you help me here with some food and plates?

The CHILDREN set out bread and plates.

NAVA: You're a great cook, Aunt Martha. I remember that Jesus stayed at your house a lot. You told me once how you complained to Jesus about how Aunt Mary wasn't doing any work. You asked Jesus to tell her to get off her behind and help out.

MARTHA: That wasn't quite what I said—

NAVA: And that time Uncle Lazarus died, you scolded Jesus for not coming sooner and saving him.

MARTHA: I didn't exactly scold him—

NAVA: And another time after Jesus fixed Lazarus, you were serving a big dinner at the Bethany house. Jesus was there too. Aunt Mary spilled a whole bottle of Capurnaum Number Five on Jesus' feet and had to wipe it all up with her hair.

1 **MARTHA:** That's not quite what happened, but looking back, I can
2 see that we unknowingly prepared Jesus for burial.

3 **JAMES:** I admit that there's so much I don't understand. Jesus was
4 my older brother—a lot older. In some ways, I hardly knew him.
5 He left home just about the time I came to appreciate having an
6 older brother. I suppose he thought I could look after Mom.
7 Actually, Jesus kind of disowned me. He had been on some kind
8 of preaching tour, a casting-out-demons-and-miracles tour in
9 Galilee. Huge crowds were gathering. Then we heard he had
10 come home, so we went out to see if we could reel him in a bit.
11 This whole "being the Messiah" thing was getting out of hand.
12 Lots of people were saying he was out of his mind. Our own
13 scribes said he had Beelzebub in him. What were we to think? It
14 was embarrassing! We got to the synagogue, but we couldn't
15 get near him for the crowds, so we pushed into the doorway as
16 far as we could. We managed to get a message to him, saying,
17 "Your mother and your brothers and sisters are outside asking
18 for you" (*Matthew 12:47*). That's when he publicly disowned us.
19 Talk about shame! We were chagrined. Horrified! He said for all
20 to hear, "Who is my mother and my brothers?" (*Matthew 12:48*).
21 Then he pointed to *other* people there and said, "Here are my
22 mother and my brothers! Whoever does the will of God is my
23 brother and sister and mother" (*Matthew 12:49-50*). Well, that
24 did it. Mother here was broken-hearted. She left, devastated.
25 You talk about a spear thrust into his side, centurion? Well, that
26 one went all the way through. We stumbled home and wept. So
27 why am I here? I guess because my mother is here. And
28 everyone who Jesus loved is here. I still love my brother, no
29 matter what. Shall we do a wake for Jesus now? What's next?

30 **WIDOW OF NAIN:** "What's next?" you ask, James. Whatever
31 happens, it will be because of the power of God. Most of you
32 probably don't remember me, do you? I am from Nain, a village
33 near Galilee. My husband has been gone a long time. Mary,
34 believe me when I tell you I know something of what you are
35 going through. My dear husband Uri has been gone twenty
36 years. Life has been hard. But he left me with a wonderful son,
37 Yair. His name means "enlightened." He was our light. Still is our
38 light because of Jesus. Yair took sick and died, leaving two little

ones—my grandchildren, Melek and Anna, (*She puts her arms around them.*) who are with me today. We were headed to the gravesite with Yair's body, crying out in our grief. Then Jesus interrupted our procession.

ANNA: Can I tell the rest of the story? (*WIDOW OF NAIN nods.*)

Jesus said to Grandma—well, he said to all of us, “Do not weep.” Then he came forward and touched the sling we were carrying Daddy on, and the bearers stood still. Jesus said, “Young man, I say to you, rise!” (*Luke 7:14*). Then Daddy sat up and began to speak! Jesus gave him back to us. It was just so amazing!

NAVA: Anna, that is so awesome! Jesus stopped the whole funeral procession? Everybody stopped crying? Then your daddy just, like, sat up? I bet everybody freaked out, right? I bet they dropped the sling!

WIDOW OF NAIN: Right, Nava. Everybody was terribly afraid, but you could hear them praising God, saying, “A great prophet has risen among us!” (*Luke 7:16*) and “God has looked favorably on his people!” (*Luke 1:68*). This word about Jesus and what he did spread throughout Judea and all the surrounding country. Jesus turned the sorrow of death into rejoicing, he gave me a garland for ashes, he gave them (*Gestures to MELEK and ANNA*) back a father. I don't know what will happen next, except for this: he holds the power of death, so we have to believe that somehow he will triumph even yet.

MELEK tugs on her.

Yes, Melek? You wanted to say something?

MELEK: Yes, I just want to say that I love this Jesus man. I am only ____, [*Insert actual age*] but I have seen a lot of dead people. I have never seen anything like this, though. One moment people were weeping, the next they were dancing. Who can do that? Jesus changed everything. I was so sad and so worried. What were we going to do now that Daddy was dead? Grandma would have to raise me and my sister, and she just has this tiny one-room house that Grandpa built before he died. Daddy was just teaching me a little about how to farm and take care of the chickens. We were going to go fishing. I thought I would never

1 get to fish with him again, but now we can! Thank you, God, for
2 giving my daddy back to me. I wish he could be here today, but
3 he had to work. I'm just so glad he's alive!

4 **LAZARUS:** If anybody can say thanks to God for giving back life,
5 it's me! I'm Lazarus. My name means "God is my help," and that
6 sure turned out to be true! I know why I am here. I am here
7 because I believe that this is where the kingdom Jesus spoke so
8 often about will be built. The kingdom is where the Lord God
9 almighty reigns, where his will is done, and as I look around here,
10 I see that you have all been touched—no, transformed by Jesus
11 in some way. What can I say? From the dark void I heard Jesus'
12 distant voice call my name. "Lazarus, Lazarus, come on out of
13 there" (*John 11:43*). By the way, Martha, I heard what you said:
14 "He stinks."

15 **MARTHA:** Well, I was right. It took us all day to get the stink of
16 death and spices and ointment off of you.

17 **LAZARUS:** You scrubbed me raw! But thanks.

18 **MARTHA:** Don't mention it.

19 **LAZARUS:** Like Melek and his grandmother here, I can attest to
20 the resurrection power of Jesus. That makes it so hard to
21 understand. If I went to the tomb where he now lays, could I call
22 out, "Jesus, come forth"? And would he come forth? I don't think
23 so. I don't have that kind of power. Nobody does. Those who
24 hated him taunted him with my resurrection, saying to him up
25 there on the cross, "He saved others, let him save himself!"
26 (*Matthew 27:42*). And he didn't. He just hung there, and finally
27 died. (*Overcome*.) I wasn't there, but... thank you, Joseph, for
28 stepping up. And you, centurion. I would have hated you, but I
29 see that Jesus has changed you also. I am just going to wait
30 here, believing that someday I will again hear the voice of Jesus
31 calling me forth.

32 **ADELE:** Ahem—ah, as long as we are talking about coming back
33 from the dead, well, that happened to me too!

34 **MOTHER MARY:** What is your name, child? Are you here alone?

ADELE: My name is Adele. My father is Jairus. Maybe you've heard of him. He's an official in the synagogue. One day I got so, so sick. Daddy was worried and sent a messenger to Jesus, asking him to come and heal me. Jesus started to come, but I died before he could get there. Jesus told Daddy, "Don't be afraid; only believe, and she will be well" (*Luke 8:50*). When Jesus arrived at our house, he would not let anyone go in with him except Peter, James, and John, and my parents. They tell me everyone was crying and mourning for me. Jesus said, "Don't cry; the child is not dead—she is only sleeping!" (*Luke 8:52*). They all made fun of him, because they knew that I died. But Jesus took me by the hand and called out, "Get up, child!" My life returned, and I got up at once. Jesus ordered them to give me something to eat. I was so hungry! I guess getting sick and dying really works up your appetite. My parents were astounded. I am not here alone. Daddy is over there. (*Points out to congregation and waves.*) Hi, Daddy! Daddy thought we should come here tonight, but I don't know why. Why are we all here? What is supposed to happen?

TALIA: Well, I wasn't going to say anything, but Adele here made me brave enough to speak up. My name is Talia. My mom is that other Mary, the wife of Clopas. She is over there. (*Points toward audience. Looks toward PETER.*) Oh, I see Peter over there. Remember me, Peter?

PETER: Well, ah, no, not really. Clopas? Not sure I remember him.

TALIA: Well, anyway, I was one of the kids you tried to block from seeing Jesus. It was near Jerusalem. People were bringing their babies to him. You and some others told us to go away. Then Jesus told you to stop that and to let us through, and he said, "Let the little children come to me and don't stop them, for it is to these that the kingdom of God belongs" (*Matthew 19:14*). I don't know about any kingdom, but I ran up to Jesus. He put his arm around me and hoisted me up onto his lap. I am just here because Mom came. But now I have made some new friends. Hi Adele, Anna, Melek, Nava, and Chaviva.

ALL CHILDREN: (*Together.*) Hi, Talia!



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DAWNING OF FAITH

by Bradley K. Hill.

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