

TO HAVE NO DOUBT

by Benjamin Splittgerber



“DO YOU KNOW how many times he was sighted after his body went missing?” the Roman official asked, looking down the length of his nose at Gaius.

Considering the question, Gaius was certain no one knew the answer. Perhaps it was in the dozens, but he wasn’t sure. He was only told about a handful of instances. He shook his head as he answered. “No, sir.”

The Roman official nodded slowly and paced the room, allowing time to pass by, hoping that growing doubt and anxiety would fill Gaius during the moment of silence.

Gaius was charged with treason and blasphemy for associating with what his fellow Romans call a dangerous superstition, followers of Christos.

Now he was sitting on a chair in the middle of the interrogation chamber. Besides the official questioning him, the only other occupant was a silent guard who stood near the room’s sole door.

“Did you see him alive after his supposed resurrection?” the Roman official asked after he deemed the necessary amount of time had passed.

At least Gaius knew the answer to this question.

He wasn't at the tomb the day that the Master rose. He was out of town when he appeared in the disciples' hideout. As a Roman citizen, it was easier and safer for him to travel, and so he was selected to run errands and bring supplies. He was in another part of the province attending family business when the Master rose into the clouds. That, along with the numerous other occasions he appeared, Gaius wasn't there.

Except one.

"I saw him traveling on his way to Emmaus," Gaius said. "He was walking with my fellow brothers, and I was walking in the opposite direction. We stopped for a few moments to talk before going on our way."

The Roman Official's brow furrowed. "Yes, we've heard reports of that supposed encounter." He took a step closer to Gaius. "They all state that no one recognized this Christos as they walked and talked with him until he, quite conveniently, vanished." The Roman official stared directly into Gaius' eyes. "Tell me, when you happened upon him, did you recognize him?"

Gaius sighed. In truth, he did not. He recalled looking at the man and speaking with him, but he didn't recognize him. Now, looking back, the man's face was blank in his memory. No one recognized the Master until he had broken bread with the disciples at Emmaus. Another event he had missed. He was only told who this man was afterward.

"No, I didn't," Gaius confessed to the official.

"So, it could have been anyone disguised as this Christos that you spoke to, could it not? Playing a little treachery perhaps?"

Gaius didn't respond.

The Roman official grunted. "With that said, I'll repeat my previous question. "Did you see him alive after his supposed resurrection?"

Gaius' immediate future looked bleak. Even as a Roman citizen he could still easily be executed. At least being a citizen

afforded him a quicker death if it came to that. Besides that, there was forced labor or various corporal punishments. He should have been afraid. He should be cowering at every word the official said to him. He should be willing to give up the names and locations of his fellow Christos followers, but he wasn't. Instead, as he silently prayed, he felt a warmth that conveyed peace and love. Something he only felt when he was in the presence of the Master.

"Shall you have me repeat the question?" The Roman official asked. His voice betrayed impatience. "I hope you don't force me to use the persuasive tools to encourage you to answer."

"I'm sorry. No. I never saw the Master after he rose from the dead," Gaius answered truthfully.

The Official's eyebrows raised. "So, what you were told came from secondhand sources. Then how can you believe it, then? Your life is on the line based on what some unreliable people have told you. Don't you have any doubts?"

Looking the official back in the eye, Gaius smiled earnestly. Even if he was reunited with the Master today, or another, it didn't matter. "No, I have no doubt. I believe every word."