

He Is Risen!

by
Alastair Macdonald

I awaken the priests in their temple beds.
Cock-a-doodle-do!
The Roman guards, those sleepy heads.
Cock-a-doodle-do!
I'm Machai the rooster, king o' the Mount,
"Awake Jerusalem!" I cry out,
"Cock-a-doodle, cock-a-doodle, cock-a-doodle-do!
Cock-a-doodle-doodle-doodle, cock-a-doodle-do!"

The priests complain, the Pharisees gripe,
"Who is this man called Jesus Christ?
Some say He's a prophet sent by God
Or perhaps the Messiah, an obvious fraud!
Whoever He is, a dangerous man
With strange ideas of God's commands.
He angers the Romans, the crowds He attracts,
We need to get rid of Him, that's a fact!"

Jerusalem's ready, the Passover feast,
With thousands of people gathered to meet
Family and friends remember anew
God's grace and deliverance of the Jews.
The man named Jesus and followers come
Into the city, a gigantic throng
Of simple folk from the Galilee shore,
As they follow this man they truly adore.

Into the city, a donkey He rides,
Surrounded by people on every side.
They sing God's praises, glory on high
"Hosanna in the highest!" I hear them cry.
Palm leaves wave, placed in His path
Such honor and glory He truly hath.
But quietly Jesus takes it all in,
The calm in the storm surrounding Him.

He makes His way to the Temple gates
Where an angry look appears on His face.
Merchants are busy at their stalls
Selling goods in those hallowed halls.
Upends the stands and goods go flying,
Exclaims in anger and then decrying,
“How dare you abuse this sacred place?
The house of God you have abased!”

He tells His disciples, the chosen twelve
Into Jerusalem they should delve
To an upper room where dinner's prepared,
The Passover Seder they will share.
They gossip and tell events of the day,
Ignoring their teacher and turn away,
‘Til Jesus goes down on bended knees
And washes their feet despite their pleas.

Judas Iscariot, disciple of Christ
Has met with priests that very same night.
He agrees to betray his friend and Lord
With a bag of silver as his reward.
As they sit down at the table to eat.
Jesus predicts this harmful deceit.
He points to Judas, looks him in the face;
Judas gets up and leaves that place.

With this talk of foreboding gloom
The disciple Peter tells all in the room,
“I will follow you to prison and death.
Will honor you until my last breath.”
Jesus looks up and tells His friend,
“I declare before this very night ends,
Deny me you will, three times in row
And then you will hear this rooster crow.”

Jesus blesses the bread and declares,
"This is my body with you that I share.
Do this in remembrance in days ahead,
Whenever you share your daily bread."
He takes the cup, blesses the wine
Quietly says, "Remember this sign.
For this is my blood which is given for you
For your redemption, be born anew!"

During the meal, Jesus prepares
His friends for the trials they will share.
He speaks of His death, events to unfold,
The Holy Spirit will touch their souls.
"I'll be with you always, do not be afraid,
You will soon understand what I have said.
Now let's go to Gethsemane, a quiet place
For I need to pray and ask for God's grace."

While Jesus prays his disciples sleep,
They miss the pleas, the tears He weeps.
Into the garden a mob arrives,
Lead by Judas, a group of scribes.
He greets his friend, a kiss on the cheek,
Agreed on cue of the man they seek.
Peter, in anger, cuts a man's ear;
It's touched by Jesus, the cut disappears!

They bind His hands and He's lead away
To the high priest's home without delay.
He's questioned by the Sanhedrin
Who find Him guilty of this sin.
"Blasphemy towards our God,
He should die as His reward!!"
Jesus so quiet, says hardly a word,
Not a single defense is ever heard.

Following Jesus to the temple square,
Peter hides in doorways, afraid and scared.
In quick succession he is approached
By three bystanders who are provoked,
To ask if he is the friend of this man
Who's been convicted of this crime.
He denies his friendship in words so strong.
Then Machai the rooster sings his song,
"Cock-a-doodle-do! Cock-a-doodle-do!"

Jesus looks up, sad look in His eye,
Notices Peter who starts to cry.
He flees the scene, his heart's afflicted,
Denying his Lord as Jesus predicted.
To Pontius Pilate they choose to send
Their convicted prisoner and recommend
That Jesus be sentenced, condemned to die
For all His crimes He won't deny.

Judas Iscariot, filled with remorse
Realizes he is the cause
That his friend and teacher Jesus will die.
Disgusted and saddened, he starts to cry.
He returns the silver, his bitter reward
To the temple gates, throws it on the floor.
Then hangs himself from a nearby tree
Dejected and broken for all to see.

Pontius Pilate asks Jesus Christ
"You're King of the Jews, isn't that right?"
Jesus replies in a quiet way,
"Governor Pilate, it is as you say."
He refuses to speak against the lies,
That the priests present, as they all try
To urge the Governor that His crime
Deserves crucifixion at this time.

Pilate looks out at the growing crowd
Speaking to them in a voice so loud,
“Tell me what you would have me do,
Release Barabbas or Jesus to you?”
“Barabbas! Barabbas!” they all cry out.
“Release Barabbas without a doubt!
Crucify, crucify, crucify Him
Who defiles our God, crucify Him!”

Disturbed and puzzled at their choice
Pilate informs them, in a loud voice
“This man is innocent as can be,
But I’ll grant your wish as you will see.”
A symbolic sign, he washes his hands,
Releases Barabbas as they demand.
The guards grab Jesus, take Him away
To crucify Him on this very day.

A crown of thorns on His head they place
They flog His body, spit in His face.
Taunting Lord Jesus, King of the Jews,
Upsetting the crowd who hear this news.
He’s forced to carry a cross of wood
His body's so tired, if only He could.
To Golgutha He must carry the cross,
The place of the skull and our great loss.

He trips, He stumbles and then He falls.
A man named Simon the soldiers call
To carry the cross the rest of the way,
For Jesus' end there's no delay.
Following Him is a very large crowd
That clamors and screams in voices loud.
At the back of the crowd, family and friends
Furtively follow to see His end.

They nail His hands to the wooden cross.
I can't believe they would do it.
Then raise it high 'til it's aloft.
I can't believe they would do it.
Attaching a sign of what He's accused,
"Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews."
I can't believe, I can't believe,
I can't believe they would do it.

As Jesus is raised upon the cross,
He's heard to speak in a gentle voice,
"Father, forgive them, forgive them anew
For Father they know not what they do."
While Mary His mother and Magdalene
At the foot of the cross are seen weeping,
The guards throw dice, dividing His clothes,
An un-seamed garment they have to dispose.

His cross is placed between two thieves
One mocks Lord Jesus, the other sees
That He is blameless, an innocent man,
Unjustly accused unfairly damned.
He asks of Jesus, "Remember me,
When you are in heaven and God you see."
Jesus replies, gives his advice,
"Today you will join me in paradise."

His mother Mary and a friend well-loved,
Look at the cross suspended above,
Weeping and crying at Jesus' fate,
Fearing His death that they await.
He speaks to His friend, "Here is your mother.
Take her to your home and truly love her."
And to His mother, "This is your son,
Cherish and love him as he were your own."

The pain and suffering, hard to bear
His body's stretched, hung in the air.
His joints and tendons pull and strain
How can Jesus endure such pain?
When He's awake He quietly prays
Those near the cross hear Him say,
"Father, Father, I know you hear it,
Into your hands I commend my spirit."

The sky grows dark, as dark as night
So ominous and full of fright.
Jesus cries out, "My God why?
My God have you forsaken me?"
Cries out in thirst and spoiled wine
Upon a sponge is now declined.
His body's tired, so, so diminished,
Shouts out in pain, "It is finished!"

Thunder and lightning crash from the clouds
Enclosing the city like a dark shroud.
A wild wind blows ferociously
Breaking shutters, upending trees.
The ground below shakes, rumbles and raves
Tumbling buildings, opening graves.
The Temple curtain guarding the ark
Is torn and damaged, divided in half.

Jesus' body removed from the cross,
A symbol forever of our great loss.
He's taken and placed in a nearby grave,
A hole in a cliff dug out like a cave.
In front of the cave a stone is placed,
Blocking the entrance, the body is safe.
And guards are placed in front of the vault
Protecting the grave from any assault

Shaken by all the events of the day
Jesus' friends hide, scared and afraid.
They cannot believe their teacher who led
The people from Galilee, now is dead.
"He could have been saved from the cross?
With his great powers could prevent this loss?"
They forget the words their teacher spoke
As they fear for their lives and give up hope.

On the third day, first day of the week,
As is the custom, the women did seek
To anoint the body with spices and myrrh,
And go to the tomb where He's interred.
They reach the cave, guards are not there;
The stone's rolled back, the entrance is clear.
With fear in their heart, they enter the tomb.
Worried at what they will find in the room?

The tomb is empty, no body there.
They start to cry, a sense of despair,
"What have they done with Jesus Christ?
Stolen Him in the dark of the night?"
Mary Magdalene stays in the crypt
Looking around as she sobs and weeps.
The strips of linen that wrapped our Lord
Are neatly folded on the floor.

As she leaves, she sees a bright light.
Two angels appear, dressed in white,
"Why are you crying?" she hears them say.
"They've taken the body of Jesus away!"
They gently tell her, "Do not be dismayed,
For He is risen, do not be afraid."
She looks around and sees a man
A familiar look in the way He stands.

Jesus turns, mentions her name,
"Mary." He says, "I am here again!"
"Teacher, is this really you?"
For she can't believe it can be true.
"Yes Mary, it's me, I am truly here.
Now tell my disciples they should not fear.
Tell them I have risen, of the good news,
And tell them I plan to be with them soon."

Mary rejoicing returns to the room.
Jesus speaks to me for we are alone,
"Machai the rooster, you've been a good friend.
You've stood by me through thick and thin.
When I was arrested and on the cross
You were there, you shared my loss.
Your time will come in not so long,
Join me in heaven and sing a new song."

Machai the rooster sings a new song.
"Alle-alleluia!"
Sings in heaven all day long.
"Alle-alleluia!"
Sings of our Savior Jesus Christ,
Rose from the dead, gave us new life.
"Alle-alle-alleluia, alle-alleluia!
Alle-alle-alleluia, alle-alleluia!"