

People think I have come up to Jerusalem from our fishing village for Passover.

There are crowds following Jesus now. I remember when he used to walk by our home, in the early days, you could see him through the few disciples he had. My children would run and follow him for a while, and he would always stop and touch their heads and speak to them, no matter how much of a hurry he appeared to be in.

He spoke just before, of seeds dying, of his heart being troubled, of an upcoming hour that was his to embrace, and a ripple of fear went through the crowd. Some said they heard an angel speak from heaven, others said it thundered.

As usual with Jesus, people are divided. Some say he is the promised Messiah. Others point out that he is a Nazarene carpenter. Me? I am not sure. Can't he be both?

The way he speaks, he is more than a carpenter. He speaks so well – no, not well – he speaks so lovingly, with so much humanity and so much authority. No wonder crowds gather around him – this time in Jerusalem, I could barely see him. That didn't matter. I still heard him, and his words echo now long after he is gone.

When he speaks I feel free. Like chains have fallen off me. Like I can see more clearly. I feel lighter, as though the burdens of this world – well, they are not *gone*, but they are manageable. Supported. He draws me in every time I hear him speak, and I feel most free when I am in his presence and hearing his words.

That's the truth of it.

People think I have come up to Jerusalem for the Passover. I haven't. I have come here for Jesus.