

JESUS APPEARED TO HIS DISCIPLES AFTER THE RESURRECTION:

JOHN 20:19-31

19 Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.

20 And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the LORD.

21 Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.

22 And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost:

23 Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.

24 But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.

25 The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the LORD. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.

26 And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you.

27 Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.

28 And Thomas answered and said unto him, My LORD and my God.

29 Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they

that have not seen, and yet have believed.

30 And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book:

31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

Early in the morning on the first day of the week, three days after Jesus was crucified, Jesus appeared unto Mary at the tomb. When she saw Him she did not recognize Him, He spoke to her and she did not recognize His voice either because Jesus' physical body was changed from a mortal body to an immortal body. When He called her name she understood that the One she saw was Jesus , the risen Lord. She exclaimed Teacher! He told her not to touch Him but she should go and tell His brethren that He ascends to His Father and God who is there Father and God also.

Mary went and told His brethren that Jesus is alive, she saw Him and told them the things He said to her.

Some observations; (1) Jesus rose from the grave on the third day just as He said He would in John 2:9. (2) He rose on the First day of the week. (3) His mortal body was changed to an immortal body. This tells us that on that resurrection morning-when He returns to receive His bride, the church, we too will be changed from mortal to immortality. (4) Mary could not recognize Him or His voice. (5) He told Mary not to touch Him, signifying that He is holy and should not be treated as ordinary by touching Him. (6) He gave her, her assignment to go to His brethren and tell them that He ascends to His Father and God and their Father and God. (7) He no longer called them friends but brothers. (8) Mary was obedient, she went and told them that He is alive, she saw Him and told them the things He said to her. (John 20:11-18)

Let us now turn our attention to later that same day, the First day of the week. Jesus appeared unto His disciples while they were in a room with the doors closed. The doors were closed because they were afraid. The doors were not open for Him to enter, He entered the room while the doors were closed. Jesus will go through any wall or closed doors to get to those who are His.

1. On entering the room He offered peace. Then He showed them the nail prints in His hands and His pierced side. His brethren had all the proof they needed to believe that He is alive. He rose on the third day just as He said He would. He told them that as the Father had sent Him, He was sending them. Then He breathed on them and told them to receive the Holy Ghost. The question is how did the Father send Him? We read in Isaiah 61:1 when Jesus entered the synagogue on one of the sabbath, He was handed the scroll with the scriptures and He read; “The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me; because the LORD hath anointed Me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He hath sent Me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;

He gave them the same assignment that His Father gave to Him, which is the same assignment that we have. We are to go as His ambassador with His authority without fear. Mark’s gospel records that when we go He would confirm His word with signs of miracles and we are assured of His protection. (Mark 16:15-18) We must go without fear or doubt.

2. Thomas, one of His disciples was not with the rest when Jesus appeared unto them. When he joined them they told him that Jesus is alive, He appeared to them, they saw Him and what He said to them. He did not believe their report. He needed proof that what they said was true. He said that in order for him to be convinced, he would need to put his finger in the place in His hand where the nail was driven and thrust his hand in His side. Eight days later while the

disciples were together in a room and Thomas was there ; the doors were closed, Jesus stood in the room with them and declared peace. He invited Thomas to satisfy his curiosity and doubts by putting his finger in the place where the nail was driven and put his hand in His side where He was pierced with the sword. At that point Thomas believed and declared “ My Lord and My God.” He was ready to submit. He declared that Jesus was both his Lord and God. Jesus told Thomas that he had to see in order to believe but those who believe not seeing are blessed. Here we see Jesus pronouncing a blessing on all of us who would believe the gospel. The writer of Hebrews writes that without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder-of them that diligently seek Him” (Hebrews 11:6)

3. It is important to note that all four gospels say that when the disciples heard that Jesus was alive, some doubted. In Matthew 28:17 it says “ When they saw Him, they worshipped Him, but some doubted. He told them to go into all the world in His authority and make disciples and He would be with them to the end of the age. When Mary told them that He was risen from the dead they refused to believe her. (Mark 16:11) After that He appeared to two of them while they walked by the countryside. They went and told the rest, but they did not believe them either.(Mark 16:12-13) Then He appeared to the eleven and rebuked them for not believing that He is alive. At that point He commissioned them to go into all the world and preach the gospel. In Luke 24:9-12 we read that the women who went to the tomb of Jesus went and reported to the eleven and the rest of His followers that He was not in the tomb, He is alive; they considered the report as nonsense and did not believe. Jesus later appeared to them and asked them why were they troubled and doubtful. Then He showed them His nail pierced hands and feet and invited them to touch Him as proof that He was real with flesh and bones. He ate with them. He told them that He confirmed all that was written in the scriptures about Him and they were witnesses

of those things. Then, He told them He was sending them the promise of the Father, they should wait in the city until they were clothed with power from on high. (Luke 24: 36-49)

4. I noticed that these gospels show that there were doubts and unbeliefs among some of the followers of Jesus when they heard that He was risen from the dead and He is alive. My attention has been drawn to how Jesus treated them even though they had doubts. He did not single them out or isolated them from the group but He treated them equally. He included them in His assignment purpose and promises. The command He gave to one He gave to all. This is encouraging to me because it shows me that He is not expecting me to be perfect but obedient. He will still use me with my imperfections, fears and doubts. He tells me to go and make disciples. He has given me the command, the authority, the message, the purpose, the assurance that He will confirm His word as I deliver it. The confirmation will be signs and miracles and I will not be alone, He will be with me to the end. I should not allow fear or doubt to stop me from going, I must be obedient and go. He will take care of everything as I go.