

A Follow Up Bible Study

April 7, 2021

Building on the Messages of the Lessons from the Resurrection of Our Lord

Warm Up

Complete this sentence for yourself: *It wouldn't seem like Easter to me if we/I didn't...*

1. Sermon for April 4, 2021

Text: **John 20:19-23**

Theme: **The Life-Giving Hands of Jesus**

Share your questions or comments regarding Sunday's sermon.

Share your questions or comments regarding Sunday's sermon **text**.

Gospel Lesson: John 20:19-31

2. As noted Sunday, this is usually the Gospel Lesson for the 2nd Sunday of Easter. I switched them for 2 reason. 1. The text for Sermon in the Hands of the Passion series was based on the first 5 verses of this Lesson. 2. Many who worship on Easter never hear this Lesson.

- *...for fear of the Jews.* That is what the Greek says, but what does this mean? The people gathered in this locked room was also Jews.

- Who was gathered in this room at the time? Consider the parallel account in Luke 24 follower Jesus' visit with the 2 on the way to Emmaus.
³³ They got up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem. They found the Eleven and those who were with them assembled together. ³⁴ They were saying, "The Lord really has been raised! He has appeared to Simon."

What insights does Acts 1 possibly offer?

¹³ When they entered the city, they went to the upstairs room where they were staying. Peter and John were there, also James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, Simon the Zealot, and Judas the son of James. ¹⁴ All of them kept praying together with one mind, along with the women, with Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.

¹⁵ In those days, when the group there numbered about 120 people,...

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3. John notes there was an element (atmosphere) of *fear* in this room. Based on what we know from the Luke 24 account what other emotions filled the room?

4. As noted in the Sermon, while *Peace be with you!* was the standard Jewish greeting, coming for the Risen Lord Jesus it is more than a nice greeting. It has the power to give peace. How?

5. Jesus second greeting of *Peace* is followed with a **commissioning**, a **gift**, and **tools** with a promise. What are they?

- On what basis do we know that the Keys really work vs. *That's just your opinion.*?

- To whom did Jesus give his Keys?

6. Verses 24-31 are the ones we usually focus on for Easter 2: Thomas' absence, refusal to accept the witness of so many, and Jesus' gracious visit to help Thomas. On the basis of this account he's known as *doubting Thomas*. For a fuller sense of this disciple...

John 11: ¹¹ *He said this and then told them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there to wake him up."*

¹² *Then the disciples said, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will get well."*

¹³ *Jesus had been speaking about his death, but they thought he was merely talking about ordinary sleep.*

¹⁴ *So Jesus told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead. ¹⁵ And I am glad for your sake that I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him."*

¹⁶ *Then Thomas (called the Twin) said to his fellow disciples, "Let's go too, so that we may die with him."*

Why did Thomas say that? And what does that reveal about Thomas's character?

John 14: ⁵ *"Lord, we don't know where you are going," Thomas replied, "so how can we know the way?"*

Why did Thomas say that? And what does that reveal about Thomas's character?

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7. The EHV brings out the continuing action of Greek verb form:

²⁵ *So the other disciples **kept telling** him, “We have seen the Lord!”*

How might that help us understand Thomas’ strong negative reaction?

Thomas’ demand, *Unless I see... put my finger..., and put my hand...* might seem strange, even gruesome, until you remember that John expected everyone to be familiar with Luke’s account. Luke was probably written 20-30 years earlier. Luke recounts in Luke 24:

³⁶ *As they were talking about these things, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you.”*

³⁷ *But they were terrified and frightened and thought they were looking at a ghost.*

³⁸ *He said to them, “Why are you troubled? Why do doubts arise in your hearts? ³⁹ **Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself. Touch me and see, because a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.**”*

8. While we don’t want to read into a text or focus on what it not written, it is good to treat the people like real people. Imagine if you were Thomas living among the disciples who are filled with joy and recounting the accounts of Jesus’ resurrection appearances for a whole week. (*After 8 days* is a Hebrewism for *1 week*.) What would you expect Thomas to be going through? Recall Thomas’ expectation or conviction expressed earlier in John 11:16.

What can we say for sure about Thomas’ state of mind a week later, based on Jesus’ words to him?

When Jesus appeared to Thomas, his response was *My Lord and my God!* Why did Thomas say that instead of simply saying, *Oh, I guess I was wrong. Jesus, you really are alive. Thank you for appearing to me.?*

Was Jesus’ message to Thomas Law or Gospel?

Apologetics: Consider the impact of Thomas’ witness when some say, *Jesus didn’t rise from the dead. He was just unconscious and revived after 3 days.*

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9. Mark shows us that Thomas wasn't the only one Jesus had to rebuke for stubbornly resisting to listen to reliable witnesses:

⁹ After Jesus had risen early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had driven seven demons. ¹⁰ She went and reported to those who had been with him, as they mourned and wept. ¹¹ When they heard that he was alive and had been seen by her, they did not believe it.

¹² After these things, Jesus appeared in another form to two of them as they were walking along on their way to the country. ¹³ These two also returned and reported it to the rest. But they did not believe them either.

¹⁴ Later, he appeared to the Eleven themselves as they were reclining at the table. He rebuked them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they did not believe those who had seen him after he had risen.

Mark's words no doubt reference Jesus' rebuke to Thomas as well. Explain how their reluctance to believe the reports is a blessing for us.

First Lesson: Isaiah 25:6-9

A Banquet for All Peoples

⁶ On this mountain
the LORD of Armies will prepare for all peoples
a banquet of rich food,
a banquet of aged wines,
with the best cuts of meat,
and with the finest wines.^a

⁷ On this mountain
he will destroy the shroud that covers all peoples,
the burial cloth stretched over all nations.

⁸ He has swallowed up death forever!
The LORD God will wipe away the tears from every face.
He will take away the shame of his people throughout the earth.
For the LORD has spoken.

⁹ On that day it will be said,
"Look, here is our God!
We waited for him, and he saved us!
This is the LORD!
We waited for him.
Let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation!"

^a Isaiah 25:6 More literally *a banquet of fat food, a banquet of wine dregs, fat food filled with marrow, and dregs that are filtered*

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10. The headings in Bibles are not part of the inspired text. They are put there to help the reader get a sense of sections of Scripture and to help find a section previously read.

How does this EHV heading help summarize the text? And what question does it raise?

11. What is the cause for celebration?

Salvation: rescued or delivered from what?

12. What words in the text define of the identity of *all the peoples*?

13. The footnote on v. 6 shows us the value of **not** merely offering a literalistic translation. The literal terms used in the footnote translation do not communicate Isaiah and the Spirit's intent to our ears, culture, and stomachs. It sounds like a formula for heart disease and/or indigestion.

Second Lesson: 1 Corinthians 15:19-26

¹⁹ If our hope in Christ applies only to this life, we are the most pitiful people of all.

²⁰ But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. ²¹ For since death came by a man, the resurrection of the dead also is going to come by a man. ²² For as in Adam they all die, so also in Christ they all will be made alive. ²³ But each in his own order: Christ as the firstfruits and then Christ's people, at his coming. ²⁴ Then comes the end, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father, after he has done away with every other ruler and every other authority and power. ²⁵ For he must reign "until he has put all his enemies under his feet." ²⁶ Death is the last enemy to be done away with.

14. Why would we be *the most pitiful people of all if our hope in Christ only applied to this life*?

15. What hope is unwrapped for us with the reality of Jesus' resurrection?

16. Compare and contrast Jesus' Easter triumph with his final triumph. How are they connected?