

## John 20:1-31

<sup>20</sup> Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance.

<sup>2</sup> So she came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, and said, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him!"

<sup>3</sup> So Peter and the other disciple started for the tomb.

<sup>4</sup> Both were running, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first.

<sup>5</sup> He bent over and looked in at the strips of linen lying there but did not go in.

<sup>6</sup> Then Simon Peter came along behind him and went straight into the tomb. He saw the strips of linen lying there,

<sup>7</sup> as well as the cloth that had been wrapped around Jesus' head. The cloth was still lying in its place, separate from the linen.

<sup>8</sup> Finally the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed

<sup>9</sup> (They still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead.)

<sup>10</sup> Then the disciples went back to where they were staying.

The first day would be Sunday, since the last day of the week is Saturday for the Jewish people. The Sabbath is the seventh day.

A woman is recorded to being the first eye-witness to the resurrection. This strengthens the argument for the resurrection being the truth because it is not something the Jewish men would admit and write down if it weren't true.

"The disciple whom Jesus loved" is John, the writer of the Gospel of John. He never refers to himself by name.

**John believed** – based on the evidence of the empty tomb alone.

<sup>11</sup>Now Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb

<sup>12</sup>and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot.

<sup>13</sup>They asked her, "Woman, why are you crying?"

"They have taken my Lord away," she said, "and I don't know where they have put him."

<sup>14</sup>At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus.

<sup>15</sup>He asked her, "Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?" Thinking he was the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him."

<sup>16</sup>Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means "Teacher").

<sup>17</sup>Jesus said, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'"

<sup>18</sup>Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news: "I have seen the Lord!" And she told them that he had said these things to her.

When Mary referred to Jesus as her Lord, she uses this term in the religious sense of the time – he rules her life and she submits willingly to that rule over her. This is similar to a king's position over his subjects who are loyal to him.

The risen Jesus is not immediately recognizable, especially in public settings. This is a central element of the post-resurrection body of Jesus.

**Mary believes.** This event indicates that women have central roles in Jesus' life.

This is the first time Jesus refers to the disciples as 'brothers'. Their relationship has changed. Jesus is now equal with believers. Believers are adopted into God's family.

<sup>19</sup> On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!"

<sup>20</sup> After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

<sup>21</sup> Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you."

<sup>22</sup> And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit.

<sup>23</sup> If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

<sup>24</sup> Now Thomas (also known as Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came.

<sup>25</sup> So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!"

But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe."

This is a miraculous appearance. Jesus' body transcends the limitations of ordinary physical existence.

Though 'Peace be with you' was a standard greeting, this one fulfills the promise Jesus made in 14:27 (Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.).

The disciples' joy is not mere happiness. It is the eternal joy of knowing the Saviour.

Jesus commissions the disciples – and all future followers – to share the good news. (15:27 "You also are to testify because you have been with me from the beginning.")

Just as God breathed life into Adam, so Jesus breathed on them to receive the Holy Spirit. This event becomes the guarantee for believers as they receive the Holy Spirit. It is a gift from God.

The forgiveness of sins is associated with receiving the Holy Spirit, not with the death of Jesus. Jesus took away the sins of the world, but as people come to believe him, they receive the Holy Spirit, and through that, receive eternal life and their sins are forgiven.

This reflects our human need to see proof in order to believe.

<sup>26</sup> A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!"

<sup>27</sup> Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe."

<sup>28</sup> Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!"

<sup>29</sup> Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

<sup>30</sup> Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book.

<sup>31</sup> But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

This sections was edited into the gospel later to make a theological point. Thomas would have also received the Holy Spirit with the others. Inconsistencies like this do exist in the scriptures.

Jesus knew what Thomas had said the week before. Thomas verified the physicality of the risen Jesus and the continuity as well – this is the *same* Jesus that hung on the cross.

Thomas believes. This is a personal confession of belief. These words, 'Lord' and 'God' refer to Yahweh, God the Father. They now include Jesus as well in that designation.

Thomas is an eye-witness. Yet, **belief does not come from evidence. It is a gift from God.**

Jesus praises those later generations who believe based on the written accounts.

'Signs' are a means to belief. The signs led the locals of the day to believe in Jesus.

John's purpose in writing the Gospel are so that YOU also will believe – not through witnessing the signs but because of this written record.

The life in Christ is eternal life, starting from the time you first believe. It is a life of passion and purpose, as a child of God, as a member of the body of Christ, the body of believers, the church.