

Synchronizing the Resurrection Narratives, Event #19: After 8 days Jesus appears to the group of disciples for a second time while Thomas is present.

Review of the resurrection *events* up to this point (I have narrowed down the *approximate* hour of the events based on sunset of Saturday, April 4, 33 and the sunrise of Sunday, April 5, 33; MM is Mary Magdalene):

- Event #1: Saturday, 5:45 p.m., April 4, 33: Two Marys go to “look” at tomb, Matt. 28:1.
- Event #2: Sunday, 3:00 a.m., April 5, 33: Earthquake and angel from heaven, Matt. 28:2-4.
- Event #3: Sunday, 4:00 a.m.: MM visits the tomb before daybreak, Jn. 20:1.
- Event #4: Sunday, 4:15 a.m.: MM reports empty tomb to John & Peter, Jn. 20:2.
- Event #5: Sunday, 4:30 a.m.: Peter and John run to the tomb, Jn. 20:3-9.
- Event #6: Sunday, 4:40 a.m.: MM returns to tomb & sees 2 angels, Jn. 20:10-13.
- Event #7: Sunday, 4:50 a.m.: MM sees the Risen Lord, Jn. 20:14-17.
- Event #8: Sunday, 5:00 a.m.: MM tells disciples who do not believe her, Jn. 20:18; Mk. 16:9-11.
- Event #9: Sunday, 6:00 a.m.: MM & other women go to tomb of Jesus, Mk. 16:1-3; Lk. 24:1-2.
- Event #10: Sunday, 6:30 a.m.: Women enter tomb; 3 angels, Mt. 28:5-7; Mk 16:4-7; Lk. 24:3-8.
- Event #11: Sunday, 7:00 a.m.: Women run in fear; Jesus meets them, Mt. 28:8-10; Mk. 16:8.
- Event #12: Sunday, 8:00 a.m.: Women went to tell disciples; soldiers report, Mat 28:11-15.
- Event #13: Sunday, 8:10 a.m.: Once again, the disciples do not believe the women, Lk. 24:9-11
- Event #14: Sunday, 8:30 a.m.: However, Peter runs to the tomb a second time, Lk. 24:12.
- Event #15: Sunday, 8:45 a.m.: Private meeting between Jesus and Peter, 1 Cor. 15:5; Lk. 24:34.
- Event #16: Sunday, 10 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Jesus & 2 travelers to Emmaus, Mk. 16:12; Lk. 24:13-32.
- Event #17: Sunday, 5:00 p.m. The 2 travelers tell the 11 Disciples, Mk. 16:13; Lk. 24:33-35.
- Event #18: Sunday, 5:20 p.m. Thomas leaves; Jesus appears, Lk. 24:36-49; Jn. 20:19-25.
- Event #19: 8 days after the resurrection. Jesus appears to Thomas, Mk. 16:14-18; Jn 20:26-31.

Event #19 is Jesus appearing to the group of disciples eight days later. John tells us that Thomas was present at this second group appearance.

Mark 16:14 And afterward He appeared to the eleven themselves as they were reclining at the table; and He reproached them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they had not believed those who had seen Him after He had risen. ¹⁵ And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. ¹⁶ "He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned. ¹⁷ "And these signs will accompany those who have believed: in My name they will cast out demons, they will speak with new tongues; ¹⁸ they will pick up serpents, and if they drink

any deadly *poison*, it shall not hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover."

John 20:26 And after eight days again His disciples were inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors having been shut, and stood in their midst, and said, "Peace *be* with you." ²⁷ Then He said to Thomas, "Reach here your finger, and see My hands; and reach here your hand, and put it into My side; and be not unbelieving, but believing." ²⁸ Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!" ²⁹ Jesus said to him, "Because you have seen Me, have you believed? Blessed *are* they who did not see, and *yet* believed." ³⁰ Many other signs therefore Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ but these have been written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.

In this appearance Jesus singles out Thomas, addresses his concern, and confronts his unbelief. We have noted how the Lord appeared to different disciples who all had very different temperaments and states of mind: Mary was filled with great love for Christ; Peter was filled with great grief over his denial of Christ; the two disciples of Emmaus were filled with deep theological thinking about Christ. Now we have Thomas, the stiff necked unbelieving believer (what an *oxymoron*!).

Recall that eight days hence Thomas had left the group of the disciples as the two travelers to Emmaus were recounting their extended discourse with Jesus Christ to the disciples. Thomas had a real dogged disbelief about the Resurrection. He was totally irrational, yet probably thought he was the only rational one. We find the same attitude today in postmodernism as well as among some Christians. I understand if a naturalist who by definition excludes all miracles a priori precisely because such a thing as Resurrection from the dead is by any definition a miracle. But what is the height of irrationality is for a person to believe in God (be a theist) and believe in Jesus Christ and then doubt the supernatural. The very fact that someone grants that there is a God precludes that person from rationally excluding the miraculous. This is a huge problem today in postmodernism where people, even Christians, have irrational *philosophical* presuppositions against the miraculous. Due to the influences of postmodernism and scientism, there are Christians who wonder if the miracles in the Bible are myth *solely* because they contain miracles. How idiotic! They are not even aware that the reason they think this way is due to their postmodern philosophical *anti-supernatural* presuppositions—yet they believe in an all powerful God. What nonsense! I don't mind it when people admit their anti-supernatural presuppositions, what I do object to is when they think they are doing history when they are doing philosophy. If you are going to do history you need to use historical tools of analysis instead of rejecting the historical tools based on a priori philosophical assumptions.

Thomas is a buffoon. Good thing that the Lord loves His Christian buffoons as well as supergrace believers. Consider how Thomas left the group of disciples before the Emmaus travelers had even finished recounting their time with the resurrected Lord (the way this is phrased indicates that to leave the group was a dereliction of apostolic duty—he probably left the group to go brood in despair in corner by himself away from fellow believers); how he retained a dogged disbelief in the resurrection though he had personally witnessed the miracles of the Lord over a period of years; how he formerly told the Lord he would die for Him (John 11:16); how slow and pessimistic he was in regard to the previous teaching of the Lord (John 14:5); and now his arrogant assumption of the right to lay down the conditions on which he should believe.

However, we see how Christ in His grace accepts Thomas's conditions—again, the Lord loves all of His own, and that includes the spiritually retarded. This disciple is often called “doubting Thomas.” He was no doubter. Flat, frank, dogged *disbelief* (a faith in naturalism, a faith that there can be no such miracle), and not a hesitation or doubt, was his attitude. The very form in which he puts his requirement shows how he was hugging his unbelief, and how he had no idea that what he asked would ever be granted. “Unless I have so-and-so I will not,” indicates an altogether different *spiritual* attitude from what “If I have so-and-so, I will,” would have indicated. The one is the language of *willingness to be persuaded*, the other is the token of *determination to be obstinate*.

It is not as if the other disciples has reached spiritual maturity and were aglow with spiritual enlightenment. They too, *at first*, were irrational as they thought that the women's testimony were “idle tales” (Luke 24:11). The whole concept of the Resurrection was indeed fantastic—fantastically true or fantastically irrational! Remember, the Lord appeared to them *physically* and although he had wounds from the stakes of the cross, otherwise He appeared to be physically healthy as ever—He was not a bruised, bleeding, limping, recovering, beaten Man. Remember, we are promised to have the same kind of body (eternal physical body) that He has (1 John 3:2). Their initial disbelief has tremendous apologetic value in destroying the critics' myths that the Resurrection arose from their own heated imaginations. Not so! They were in no mood to belief in such a thing and even less so was Thomas, James (the Lord's half-brother), or the Apostle Paul.

Due to the relevance of Christ's appearance and words to hard-nosed skeptical Thomas, I will continue with lessons from this event in the next daily doctrine (or two).

Blessed,

Pastor Don

Ephesians 1:3 Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ,