

John 20

Verse 1 The first day of the week refers to Sunday. The day of Christ's resurrection was on the day of the Feast of First fruits.

Verse 2

- Mary runs to Peter and John to inform them that she was at the tomb, the stone had been rolled away and He was not there. She thinks someone has come to take His body away.
- Those who put Jesus to death were fearful that one of His follows would come and take His body away to make it look like He rose from the dead like He had claimed. When they realize that Jesus is not in the grave despite guards watch over the tomb that had a stone rolled in front of with a seal on it, they engage in a cover up.
 - **Matthew 27:62-66** Now on the next day, ^[a]the day after the preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered together with Pilate, ⁶³and said, "Sir, we remember that when He was still alive that deceiver said, 'After three days I *am to* rise again.' ⁶⁴Therefore, give orders for the grave to be made secure until the third day, otherwise His disciples may come and steal Him away and say to the people, 'He has risen from the dead,' and the last deception will be worse than the first." ⁶⁵Pilate said to them, "You have a guard; go, make it *as* secure as you know how." ⁶⁶And they went and made the grave secure, and along with the guard they set a seal on the stone.
 - **Matthew 28:11-15** Now while they were on their way, some of the guard came into the city and reported to the chief priests all that had happened. ¹²And when they had assembled with the elders and consulted together, they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers, ¹³and said, "You are to say, 'His disciples came by night and stole Him away while we were asleep.' ¹⁴And if this should come to the governor's ears, we will win him over and ^[a]keep you out of trouble." ¹⁵And they took the money and did as they had been instructed; and this story was widely spread among the Jews, *and is to this day.*

Verses 3-10

- After hearing Mary's report, Peter and John ran to the tomb with John making sure to tell his audience that he was faster than Peter.
- When they get to the tomb and look inside, they find the linen wrapping and face cloth that Joseph of Arimathea & Nicodemus had wrapped His body with after anointing Him with myrrh & aloes (**John 19:38-42**).
- They anointed Jesus' body and wrapped Him in linens to help with the decomposition. This act was done out of love and respect, but the anointing and the linen wrapping were not needed as Christ would not see decay.
 - **Acts 2:29-32** Brethren, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is ^[ac]with us to this day. ³⁰And so, because he was a prophet and knew that God had sworn to him with an oath to seat *one* ^[ad]of his descendants on his throne, ³¹he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of ^[ae]the Christ, that He was neither abandoned to Hades, nor did His flesh suffer decay. ³²This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses.
- Although Christ had taught and spoken on His resurrection, Peter and John up to this point did not understand fully that Christ was to rise from the dead.

Verses 11-12

- Mary is left weeping outside the tomb and as she is weeping, she stoops and looks into the tomb and sees 2 angels. She sees one angel at the head and one at the feet with the place where Jesus had lain in between the angels. What Mary sees is pointing back to the ark of the covenant and the mercy seat.
- In **Romans 3:25** The word propitiation (hilasterion) in this verse is also used in the Septuagint in **Exodus 25:22** where it is translated mercy seat. *Christ is our Mercy Seat!*
 - **Romans 3:24-25** *being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; ²⁵whom God displayed publicly as a ^[a]propitiation (hilastērion) ^[b]in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, ^[c]because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed;*

- **Exodus 25:22** *There I will meet with you; and from above the mercy seat (hilastērion) from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, I will speak to you about all that I will give you in commandment for the sons of Israel.*
- God promised to meet them above the mercy seat (**Ex 25:22**). It is through Christ's death on the cross as our true mercy seat where God meets us.
- At the tomb on the resurrection day, the 2 angels were surrounding the true mercy seat (one on each end) where Christ's body had been laid. On the ark of the covenant, the angels were on both ends and the blood from the sacrifice that would atone for the sins of the people was on the mercy seat between them. The angels at the tomb were on each end of the true sacrifice whose perfect spotless blood would take away the sins of all those who believe once for all, Christ our High Priest. It would be between the mercy seat and the angels on the Ark of the Covenant that God would meet them there. Christ is both our High Priest and our mercy seat and His death upon the cross is where God meets His people.

Verses 13-14

- The angels ask Mary why she is weeping. Jesus had told His disciples that His death would cause the world to rejoice and them to weep. However, their weeping would be short lived as He will be resurrected soon. Mary's weeping is soon to be turned to joy at the sight of the resurrected Christ.
 - **John 16:19-22** Jesus knew that they wished to question Him, and He said to them, "Are you deliberating together about this, that I said, 'A little while, and you will not see Me, and again a little while, and you will see Me'? ²⁰ Truly, truly, I say to you, that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; you will grieve, but your grief will be turned into joy. ²¹ Whenever a woman is in labor she has ^[a] pain, because her hour has come; but when she gives birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish because of the joy that a ^[b] child has been born into the world. ²² Therefore you too have grief now; but I will see you again, and your heart will rejoice, and no one will take your joy away from you.

Verses 15-16

- Mary turns around and sees Jesus, but does not recognize Him, but rather thinks He is the gardener.
- Mary will soon recognize it is Jesus by His voice calling out her name.
- Jesus knows His sheep by name and when He calls His sheep's name they know His voice and they follow.
 - **John 10:3,27-30** To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; ²⁸ and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. ²⁹ ^[d] My Father, who has given *them* to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch *them* out of the Father's hand. ³⁰ I and the Father are ^[e] one."

Verses 17-18

- Mary is overwhelmed in seeing Jesus that she begins to embrace and cling to Him. Jesus is not forbidding any form of touching Him in His resurrected body as Thomas will be told to touch His hand and side (**John 20:27**) and the women that were at the tomb that He met came and took hold of His feet and worshiped Him (**Matthew 28:8-9**).
- Mary is used to having Jesus in her presence in the flesh, but now as result of His resurrection and subsequent ascension to the Father, how she and all will have fellowship with Him is by the Spirit of Christ (**Romans 8:9**) indwelling all believers. The sending of the Spirit of Christ is dependent on Christ ascending to the Father.
- By adoption as sons, union with the Sonship of Christ, and the indwelling of the Spirit of Christ, all believers have the privilege to call God the Father, Abba, Father (**Romans 8:15-16, Galatians 4:6**).
- Jesus will ascend to the Father in 40 days (**Acts 1:1-3**).

The resurrection of Christ:

- Validates that Jesus is who He says He is and that His work including His perfect life and His sacrificial death were accepted by the Father.
- All of the elect share in the resurrection (and the death) of Christ.
 - **Romans 6:3-5** Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? ⁴ Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. ⁵ For if we have become ^[a] united with *Him* in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be ^[b] in the likeness of His resurrection.
- Is our hope of both spiritual and physical resurrection.
 - **Ephesians 2:1-10** And you ^[a] were dead ^[b] in your trespasses and sins, ² in which you formerly walked according to the ^[c] course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. ³ Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, ^[d] indulging the desires of the flesh and of the ^[e] mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. ⁴ But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead ^[f] in our transgressions, made us alive together ^[g] with Christ (by grace you have been saved), ⁶ and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus, ⁷ so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith; and ^[h] that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God; ⁹ not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.
 - **1 Corinthians 15:20-23** But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep. ²¹ For since by a man *came* death, by a man also *came* the resurrection of the dead. ²² For as in Adam all die, so also in ^[b] Christ all will be made alive. ²³ But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming,
 - **1 Peter 1:3-5** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to *obtain* an inheritance *which is* imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you
 - **John 6:37-40** All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out. ³⁸ For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. ³⁹ This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day. ⁴⁰ For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day."
- It was impossible for death and the tomb to hold Him.
 - **Acts 2:24** But God raised Him up again, putting an end to the ^[b] agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held ^[c] in its power.
- The resurrection is Triune in nature as God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit raised Christ from the dead.
 - **Galatians 1:1** Paul, an apostle (not *sent* from men nor through the agency of man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead),
 - **Romans 8:11** But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies ^[e] through His Spirit who dwells in you.
 - **John 2:19-21** Jesus answered them, "Destroy this ^[h] temple, and in three days I will raise it up." ²⁰ The Jews then said, "It took forty-six years to build this ^[i] temple, and will You raise it up in three days?" ²¹ But He was speaking of the ^[j] temple of His body.

The world thought they had victory over Jesus and His followers as they watched Him die and His dead body was laid in a tomb. However, in three days Christ would be raised victoriously. It was in His resurrection that the Father had validated Him in His life and His sacrificial death. The resurrection declares that the sacrifice of Christ was accepted by the Father. His death and resurrection are personal to His elect as they are united with Him in both. All that the Father has given to Christ will be raised spiritually from death to life in regeneration by the same Spirit that raised Christ from the dead. They will also share in the likeness of His bodily resurrection as He is the firstfruits of those who are in Him. It was impossible for Him not to be resurrected and it is equally impossible for His elect to not be raised spiritually and on the Last Day physically. His resurrection is our living hope! He is not here, He is risen!

Verse 19

- The Greek word used for the door being closed is κεκλεισμένων kekleismenōn which seems to indicate that the door was not only shut, but locked for fear of the Jews. This would indicate that Jesus possibly walked through the door or wall to enter the building although no specific detail is mentioned.
- Jesus greets them with a greeting that was custom among the Jews and that was a greeting of peace. However, there is deeper meaning to Him saying “Peace be with you.”
- Christ promised that He would leave them His peace and it was peace that was not like the world’s idea of peace (John 14:27).
- Through Jesus and His death in the cross, all believers have peace with God the Father. Peace comes through Christ.
 - Romans 5:1 Therefore, having been justified by faith, ^[a]we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,
 - Colossians 1:19-20 For ^[a]it was the *Father’s* good pleasure for all the ^[b]fullness to dwell in Him, ²⁰and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, *I say*, whether things on earth or things in ^[c]heaven.
 - Ephesians 2:14-17 For He Himself is our peace, who made both *groups into* one and broke down the ^[a]barrier of the dividing wall, ¹⁵^[b]by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, *which is* the Law of commandments *contained* in ordinances, so that in Himself He might ^[c]make the two into one new man, *thus* establishing peace, ¹⁶and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, ^[d]by it having put to death the enmity. ¹⁷And He came and preached peace to you who were far away, and peace to those who were near;

Verses 20-22

- The disciples fear quickly turned to rejoicing by the presence of Christ as they see Him and His hands/side.
- An apostle is one sent by God. As Jesus was sent by the Father for a mission and purpose, Jesus is going to send these men on a mission to spread the gospel by the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. Jesus had prayed that same thing in the High Priestly prayer in John 17.
 - John 17:18 As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.
 - Acts 1:8 but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.”
- The disciples who are going to be sent out by Christ can only accomplish their mission by the indwelling and empowerment of God the Holy Spirit.
- The Bible records that they are not filled with the Holy Spirit until the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4) so here Jesus is breathing on them as a sign or pledge that they will receive the Holy Spirit that has been promised.
- God breathed into Adam and he became a living soul (Genesis 2:7). The breathing of the Holy Spirit into the lives of His elect by the hand of God the Father and God the Son brings eternal life as He is a life-giving Spirit.
 - 1 Corinthians 15:45 So also it is written, “The first man, Adam, became a living soul.” The last Adam *became* a life-giving spirit.

Verse 23 Jesus is not giving them the ability to forgive sins as only God can forgive sins (Mark 2:5-10, 1 John 1:9, Ephesians 1:7, Micah 7:18-19). The meaning of this verse is that through their preaching of the gospel they can declare to the people where and how true forgiveness is found. If someone does not follow the gospel as the disciples are commissioned to spread in seeking forgiveness, then there is not forgiveness. However, those who believe the gospel and seek Biblical repentance and forgiveness as found in the gospel can most assuredly have forgiveness.

Verses 24-29

- Thomas was not present when Jesus appeared to them this time. The other disciples tell Thomas that they have seen Jesus, but he says that unless he sees the imprints of the nails in His hands and puts his hand into His side he would not believe.
- Jesus will appear to them again 8 days later in a similar manner as before including coming through the doors that were shut and with a greeting of “peace.” However, this time Thomas is present. After seeing His hands and
- Thomas’ response is a clear declaration of the deity of Christ as He says “My Lord and my God!”
- Only a minimal number of people in the entirety of redemptive history had the opportunity to see Jesus who is God in the flesh. We today have never seen Him and yet we love Him and believe in Him and His gospel by faith. It is not natural for someone to love someone, be willing to live their entire lives for someone, and die for someone they have never seen. Yet, Christians love and believe in Christ and devote their entire lives to Him despite never seeing Him. This is not natural and is only brought about by the supernatural, which is the supernatural working and act of the Holy Spirit in regeneration in the heart of the elect.
 - **1 Peter 1:8-9** and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and ^[d]full of glory, ⁹ obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of ^[a]your souls.

Verses 30-31

- These verses state the purpose of the gospel according to John. All that is recorded in this gospel account have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ (Messiah), the Son of God and by believing you may have life in His name! A similar verse is found in another letter written by the apostle in 1 John.
 - **1 John 5:13** These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.
 - **John 3:14-16** As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; ¹⁵ so that whoever ^[d]believes will in Him have eternal life. “For God so loved the world, that He gave His ^[a]only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.
 - **John 3:36** He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not ^[i]obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.”
 - **John 5:24** “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.
 - **John 6:40** For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day.”
 - **John 6:47** Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life.

All who have believed have believed as a result of the supernatural working of the Holy Spirit in regeneration. Christ breathed on His disciples to signify that He and the Father are whom the Spirit is sent from, and they will soon receive the Spirit that is promised. God breathed into Adam, and he became a living soul. The breathing of the Holy Spirit into the lives of His elect by the hand of God the Father and God the Son brings eternal life as He is a life-giving Spirit. It is by the Holy Spirit one who has never seen Christ can believe in Him and love Him and are blessed. The Holy Spirit inspired the Word of God and illuminates the Bible to His elect. It is through the pages of Scripture that God speaks to His people and that the gospel is revealed. The purpose of the gospel according to John is clearly defined. The things written in this book were written so that one may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing one may have eternal life.

