

.A READING FROM THE FIRST ACTS OF THE
APOSTLES

Many signs and wonders were regularly done among the
people

by the hands of the Apostles.

And they were all together in the Solomon's Portico.

None of the rest dared join them,

but the people held them in high esteem.

And more than ever believers were added to the Lord,

multitudes of both men and women,

so that they even carried out the sick into the streets

and laid them on cots and mats,

that as Peter came by at least his shadow might fall on some
of them.

The people also gathered from the towns round Jerusalem,

bringing the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits,

and they were all healed.

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The word of the Lord

THE RESPONSE TO THE PSALM IS:

Give praise to the LORD for he is good, his mercy endures for ever.

Let the house of Israel say,

‘His mercy endures for ever.’

Let the house of Aaron say,

‘His mercy endures for ever.’

Let those who fear the LORD say,

‘His mercy endures for ever.’

Give praise to the LORD for he is good, his mercy endures for ever.

The stone that the builders rejected

has become the cornerstone.

By the LORD has this been done,

a marvel in our eyes.

This is the day the LORD has made;

let us rejoice in it and be glad.

Give praise to the LORD for he is good, his mercy endures for ever.

We beseech you, O LORD, grant salvation;

we beseech you, O LORD, grant success.

Blest is he who comes

in the name of the LORD.

We bless you from the house of the LORD;

the LORD is God, and has given us light.

Give praise to the LORD for he is good, his mercy endures for ever.

THE SECOND READING IS FROM THE BOOK OF REVELATION

I, John, your brother and partner in the tribulation and the kingdom and the patient endurance that are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos on account of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.

I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet saying, 'Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches.'

Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash round his chest. When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead.

But he laid his right hand on me, saying, 'Fear not, I am the first and the last, and the living one.'

I died, and behold I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades.

Write therefore the things that you have seen, those that are and those that are to take place after this.'

THE WORD OF THE LORD.

THE GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia.

You believed, Thomas, because you have seen me, says the Lord.

Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.

Alleluia.

A READING FROM THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING
TO JOHN

On the evening of that day, the first day of the week,
the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear
of the Jews,

Jesus came and stood among them and said to them,
‘Peace be with you.’

When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his
side.

Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord.

Jesus said to them again,

‘Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I
am sending you.’

And when he had said this, he breathed on them
and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit.

If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them;
if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld.’

Now Thomas, one of the Twelve, called the Twin,
was not with them when Jesus came.

So the other disciples told him, ‘We have seen the Lord’.

But he said to them, ‘Unless I see in his hands the mark
of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the
nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never
believe.’

Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and
Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked,

Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.'

Then he said to Thomas, 'Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe.'

Thomas answered him, 'My Lord and my God!' Jesus said to him, 'Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.'

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book;

but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

The Gospel of The Lord

THE REFLECTION ON THE READINGS

What are the names of your contacts? A question addressed to Guy Fawkes, Edmund Campion, Edith Cavell, and many other saints, spies and sinners. An authoritarian regime would closely question anyone they thought involved in a conspiracy. So, the disciples were probably worried about Thomas being away from them during the day. John's Gospel tells us (chapter 12 v.10). Paul was a persecutor of the Christians too (Acts chapter 9.)

The reality for them changed after Jesus appeared to them, a physical and real body they emphasise in the Gospels for Thomas and us. The Holy Spirit given to them would make them open and courageous preachers despite arrest and beatings. They would go to the temple area, a wide square comparable in size to Trafalgar Square. Risking arrest and when arrested keeping to the Christian message and ignoring messages to stop.

The Acts of the Apostles is a good read about the success of the Christians in becoming an ever-growing international Church in one generation, successful enough to continue even after the death of its original leaders.

John begins by telling us he is writing from the island of Patmos, a penal colony, he has been arrested and sent to this prison island for preaching the Good news about Jesus.

The message of the Resurrection is at the heart of the Christian message, Jesus appeared in a living and recognisable body, he had completed the mission from God the Father, bringing the reality promise of peace (Hebrew Shalom) of fulfilment, the path of human life was now changed, a body we have on earth becomes a new and risen body, with the external scars but an inner and everlasting reality.

Thomas's words reflect the concerns of all of us. He wants a secure proof, earlier he had asked Jesus (John chapter 14) 2 How can we know the way? Jesus gives two brilliant answers to Thomas and us ,

"I am the way the truth and the Life" and today:

"Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."