

John - Commentaries by Favell Lee Bevan Mortimer

Peep of Day, Lesson 20: The First Miracle (2:1-11)

John 2:1-11

I TOLD you that some people used to ask Jesus to come into their houses. I shall now tell you about such a man. This man gave a feast, and Jesus came to the feast. Mary, Jesus' mother, came, and the disciples came. There were many other people at the feast.

There was some wine for the people to drink, but there was so little that very soon it was all finished. Jesus knew that the wine was finished. Could Jesus not give the people more wine?

Yes. He made the world and all things in it.

There were some large stone jars in the house. Jesus said to the servants, 'Fill the jars with water,' and they filled them to the very top.

Then Jesus said, 'Take some, and give it to the man in charge of the feast.' The servants did so; but Jesus had turned the water into wine.

When the man had tasted it, he said, 'What nice wine this is! Where did it come from?'

The servants told him how Jesus had said to them to fill the jars with water. Then all the people at the feast knew that Jesus had turned the water into wine. This was the first wonder that Jesus did; it was called a miracle.

Why did Jesus do miracles?

To show people that He was the Son of God. The disciples now felt quite sure that Jesus was the Son of God.

Questions

When Jesus was at the feast, what was finished very soon?

How did Jesus make more wine?

What was the first miracle Jesus did?

What the Father gave to the Son:

A verse from the Bible for you to learn:

"The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into His hand." John 3:35.

Peep of Day, Lesson 49: The Dinner (20:1-19)

John 20:1-19

JESUS told His disciples to go far away into the country, and He said, 'I will come and see you again.'

So the disciples went away from Jerusalem, and they went into the country. They came to the place where they had once lived beside the sea. They had some ships on the water. They used them when they were fishing.

One night Peter said to the disciples, 'I shall go and fish'. The other disciples said, 'We will go with you.' So they got into a ship, and all night long they tried to catch fish, but they could not catch any. So in the morning they were tired and hungry.

They looked up and saw a man standing on the shore. They did not know who the man was. The man called out to them and said, 'Children, have you anything to eat?'

The poor disciples said, 'No.' They had caught no fish all night.

The man said, 'let down your net on the right side of the ship and you shall find some fish.'

They did as the man told them, and they caught so many fish in the net that they could hardly lift it out of the water.

Now John found out who the man was. He said to Peter, 'It is the Lord.' Peter was very glad, and he jumped into the water, and swam first to Jesus. The other disciples came soon afterward in their little ship, with their nets and their fish.

Jesus knew that they were tired and hungry. By the shore there was a fire, and some fish on the fire and some bread. How kind it was of Jesus to give food to His poor hungry disciples!

Jesus said to them, 'Bring some of the fishes that you have caught.' So Peter went and took up the net and found it full of big fish one hundred and fifty three. This was one of Jesus' great miracles.

Then said Jesus to the disciples, 'Come and dine.' So they all sat down to dine together. Then Jesus took the bread, and gave some to each of them. He took the fish and gave some of it to them too.

Now the disciples were quite sure that it was Jesus who was feeding them. This was the way they used to dine together before Jesus had died. Now He was alive again, and they dined together once more. But they knew He was not going to stay long with them.

When they had all finished eating, Jesus said to Peter, 'Do you love Me?'

Peter said, 'Yes, Lord; Thou knowest that I love Thee.'

Then Jesus said, 'Feed My lambs,' (that is, 'Teach other people more about Me').

Peter did love Jesus, and Jesus knew he did. Yet Jesus said again, 'Do you love Me?'

Peter said again, 'Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee.'

Then Jesus said, 'Feed My sheep.'

Jesus asked Peter the same thing once more: 'Do you love Me?'

Peter was afraid Jesus did not believe him, and this made him sorry. He said, 'Lord, Thou knowest everything. Thou knowest that I love Thee.'

Jesus said again, 'Feed My sheep.'

If Peter loved Jesus, he would do what Jesus told him, and go and teach people.

Do you love Jesus, children? What would you answer if Jesus said to you, 'Do you love Me?' Could you say to Jesus, 'Look into My heart, and Thou wilt see that I love Thee?' If you do really love Him, you will hate lies and a bad temper, and you will try to be kind and gentle, and to please Jesus all the day.

Why did Jesus ask Peter so often whether he loved Him? Why did He ask him three times over?

Peter had said three times over that he did not know Jesus. So Jesus wanted to hear him say he loved Him three times over.

Then Jesus told Peter what would happen to him when he was old. Jesus said to Peter, 'When you were young, you walked about where you liked; but when you are old, some men will take you, and stretch out your hands and carry you where you do not want to go.'

Jesus meant that Peter would be crucified. Men would stretch out his hands on a cross, and nail him, as they had done to Jesus. Wicked people would crucify Peter because he loved Jesus, but Peter would never say again that he did not know Jesus.

Peter was not proud now, as he used to be. And Peter would pray to God to keep him from sin.

Questions

Did the disciples stay in Jerusalem, or did they go into the country?

Why did they go out in boats one night?

Could they catch any fish?

Who spoke to them in the morning?

What did He tell them to do?

Which of the disciples knew first that it was Jesus speaking to them?

Which of them jumped into the water and swam to Jesus?

What did the disciples find ready for them when they were come to Jesus?

Had they caught any fish in the net?

What question did Jesus ask Peter three times?

What did Jesus want Peter to do, if he really loved Him?

How can children show that they really love Jesus?

What did Jesus tell Peter that wicked men would do to him one day?

Who loves Christ, and who does not:

A verse from the Bible for you to learn:

If a man love Me, he will keep My words.... He that loveth Me not keepeth not My sayings. John 14:23, 24.

Peep of Day, Lesson 48: Thomas (20:24-31)

John 20:24-31

You have heard how the disciples saw Jesus in the evening. But one of the disciples was not there when Jesus came. His name was Thomas. I do not know why he was not there.

When the disciples saw Thomas next, they said to him, 'We have seen Jesus. On the Lord's Day night we saw Him. He came into the room as we were sitting together, and He spoke to us. We are sure it was Jesus Himself, because He showed us the marks of the nails in His hands and feet, and the hole in His side where the spear went in.'

But Thomas would not believe the disciples. He said, 'I do not think you saw Jesus Himself. He died on the cross. I never will believe unless I put my fingers into the marks of the nails, and put my hand into the hole in His side.'

It was very wrong of Thomas to speak in this way. He should have remembered that Jesus had promised to come alive again.

Jesus heard Thomas speak, though Thomas could not see Him. But Jesus was always with the disciples and heard all they said because He is God.

Next Lord's Day evening the disciples were in a room together. Thomas was there too. The doors were locked to keep the wicked people out, but the disciples knew that Jesus could come in. And He did come. They saw Him standing in the middle of the room. He spoke kindly to them and said, 'Peace be unto you!'

Then He spoke to Thomas. 'Come,' He said to Thomas, 'here are My hands. Put your finger into the marks. And here is the hole in My side; put your hand into it.'

Now Thomas knew that Jesus had heard him speak so sinfully, and he felt ashamed and sorry He saw that it was Jesus Himself, and he cried out, 'My Lord and my God!'

Then Jesus said to Thomas, 'Now, because you have seen, you believe. Blessed are they who have not seen, and yet have believed.' Jesus forgave Thomas for what he had said. Thomas really loved Jesus.

Questions

Which of the disciples would not believe that Jesus was alive again?

What did Thomas say he must do before he would believe?

When did Thomas see Jesus again?

What did Jesus say to him when He saw him?

Did Thomas then believe that Jesus was alive?

How God always hears us speak:

A verse from the Bible for you to learn:

There is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, Thou knowest it altogether. Psalms 139:4.

Peep of Day, Lesson 46: Mary Magdalene (20:1-19)

John 20:1-19

I HAVE told you of two Marys: Mary, the mother of Jesus, and another Mary, the sister of Lazarus. But there was still another, called Mary Magdalene. She came very early to the grave of Jesus, before the other women came. She looked into the grave, but saw no angels. So she came running back and told Peter and John that Jesus was not in His grave. 'I am afraid,' said Mary Magdalene, 'that some wicked people have taken Him away, and that we shall not be able to find Him.'

So Peter and John began to run as fast as they could, but John ran the faster and he came first to the grave. He stooped down and peeped in, and he saw the clothes lying in the grave. Soon afterward Peter came and went down into the grave. He saw the clothes neatly folded, and the cloth that was round Jesus' head lying in a place by itself. Then John went in too, and he remembered what Jesus had said about being alive again.

'It is all true,' thought John, 'He is alive and has left His grave.'

Then Peter and John came out of the grave and went to their own house. But they saw no angels, nor did they see Jesus. Where was Mary Magdalene all this time?

She was standing crying near the grave. She was alone, because Peter and John had gone home.

At last she stooped down and looked into the grave, and she saw a beautiful sight: two angels. One of them was sitting where Jesus' head had been, and the other where His feet had been!

The angels said to Mary, 'Why are you crying?' But still she went on crying; she said, 'Some people have taken away the Lord Jesus, and I cannot find Him.'

When she had said this, she heard a man behind her saying, 'Why are you crying?'

She did not know who it was that spoke to her. She thought it might be the gardener. She thought this man might have taken away the body of Jesus. She wanted to know where the man had put the body so that she could take it away.

The man said 'Mary!' She knew that voice and, turning round, she looked and saw that it was Jesus. How glad she was to see her Lord and Master, whom she loved!

But Jesus could not stay with her. He told her to go and tell His dear disciples that He was alive. 'I am soon going up to My Father in heaven, but I shall see My disciples first.'

Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples. They were all crying, but they would not believe what Mary said.

Mary was glad that she had gone to look for Jesus. She was the first of all the people who saw Jesus after He was alive again.¹

Questions

How many Marys have I told you about?

Who came very early to the grave of Jesus?

Which two disciples ran to the grave of Jesus?

Who came there first?

Which of them went into the grave first?

What did Peter and John see in the grave?

Did John believe that Jesus was alive again?

Did Peter and John see Jesus in the grave?

Who did they see in the grave?

Who stood alone, crying, near the grave?

What did she see when she looked in?

Why did Mary Magdalene cry?

Who was the man who spoke to her kindly?

Was He the gardener?

Did Jesus stay with Mary?

Who was the first person that saw Jesus after He was alive again?

The happiness of the righteous:

A verse from the Bible for you to learn:

"Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous." Psa. 32:11.

Peep of Day, Lesson 43: The Soldiers (19:32-37)

John 19:32-37

AT last the soldiers came to see if Jesus and the two thieves were dead, so that they might bury them before it was dark. The soldiers looked at one thief, and they saw he was not dead. So they broke his legs, and that killed him. Then they looked at the other thief, and they saw he was not dead. So they broke his legs too.

Then they looked at Jesus. They saw He was dead, so they did not break His legs. But one of the soldiers took a long stick with a sharp point at the end, called a spear, and put it in His side. And out of Jesus' side blood and water came flowing out onto the ground. John was standing nearby, and he saw the blood.

Do you remember how Jesus, at supper the night before, had poured wine into a cup and said to the disciples, 'This is My blood, which is shed for many'?

Now His blood was poured out. The spear made a hole in Jesus' side. There was a hole in His side, and a hole in each hand, and a hole in each foot, and His forehead was pricked with thorns, and His eyes had shed many tears, and blood had come from His skin. All this He suffered for people who have sinned, just like we have, so that God might forgive them their sins. 1

Questions

How did the soldiers kill the thieves?

Why did they kill them so soon?

Why did the soldiers not break Jesus' legs?

What did they put into Jesus' side?

What is a spear?

What came out of His side?

What had Jesus poured out once at supper, when He said, 'This is My blood'?

Why did Jesus shed His blood on the cross?

What takes away sin?

A verse from the Bible for you to learn:

The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.

1 John 1:7.

Peep of Day, Lesson 34: The Last Supper, Part 2 (13:21-30)

John 13:21-30

You know the wicked thing that Judas meant to do. Jesus knew that he would bring the wicked people to take Him and kill Him. Jesus had been very kind to Judas, and Jesus was sorry that he was so wicked.

Jesus was sitting at supper, and all the twelve disciples were round the table. He said, 'One of you will give Me to the wicked men to be killed! One of you, My disciples.'

All the disciples were very sorry, and Peter said, 'Is it I?' And John said, 'Is it I?' And each of them said, 'Is it I?' But Jesus did not tell them.

Now John was leaning his head on Jesus' bosom, and Peter whispered to John, 'Do ask the Lord which it is that will show the wicked people where He is.'

So John whispered, 'Which is it?'

Then Jesus said, 'The one that dips some bread in the dish with Me.' For there was a dish of sauce on the table, and Jesus dipped His bread in it. As He dipped it, one of the disciples put his hand in the dish too. Which was it?

It was Judas; he dipped his bread in the dish with Jesus. So John knew which of the disciples was so wicked.

Then Jesus said to Judas, 'Go, and do what you mean to do.' Judas got up and went out of the room.

Where did he go?

He went to the wicked people, to bring them to Jesus in the dark. But the disciples thought he was going to buy something at a shop, or to give money to the poor.

Questions

At supper what did Jesus say that one of His disciples would do?

Who asked Jesus to tell him which it was?

Who dipped his hand in the dish with Jesus?

Why did Judas go out of the room?

What did the disciples think he was going to do?

Only God knows us completely.

A verse from the Bible for you to learn:

Thou, even Thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men. 1 Kings 8:39.

Peep of Day, Lesson 29: Lazarus (11:1-17)

John 11:1-17

JESUS stayed with His disciples in a place by Himself. The wicked people who wanted to kill Him could not find Him, but Jesus' friends knew where He was.

Jesus had other friends besides His disciples. One of His friends was called Lazarus. Lazarus had two sisters; their names were Martha and Mary. These three all lived together. They all loved Jesus, and Jesus loved them. Jesus used often to come to see them. He used to sit in their house and talk to them. Martha liked to make a fine dinner when Jesus came, but Mary liked to sit and listen to His sweet words.¹

One day Lazarus fell very sick. Martha and Mary loved their brother Lazarus very much indeed. They knew that Jesus could make Lazarus well; so they sent a man to tell Jesus that Lazarus was sick. The man went far away to look for Jesus.

Lazarus grew worse and worse. At last he died. His friends wrapped white cloths round his face and his arms and his legs. They put him in a big hole and rolled a stone up to it to close the hole.

Martha and Mary waited and longed for Jesus to come. Four days passed, and at last Jesus came. Martha and Mary did not think that Jesus would now make Lazarus alive again, because their brother had been dead for so long. So they sat on the ground and cried.

When Martha heard that Jesus was on the road a little way off, she came to Jesus and said, 'If Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.' She knew that even then God would do anything that Jesus asked Him.

Then Jesus said, 'Your brother shall rise again.'

'Yes,' said Martha, 'I know he will rise again at the last day, when all the dead people will rise.' Martha was afraid that Jesus would not choose to make Lazarus alive soon, but she knew that He was able to do it.

Martha went back to the house and found Mary still sitting on the ground, and many friends around her. Martha whispered in her ear, and told her that Jesus wanted to speak to her. So Martha and Mary went together and found Jesus waiting for them on the road.

Mary's friends went with her, and they cried, and Mary cried very much indeed. When she saw Jesus she fell down at His feet and said, 'Lord, if Thou hadst been here my brother had not died.'

Jesus was very sorry to see her so unhappy and to see so many people crying. He felt very sad indeed, and He sighed very deeply. Jesus does not like to see any one in trouble; He is so kind.

Then Jesus said, 'Where have you put Lazarus?'

Martha and Mary and their friends said, 'Come and see.' Then they showed Him the way to the grave. As Jesus walked along, the tears rolled down His cheeks.

At last they came to the grave. It was a hole, and a very large stone was in front of the hole. Then Jesus said, 'Take away the stone.'

Martha thought that Jesus was going to look at Lazarus lying dead. So she said, 'Do not go in; his flesh has a bad smell by this time. He has been dead for four days.' But Jesus told her to believe that He could make Lazarus alive.

They then rolled away the stone. Jesus lifted up His eyes to His Father in heaven, and thanked Him for helping Him to do wonderful things.

Many people were standing by, looking at Jesus, and wondering what He would do. Poor Martha and Mary were longing to see Lazarus alive again. Then Jesus spoke loudly and said, 'Lazarus, come forth.'

Lazarus heard, though he was dead; for the dead hear the voice of Jesus. Lazarus got up and walked to the opening of the hole. His hands were tied with cloths, and his feet wrapped round with cloths, and a cloth was over his face. But Jesus said, 'Undo the cloths.'

How pleased Martha and Mary must have been to see his face again! How they must have thanked the Lord Jesus for His kindness!

The people who saw all this were surprised, and they said, 'Jesus must be the Son of God.'

Questions

Had Lazarus any sisters?

What were their names?

Did Jesus ever come to their house?

When Lazarus was sick, was Jesus with him, or far away?

Was Lazarus dead before Jesus came?

Did Martha think that Jesus could make Lazarus alive again?

Why did Jesus sigh and weep?

Where was dead Lazarus put?

What did Jesus say to Lazarus?

What clothes did Lazarus wear in the grave?

What did the people think of Jesus when they saw Him make Lazarus alive again?

God's care of the righteous:

A verse from the Bible for you to learn:

The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles. Psa. 34:17.

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