

Bible Studies for Enquirers and New Believers: A Series of Eight Studies

Study 3 – We See Jesus: An Easter Study

taken from

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Readings: John 20:1-29; Hebrews 2:9-10

Memory Verses: John 20:29; Hebrews 2:9

Who Saw Jesus According to John 20:1-29?

- Mary Magdalene saw Jesus but did not recognize him at first – John 20:14,18
- Peter and John saw the significance of the empty tomb and the position of the grave clothes – John 20:8
- The Disciples with the exception of Thomas saw Jesus – John 20:20-27
- Thomas eight days later and together with the other disciples, saw Jesus – John 20:27. Jesus said to Thomas: "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe" (John 20:29). Unlike Mary, Peter, John, Thomas and the other disciples, we have not seen Jesus with our physical eyes, but with the eyes of faith we have looked to him and seen him. Like the writer of the letter to the Hebrews: "We see Jesus, who for a little while was made lower than the angels, crowned with glory and honour because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone" (Hebrews 2:9). Here the original Greek word for 'see' means 'steady contemplation'.

Who is This Jesus Whom We Now See?

- We see Jesus the Man
 - Jesus is his human name given to him by God through Joseph and Mary. The name Jesus means 'saviour'. He is not an angel but fully man. Psalm 8:4-6 and Hebrews 2:5-8,14. He was tested and tempted in every way just as we are. Because he did not give in to temptation he knows its full force. Not just in the wilderness but from the beginning of life until its end he was tempted. "Though he was a son yet he learned obedience through the things that he suffered" (Hebrews 5:8). In the Garden of Gethsemane he struggled and emerged victorious – "not as I will, but as thou wilt" he said to his Heavenly Father (Matthew 26:39).
- We see Jesus the Lord of History
 - He is the eternal unbegotten son of God. He was born to the virgin Mary in the fullness of time – at God's appointed time – Galatians 4:4. The apostle Paul wrote that at the right time he died for the sins of mankind – Romans 5:6. As predicted by the prophets he rose on the third day after his death.

God's purpose as a plan for the fullness of time is to unite all things in Jesus Christ – Ephesians 1:10. Until then the Devil and evil agencies can only act within God's permissive will.

- We see Jesus the Lord of Nature

- He shared in the work of the creation of the world. It was not strange, therefore, that when he died there was darkness at noon – also earthquake and storm (Matthew 27:45,51). Nature was showing sympathy with its creator. Flood and tempest – all the powers of nature – are in his control as his miracles show. One day he will create a new heaven and a new earth – Revelation 21:1.

- *"Who sees God's face, that is self-life, must die,
What a death were it then to see God die?
It made his own Lieutenant Nature shrink,
It made his footstool crack, and the Sun wink."*

–John Donne. Good Friday, 1613. Riding Westward.

- We see Jesus the King

- Hebrews 2:9 – He was crowned with glory and honour for every man – for you and me. This is the grace, kindness and love of God to us. He has therefore already been crowned but his glory will be shown to all and everyone will bow the knee – Philippians 2:8-11. Man crowned him for a few hours with a crown of thorns in mockery but God has crowned him for eternity with glory and honour.

- We see Jesus Our Brother

- Hebrews 2:11 – He who was perfect man, Lord of history and of nature, and eternal King is not ashamed to call us brothers and sisters. It is strange that sometimes we are ashamed of him in a world that mocks or rejects him. For us he has tasted death with all its humiliation and bitterness, having borne our sins in his own body on the tree. In bringing us into his Father's household and family he has made us his brothers and sisters – Hebrews 2:10-11. The world may despise us but we are brothers of the King.

- We see Jesus the Pioneer of our Salvation

- Hebrews 2:10 – The word 'archegos' in the original Greek means 'a pioneer, an originator, source, author, one who blazes a trail'. The same word is used in Hebrews 12:2 where we are exhorted to look to Jesus who is the pioneer and perfecter of our faith. He partakes first in what He establishes. He not only shows the way but he is the way.

- We see Jesus the Conqueror of Death

- Hebrews 2:9 – When someone dies it is news, but when someone rises from the grave to live forever, it is good news for all. In the song of praise known as the *Te Deum* we read about Jesus: "When thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death, thou didst open the kingdom of heaven to all believers". Death for Jesus was no defeat; through it he opened the door of life.

- We see Jesus the Victor over the Devil
 - Hebrews 2:14-15 – Through his death and resurrection Jesus destroyed the destroyer, that is the devil. Mankind need no longer live in the bondage of the fear of death because Jesus has taken the sting out of death and rendered the devil impotent although he has a little power for a limited time.
- We see Jesus the High Priest
 - Hebrews 2:18 – Jesus represents God to man and man to God. He made expiation or atonement for the sin of man and reconciles man to God by removing the barrier of sin. Because as a man he has suffered and been tempted he is able to help those who are being tempted by sin and the devil. As our great High Priest Jesus, the perfect man, is able to understand all our need. Because he is divine he is able to meet all our need.

Concluding Activity

1. Without looking at these notes and after reading Hebrews 2:5-9 again list the titles of Jesus suggested by this passage.
2. Taking the titles one by one make a litany of praise to God.