

Reflections for 11th April 2021

2nd Sunday of Easter

Doubting and Believing

In our church year, we continue through the season of Easter for the next few weeks, as we reflect on different aspects of the good news of the resurrection. This week we think about the place of Thomas in the gospel, along with our story based on the account in the book of Exodus of the escape of God's people from Egypt through the Red Sea. This story has often been seen by Christians as pointing towards the burial and rising of Jesus, and to our own baptism.

Over many years the church has come to think of Thomas as 'doubting' Thomas, but I wonder whether that label has given him something of a 'bad press' that he doesn't really deserve. It is true that in the gospel reading Jesus said to him, 'Stop doubting and believe', but those words could be translated, 'Do not be faithless, but believing', or something like, 'Don't be an unbeliever, but become a believer.'

As Thomas heard the account from his fellow disciples of their meeting with the risen Jesus in the upper room, he did what he usually did (as we see him in the gospels) – he said what he really thought. He didn't want to rely on what others had seen or heard, but he wanted to experience the presence of Jesus for himself.

And so he did. As a result of his honesty and his enquiring attitude, he was blessed through his meeting with the risen Jesus, and so many other people have been blessed through that story as it has been passed on over the centuries.

And the good news is that we too can be in the company of:

those who have not seen and yet have believed (John 20. 29)

We too can encounter the presence of God in the risen Jesus, and, as the gospel says, we too can believe – and be blessed.

Revd John Waller

Living God,
for whom no doors are locked, no entrance barred;
open the doors of our hearts,
that we may seek the good of others
and walk the joyful road of sacrifice and peace,
through Jesus Christ our risen Lord. Amen.

Bible readings: Exodus 14. 10-22; Acts 4. 32-35; John 20. 19-31

Story: 'The Great Escape' – the Hebrew people escape from Egypt (Exodus 7 – 14)