



Can We Be Friends Now?

Believe Without Seeing, Part 1

Barbara Brown, MSE (BB): Good morning, everyone. So glad you could join us today. Father, we just thank You for another day above ground, God, to get it, to get the lessons we hadn't gotten to this point and for Your mercies, Your new mercies that we got this morning, that we woke up. Thank You for Your Son, Yeshua, the "pattern son," all that He taught us, God, that we just receive the impartation of that today as we gather together to hear Your word with Your heart for each of us. We're just going to be found praising You, in Yeshua's holy and beloved name.

Dr. Tom Taylor (TT): What I want to do today is, look with me toward the end of *John 20*. Yeshua has been resurrected for some time and already appeared to most of the disciples, but we discover that when He first showed up to them, Thomas was not with them, so we're going to pick up the story here in *John 20:24*: ***"Now Thomas, one of the twelve, termed Didymus (that was his Greek name), was not with them when Yeshua came."***

"Jesus" was not His name; He was a Hebrew, a Jew. His name was "Yeshua" and why anybody bothered to change it is a mystery to me. So, "Jesus" is a Greek invention, "ee-eh-sous" is how it's pronounced in Greek. OK, kind of sounds like "Jesús" in Spanish, "Jesus" in English. But what's the big problem with just pronouncing His name correctly, Yeshua? So in case you get confused, now you know.

Now down in verse 25:

The other disciples, then, said to him, "We have seen the Lord!" (They're talking to Thomas here.) Yet he said to them, "Should I not perceive in His hands the print of the nails, and thrust my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will by no means be believing."

Man, what a stubborn guy! You've probably heard the term, "Doubting Thomas," referring to anyone who refuses to believe something, no matter what the evidence. That term came about because of this lone disciple who basically says, "I don't care what you say you've seen. The

only way I'm gonna buy that you've seen the same Yeshua Whom we used to know is if I see the nail prints, put my fingers into those prints, and put my hand into the cut in His side that was made by the Roman sword."

Now watch what happens, beginning in verse 26:

And after eight days His disciples were again within (there in the room, wherever they were gathered), and Thomas was with them. (I wonder where Yeshua was for those eight days. No idea. There isn't anything written about it. All right,) The doors having been locked, Yeshua is coming and stood in the midst (of them) and said, "Peace to you!" (or in Hebrew, "Shalom!") Thereafter, He is saying to Thomas, "Bring your finger here and perceive My hands, and bring your hand and thrust it into My side, and do not become unbelieving, but believing."
And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!"

Now you realize that Yeshua was not present when Thomas went on his doubting rant. So, how did Yeshua about it? All I'll say about that is this is a good occasion to remind yourself that you cannot hide anything from the Father or the Son. If you ever think that you have some big secret or area of your life that you're hiding from everyone, God sees it as if it were in bright daylight.

This realization hit me years ago when I was horrified with all I had hidden from others throughout various times in my life, because I realized suddenly that the Father has this gigantic searchlight. (That was the image that I got.) He has this gigantic searchlight that He trains on you and it exposes absolutely everything. There is nowhere for the cockroaches to run because the light is that bright and that penetrating. There's no corner He can't see into and there are no shadows, they completely dissolve under that searchlight; so hiding from Him or hiding anything from Him, forgive me, is just the height of stupidity, because He knows everything and sees everything, and that's literal.

So, here's Thomas not realizing that what the guys are saying is something he really ought to better pay attention to. (How's that for a proper sentence?) Because the Man he knew died and Yeshua had told them He would be resurrected. And He was and the others saw Him, but Thomas is still back in that old realm where he was just walking around with Jesus. He's just, you know, the carpenter's son from Nazareth.

But now Thomas has seen, has heard, and Yeshua comes into the room and goes right after Thomas. [He] said, "Come over here, now. Put your finger right here. I know you want to, so get it done. And put your hand right here in My side. Now, instead of being unbelieving, you can be believing now, yeah?" And Thomas says, ***"My Lord and my God!"*** (Sudden realization.)

So now let's go to verse 29:

Now Yeshua is saying to him, "Seeing that you have seen Me, you have believed. (Now watch this!) Happy are those (in your Bible it'll say "blessed") who are not perceiving and believe."

You and I are among, *"those who are not perceiving and believe."* This is a big deal to God for you to trust Him, to believe in His Son, especially when you've never laid eyes on either one of Them. This is the height of faith. We believe, without having physically seen or heard Yeshua, and God especially honors your faith in Him, your trust in Him, that Yeshua's birth, death, and resurrection are real, and that you're deliberately choosing to believe in the absence of other evidence. ***"Blessed (or happy) are those who are not perceiving and believe."***

Yeshua spent a total of 40 days after He was resurrected walking around on the earth, but He didn't show Himself to just everybody. And He did this until a day when He was taken up into the Heavens in a cloud in front of (we'll learn from Paul) over 500 witnesses.

So now, let's pick up the story that continues in the book of Acts, in the first chapter, verse four:

And, being foregathered ("foregathered," that's a cryptic word, you could just say "and being gathered") He (that's Yeshua now) charges them (those are the disciples who were left) not to be departing from Jerusalem, but to be remaining about for the promise of the Father, "which you hear of Me, seeing that John, indeed, baptizes in water, yet you shall be baptized in Holy Spirit after not many of these days."

Be remaining where? In Jerusalem. Don't go out of Jerusalem. Remain in Jerusalem for the promise of the Father. ***"The promise of the Father"*** refers back to an earlier chapter we read late in *John* between 14 and 17 when He's talking here about the consoler, ***"the spirit of truth – it will be guiding you into all the truth."***

Wait in Jerusalem for this, because just like John baptized in water, you're about to be baptized in the Holy Spirit after not many of these days. In fact, it doesn't say "the"; it says, ***"You shall be baptized in Holy Spirit after not many of these days."***

Essentially, Yeshua is just saying, "Look, just cool your jets until the Holy Spirit comes." In verse six [it says]:

Those, indeed, who are coming together, asked Him, saying, "Lord, art Thou at this time restoring the kingdom to Israel?" (They're not listening.) Yet He said to them, "Not yours is it to know times or eras (eras is seasons) which the Father placed in His own jurisdiction."

This is an important insight: You and I are not going to figure out God's timing for anything. Unless He specifically says what the timing is, it won't be what you or I think. The Father keeps timing to Himself.

This was one of my hardest lessons in trusting God. [It] might not be for you, but it was for me. My experience, for what it's worth, is that the Father will always show you the "what", that's the revelation you're likely to have. He'll show you the "what"; sometimes He'll tell you the "why"; rarely does He show you the "when"; and I've never known Him to say anything about the "how". He clearly reserves the "how", if for no other reason than, as Barbara says, "God just likes to show off to His children." And it really does feel like He gets a kick out of blowing our socks off from time to time with what He does.

But He doesn't tell you how He's going to do what He does. When you get a revelation from God about something you're supposed to do, that's the "what" and almost invariably human beings will go straight to the "how". How am I going to do that? How is that going to happen? He won't say a thing about it. He's just going to tell you the "what"; now do that and then you'll watch Him do the "how". You'll watch Him perform.

Man, Barbara and I have seen this over and over again! Now, I don't always like how the way God works *feels*, but here's the thing about God's timing: He will test your every last nerve while you're waiting for Him to move. We humans are not patient. We like instant pudding, but again, as Barbara says, "*It's hard to rush someone as old as God.*" His timing is never ours. He's never late, but I've never known Him to be early; He's just in time, and that makes people nuts, or it can, and it has made me nuts from time to time, but I've gotten used to it now. And this is what faith, or trust, is all about anyway.

If God says something, He's going to do it. He does not play games and He does not waste time, lives or words, and there's great benefit to waiting on the Father patiently. This is something Isaiah wrote in *Isaiah 40:31*. Now I'm going to read this from the *Concordant*, but I'll give you the plainer English along side:

Yet those who are expectant in Yahweh (which is "Those who wait upon Yahweh or YaHoVeH or the Lord"), they shall rejuvenate with vigor ("They shall renew their strength"); They shall ascend on pinions like vultures (or "They shall mount up with wings like eagles"); They shall run and not be wearied; They shall walk and not faint.

Here's the point: WAIT FOR GOD to do what you've asked Him or what He's shown you He'll do. One of the biggest mistakes I think people make is asking God over and over again for the same thing, as if God is hard of hearing. He heard you the first time, so CHILL!

You probably know the saying in *Psalm 46:10*: **“Be still, and know that I am God.”** Do you know, in the original Hebrew it says, **“Relax and know that I am Elohim (or God)”**? *“Relax. Relax and know that I am God.”* Isn't that great?! *“Relax, chill out, I've got this.”*

OK, now back to Yeshua's instructions in Acts 1:8:

“But you shall be obtaining power at the coming of the holy spirit on you, and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem and in entire Judea and Samaria, and as far as the limits of the Earth.” (Now that's the known Earth, understand.) **And saying these things, while they are looking, He was lifted up, and a cloud took Him up from their eyes. And as they were looking intently into heaven at His going, lo! two men stand beside them in white attire** (there's two guys there who weren't there before, and they're in white attire, and in verse 11 these guys) **who say also, “Men! Galileans! Why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus (this Yeshua) Who is being taken up from you into heaven shall come thus** (which means He's going to come back out of the clouds He just went into), **in the manner in which you gaze at Him going into heaven** (Whom you just saw going up, is gonna come right back down just like you saw).”

You notice they say nothing about when. Kinda of sounds like police officers taking control of the scene, doesn't it? *“Move along now, nothing to see here. He'll be back just like you saw Him leave. Go on about your business now.”* And then later during the feast of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit did fall exactly as Yeshua said it would.

We have watched a whole new chapter that began in human history when the messenger Gabriel visited Yeshua's mother, Mary (or Miriam), in Nazareth, and Yeshua -- the only begotten Son of the Father of all creation -- arrived as an infant, grew into manhood, heralded the word of the Kingdom to save the nation of Israel, died a horrible death at the hands of those He came to save, and was raised out from among the dead to be seen by His closest followers, and then was taken up into heaven in front of a multitude, and Who was promised to come again by two messengers standing by. Then the Holy Spirit falls on all the disciples, exactly as Yeshua promised, and a brand new relationship with the Father suddenly became available to anyone who believes in His Son.

Until next time: **Live well!**