

S.D.G.

Chapter Nine

## THE END OF THE BEGINNING

Book Three

### THE KING CROWNED

By Stephen H. Funck, April 17, 2020

The people who were at Nicodemus' home and with Joanna at the Palace were very excited and envious when they heard that Yeshua had appeared to some staying with Joseph of Aramathea. There was a great stir among all as they tried to make sense of it all. There was even greater anticipation, wondering when, if, Yeshua would come to them again.

Practical matters, many had to return home to Galilee, harvest was waiting. They would all be back for the next great festival, Shavuot, Pentecost. Many pilgrims from far away would stay in Jerusalem until then. This would be the only time in their lives they would celebrate Passover in Jerusalem. Some from even farther away spent a year on the way to and from. If they could, they would stay until, Succoth, the fall festival.

The whole week was filled with questions. Yeshua's followers had questions and the people in Jerusalem had questions. Rumors had spread through all the people. What were they to think? The Sanhedrin did not say much at all. They did not even talk much about the reports of Yeshua among themselves. They had done what they thought they had to do. They had carried out their responsibilities as the leaders of God's people, leaders of His holy nation, guardians of the Temple and all that was sacred. The evil one brought confusion, misled the people, pulled them in differing directions. Their most important task was to provide, establish stability. They could not, must not, give into the forces that would bring chaos, destruction. Their hearts, spirits had to be kept calm, steady. The people saw that, wanted that. The leaders ignored the rumors and the people followed the path of security. There was more freedom to speculate, question, hope, further away.

Since many were leaving, each day had more room in the Temple. Everyone who wanted could fit in. The followers of Yeshua came for worship as normal. People who recognized them kept their distance. The high point of daily worship was the counting of the Omer<sup>1</sup>. At the same time thousands of priests were preparing over 250,000 lambskins from the Passover. Hard work, messy, full of joy. It made good income. That took space in the Temple Court from the worshippers. The builders were back, moving stones and fill for the retaining walls. Clopas and his sons were back in the quarry. All around in the porticos the great teachers were surrounded by students. Many pilgrims had heard of their reputations and wanted to get a portion of their wisdom before they had to return home. The Prefect and his soldiers relaxed. There had been no trouble. Sol and Lev were taken to trial at the Sanhedrin and then to the Prefect for crucifixion.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.jewfaq.org/holidayb.htm> <https://ffoz.org/discover/messianic-jewish-calendar/counting-the-omer.html>

Yeshua had blazed like a comet through the sky across Galilee. They saw miracles of healing. They listened to his preaching announcing the kingdom of God. Many thought he was the Messiah. Was he the forerunner? He did not do what they thought the Messiah would do. He was not supposed to die on a cross! That was not God's intention! All their high hopes had been smashed to the ground. Had they been fools again? It was hardest for those who had been closest to Yeshua. Embarrassing. They tried to disappear.

Yeshua had come to them the evening his tomb was reported empty. They had heard the reports of angels. Mary Magdalene actually saw him and talked to him. Clopas' family had returned, saying that they talked with him along the way and ate with him. They recognized him in the breaking of bread. Excitement and questions, wonderings and hope, nothing was anything like they expected. They were all as confused as they were filled with joy. Seeing the Master themselves was beyond wonderful. He spoke to them. They were terrified. He was not a ghost, no wispy spirit. He was a real person, a real body, solid unlike any other body. They were to stay in Jerusalem.

They tried to talk with old acquaintances. It did not go well. A few folks sought them out, curious, wary. They were excited and shaky, without strength. Some went to the Temple for morning and evening prayers. It was good to participate in that glorious worship. They were so familiar with it. The disciples took turns leading evening worship with the rest at the house. Every evening meal included sharing the bread and wine with the words of Yeshua and His prayer. It was very strange. Somehow since they had seen Yeshua, His resurrected body, His glory outshone the Temple, the worship among themselves was deeper, powerful, than the Temple. When would they see Yeshua again? Would they see Him again?

Since more returned to Galilee, those at Nicodemus' and with Joanna came to Joseph's. It was good to be together. Nicodemus and Joanna were there most of the time as well. Strange week, women spun, men talked, children listened, played, asked questions. Questions the adults did not really have answers for. It was a strange week. Seven days after their last supper with the Master they were all able to fit into Joseph's great room. They remembered and talked about that as they ate. In the mornings many went to the Temple for worship but in the evenings they stayed together and the Master's disciples led the evening prayers. They were always fearful. Joseph and Nicodemus had taken great risk by opposing the Council. They no longer walked alone among the people. Their homes were kept locked and the door opened with caution.

The next day was very bad and in a strange way very good. Still no one felt like eating much. It was almost a fast. It was seven days since the Master's crucifixion. That part was bad, but He had been victorious over death. He was the passover lamb that brought salvation for all people. He had brought about a new covenant through His blood. No one ever expected any of that. It was hard to get used to.

The seventh day of Passover<sup>2</sup> was celebrated with with special prayers and meals. It commemorates the

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<sup>2</sup> [https://www.chabad.org/holidays/passover/pesach\\_cdo/aid/1699/jewish/The-Seventh-Day-of-Passover.htm](https://www.chabad.org/holidays/passover/pesach_cdo/aid/1699/jewish/The-Seventh-Day-of-Passover.htm)

day the Children of Israel reached the Red Sea and witnessed the miraculous "Splitting of the Sea", the drowning of the Egyptian chariots, horses and soldiers that pursued them, and the passing through the Red Sea on dry ground.

The following morning was a week after the report of the tomb empty. All who had been there repeated their stories and they relived the wonder and amazement. They remembered and prayed for all who found it too hard to believe. They prayed for wisdom and understanding, that God would lead them according to His will. They prayed for all that had to return home to Galilee. That evening all gathered at Joseph of Aramathea's. Good food, wonderful fellowship, the conversation was filled with wondering and speculation. Why had God done what He had? When would they see Yeshua again?

The mood was festive. They were filled with joy, singing Psalms with cries of Hallelujahs and Hosannas. Someone shouted "Kylie eleison". It was Greek but they knew the meaning, and sounded fitting, "Lord have mercy". Someone responded with Kyrie eleison and another added "Christe eleison", "Messiah have mercy". They shouted more and more rejoicing with praise.

Over one hundred people were sitting in circles. The disciples were with their families, not as a separate group. Each circle had the bread and wine they needed. The disciples did as Yeshua had done. After the meal was completed, the Master used the bread of the afikomen and third cup. The disciples planned that John would have words of introduction, James would pray and they would all pray the prayer Yeshua taught. Andrew would then say the words about the bread and they would share the bread in their circles. Nathaniel would say the words about the wine, then they would share the cup. Phillip was to have concluding words and prayer. This would be followed with the evening worship: Barechu, Shema, Amidah, Aleinu.<sup>3</sup>

As many hoped and some prayed for, Yeshua appeared in their midst. As they had the week before, they forgot the evening prayers. Yeshua did not object. Clopas and family came every Sabbath and stayed over the following day. So they were there the times Yeshua appeared. It meant the loss of a day and a half's wages, but with Symeon also working the quarry they got by. Clopas visited the family James, Salome, Simon in the city, encouraging them to join Yeshua's followers. They had been wounded by their mother's death and the circumstances about Mary. Then their father and Mary were gone for years, nothing was the same when they returned. All the questions, accusations, hurt and confused them. Since Clopas was their father's brother, he knew what was hidden, what their father knew. He did not reveal the hidden but his peace and confidence gave them hope. They did love Mary, Mother Mary. She, was, is wonderful. The rest of the family, Jose, Jude and Mary would soon be back for Shavuot. Salome and Simon did come over with their families to talk. James came a few times bringing other "pious ones"<sup>4</sup> with him. Their teachings had much in common with what Yeshua said.

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<sup>3</sup> <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maariv>

<sup>4</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Essenes>

The week continued as the week before. After Yeshua did not appear during the third observance of His resurrection, they were disappointed and wondered how often and when they would see Him again. Mary of Magdala was talking with the other women. "They tell us in the Temple the golden table of showbread is brought out. The Court of Israel and some in the middle court get to see the face of God and hear the High Priest proclaim 'Behold God's love for you!' Now, sharing the bread and wine, each of us has the love of God, the body and blood of Yeshua." The Master had promised He would meet them on the mountain in Galilee. The disciples went to tell the news to the people of Galilee and invite them to meet on the mount where Yeshua fed the five thousand.

They spent the week going through the towns and villages, especially to all they knew who had been healed and heard Yeshua. They were very disheartened by the cool reaction. Crucifixion was not acceptable, even hearing of Yeshua's appearances afterward did not help much. This was not the victory of the Messiah they wanted. The disciples decided to go fishing as they had before. Their money was running low. They needed a diversion. Peter had been miserable ever since his betrayal. He would have left but had nowhere to go. They borrowed Zebedee's boat. Nothing! They were failures as fishers of fish just like they were failures as fishers of men. By morning they were done.

Someone called from shore. "Put the net on the other side." An enormous haul, they counted 153 fish!<sup>5</sup> Yeshua was waiting for them. Seeing Him again changed everything. He talked with Peter off on the side. They sold the fish. The next day was Sabbath. They did not feel like going to synagog. Since they had a minyan<sup>6</sup> they held their own and rested. The following day was the first day of the fourth week after Yeshua's resurrection, the day they told everyone to meet. They planned what they would say and do. They would conclude with the sharing of the bread and wine and hoped, prayed, Yeshua would appear. Would anyone come?

There was a crowd, nothing like the one when Yeshua feed the five thousand, maybe about five hundred. Still they were satisfied. The message was going out. They told their testimonies, how Yeshua had appeared to them. They said He had repeatedly told them beforehand He would be crucified and rise on the third day. This was the will of the God. His death was the sacrifice that atoned for the sins of the whole world and ended the power of death. The bread was His Body broken for them and the wine was the blood of the New Covenant prophesied by Jeremiah.

Yeshua appeared and proclaimed. "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." Gone! Many rejoiced with shouts of Hallelujahs, Hosannas. A few thought they had been fooled. "Its not right. He was supposed to take care of everything." "Now he expects us to do his work for him."

The people at Joseph's were happy to hear the reports. They were disappointed by the cool response, but understood. Nothing was like they expected. The Messiah did not come with the army of heaven and transform

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<sup>5</sup> <http://shaliach.net/ac/12all/index.php?action=social&c=98dce83da57b0395e163467c9dae521b.133>  
<http://www.scripturessay.com/what-is-the-significance-of-the-number-153-mentioned-in-john-21/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Synagogue>

the world. He did promise He would return to judge, to end, this world. The weeks were changing them, toughening them, deepening them. Yeshua would appear and talk about matters He knew about but they did not, such as meeting Satan in the desert. He would tell the same story in different wordings. They could not piece together the exact saying. He had taught His parables several ways. They knew stories in the Torah were retold. The great rabbis were careful to repeat their teachings with the exactly the same words. Their disciples could learn exactly. Yeshua, the scriptures were not like that.

Yeshua invited them to meet on the top of the Mount of Olives. They looked over the city and marveled the glorious Temple would soon be destroyed. They watched as He rose into the sky and knew they would not see Him on earth again. In the Temple the Chief Priest looked out the Nicanor Gate and saw a flash of light on the top of the Mount.

As the disciples descended the Mount, they were talking. "I love to look at the Temple. It is the most beautiful sight in the world."

"Somehow it all looks different, knowing it will soon be destroyed."

"Everything has changed. The old way it is over. They don't know it."

#### Questions:

The Gospel accounts have great variations, what could lay behind that?

How do the Gospels report what only Jesus knew, said and did?

How did the appearance on the mount in Galilee happen? We mix it with the Ascension.

What was it like when Jesus appeared? You may have a different concept. I have to have some kind of description. I told the story so some could say it was physiologically driven imagination, "some doubted". That does not mean He did not really appear.

The Gospels record the events of Jesus' life. They do not include the background information everyone knew at the time they were written. This is one of a series of stories that includes that background faithful to what is known about the history and culture. I hope this provokes-in a good way-the reader to think deeply about the Scriptural account. Go to my web site for more. <http://thesignofconcord.com>. These are in the section titled "King of Kings". There is also a section titled "King of Kings Supplements" with additional information.

If you do not think this reflects the culture and historic situation, how would you tell the story?

Many thanks to my patient wife Lynne for repeatedly proofreading.

This is meant for non technical readers. The footnotes are links to the documentation.