

### **THE QUESTION OF THE WEEK**

“Thomas, called Didymus, was not with them (the apostles) in the Upper Room when Jesus came.”

John 20: 24

Thomas, one of the twelve apostles, had been with Jesus since he was called to be an apostle. Thomas was with the others in the Upper Room for that Last Supper when Jesus washed their feet, broke the bread, pronounced the transforming blessing over both the bread and wine, prophesied his betrayal and his denial. Thomas had been there for all of it. Thomas had gone out from there with the others to the Garden of Gethsemane to sleep there for the night. Thomas had been with the others when all the soldiers and police came to take hold of Jesus, his Master, his Lord. It was dark. There was a scuffle, a small melee, a swinging of swords, a severed ear. A healing. Then flight. Thomas ran like the others ran. Who knows where to.

Remember. Thomas and the twelve were not from Jerusalem. They were from elsewhere, most from Galilee in the North. Heathen Galilee. The next morning, Thomas was somewhere in the crowd, somewhere around the Mount of Calvary. He saw them hoist Jesus up after nailing him to the cross. What went through his mind? He loved Jesus. Thomas was called Didymus (Twin). People thought he looked so much like Jesus he could be his twin. You know how nicknames are created.

When the others make their way back to the Upper Room where they had eaten the Passover, Thomas does not gather with them. Is he afraid? Is he so crestfallen that he has no hope? Is the devastation and crushing loss too much for him? Is he the kind of person who only knows how to grieve by drawing away from people? We don't know. But we do know that Thomas missed out on the appearance of Jesus on that Easter Sunday night. They tell him of course when they do finally meet but Thomas is still inconsolable. He cannot even read their joy. He saw Jesus die. “I won't believe unless I can put my fingers in the nail holes and my hand into his side.” I will not believe.

The next week Jesus comes again and says the same thing. “Peace to you.” But then he turns to Thomas and offers his hand and opens his clothing to reveal the wounded side. It really IS Jesus. He really IS risen. “My Lord and my God!” Could you have said it better yourself? And that, my friends, is the question of the week.