

## MOTZA EI' SHABBAT AND THE GOSPELS

I was recently reading in chapters 20 and 21 in the book of John and noticed that in verse 19 of chapter 20, the description of the time at which Messiah first manifested himself to the *talmidim* in the upper room appeared to be in the evening following the Sabbath, or at Motza ei' Shabbat. The Lord has brought much revelation regarding the importance of this time in relation to our walk with HIM and our coming to the table of HIS presence at this time. For this reason, my interest in these scriptures was quickened. A review of the Greek words used in this scripture further convinced me that this was indeed the case. If this is true, then Messiah was resurrected on the seventh day Sabbath because the account we are examining in John 20 says that Messiah appeared to the *talmidim* on the evening of that day. Looking further, it was determined that all four gospel accounts include a description of the day that Miryam (Mary) from Magdala went to the tomb. Without exception every translation that I looked at says that Miryam went to the tomb on the first day of the week. Looking at Matthew 28:1, Luke 28:1 and John 20:1 in the greek , I was shocked to discover that as I had suspected all of these state very clearly that this was the morning of the Sabbath (Sabbaton in the greek). Mark 16:1 contains a little different language in that it appears to relate the day to the morning following the Sabbath. This is very likely referring to the high Sabbaths associated with Passover and not with the seventh day Sabbath spoken of by the other gospels. It is clear to me that Messiah was resurrected at some time after sundown on Friday. This also provides a reference point for us to assume that if after crucifixion Messiah was in the earth for three days and three nights, HE was crucified before sundown on Tuesday. This also means that very likely, Messiah entered Jerusalem on the Sabbath before Passover.

Looking back to our verses in John 20 and 21, it now appears that Messiah came to HIS *talmidim* at Motza ei' Shabbat (verse 19) and once again one week later at Motza ei' Shabbat (verse 26). He also appeared to them the third time on the shores of lake Tiberias. After meditating on the verses in these two chapters, I believe that the LORD has shown me the following "rest of the story".

After Messiah came to HIS *talmidim* for two successive weeks in the same place at the same time in the evening following the seventh day Sabbath, I would strongly suspect that on the third Motza ei' Shabbat the *talmidim* were gathered in the upper room awaiting the appearance of Messiah among them. HE didn't come! What took place during the evening we can only speculate about, but we know from John 21:3 that at some point Shim'on Kefa said "I am going fishing". The others said "we're coming with you". We know that after fishing all night they had caught nothing, and Messiah on the shore at daybreak called out to them to cast their net on the other side of the boat. After catching 153 fish with a single net and recognizing Messiah, they came to the shore and found a fire of coals, fish on the fire and bread ( Messiah had obviously had better luck fishing than they had).

After HE had served them breakfast, Messiah turns to Kefa (Peter) and asks “Do you love (**agapao**) me? Kefa replies “LORD you know that I love (**phileo**) you” and Messiah responds “Feed my Lambs”. Messiah asks the identical question again and the response from Kefa is the same. The LORD responds this time “shepherd my sheep”. There is obviously something very interesting happening in this exchange between Kefa and Messiah. Kefa has chosen not to respond directly to Messiah’s question. We know that agape or agapao is normally translated “love”, but has to do with Yahweh’s love for us and I suspect involves a depth of love that we are incapable of understanding. Phileo is also normally translated “love” and we know that this word describes a brotherly love or the love that one friend would have for another. I believe that Kefa intentionally ignored the real question poised to him because he understood that he did not agape Messiah and the question was like a dagger thrust into his heart. He wanted to agapao Messiah as Messiah loved him, but it just wasn’t in him. When Messiah did not appear the evening before at Motza ei’ Shabbat, Kefa went fishing. I believe that the LORD is telling Kefa “ If you want me to bring agape to the goal in your life, feed my lambs, tend my sheep”.

But, the LORD is full of mercy and compassion. In verse 17, Messiah asks Kefa a third question, “do you (**phileo**) me? In great relief I believe, Kefa responds “ LORD you know everything, you know that I (**phileo**) you”. I also believe that the LORD in HIS great mercy is letting Kefa know that HE understands that agapao is not within Kefa’s reach unless HE brings it to the goal in him. If the LORD were to come to us now and ask “do you agapao me”, how would we respond? Hopefully we would realize that we do not “love” HIM as HE “loves” us. This “love” or agape is not within our reach or understanding until Messiah Yahshua manifests it in our lives. 1 Corinthians 13 says that this gift from Yahweh is the ultimate and permanent gift. It endures forever and allows us to behold Messiah as HE really is. With this gift we no longer understand as children, but as mature followers of Messiah Yahshua. My prayer to Messiah right now is that HE would bring this great gift to reality in our lives.

Is there more to this story? Is it incidental that Messiah appeared to HIS *talmidim* at two successive Motza ei’ Shabbats and used a third to encourage Kefa to be faithful to his calling by Messiah? HE has shown us previously that this time is a special time in our worship, because it brings us to the second table of Shabbat. It brings us to the fellowship of the chosen, the fellowship of angels, the table of shewbread, a ministry of priests and the renewal of HIS table. Moreover, it bring us to the table of HIS presence that exists in the heavenly dimension that we now have access to on a continual basis. Shall it be by our presence at this table, beholding HIM, that we shall be changed and be brought to the goal of agape?