

## Tenth Lesson in the Gospel of John

### JESUS' KINGSHIP, RESURRECTION AND APPEARANCES

**THE KINGSHIP OF JESUS** John 19:19 What is **INRI**? It is the signboard hung over Jesus' head on the cross written in Latin: "*Iēsus Nazarēnus, Rēx Iūdaeōrum*" Which means "*Jesus the Nazarene, king of the Jews.*"

**What is the Biblical basis of the kingship of Jesus?** **In the Old Testament:** The book of Isaiah 9:6-7 reads "A child has been born for us, a son given to us. Authority rests upon his shoulders and he is named wonderful counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. **He will rule** with justice and righteousness".

**In the New Testament** we have very clear proofs for Jesus' kingship. 1) In the Annunciation (Lk 13:2-33), we read: "The Lord God will make him **a King** like David and He will be the King of the descendants of Jacob forever and His Kingdom will never end." 2) The Magi from the Far East came to Jerusalem and asked the question:(Mt. 2:2) "*Where is the baby born to be **the king of the Jews**?*" And they offered Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh. There is a symbolic meaning behind presenting Gold. In the ancient world, Gold was a gift for the kings. So they saw baby Jesus as their king.

3) Jesus' public ministry centered on theme of **the Kingdom of God**. The phrase "**kingdom of God**" occurs 122 times in the Gospels and of which 90 instances are used by Jesus himself. 4) During the royal reception given to Jesus in Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, the Jews shouted: (Lk.19: 38) "***Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord***" He went to Jerusalem to be enthroned as their king. He was riding on a donkey. The kings in the biblical times used horse when they went for war while Jesus used a donkey. There is a symbolic meaning behind the donkey ride. Donkey is a symbol of peace. So Jesus came as ***the king of peace***.

5) When he talks about the final judgement (Matthew 25), he says that the Son of Man will come in his glory. All the angels come with him. **He will sit upon his glorious throne**. All the nations will be assembled before him. He will separate the good ones (sheep) from the bad ones (goats) and will place the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. 6) During the trial of Jesus, Pilate asked the question: (Jn.18: 33):"***Are you the king of the Jews?***" Jesus replied: "***You say that I am a king***". I was born and came into this world for this one purpose, to bear witness to the Truth." 7) Before his ascension into heaven, Jesus declared: (Mt. 28:18): "***I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth.***"

**Was Jesus truly a king?** Yes. How? He had no servants yet they called him Master. He had no armies yet kings feared him. The mount of Calvary was his palace. The Holy Cross was his

throne. Two thieves were his soldiers. The crown of thorns was his royal crown. Nails were his scepter and staff. Blood from his body was his royal perfume. 'Father, forgive them that they don't know what they are doing' was his royal command. Based on all these, we may truly say that Jesus was truly a king but not a king of this world because the kings of this world possess power, wealth and force, having geographical borders while the borders for Jesus are his gospel values of fraternity, charity, justice, truthfulness, option for the poor and downtrodden.

**Why Jesus is called “King of kings and Lord of lords?”** Because, in the end, all other rulers will be conquered or abolished and He alone will reign supreme as King and Lord of all the earth. There is no power, no king, and no lord who can oppose Him and win. Fundamentally, the idea of Jesus being King of kings and Lord of lords means that there is no higher authority than him (Eph1:21–23).

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**John 19:23-24 Significance of Jesus’ Clothing and division by the soldiers:** Clothing in the Bible has spiritual significance. Messages are conveyed by the means of the use of clothing in the Bible. All the four gospels speak about Jesus’ clothing. This is actually a fulfilling of a passage of scripture from the Psalm that Jesus uttered from the cross. Psalm 22:16-18 *“Yes, dogs are round about me; a company of evildoers encircle me; they have pierced my hands and feet- I can count all my bones- they stare and gloat over me; they divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots”*

**The clothing of Jesus is an interesting study in and of itself.** When Jesus was born, He was wrapped in swaddling clothes. During his public ministry, people wanted to touch His garment. We remember the woman (Matthew 9:21) who came up behind Jesus and said, *“If I could just touch the hem of His garment, I’ll be whole.”* She did and she was. Then, at his trial, the soldiers gave him a purple robe to make a mockery of Jesus. Later, when Jesus was buried, his body was wrapped in a linen garment. The Bible also tells us in Revelation 1:13 that when He comes back as our glorified Lord, He will have on a garment of glory.

**What is the Symbolism of seamless robe of Jesus?** **Firstly** it speaks of Jesus’ divinity (divine origin). It was woven from top to bottom. This word ‘top’ has great significance. In **John 3:31**, Jesus is the one who comes from above and in 19:11 Pilate would have no power over Jesus were it not given him from above. This garment is not just any garment but is drawing attention to some divine connection. **Secondly** It reminds us of the sinlessness of Jesus. The book of Hebrews says that He was holy and harmless and undefiled and separate from sinners. He was tempted in all points like as we are yet without sin. So the seamless robe reminds us of the perfection of Jesus in His sinlessness. When God created Adam and Eve, they were placed in the garden of Eden, a perfect environment and they were without clothing and they were not ashamed. They were clothed in glory of God. When sin entered their life, they realized their nakedness and they sewed fig leaves together to cover their sins.

**Thirdly** it speaks of Jesus' high priesthood. Tunic was also part of the liturgical vestment, designed by God and given to Moses in the desert of Sinai. Throughout the books of Exodus (28:32), Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy, there are many mentions of linen garments that are to be worn by the priests that serve at the tabernacle during Temple service. All of this is to say that the seamless garment mentioned only by John, is to point directly to the fact that Christ is the High Priest Of the New Covenant. The first century Jewish historian Josephus stated in his book "Antiquities (History) of the Jews" that the temple's high priest had to wear clothes (a vestment) colored blue. This clothing was not made by pieces of cloth sewn together, or even two large pieces. It was one long vestment that was parted along the breast and back.

**Fourthly** St. Cyprian gives an allegorical meaning to the seamless tunic: Seamless tunic signifies the indivisible kingdom of Christ. Although Solomon's kingdom was rent asunder like a garment and its glory passed away (1 Kings 11:29-32), the Church of Christ is forever glorious and will always remain intact (Jn 19:24).

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**The symbolism of Blood and water from Jesus' pierced side:** Two substances came out of the Lord's pierced side: Blood and Water. **Blood is for redemption**, to deal with sins. Heb. 9:22 "According to the law almost everything is purified by blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness". Blood is for the purchasing of the church. Acts 20:28 "you tend the church of God that he acquired with his own blood". **Water is for imparting life**, to give growth for the church (Eph. 5:29-30). Jesus' death, on the negative side, takes away our sins, and on the positive side, imparts life into us. Hence, it has two aspects: the redemptive aspect and the life-imparting aspect.

The Blood and Water signify two important matters: redemption (Blood) and the imparting of life (Water). Christ's redeeming death gives us the forgiveness and washes away our sins. Blood and Water are the two fountains: Jesus' mystical body, the church has been purchased with His blood (**Eucharist**) and produced with His life giving Water (**Baptism**). The Lord's pierced side was already prefigured by Adam's opened side, out from which Eve was produced (Gen. 2:21-23). Zechariah 13:1: "In that day there will be an opened fountain for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin (blood) and for impurity (water)."

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**John 20 Jesus' Resurrection:** Jesus rose from the dead. It was not a figment of the imagination or the appearance of a ghost. The disciples touched him and he ate food. He was able to appear and disappear. Jesus proved the reality of Resurrection to Sadducees (Matthew 22:31-32) answering from the book of Exodus (3:6) when God said, "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Issac and the God of Jacob". From God's perspective, they are alive. Jesus said, " That I am of the OT is Jesus in the NT: I am the gate, good shepherd, I am the resurrection, way and life, I am the living bread" Matthew 17:22-23 On many occasions Jesus spoke of his resurrection. The

disciples heard only the first part of Jesus' words and became discouraged. They could not understand why Jesus wanted to go back to Jerusalem where there was trouble waiting for him. The disciples did not fully comprehend the purpose of Jesus' death and resurrection until they saw him face to face after the resurrection and in the feast of Pentecost (Acts 2)

**How did Jesus' resurrection's effect the disciples?** The disciples were eyewitnesses to all that had happened to Jesus Christ – his life before his crucifixion. 40 days after his resurrection, he taught them more about the kingdom of God. Resurrection made change in their life. After seeing the resurrected Christ, they were fearless and risked everything to spread the good news about him around the world. They faced imprisonment, beatings, rejection and martyrdom and yet they never compromised their mission. They were fired with enthusiasm to tell others. Twenty centuries later we can still be confident that our faith is based on fact

**St. Paul's teaching on the resurrection of Jesus:** Most Greeks did not believe that people's bodies would be resurrected after death. They saw the afterlife as something that happened only to the soul. According to the Greek philosophers, the soul was the real person, imprisoned in a physical body and at death the soul was released. There was no immortality for the body and the soul entered an eternal state as per the Greeks. Christianity by contrast affirms that the body and soul will be united after resurrection.

**Resurrection Examples:** St. Paul compares the resurrection of our bodies with the growth in a garden. Seeds sowed in the ground do not grow unless they 'die' first. The plant that grows looks very different from the seed because God gives it a new 'body'. There are different kinds of bodies – people, animals, fish and birds. Even the angels in heaven have bodies that are different in beauty and glory. Our resurrected bodies will be very different in some ways, but not all, from our earthly bodies. Our resurrected bodies will be transformed. These bodies will not be limited by the laws of nature. Our spiritual bodies will not be weak, will never get sick and will never die. They are powerful, glorious and spiritual.

**Why is the truth of the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ so important?** The bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ is the most important event in history, providing irrefutable evidence that Jesus is the Son of God. The resurrection was not only the supreme validation of His deity; it also validated the Scriptures, which foretold His coming and resurrection. Moreover, it authenticated Christ's claims that He would be raised on the third day (John 2:19-21; Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:34). If Christ's body was not resurrected, we have no hope that ours will be (1 Corinthians 15:13, 16). As the apostle Paul said, our faith would be "useless" and the life-giving power of the gospel would be altogether eliminated. When Jesus Christ was resurrected, He became the "first fruits" of all who would be raised (Colossians 1:18). The "first fruits" language Paul uses indicates something to follow, and that something would be His followers – the rest of the "crop."

**How is Jesus' resurrection key to our faith?** The resurrection of Jesus from the dead is the central fact of Christian history. On it, the church is built. Without it, there would be no

Christianity. Jesus' resurrection is unique. He is not legend. He is real and living. Other religions have strong ethical systems, concepts about paradise and afterlife and various Holy Scriptures. Only Christianity has a God who became human, literally died for his people and was raised again in power and glory to rule his church forever. Just as he promised, he rose from the dead. As he rose, we will rise and for us, Death is not an end, there is an eternal life. The resurrection is the basis for the church's witness to the world. We do not spin stories but we proclaim the reality of his resurrection. The resurrection helps us find meaning even in great tragedy. No matter what happens to us as we walk with the Lord, the resurrection gives us hope for the future

**How does our resurrected body look like?** We will be recognized in our resurrected bodies and yet they will be better than we can imagine for they will be made to live forever. They will be perfect without sickness or disease. Refer Phil 3:21: He will change our lowly body to conform with his glorified body by the power that enables him also to bring all things into subjection to himself.

**First resurrection and the second resurrection:** Daniel 12:2 summarizes the two very different fates facing mankind: "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." Everyone will be raised from the dead, but not everyone will share the same destiny. The New Testament reveals the further detail of separate resurrections for the just and the unjust. Revelation 20:4-6 mentions a "first resurrection" and identifies those involved as "blessed and holy." The first resurrection, then, is the raising of all believers. It corresponds with Jesus' teaching of the "resurrection of the just" (Luke 14:14) and the "resurrection of life" (John 5:29).

The first resurrection takes place in various stages. Jesus Christ Himself (the "first fruits," 1 Corinthians 15:20), paved the way for the resurrection of all who believe in Him. There was a resurrection of the Jerusalem saints (Matthew 27:52-53) which should be included in our consideration of the first resurrection. Still to come are the resurrection of "the dead in Christ" at the Lord's return (1 Thessalonians 4:16) and the resurrection of the martyrs at the end of the Tribulation (Revelation 20:4). The second resurrection, then, is the raising of all unbelievers; the second resurrection is connected to the second death.

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**John 20 Jesus' Appearance to Mary Magdalene:** She was the first to see Jesus after his resurrection. She was an early follower of Jesus after she was freed from demons by Jesus (Luke 8:2). She was present at the crucifixion and was on her way to anoint Jesus' body on Sunday morning when she discovered the tomb. Like the rest of the disciples, She neither understood nor expected Jesus' resurrection and that is why she could not recognize Jesus at first. Her grief blinded her. When Jesus said her name, she immediately recognized him. We can imagine the love that flooded her heart when she heard her Savior saying her name. She could not control her joyful emotion of seeing Jesus back again. She held on to Jesus and Jesus said no. why did she hold on? She simply loved Jesus and she did not want to lose again but Jesus says that he

has to ascend into Father in heaven to fulfill the scripture. He did not want to be detained at the tomb. Secondly if he does not ascend, the Holy Spirit cannot descend upon the disciples. He will send the Holy Spirit on his arrival to complete the earthly ministry.

**My Father and Your Father/ My God and Your God:** If Jesus is God, Why does He call the Father My God? Any contradiction in his divinity? Absolutely no. Here are two points to think about. First, Jesus isn't merely God. Unlike the Father, He is truly God and truly man. He is the God-man. As the God-man, He is a perfect man, who worships, honors, obeys and prays to God the Father. In fact, the incarnate Son is dependent on the Father (John 5:30). How could the Son be dependent if He is God? The apostle Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, gives us a glimpse into the Son's humiliation: "Christ Jesus, who, though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, He humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross" (Phil. 2:6-8).

In the incarnation, the Son sets aside His independent authority and heavenly glory. Instead, He humbled Himself by taking on a human nature. It is within this context that one must read the Jesus' "my God" statements. Second, the Father and the Son have different roles within the economy of the Trinity. There is equality in nature, but subordination in their personal roles. For instance, the Son submits to the Father, but not vice versa. Therefore, when God the Son calls God the Father "my God," He is affirming His relationally subordinate role without denying His full deity.

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**John 20:24-29 Jesus' Appearance to St. Thomas** Thomas is often identified and called as doubting Thomas. Doubting is not something bad. There are many doubters in the Bible. Abraham and Sarah doubted when God told them that they would have a son in their old age. Moses doubted when God told him to return to Egypt to lead the people. The Israelites doubted when they faced difficulties in the desert. Gideon doubted when God told him that he would be judge and leader. Zachariah doubted when God told him that he would be a father in old age. Like all these people Thomas also doubted when Jesus had risen from the dead. We must note that God used all these real doubters to accomplish for greater things. Doubt is not opposite of faith but it is an element of faith. It helps our thinking. It sharpens our mind. It allows us to pose question and get an answer and push for a decision. Thomas was a doubter but his doubts had a purpose. He wanted to know the truth. He wanted to be sure. Once he was sure, he would do anything for his faith. Hence we can say that doubting was not his way of life but only his way of responding to people and situations. St. Thomas is most prominent in John's Gospel. The writer of this gospel beautifully brings out the true character of Thomas. One of the first times that Thomas shows his great character is on the occasion of Lazarus' illness. Our Lord Jesus announced to the disciples that he intended to go to his friend and console the mourning family. The other disciples were afraid of death threats to Jesus and to them as well as the Jews were planning to stone at Jesus. Only Thomas was willing to accompany Jesus in this perilous

journey saying in John 11:16 "Let us also go, that we may die with him". That shows Thomas' true love for Christ.

Later in John 14:6 Jesus talks to the disciples of how he is going to prepare a place for them in his father's house. He tells them that they "know the way to the place where they are going". But Thomas looks ambiguous and says, "Lord, we do not know where you are going, how we can know the way?" Only it is here that we receive the wonderful reassurance from Christ, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life". Again in John 20 we read the Risen Lord appearing to the disciples for the first time. We don't know why Thomas was absent for the first time. William Barclay, the biblical commentator, says that Thomas was not present because he sought loneliness rather than company of disciples as the death of Jesus was paining him a lot. It is this time Jesus appeared to the disciples when Thomas was not there. It was quite natural for Thomas to doubt the appearance of Jesus and to say that, "unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my hand in his side, I will not believe" (John 20:27). A week later Risen Christ actually stood amongst them in the locked room, bringing a greeting of peace, and invited Thomas to indeed touch his wounds. This time his doubt disappeared. His heart ran out in love and devotion. All he could say was "My Lord and My God". Thomas' is a beautiful manifestation of faith which we profess at the holy mass when priest elevates the Holy Eucharist in his hand. It was not by chance that Thomas was absent but it is all God's plan for Thomas to absent himself from the rest in order to manifest his authentic faith publicly and boldly for strengthening his belief, the belief of other disciples and the belief of every one of us. In a marvelous way, the disbelieving disciple, in touching the wounds of his master's body, heals our wounds of disbelief. St. Gregory the great says "The disbelief of Thomas has done more for our faith than the faith of the other disciples".

**How to apply this great apostle in our life?** He certainly provides very good company in our own struggles to comprehend the life and ministry of Christ. Like him, we are called to overcome our doubts, believe in the resurrection and put the Gospel to practice in our lives. We should have boldness in expressing our mind. Like him, we have to surrender to Christ for clarity when we wrestle with confusions and chaos. Only then we will have peace in our mind and heart. St. Anselm coined the famous phrase, 'Faith seeking understanding'. Certainly our faith needs understanding. When we go through struggles, difficulties and doubts in our mind, instead of getting worried, let us look at Thomas and ask for his prayers so that like him we also will be able to have deep and profound faith. Although Thomas stumbled on few occasions in terms of his faith, He clearly understood Jesus' mission command of "go out to the whole world and proclaim the Good news to all creation". We are grateful to God for the gift of St. Thomas, the founder of Christian faith in India.

**John 21:15-23 Appearance to St. Peter?** Why special treatment to him? It could be because of Peter's weaknesses during Jesus' final moments. He distanced himself from Jesus and denied Jesus three times. Perhaps he felt completely unworthy after disowning Jesus but Peter repented though. Jesus showed individual concern for Peter to pardon him, strengthen him and send him to build the church of Christ.

**Do you love me? Do you love me? Do you love me?** In the beach of Tiberias, Jesus led Peter through an experience that would remove the cloud of his denial. Peter had disowned Jesus three times. Three times Jesus asked Peter if he loved him. When Peter answered yes, Jesus told him to feed his sheep. Love is not an emotion but a sincere commitment. Love needs to be shown in action. Peter repented from what he did and now he expresses his willingness to commit his life. Four unique forms of love are found in the Bible.

They are communicated through four Greek words: **Eros** (romantic and sensual love/physical attraction) **Storge** (family love/ the affectionate bond that develops naturally between parents and children, and brothers and sisters) **Philia** (love, care. Respect and compassion for fellow human beings which most Christians practice toward each other. **Agape** (God's divine love. This is the highest of the four types of love in the Bible. Agape defines God's immeasurable, incomparable love for humankind. It is the divine love that comes from God. Agape love is perfect, unconditional, sacrificial, and pure.

**John 21:18 Jesus' prediction of Peter's death by crucifixion** Tradition indicates that Peter was crucified upside down for his faith because he did not feel worthy of dying as his Lord did. Jesus' prediction of John's death (John 21:21-22): Early church history reports that after John spent several years as an exile on the island of Patmos, he returned to Ephesus where he died as an old man near the end of the first century.

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**Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition** John 21:25 **“There are also many other things that Jesus did, but if these were to be described individually, I do not think the whole world would contain the books that would be written “** John in his Gospel did not try to write it all, but he wrote only what was sufficient to establish his main point, namely, that Jesus Christ was the Son of God and His Messiah (John 20:30, 31). The point of John is this: There were many other things Jesus did and many other words that he uttered that was not put down in writing perhaps for two obvious reasons: (1) It would not be practical because of quantity to write down every word Jesus spoke and (2) it would not be necessary. The things that are vital for us to know are written down. The things that we need to know and believe that Jesus is the Christ have been clearly written down. Here comes the role of the Sacred Tradition in the catholic church. What is sacred tradition, and why is it important? The Catholic Church is often criticized and attacked by the Christian Churches for our traditional beliefs and practices. For them they non scriptural and founded by church men.

**What is tradition?** It refers to a handing on of beliefs and practices from one generation to the next. For example, we often speak of family traditions (family meal), cultural traditions (simbang gabi of Filipinos) and national traditions (Thanksgiving Day) . They are very special and we repeat though the years. In this way, traditions help to connect the old with the young; they also help us to remember who we are. In a similar manner, Sacred Tradition refers to important

beliefs and practices that have been handed on through the centuries from one generation to the next.

**What is the relationship between Sacred Tradition and Scripture?** The New Testament itself sheds light on this relationship in the Second Letter to the Thessalonians 2:15 where the author writes “ *Therefore, brothers, stand firm and hold fast to the traditions that you were taught, either by an oral statement or by a letter of ours*” This verse is very important and makes it clear that there were important traditions passed on by word and not only by letter. As the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council noted, “*It is not from Sacred Scripture alone that the Church draws her certainty about everything which has been revealed. Therefore, both Sacred Tradition and Sacred Scripture are to be accepted and revered with the same sense of devotion. Sacred Tradition and Sacred Scripture form one sacred deposit of the word of God, which is committed to the Church.*” So we see that we need both Scripture and Sacred Tradition to understand God's life among us properly.

Most of the beliefs and practices found in Sacred Tradition have their basis in Scripture, but some do not. Catholics' belief that Mary was assumed into heaven is an example of a Sacred Tradition that has no reference in Scripture. The Assumption of Mary was nonetheless an important belief in the early Church and that is why it has been passed on through the generations as part of Sacred Tradition.

A few examples of beliefs and practices which do have their basis in Scripture would include the following: The Apostles' Creed, an early summary of important Christian beliefs. The role of bishops, priests, and the Pope in Christian ministry. The authority of the Pope--the belief that the Pope cannot teach falsely when he speaks officially as head of the Church on matters of faith and morals (Infallibility of the Pope). Our understanding of the Sacraments and their place in Christian life. Although Scripture touches on these matters, it is through Sacred Tradition that we fully understand their meaning and significance to the Church. Sacred Tradition, together with Scripture, includes those beliefs and practices that are most important to the Church because they have been revealed by God and because they have been affirmed by the teaching authority of the Catholic Church. That is why Sacred Tradition can help us to live a better Christian life. For a detailed study please refer to "Catechism of the Catholic Church"

Emeritus Pope Benedict XVI says “Thanks to Tradition, guaranteed by the ministry of the apostles and their successors, the water of life that flowed from the side of Christ and his saving blood comes to the women and men of all times. In this way, Tradition is the permanent presence of the Savior who comes to meet, redeem and sanctify us in the Spirit through the ministry of his Church for the glory of the Father” Through Catholic Tradition, the Holy Spirit works to bring the grace and truth of Christ into our own lives