



JOHN 21:1-14 | JESUS' THIRD RESURRECTION APPEARANCE

- Verse 1 –
 - The phrase **After these things** is a “timestamp” that is only general in nature. The author changes the subject to the third appearance of Jesus (as mentioned in v. 14). His appearance was to **the disciples** (not *the Twelve*).
 - This was on **the sea of Tiberias**. In John 6:1 the book mentions **the sea of Galilee, which is the sea of Tiberias**. This name for the sea highlights the later first century authorship.
- Verse 2 –
 - One wonders why, if the author can mention **Peter, and Thomas** and **Nathanael** and **the sons of Zebedee**, why **two other of his disciples** did not get named. Could it be for security reasons?
 - If John is (as always taught) the *disciple whom Jesus loved*), then why is he identified in this verse (as one of **the sons of Zebedee**)?
 - This verse seems to testify that John, the son of Zebedee, is *not* the unknown disciple.
- Verses 3-4 –
 - It is only for contextual purposes that we are told that **that night they caught nothing** (v. 3). While probably a fairly rare thing for a group of fishermen, it would not have been totally unheard of.
 - What is more interesting is that **the disciples knew not that it was Jesus**.
 - We are not told whether this was due to darkness, sunrise (though the traditional spot for this is on the western side of the sea), or something more supernatural.
 - I would guess simply that they were not focused on the Man on the seashore, and thus did not recognize Him.
 - The Greek word **knew not** is the word for *perception* rather than objective knowledge.
- Verses 5-6 –
 - It is interesting that Jesus called them **Children**.
 - The word is παιδίον [paidion], The word *pais* is the normal word for child, and *paidion* is the form one would use for an infant or toddler.
 - It is only used two other times, both by John in 1 John 2:13 and 18, where it is translated **little children**.
 - While it is clearly a term of endearment, it does not appear to be something that Jesus often used when speaking to the disciples, for they did not recognize him from the address alone.
 - The men did obey the instruction of this “stranger” and cast the net on the other side.
 - Perhaps they thought they had nothing to lose, or perhaps they thought he may be an experienced fisherman.
 - They came (apparently immediately) upon a large catch and **were not able to draw** the net **for the multitude of fishes**.
- Verse 7 –
 - The word **therefore** likely refers to the large catch, rather than Jesus addressing them as **children** (v. 5).
 - If so, then **that disciple whom Jesus loved** clearly recognized this as a miracle. It is this **disciple** that announces to Peter **It is the Lord**.
 - Simon Peter isn’t willing to wait for the boat to come ashore but jumps into the sea to swim.
 - We are told that **he girt his fisher’s coat unto him, (for he was naked)**. One wonders why we need this information, and why it is included in Scripture. Here are my thoughts:

- It could have some kind of hidden spiritual meaning. I reject most “hidden meaning” applications and find them to be the result of an unnecessary felt need to give application to every text.
 - To show that we should “always be ready.” But this seems trite and the message doesn’t come across with clarity.
 - To show that Peter was not yet willing to be a servant. For example, “I’d argue that Peter putting his tunic back on also reveals something about his identity at that point. I think it symbolizes how he isn’t yet ready to lay aside his “garments” (symbolizing his role and authority) and become a servant as Jesus did.”
(<https://goodquestionblog.com/2017/05/29/why-does-peter-put-on-his-tunic-to-swim-to-shore/>)
 - It could have been a mundane statement of fact.
 - Writers have to give detail to stories to make them readable.
 - Writers want to show the humanity of the individuals in the story.
 - It was likely fully culturally acceptable to fish unclothed and the writer gave it no second thought.
- Verse 8 –
 - This verse likely explains why **the disciples knew not that it was Jesus** (v. 4) on the shoreline. The length of **two hundred cubits** is 400-500 feet (1.5 football fields). This helps to solve the problem of why the disciples don’t recognize Jesus.
- Verses 9-10 –
 - We are not told why Jesus asked **have ye any meat?** (v. 5) when He clearly has some. Jesus calls for the disciples to bring theirs (as if inviting them to join Him for the meal).
- Verse 11 –
 - The *great mystery of the ages* is whether or not there is any meaning to the 153 fish. If there is, it for the most part remains a mystery.
 - It is likely (as with Peter in verse 7), a matter-of-fact portion of the story. (as we shall see, the full story having some potential application, the details of the story simply being details).
- Verses 12-13 –
 - In these two verses we likely have the full picture of why this account is necessary in the Scriptures, beyond simply a “human interest” story.
 - In the parables of the Kingdom in Matthew 13, the last one (Matt. 13:47-49) is about **a net that was cast into the sea**).
 - In this story:
 - Only after a long “night” did they hear from the Master.
 - The men mentioned are strongly related to the nation of Israel, as representatives.
 - The men are fully obedient to the Master.
 - When they meet Jesus, He invites them to dine.
 - All in all, the story seems to mirror the arrival of the millennium.