

Notes on the Greek New Testament Day 152 – June 1st – John 20:1-31

Works frequently referenced in these notes on John

Barrett, CK	<i>The Gospel According to John</i> , London, SPCK, 1967
Beasley-Murray, GR	<i>John</i> , <i>Word Bible Commentary</i> , vol 36, Word Books, 1987
Carson, DA	<i>The Gospel According to John</i> , Leicester, IVP (Apollos), 1991

John 20:1

Τῇ δὲ μιᾷ τῶν σαββάτων Μαρία ἡ Μαγδαληνὴ ἔρχεται πρῶτ' σκοτίας ἔτι οὔσης εἰς τὸ μνημεῖον, καὶ βλέπει τὸν λίθον ἡρμένον ἐκ τοῦ μνημείου.

εἰς, μια, ἐν gen ἑνος, μιας, ἑνος one

τη μια των σαββατων is a Semitic construction meaning 'on the first day of the week'. Cf. Mk 16:2; Matt 28:1; Lk 24:1.

Carson comments, "It is remarkable that all four Gospels (cf. Mt 28:1; Mk 16:2; Lk 24:1) introduce their respective resurrection accounts by specifying, *the first day of the week*, rather than 'the third day' after the crucifixion (cf. 1 Cor 15:3, 4), despite Jesus' passion predictions (Mk 8:31 par.). The reason is disputed, but it may have to do with the desire to present the resurrection of Jesus as the beginning of something new."

On Mary Magdalene, see the note on 19:25.

πρωῖ adv early morning, in the early morning

Beasley-Murray comments, "πρωῖ is variously interpreted in the Gospels. Mark defines it 'the sun having risen' (16:2), Luke, 'at deep dawn' (24:1), Matthew with an ambiguous phrase which may mean 'as it was dawning towards the first day' (28:1)."

σκοτια, ας f darkness

ἔτι still

βλεπω see

λιθος, ου m stone

ἡρμένον Verb, perf pass ptc, m acc & n

nom/acc s αἶρω take (away), set aside

Verse 2

τρέχει οὖν καὶ ἔρχεται πρὸς Σίμωνα Πέτρον καὶ πρὸς τὸν ἄλλον μαθητὴν ὃν ἐφίλει ὁ Ἰησοῦς, καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς· Ἦσαν τὸν κύριον ἐκ τοῦ μνημείου, καὶ οὐκ οἶδαμεν ποῦ ἔθηκαν αὐτόν.

τρέχω run

ἄλλος, η, ο another, other

φιλεω love

The third person plural, ἦσαν is used impersonally and is equivalent to the passive.

οἶδα know

The plural suggests that others may have accompanied Mary, cf. Matt 28:1; Mk 16:1.

ποῦ interrogative adverb where

ἔθηκαν see 19:42

"Mary's report suggests the fear that either enemies or robbers had taken the body of Jesus." Beasley-Murray.

Verse 3

ἐξῆλθεν οὖν ὁ Πέτρος καὶ ὁ ἄλλος μαθητής, καὶ ἦρχοντο εἰς τὸ μνημεῖον.

Beasley-Murray comments, "The sing. ἐξῆλθεν with Peter first as subject, followed by ὁ ἄλλος μαθητής, is a frequent construction in the Gospel. The following ἦρχοντο is also common usage, and should not be made the basis of conjecture that the reference to 'the other disciple' was added later."

εἰς here probably has the sense 'towards'.

Verse 4

ἔτρεχον δὲ οἱ δύο ὁμοῦ· καὶ ὁ ἄλλος μαθητής προέδραμεν τάχιον τοῦ Πέτρου καὶ ἦλθεν πρῶτος εἰς τὸ μνημεῖον,

τρέχω see v.2

δυο gen & acc δυο dat δυσιν two

ὁμου adv together

ἄλλος, η, ο another, other

μαθητης, ου m disciple, pupil, follower

προέδραμεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s

προτρέχω run on ahead; π. ταχιον

outrun

ταχιον quickly; more quickly

πρωτος, η, ον first

Verse 5

καὶ παρακύψας βλέπει κείμενα τὰ ὀθόνια, οὐ μέντοι εἰσηλθεν.

παρακυπτω look into, stoop, bend over

βλεπω see v.1

κειμαι lie, be laid

ὀθονιον, ου n see 19:40

μεντοι but, nevertheless, however
 εισηλθεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s εισερχομαι
 enter, go in

"Peter and the Beloved Disciple, in their anxiety, run as speedily as they can to the tomb. The latter runs ahead of Peter and reaches the tomb first. The Evangelist may well have wished to hint that this was not simply because the Beloved Disciple was a faster runner than Peter; he who was especially loved by the Lord loved him especially also, and love made him more fleet of foot. His speedy arrival, however, did not make much difference; he waited for Peter to arrive before entering the tomb. What prompted the reticence is not said, but at all events Peter did not share it. His immediate entry into the tomb accords with his character." Beasley-Murray. Carson comments that it is quite foolish to try and assign symbolic significance to the two disciples and their actions.

Verse 6

ἔρχεται οὖν καὶ Σίμων Πέτρος ἀκολουθῶν
 αὐτῷ, καὶ εἰσηλθεν εἰς τὸ μνημεῖον· καὶ
 θεωρεῖ τὰ ὀθόνια κείμενα,

ἀκολουθεω follow

θεωρεω see, observe, notice

Verse 7

καὶ τὸ σουδάριον, ὃ ἦν ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς αὐτοῦ,
 οὐ μετὰ τῶν ὀθονίων κείμενον ἀλλὰ χωρὶς
 ἐντετυλιγμένον εἰς ἓνα τόπον·

σουδαριον, ου n handkerchief, facecloth
 (used for the dead)

See 11:44.

κεφαλη, ης f head

χωρις adv separately, by itself

ἐντετυλιγμένον Verb, perf pass ptc, m acc &
 n nom/acc s ἐντυλισσω fold or roll up

εἰς, μια, ἐν gen ἑνος, μιας, ἑνος one

τοπος, ου m place

"It is impossible to say with certainty how John thought the resurrection had taken place. At the raising of Lazarus the body, after being quickened, was drawn out of the tomb still wrapped in, and confined by, the bandages which had been used in preparing it for burial. Here however it seems that the body had in some way disappeared from, or passed through, the cloths and left them lying where they were. Cf. v.19, where the risen Jesus suddenly appears in a closed room." Barrett.

Other commentators suggest that the meaning is that the cloth was neatly folded up and left on one side – an unhurried leaving of the tomb. Beasley-Murray comments, "Jesus has forsaken his burial clothes for ever, for he is risen! The Evangelist had penned the story of Lazarus, and recorded how Lazarus, at the bidding of Jesus, came forth from his tomb, with the wrappings of the dead still binding him hand and foot, and the napkin on his head; he had to be freed to take up life again in this world. Jesus on the contrary left his wrappings in the grave as a sign of his resurrection into the life of God's eternal order."

Verse 8

τότε οὖν εἰσηλθεν καὶ ὁ ἄλλος μαθητῆς ὁ
 ἑλθὼν πρῶτος εἰς τὸ μνημεῖον, καὶ εἶδεν καὶ
 ἐπίστευσεν·

τοτε then

εἶδεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ὁραω see
 πιστεω believe (in), have faith (in)

I.e. believed that Jesus had risen from the dead. Beasley-Murray comments, "On entering the tomb 'he saw, and believed'; he saw not only the wrappings, but their significance: he 'believed'!" Carson adds, "Thus the Evangelist introduces the themes of seeing and believing that reach their climax in v. 29." Cf. Lk 24:12 for Peter's response.

Verse 9

οὐδέπω γὰρ ᾔδεισαν τὴν γραφὴν ὅτι δεῖ αὐτὸν
 ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναστῆναι.

οὐδέπω adv not yet

Maybe 'up to this time had not believed ...'

ᾔδεισαν Verb, pluperf act indic, 3 pl οἶδα
 γραφη, ης f writing, Scripture

δει impersonal verb it is necessary, must,
 should, ought

νεκρος, α, ον dead

ἀναστῆναι Verb, 2nd aor act infin ἀνίστημι
 rise, come back to life

Beasley-Murray comments, "The lack of understanding of the Scriptures concerning the Messiah's redemptive work is beautifully illustrated in the Emmaus story (Luke 24:25–27, 32) and extended to the whole disciple group in Luke 24:44–47. The plural ἤδεισαν shows that the ignorance of the Scriptures applied to both disciples; in the context, however, it appears to emphasize the disparity between the faith of the one and the incomprehension of the other." The Beloved Disciple, without need of further demonstration, understands what has happened to the Lord. He thus becomes a model for believers: like those pronounced blessed in v.29, he has not seen Jesus yet has believed.

Verse 10

ἀπῆλθον οὖν πάλιν πρὸς αὐτοὺς οἱ μαθηταί.

ἀπῆλθον Verb, aor act ind, 1s & 3pl

ἀπερχομαι

πάλιν again, once more

πρὸς αὐτοὺς 'to their own [homes].'¹ Bernard assumed that the Beloved Disciple took the news of the empty tomb to Mary, the Mother of Jesus.

μαθητης, ου m disciple

Verse 11

Μαρία δὲ εἰστήκει πρὸς τῷ μνημείῳ ἔξω κλαίουσα. ὡς οὖν ἔκλαιεν παρέκλυψεν εἰς τὸ μνημεῖον,

εἰστήκει Verb, pluperf act indic, 3 s ἵστημι
stand, stop.

μνημειον, ου n grave, tomb

ἔξω adv. out, outside

The presence of ἔξω in the text is uncertain. In κ^c B W x etc it precedes κλαίουσα, in Dgr^{supp} K L etc it follows the verb, and it is omitted in κ^* A and MSS of the OL and OS. Normally that would suggest that the omission is original, but κ has ἐν τῷ μνημείῳ instead of πρὸς τῷ μνημείῳ, which suggests that ἔξω may have been omitted accidentally. The UBS committee therefore accepted the first reading as most likely.

κλαιω weep, cry

παρακυπτω look into, stoop, bend over
μνημειον, ου n grave, tomb

Verse 12

καὶ θεωρεῖ δύο ἀγγέλους ἐν λευκοῖς καθεζομένους, ἓνα πρὸς τῇ κεφαλῇ καὶ ἓνα πρὸς τοῖς ποσίν, ὅπου ἔκειτο τὸ σῶμα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ.

θεωρεω see, notice

δου gen & acc δυο dat δυοισιν two

λευκος, η, ον white, shining

Cf. Mk 16:15; Matt 28 2f.; Lk 24:4.

καθεζομαι sit down, sit

εἰς, μια, ἐν gen ἑνος, μιας, ἑνος one

κεφαλη, ης f head

ποσίν Noun, dat pl ποους, ποδος m foot

ὅπου adv. where

κειμαι lie, be laid

σωμα, τος n body

Beasley-Murray comments, "The scene recalls the synoptic accounts: in Mark 16:5 a 'young man' (νεανίσκος) dressed in white appears to the women; in Luke 24:4 two 'men' in flashing clothing; in Matt 28:2–3 an angel with the appearance of lightning and wearing a garment white as snow. In all cases (including Mark) the appearance is of angelic beings, for 'shining white garments are the symbol of the heavenly world' (Blank, *Johannes* 3:167). The presence of the angels is a witness that the powers of heaven have been at work here. Their position in the tomb, one at the head and the other at the feet where Jesus had lain, is a reminder of the silent testimony of the grave clothes, but of another order; it witnesses that *God*, not robbers, has taken Jesus, for a purpose yet to be revealed."

Verse 13

καὶ λέγουσιν αὐτῇ ἐκεῖνοι· Γύναι, τί κλαίεις; λέγει αὐτοῖς ὅτι Ἦραν τὸν κύριόν μου, καὶ οὐκ οἶδα ποῦ ἔθηκαν αὐτόν.

ἐκεινος, η, ο demonstrative adj. that [one],
he, she, it

γύναι Noun, voc s γυνη, αικος f woman

"The question of the angels, why are you crying?, is not designed to elicit information. It is a gentle reproof." Carson.

αιρω take, take away

οἶδα know

ποῦ interrogative adverb where

ἔθηκαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s τιθημι place,
put

Verse 14

ταῦτα εἰποῦσα ἐστράφη εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω, καὶ θεωρεῖ τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐστῶτα, καὶ οὐκ ᾔδει ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστίν.

εἰποῦσα Verb, aor act ptc, f nom s λεγω

ἐστράφη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s στρεφω
intrans (mostly in pass) turn, turn around

ὀπισω adv back, behind

ἐστῶτα Verb, perf act ptc, n nom/acc pl
ἵστημι stand

ᾔδει Verb, pluperf act indic, 3 s οἶδα

Mary fails to recognise Jesus. This is similar to the story of the two on the Emmaus road. Some suggest that the resurrection body was a transfigured body, hence not easily recognised. Others suggest that Mary failed to recognise Jesus through her tears. John focusses on recognition through relationship: Mary recognises Jesus when she hears his voice. John emphasises the power of the Word.

Verse 15

λέγει αὐτῇ Ἰησοῦς· Γύναι, τί κλαίεις; τίνα ζητεῖς; ἐκεῖνη δοκοῦσα ὅτι ὁ κηπουρός ἐστίν λέγει αὐτῷ· Κύριε, εἰ σὺ ἐβάστασας αὐτόν, εἰπέ μοι ποῦ ἔθηκας αὐτόν, κάγω αὐτόν ἀρῶ.

ζητεω seek, look for

δοκεω think, suppose

κηπουρος, ου m gardener

βάσταζω carry, bear

κάγω a compound word = και ἐγω

ἀρῶ Verb, fut act indic, 1 s αἰρω

Cf. v.13. Beasley-Murray comments, "She assumed that at so early an hour during the Feast only the gardener would be there. She may further have thought that since the tomb was new, he may have removed the body of Jesus from it to another place, without ill will: hence her plea to know where he had placed it that she may take him away."

Verse 16

λέγει αὐτῇ Ἰησοῦς· Μαριάμ. στραφεῖσα ἐκεῖνη λέγει αὐτῷ Ἑβραῖστί· Ραββουνι (ὃ λέγεται Διδάσκαλε).

"The name alone is sufficient to convince Mary of the identity of the speaker. The good shepherd calls his own sheep by name and they recognise his voice (10:3)." Barrett.

στραφεῖσα Verb, aor act ptc, f nom s στρεφω see v.14

Here the meaning may be 'look towards' rather than 'turn around', cf Matt 16:23, Lk 9:55.

Ἑβραῖστί in Hebrew or Aramaic
διδασκαλος, ου m teacher

Verse 17

λέγει αὐτῇ Ἰησοῦς· Μή μου ἅπτου, οὐπω γὰρ ἀναβέβηκα πρὸς τὸν πατέρα· πορεύου δὲ πρὸς τοὺς ἀδελφούς μου καὶ εἰπέ αὐτοῖς· Ἀναβαίνω πρὸς τὸν πατέρα μου καὶ πατέρα ὑμῶν καὶ θεόν μου καὶ θεὸν ὑμῶν.

ἅπτω midd. take hold of, touch

"The present imperative with μη in a prohibition signifies the breaking off of an action already in progress, or sometimes of an attempt to perform an action; ... Accordingly we may suppose either that Mary had seized Jesus' feet (in which case we may cf. Matt 28.9) or that she was on the point of doing so when Jesus prevented her." Barrett.

In verse 27 Thomas is invited to touch Jesus. Hence Jesus is not here saying that it is quite impossible to do so.

Some suggest that Mary is tempted to make physical contact the basis of her relationship with Jesus. She wants to restore the old relationship. But the resurrection appearances were only a temporary phase in the life of the Church. Jesus is soon to ascend to the Father. The relationship between Jesus and his people is henceforth to be part of the ministry of the Spirit. Carson, however, argues that the sense is 'Stop clinging to me, but (δὲ) go and tell my disciples that I am in process of ascending (ἀναβαίνω) to my Father and your Father.' He adds, "This makes the contrast between the prohibition to Mary and the invitation to Thomas easier to understand. Mary is told to stop, because her enthusiastic and relieved grasping of Jesus does not really comprehend what is transpiring. She now believes him to be alive, but has understood neither that he is not about to disappear, nor that he soon will.

Thomas is told to touch, because he has not yet believed that Jesus has risen from the dead."

οὐπω not yet

ἀναβέβηκα Verb, perf act indic, 1 s

ἀναβαίνω go up, come up, ascend

τὸν πατέρα alone is read by κ B D W it^{b,d,e} etc, but many more MSS add μου after πατέρα (so P⁶⁶ A K L x Δ Θ etc). It is most likely that the shorter reading is original and that μου has been added to match the words of Jesus in v 17b.

πορεύομαι go

τους ἀδελφους μου again stresses a new relationship, cf. Matt 28:10. "The last thing that the disciples have learned about Jesus is that his body is missing; here they are to learn that he is alive, and on his way to his Father to complete his saving task... We recall his promise to prepare a place for the disciples in the Father's house (14:2); to banish their sadness and fill them with joy through reunion with them (14:18-19; 16:16-22); the new relationship whereby the Father and the Son will make their home with them (14:21-23); the new era of effective prayer and power in their service for God (14:12-14; 16:23-24); and above all the bestowal of the Paraclete-Spirit, who will take the place of Jesus and expound his revelation to them and enable them to carry out their mission." Beasley-Murray.

εἰπέ Verb, aor act imperat, 2 s λεγω

"Here John emphasises that the relationship between Jesus and God is different from that between the disciples and God, even though it is described in the same terms and the disciples are said to be his brothers. Jesus eternally is the Son of God; he gives to those who believe in him the power to become the children of God (1:11)." Barrett. Beasley-Murray comments, "The distinction between the only Son of the Father and the sons who by the Spirit share his sonship is naturally assumed. But as Brown points out, it is not the difference but the likeness that is proclaimed here: 'The statement of the Johannine Jesus is one of identification and not of disjunction' ... By way of illustration, Brown cites Ruth 1:16: 'Your people shall be my people and your God my God.' The parallel is apt, but it should be noted that while it is Ruth who chooses to come under Naomi's God, it is the Redeemer who has chosen to come to us, and in virtue of his total saving activity, living, dying, rising and ascending, makes us the sons of the Father and the people of God." The emphasis is on shared privileges, cf. Rom 8:15-16; Heb 2:11-12.

Verse 18

ἔρχεται Μαριὰμ ἡ Μαγδαληνὴ ἀγγέλλουσα τοῖς μαθηταῖς ὅτι Ἐώρακα τὸν κύριον καὶ ταῦτα εἶπεν αὐτῇ.

ἀγγελλω tell

ώραω see

"Mary departs and delivers her message to the disciples. How did they receive it? According to the tradition in Mark 16:10-11, they refused to believe her, just as in Luke 24:11 the women's story of seeing Jesus alive appeared to them as 'idle tales.' It was urgently necessary for Jesus himself to deal with them!" Beasley-Murray.

Verse 19

Οὔσης οὖν ὀψίας τῆ ἡμέρα ἐκεῖνη τῆ μιᾶ σαββάτων, καὶ τῶν θυρῶν κεκλεισμένων ὅπου ἦσαν οἱ μαθηταὶ διὰ τὸν φόβον τῶν Ἰουδαίων, ἦλθεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς καὶ ἔστη εἰς τὸ μέσον, καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς· Εἰρήνη ὑμῖν.

For vv. 19-20, cf. Luke 24:36-42.

ὀψια, ας f evening

σαββατον, ου n (often in pl) the seventh day, Sabbath, week

For this phrase cf. v.1.

θυρα, ας f door

κεκλεισμένων Verb, perf pass ptc, gen pl

κλειω shut, shut up, lock

όπου see v.12

It is not clear whether those gathered were only the 10 (12 less Judas and Thomas) or a larger number of disciples. Whatever their number, they are presented as the infant church to whom Jesus appears and to whom he imparts the Spirit.

φοβος, ου m fear

ἔστη Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ἵστημι see v.14

μεσος, η, ον middle; ἐν μ., εἰς μ. in the middle, among

Beasley-Murray comments, "The feature of the locked doors, mentioned at the beginning, shows the ability of Jesus to presence himself in any place; 'passing *through* locked doors,' however, is hardly appropriate to denote that power, or the ability of the risen Jesus to 'materialize' himself (Barrett...); the Lord reveals himself where he wills, in a mode beyond comprehension, and it is well for us to acknowledge the limits of our understanding here."

εἰρηνη, ης f peace

Cf. vv. 21,26. These words form the familiar greeting *shalom alekem*. Beasley-Murray comments, "Never had that 'common word' been so filled with meaning as when Jesus uttered it on Easter evening. All that the prophets had poured into *shalom* as the epitome of the blessings of the kingdom of God had essentially been realized in the redemptive deeds of the incarnate Son of God, 'lifted up' for the salvation of the world. His 'Shalom!' on Easter evening is the complement of 'It is finished' on the cross, for the peace of reconciliation and life from God is now imparted. 'Shalom!' accordingly is supremely the Easter greeting. Not surprisingly it is included, along with 'grace,' in the greeting of every epistle of Paul in the NT." Carson, commenting on the repeated greeting in vv. 21, 26 suggests that this "would eventually prompt the reflective among them to recall that Jesus before the cross had promised to bequeath to them his peace (14:27; 16:33)."

Verse 20

καὶ τοῦτο εἰπὼν ἔδειξεν τὰς χεῖρας καὶ τὴν πλευρὰν αὐτοῖς· ἐχάρησαν οὖν οἱ μαθηταὶ ἰδόντες τὸν κύριον.

ἔδειξεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s δεικνυμι
show, point out

χειρ, χειρος f hand
πλευρα, ας f side (of the body)

Evidence of the reality of his death and of his resurrection – he who was crucified is now risen.

Carson comments, "Temple ... reminds us that Jesus' wounds are his credentials to the suffering race of human beings. He cites the poem of Edward Shillito, 'Jesus of the Scars', published shortly after the savage butchery of the First World War:

*If we have never sought, we seek Thee now;
Thine eyes burn through the dark, our only stars;
We must have sight of thorn-pricks on Thy brow,
We must have Thee, O Jesus of the Scars.*

*The heavens frighten us; they are too calm;
In all the universe we have no place.
Our wounds are hurting us; where is the balm?
Lord Jesus, by Thy Scars, we claim Thy grace.*

*If, when the doors are shut, Thou drawest near,
Only reveal those hands, that side of Thine;
We know to-day what wounds are, have no fear,
Show us Thy Scars, we know the countersign.*

*The other gods were strong; but Thou wast weak;
They rode, but Thou didst stumble to a throne;
But to our wounds only God's wounds can speak,
And not a god has wounds, but Thou alone."*

χαίρω rejoice, be glad

ἰδόντες Verb, aor act ptc, m nom pl ὁρᾶω
see, observe, recognise

Beasley-Murray comments, "The promise of Jesus, made to them in the Upper Room, that he would 'come' to them (14:18) and turn their grief into joy (16:20–22) was now fulfilled. Joy is a fundamental blessing of the kingdom of God (e.g. Isa 25:6–9; 54:1–5; 61:1–3), and 'Joy is the basic mood of Easter' (Blank)."

Verse 21

εἶπεν οὖν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς πάλιν· Εἰρήνη ὑμῖν· καθὼς ἀπέσταλκέν με ὁ πατήρ, καὶ γὰρ πέμπω ὑμᾶς.

πάλιν again, once more

"Each Gospel ends with a commission of the risen Lord." Beasley-Murray.

ἀπέσταλκέν Verb, perf act indic, 3 s

ἀποστελλω send, send out

καίγω a compound word = καὶ ἐγώ

πέμπω send

Cf. 13:20; 17:18.

The two verbs πέμπω and ἀποστελλω are used synonymously in this gospel. Each is used both of the Father sending the Son and of Jesus sending out his disciples.

Beasley-Murray comments, "The sending of the Son into the world by the Father is a constant theme of this Gospel. It reflects in measure the principle of Jewish authorization 'One who is sent is as he who sends him.' In the person of the Son, in his words and deeds, the Father himself is present, his words declared and his actions performed. The time has now come for the disciples to go forth into the world as the representatives of the Lord; thereby the declaration of 13:20 will become operative as men and women receive the Christ in the mission of the disciples and the God and Father who sent him. This concept, however, is deepened in two respects. The mission of the Son has not finished with his 'lifting up' to heaven. 'As the Father has sent me' implies a sending in the past that continues to hold good in the present. Such is the force of the Greek perfect tense, and Westcott perceived this long ago: 'The mission of Christ is here regarded not in the point of its historical fulfilment (*sent*), but in the permanence of its effects (*hath sent*). The form of the fulfilment of Christ's mission was now to be changed, but the mission itself was still continued and still effective. The apostles were commissioned to carry on Christ's work, and not to begin a new one'... That insight has been freshly appreciated by recent scholars. The risen Lord does not hand over his mission to his disciples and leave them to it; 'he only gives the disciples a share in it ... with the assistance of the Paraclete' (Schnackenburg...). It is this setting that is presupposed in the striking words of 14:12-14: the disciples go forth to their mission and seek the Lord's aid therein, and in response to their prayers *he* will do through them 'greater things' than in the days of his flesh, 'that the Father may be glorified in the Son' – in the powerful mission that *he* continues! The second point of added depth is the link established in the juxtaposition of the declaration of mission and the bestowal of the Spirit. The Paraclete-Spirit was promised earlier to the disciples, assuring them that they would thereby be enabled to carry out their task of witness in a hostile world (see especially 15:25-26; 16:8-11). The risen Lord, in associating his disciples with his continuing mission in the world, bestows the Spirit, through whom his own ministry in the flesh was carried out in the power of God."

And Barrett comments, "In the apostolic mission of the Church... the world is veritably confronted not merely by a human institution but by Jesus the Son of God (13:20; 17:18). It follows further that as Jesus in his ministry was entirely dependent upon and obedient to God the Father, who sealed and sanctified him (4:34; 5:19; 10:37; 17:4, and other passages: 6:27; 10:36), and acted in the power of the Spirit who rested upon him (1:32), so the Church is the apostolic Church, commissioned by Christ, only in virtue of the fact that Jesus sanctified it (17:19) and breathed the Spirit into it (v.22), and only so far as it maintains an attitude of perfect obedience to Jesus (it is here, of course, that the parallelism between the relation of Jesus to the Father and the relation of the Church to Jesus breaks down). The life and mission of the Church are meaningless if they are detached from this historical and theological context."

Verse 22

καὶ τοῦτο εἰπὼν ἐνεφύσησεν καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς·
Λάβετε πνεῦμα ἅγιον·

ἐμφυσᾶω breathe on

λάβετε Verb, aor act imperat, 2 pl λαμβανῶ

Cf. Gen 2:7 where the verb ἐμφυσᾶω is also used in the LXX. See also Ezek 37:9-10. John presents this act of Jesus as the beginning of the new creation. Cf. 7:39; 16:7 which link the gift of the Spirit with the glorification of Christ. Beasley-Murray comments concerning the Ezekiel passage, "The prophet calls to the wind to 'breathe into these slain that they may live,' after which 'breath came into them, they came to life and rose to their feet, a mighty host.' This is a vision of the return of the Jewish people from the lands ('the graves') to which they had been transported, and their quickening by the Spirit on their return to their own. The symbolism is a clear application of the notion of resurrection, and that in an eschatological context (deliverance for the kingdom). It is not surprising that it came to be viewed as a representation of resurrection in the time of the kingdom." This passage in Ezekiel, its interpretation in first century Judaism, its relationship with the general hope of resurrection and its fulfilment focus in the resurrection of Jesus, are all considered in more detail in N. T. Wright, *The Resurrection of the Son of God*.

The relationship between John's account here and that of Luke in Acts 2 is the subject of much debate. Carson provides a very full outline of the bewildering variety of views. He concludes, "The episode in 20:22, which most will agree is in some sense symbolic, is best understood as symbolic of the enduement *that is still to come.*"

Verse 23

ἄν τινων ἀφήτε τὰς ἀμαρτίας ἀφέωνται αὐτοῖς·
ἄν τινων κρατῆτε κεκράτηνται.

ἄν particle indicating contingency
τις, τὶ acc τινά, τὶ gen τινός dat τινί enclitic
pronoun and adj anyone
ἀφήτε Verb, aor act subj, 2 pl ἀφημι
cancel, forgive
ἀμαρτία, ας f sin
ἀφέωνται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 pl ἀφημι

Among the variants for the term ἀφέωνται (read by κ^c A D [L] x etc) the most important are the present ἀφίενται (B³ K W Δ Θ etc) and the future ἀφεθήσεται (κ^a supported by MSS of the Latin, Syriac, Coptic, Armenian, and Ethiopic versions). The alternative readings are best viewed as simplifications that weaken the sense (so the UBS committee).

κρατεῶ hold, hold fast, hold back
κεκράτηνται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 pl
κρατεῶ

Cf. Matt 16:19; 18:18.

The authority conferred is connected with the gift of the Spirit. Barrett suggests that these words apply (though not exclusively) to the giving or withholding of baptism. 16:8-11 suggests a link with the preaching ministry of the disciples which continues the work of Christ.

Beasley-Murray comments, "John's context is specifically that of the commission of the *risen* Lord in v 21 and the gift of the Spirit in v 22. It entails therefore the double context of the continuance of the mission of Jesus through his disciples in the world, and the continuance of that mission through the Holy Spirit to the world in and with the disciples. (This latter aspect is the theme of 15:25–26; 16:8–11.) With the double context, there is a double aspect of the mission: that of declaring salvation and judgment. The Gospel makes it plain that Jesus was sent primarily to reveal God and to redeem mankind: 'God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him' (3:17). But the rejection of the revelation and of the Revealer inevitably entails a negative judgment upon the rejectors. So we have the paradoxical saying, at the close of the narrative of the healing of the blind man: 'For judgment I came into this world, that those who do not see should see, and that those who see should become blind' (9:39). The ministry itself concludes in the lifting up of Jesus, which is declared to be the judgment of this world and its prince (12:31) – condemnation for those who range themselves with the crucifiers of the Christ, and forgiveness for those who receive his word. This process of judgment continues through the witness of the followers of Christ and through the Spirit of Christ who works with and through them. Disciples proclaim forgiveness of sins and so entry into the saving sovereignty of God through the redemption of Christ, and judgment on those who reject the revelation and redemption of Christ." Cf. 2 Cor. 2:15,16.

Verse 24

Θωμᾶς δὲ εἶς ἐκ τῶν δώδεκα, ὁ λεγόμενος
Δίδυμος, οὐκ ἦν μετ' αὐτῶν ὅτε ἦλθεν Ἰησοῦς.

For Thomas, cf. 11:16; 14:5; 21:2. "There he is seen as less a skeptic than a loyal but pessimistic follower of Jesus, ready to die with him if need be, but slow to comprehend and ready to say so (14:5)." Beasley-Murray.

δώδεκα twelve
Δίδυμος, ου m Didymus (meaning twin)
ὅτε conj when

Verse 25

ἔλεγον οὖν αὐτῶ οἱ ἄλλοι μαθηταί·
 Ἐώρακαμεν τὸν κύριον. ὁ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς·
 Ἐὰν μὴ ἴδω ἐν ταῖς χερσὶν αὐτοῦ τὸν τύπον
 τῶν ἥλων καὶ βάλω τὸν δάκτυλόν μου εἰς τὸν
 τύπον τῶν ἥλων καὶ βάλω μου τὴν χεῖρα εἰς
 τὴν πλευρὰν αὐτοῦ, οὐ μὴ πιστεύσω.

ἔλεγον may here have *conative* force, i.e. 'tried to tell.'

ἄλλος, η, ο another, other
 ἔωρακαμεν Verb, perf act indic, 1 pl ὄραω see
 ἔαν μη unless
 ἴδω Verb, aor act subj, 1 s ὄραω
 χεῖρ, χειρός f hand
 τυπος, ου m pattern
 ἥλος, ου m nail
 βαλλω throw, place
 δακτυλος, ου m finger
 πλευρα, ας f side (of the body)
 πιστευω believe (in), have faith (in)

"He would be satisfied neither with a substituted body which was not the body of the Lord who died on the cross, nor with a spiritual body or apparition" Barrett. Beasley-Murray comments, "His response to his fellow disciples concerning the resurrection of Jesus is an exaggerated expression of the attitude they manifested to the women who said that they had seen Jesus. But the conditions he lays down for believing are unreasonable. They are an example of the attitude condemned by Jesus in 4:48."

Verse 26

Καὶ μεθ' ἡμέρας ὀκτὼ πάλιν ἦσαν ἔσω οἱ
 μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ Θωμᾶς μετ' αὐτῶν. ἔρχεται
 ὁ Ἰησοῦς τῶν θυρῶν κεκλεισμένων, καὶ ἔστη
 εἰς τὸ μέσον καὶ εἶπεν· Εἰρήνη ὑμῖν.

ὀκτὼ eight

The counting of days is inclusive – i.e. this is the following Sunday. It is Jesus himself who establishes a new pattern for the church by meeting with them on the first day of the week.

παλιν again, once more
 ἔσω adv inside, within
 θυρα, ας f see v.19 for this and the rest of this verse

Verse 27

εἶτα λέγει τῷ Θωμᾷ· Φέρε τὸν δάκτυλόν σου
 ὧδε καὶ ἴδε τὰς χεῖράς μου, καὶ φέρε τὴν χεῖρά
 σου καὶ βάλε εἰς τὴν πλευρὰν μου, καὶ μὴ
 γίνου ἄπιστος ἀλλὰ πιστός.

εἶτα adv. then, and then
 φερω bring
 δακτυλος, ου m see v.25
 ὧδε adv here
 χεῖρ, χειρός f hand

Jesus' resurrection body was substantial and real.

ἄπιστος, ον unfaithful, unbelieving
 πιστος, η, ον faithful, believing

Beasley-Murray comments, "As he extends his hands, with the invitation to touch them and for Thomas to put his hand in his side, he adds a saying which is half rebuke and half appeal: 'Stop being unbelieving, and show yourself a believer!' ... The impression given by the narrative is that Thomas was overwhelmed by the appearance of the Lord and his words to him, and without any further demonstration he burst out with his confession."

Verse 28

ἀπεκρίθη Θωμᾶς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ· Ὁ κύριός
 μου καὶ ὁ θεός μου.

ἀπεκρίθη Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s
 ἀποκρινομαι answer, reply, say

"The collocation of κυριος and θεος is common in the LXX where it represents יהוה יהי and similar expressions... Christ is called θεος only in John (1:1; 1:18 *si v.l.*; cf. 5:18; 10:33) and in the Pastorals [Titus 2:13] (and possibly, but not probably, in Rom 9:5). [See also Heb 1:8; 2 Peter 1:1.] The difference between the present verse and 1:1 (where θεος is anarthrous) cannot be pressed; here the articular nominative is used for a vocative. There can be no doubt that John intended this confession of faith to form the climax of the gospel ...; it is his final Christological pronouncement." Barrett.

Beasley-Murray adds, "So it comes about that the most outrageous doubter of the resurrection of Jesus utters the greatest confession of the Lord who rose from the dead."

And Carson comments, "The reader is expected to articulate the same confession, as the next verse implies. John's readers, like Thomas, need to come to faith; and this is what coming to faith looks like. Clearly this has critical bearing on how vv. 30-31 are interpreted."

Verse 29

λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· Ὅτι ἐώρακάς με
 πεπίστευκας; μακάριοι οἱ μὴ ἰδόντες καὶ
 πιστεύσαντες.

ἐώρακάς see v.25

πεπίστευκας Verb, perf act indic, 2 s πιστευω

Barrett Beasley-Murray and Carson prefer to read this as a statement (so AV, NIV) rather than a question (RSV, USB text above).

μακαριος, α, ον blessed, fortunate, happy

"The Fourth Gospel contains only one other beatitude besides this, namely 13:17, and curiously both have an admonitory note... Yet the effect of this beatitude is to apply the lesson of Thomas to all readers of the Gospel: Happy are they who, without having had Thomas' experience, share Thomas' faith!"
Beasley-Murray.

ιδόντες Verb, aor act ptc, m nom pl ὄρω

Cf. 1 Peter 1:8 ὃν οὐκ ἰδόντες ἀγαπᾶτε, εἰς ὃν ἄρτι μὴ ὀρῶντες πιστεύοντες δὲ ...

Their seeing is the ground of our believing. We believe their testimony to the risen Lord.
Carson comments, "The witness theme in the book has not been lost to view; later believers come to faith through the word of the earlier believers (17:20). Blessed, then, are those who cannot share Thomas' experience of sight, but who, in part because they read of Thomas' experience, come to share Thomas' faith. For us, faith comes not by sight, but from what is heard (or read!), and what is heard comes by the word (i.e. the declaration) of Christ (Rom 10:17). Indeed, that is why John himself has written, as he proceeds to make explicit."

Verse 30

Πολλὰ μὲν οὖν καὶ ἄλλα σημεῖα ἐποίησεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐνώπιον τῶν μαθητῶν, ἃ οὐκ ἔστιν γεγραμμένα ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ τούτῳ·

πολυς, πολλη, πολυ gen πολλου, ης, ου
much, many

σημειον, ου n miraculous sign, sign
ἐνώπιον prep with gen before, in the presence of

The attestation for αὐτοῦ after μαθητῶν is evenly matched with that of its omission; for the inclusion P⁶⁶ x c D L W x Θ Ψ etc, for the omission A B K Δ Π etc For this reason the UBS committee placed the term in brackets.

γεγραμμένα Verb, perf pass ptc, n nom/acc pl
γραφω write
βιβλιον, ου n book, scroll

The reference to 'signs' here suggests that the death and resurrection of Jesus constituted the supreme sign.

Verse 31

ταῦτα δὲ γέγραπται ἵνα πιστεύητε ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ, καὶ ἵνα πιστεύοντες ζῶσιν ἔχητε ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ.

γέγραπται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s γραφω

Beasley-Murray comments, "Rarely has the absence of the letter ζ in a word caused so much discussion as here. πιστεύσητε, aorist subjunctive, is read in x^c A c D K L W x Δ Π etc, and πιστεύητε, present subjunctive, in P^{66vid} x^{*} B TheodGreek etc. The aorist suggests the action of *taking the step of faith*, the present a *continuance in believing*; the difference has bearing on the purpose of the writing of the Gospel. While the external attestation may be held to support the former rather than the latter reading, the intrinsic likelihood of the reading is bound up with the supposed intention of the Evangelist. The UBS committee therefore set the σ in brackets and left the decision to the reader."

Beasley-Murray comments on the meaning of the alternative tenses, "The former represents an evangelistic intention in writing the book; the latter, a desire to build up Christians in the faith. It is increasingly recognized, however, that a decision like this can hardly rest on a fine point of Greek grammar, not least in view of the fact that the Evangelist does not always keep the rules in his use of tenses." It is probably best not to see the dual purposes of bringing unbelievers to faith and confirming believers in faith as alternatives.

ζωη, ης f life

ὄνομα, τος n name, title, person, authority, reputation

J. Blank wrote of vv 30–31: "This is the shortest summary of Johannine theology. If one wished to explain every concept of this concluding remark in its full significance one would have to read through the whole Gospel again."

Verses 30 & 31

These verses bear the mark of having been intended as a conclusion to this gospel. Chapter 21 has the form of an appendix. There is debate as to whether the following chapter was written by the same hand (so Westcott, Plummer) or was written later by another hand and appended to the completed gospel (Kummel, Barrett, Brown, Sanders). Sanders suggests that Ch 21 is an appendix prompted by the death of the beloved disciple.