



# The Keeper of the Keys:

*"I have the Keys of Hell and Death"* Rev. 1:18



**Guided Growth with Pastor Keith @ CBC Easter Sunday 2023**

When Pilate gave in to the political pressure from the Jewish leaders and condemned Jesus, he wrote the accusation *"Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews"* in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek. (Jn 19:19) Many Catholic crucifixes have the letters INRI posted above Jesus' head. This is the abbreviation for the Latin "Jesus Nazarenus Rex Iudaeorum". If you likewise abbreviate the Hebrew phrase you will get the Hebrew Tetragrammaton! יהוה -Yahwey! It is translated "LORD" some 6792 times in the Old Testament and Jesus claimed that Holy Title many times in the New Testament. (Jn. 8:58; 13:13; 14:6,10,11,20; 15:1,5, 18:5-8 and 7 distinct times in Revelation!) While the Apostles all fled from the Garden when Jesus was arrested, only John returned to stand with him at the Cross. (Jn 19:26) Some 60 years later Jesus came to Patmos to "stand" with John. Jesus identifies himself as *"I am he that liveth and was dead; and behold, I am alive forevermore...and have the keys of hell and of death."* (Rev. 1:17-18) He goes in in Rev. 3:7,8 to describe himself as the one who *"openeth and no man shutteth"*. Life is filled with "shut doors"! On that first Easter Jesus opened many doors that held his people in bondage.

## 1. The Door Of Discouragement: He opens the tomb. Luke 24:1-12

### A. The Women were the first to arrive at the tomb.

- 1) They were still Devoted in spite of feeling defeated!
- 2) Their Fears were ultimately Futile. *"Who shall roll us away the stone?"* Mk.16:3
- 3) Their Tears were Temporary: Jn 20:15,16 (See Psalm 30:5)

### B. Their Remorse Was Replaced With A Reminder. Lk 24:5-8

*Beware of forgetting in the darkness truths you learned in the light!* Is. 50:10

### C. Their Devotion led to a Delightful "Duty." Vs9

- 1) Duty to God is a Privilege! (Mark 16:7)

## 2. The Door Of Doubt Vs 13-35 He opens their eyes! (Vs 13-35)

### A. Their Doubt Was Complicated By:

- 1) **A Transition:** Circumstances pressured them to shift their focus toward human reasoning rather than Divine Revelation.
  - a) Their Feelings overwhelmed their Faith.
  - b) Their Intellect replaced God's Inspiration.
- 2) **A Revelation** (of their selfish motives):
  - a) They wanted a Messiah, not a Master.
  - b) They wanted a temporary security, not a savior! Lk 24:21 *"But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel."* Redemption comes at a price. Mt. 20:28

### B. The Great Physician:

- 1) Diagnose their problem: Faithlessness. Vs 25-26  
Their real problem was not in their heads, but in their hearts! Pr 4:23

2) Prescribes the solution. **God's Word**. Luke 24:27-28 See also Romans 10:17

**Bible “Commandments” (entole) literally are “authoritative prescriptions!”**

a) This was ultimately “**Heart**” medication. Vs 32 *“Did not our hearts burn within us...”*

b) It penetrates deeper than any medicine. Heb. 4:12,13

### **C. When They Opened Their Hearts, God Opened Their Eyes! (2 Cor 3:16-18)**

1) They already had the evidence of the promises of Jesus, the empty tomb, the angels, the women’s witness, and the Scriptures.

**How much more “evidence” do you need?**

2) They immediately returned to share with others! (16 mile round trip!) Luke 24:33-35

*The best evidence that we have understood the Bible and met the living Christ  
is that we have something exciting to share with others. Ps. 107:2*

**Doubt makes the mountain which only faith can move.**

Doubt sees the obstacles; Faith sees the way. Doubt sees the darkest night; Faith sees the day.

Doubt dreads to take a step; Faith soars on high; Doubt questions, "Who believes?"

*Faith answers, "I."*

### **3. The Door of Distress. Vs. 36-45 *“they were terrified and affrighted...”* 37**

**A. Christ Offers Peace. Vs. 36**

1) Remember “Peace” means to **Partner!** (eiro:“to join”)

**B. Notice Christ’s Process (For Peace). Vs 39**

1) Encouragement. *“Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself, handle me, and see.”*

2) Chastisement. *“he upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart.”* (Mk 16:14)

3) Enlightenment: Vs 44,45 *“then opened he their understanding...”*

**He opens their mind!**

## **Conclusion:**

**Are you trapped behind the door of Discouragement? Doubt? Distress? (See Rev. 3:7)**

**Easter Means that That God has a Plan! (Jer. 29:11; Pr. 3:1-4); That Plan involves a Process! (Pr.**

**3:5) That Process involves a Path! (Pr. 3:6) That Path involves Personal Choices! (Pr 3:7)**

1) Sin carries a death penalty. Ro. 6:23; Rev. 20:14,15

2) Jesus death paid that debt. Ro. 5:8; 1 Cor 15:3; 2 Cor 5:21

3) We must choose to accept this gift of grace. John 3:16-18

**There’s one door even God can’t open! (Ro. 10:10; Rev. 3:20!)**

## **Application:**

**He opens the doors of discouragement, doubt, & distress to encourage us to walk through**

**The Door of Devotion. Vs. 36-45      He Opens their Lips. (Vs 46-49)**

**Their (Our) Part: Pray and Obey. Vs. 49; Acts 1 (They were to be witnesses) (29 X in Acts.)**

**God’s Part: Enlighten and Empower. (Acts 1:8)**

**Are you willing to Walk through the door of Devotion and be a witness of His grace?**

*“I have set before thee and open door” Rev. 3:8*

**Easter reminds us that Faith involves a Journey that includes a “Cross” (Lk 9:23)...**

**But leads to a Crown! 2 Tim. 4:6-8**