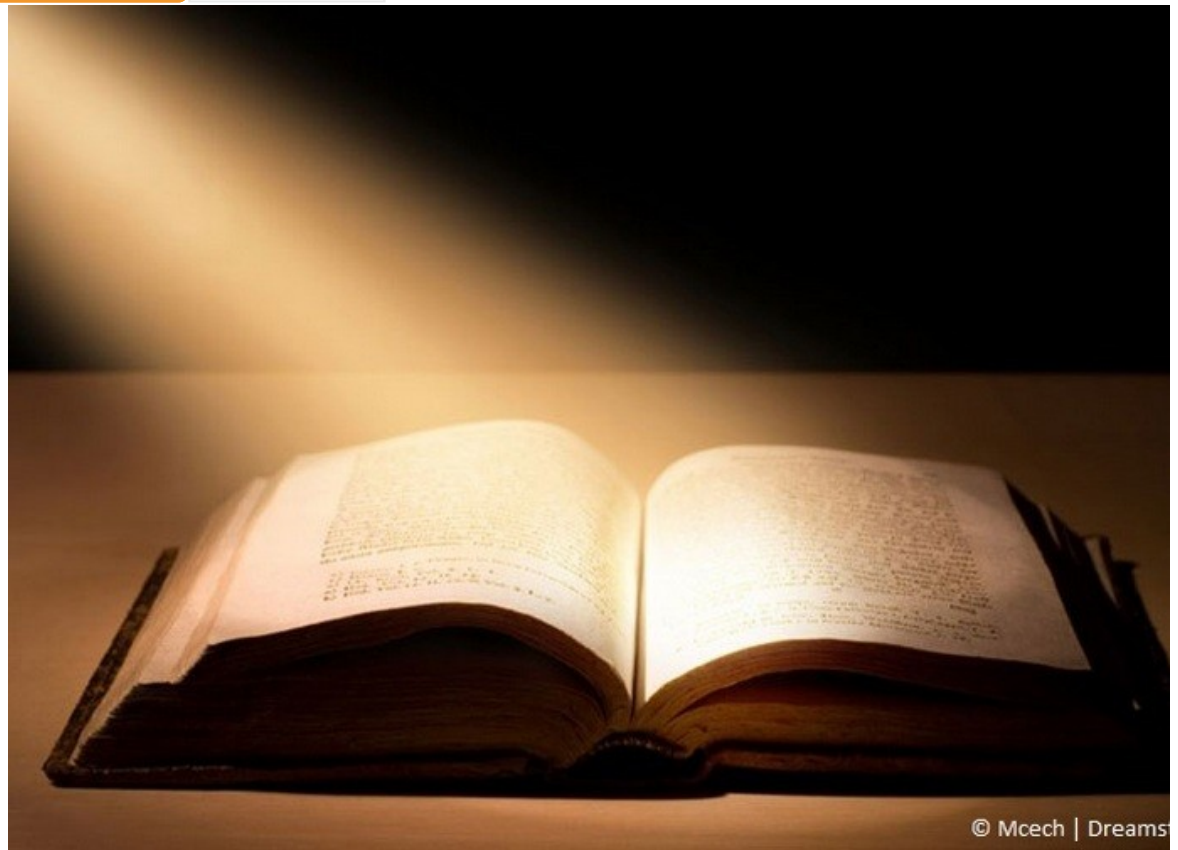


GOSPEL PEARLS

For fear of suffering

FRAGMENTOS DEL EVANGELIO

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Now Thomas, one of the twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe." Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but

believe." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed. (John 20: 24-29)

Sometimes we believe that it was easy for those who knew Jesus during his earthly life to have faith, but this is not so. Even after His resurrection, perhaps for fear of suffering another disappointment, the apostle Thomas felt the need to verify for himself without trusting his fellow apostles who also claimed to have seen the risen Jesus. It was only at seeing Jesus for himself that Thomas repented without even touching His Body, making one of the clearest and most beautiful professions of faith in the entire Gospel. May we take a cue from Thomas' few words to strengthen our faith, eliminating any fear of suffering.