

Jesus had suffered on the cross and died just days before the account in today's passage. His body was placed in a wealthy religious leader's tomb. The eleven apostles and other followers hid behind locked doors for fear and wondered what they should do now that their rabbi was gone. The following day was the Sabbath. Then on the first day of the week the women went to anoint the body of Jesus with spices. They found the stone rolled away and two angels suddenly appeared. The angels told them Jesus had risen. They ran back to tell the disciples, but the men did not believe them. Peter and John ran to the tomb and found the grave cloths lying there, but the body was gone.

¹³ That very day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, Luke 24:13 Two of them, that is of the disciples to whom the women had told of the empty tomb and the angel's words, were on their way to Emmaus. That means they did not place much hope in the women's testimony, or they certainly would not have left. Nor did they want to continue to observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread in Jerusalem. With such corrupt leaders in charge, who would think the feast had any reason to celebrate?

One of the two in verse 18 is named Cleopas. The one with him may have been his wife. John 19:25ⁱ tells us that a woman named Mary was the wife of Clopas. Cleopas is believed to be Joseph's brother, a blood relative of Jesus.ⁱⁱ They were hoping their nephew would be the redeemer of Israel (verse 21), but things had taken a horrible turn. Their beloved miracle working nephew had been condemned by their religious rulers and crucified. To be hung on a tree is to be cursed, according to the Law (Deuteronomy 21:23ⁱⁱⁱ). How had things gone so terribly wrong? Then they heard of the empty tomb and wondered what could have happened?

¹⁴ and they were talking with each other about all these things that had happened.
¹⁵ While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. *¹⁶ But their eyes were kept from recognizing him.* Luke 24:14-16 They went over and over the events. There were the Messianic signs of healing the blind, mute, and lame (Isaiah 35:5,6^v), the fulfillment of prophecies, the triumphal entry (Zechariah 9:9^v), and the cleansing of the temple which all showed Jesus to be the One for whom Israel was waiting. But then their rulers had Him crucified. Who would have taken the body and why? On and on the sad discussion continued until another person joined them on the road. They did not recognize the man was Jesus. The text says their eyes were kept from recognizing Him; so, the miracle was in their visual inability to recognize Him.

Portions of this Roman road to Emmaus have been discovered, but the Israeli authorities seem uninterested in preserving it. Erosion and nearby construction has all but erased it. You can still see the curbstones of the road near the village of Motza about halfway between Jerusalem and Emmaus.

¹⁷ And he said to them, "What is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk?" And they stood still, looking sad. *¹⁸ Then one of them, named Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?"* Luke 24:17,18 Jesus asked them what they had been discussing. Another miracle is that they did not recognize His voice. They

stood still with downcast faces and asked if He was the only one who had not heard the news of what had happened.

¹⁹ *And he said to them, "What things?" And they said to him, "Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people,* ²⁰ *and how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified him.* Luke 24:19,20 Jesus asked what things they were referring to, so they thought He was from out of town and had never heard of Jesus. They began to explain. Jesus (God's salvation) of Nazareth (the branch - of Jesse) was a prophet with amazing teaching and miraculous signs (mighty deeds) that many people witnessed.

"A Prophet," but was He just a prophet? They couldn't bring themselves to say He was the Messiah. That is because they did not understand that God had allowed Him to be cursed while bearing our sins so that all who receive Him could have their sin debts paid in full. The rulers wanted crucifixion instead of stoning which is the legal punishment for the crime they accused Him of. They thought that by showing that He was cursed it would prove He was not the Messiah. But they, too, did not understand that the Messiah had to be cursed when He bore our sins (2 Corinthians 5:21^{vi}; 1 Peter 2:24^{vii}).

If they had any hope that there was some godliness in their religious government, it was dashed to pieces when they had Jesus crucified. Jesus was careful not to declare Himself the Messiah because of the wrong ideas that the Messiah would set up an earthly kingdom by force. He had done nothing worthy of the least punishment (Isaiah 53:9^{viii}). All He did was heal people and speak the truth. But the things He did were the fulfillment of prophecies of what the Messiah would do. That was the declaration of the Word, not a claim that came from His lips, at least not until He was tried (Mark 14:62^{ix}). Then He was under an oath and had to answer that He is the Messiah (Matthew 26:63^x).

²¹ *But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things happened.* Luke 24:21 They continued to explain to the man whom they thought was a stranger that they hoped Jesus was the Redeemer. How ironic! They are speaking with the man who just redeemed all who will come to Him in faith, saying they *hoped* He would be the Redeemer. Jesus had just redeemed them, paid their sin debt in full, but they had no comprehension of what had been accomplished.

²² *Moreover, some women of our company amazed us. They were at the tomb early in the morning,* ²³ *and when they did not find his body, they came back saying that they had even seen a vision of angels, who said that he was alive.* ²⁴ *Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see."* Luke 24:22-24 Cleopas told the incognito Jesus about the testimony of the women from the tomb and how Peter and John had found the tomb empty. They are telling Jesus that they don't know how to make sense of it all. Jesus did exactly what He said He would do, rise after three days, but they are trying to reason in their minds that something else must have happened because – well, that is just impossible! Even Jesus' enemies were familiar with Jesus' claim that He would rise from death (Matthew 27:63^{xi}). That is why they asked Pilate to have the tomb guarded.

²⁵ *And he said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!"* Luke 24:25 Jesus started with a rebuke. He called them foolish

and slow of heart not just for forgetting what He said, but for not looking to the prophetic writings and believing them in order to make sense of what took place.

Uncle Cleo and Aunt Mary had done what we are so prone to do. Instead of looking to the Word to help us understand what is taking place, to give a sense of how we should interpret what we are experiencing, they tried to make sense of it in their minds. Jesus called that foolish. Jesus' ministry was the fulfillment of one prophecy after another. Why would His death be any different? They should have looked to God's Word to find out why He died and why the tomb was empty. To not do so is foolish!

Before we go on, I think we should consider how we are like this couple. Instead of looking to the Word of God regarding what we are going through and to understand the world's condition, we look to our reasoning and to all kinds of books with supposed secret wisdom instead of the declaration of God's Word in the Holy Bible. Unless your mind is saturated with the Word of God, that will get you nowhere. You will be chasing conspiracy theories. Isaiah declared, ¹² *“Do not call conspiracy all that this people calls conspiracy, and do not fear what they fear, nor be in dread.* Isaiah 8:12 When we do that, we focus on all kinds of things that distract us from loving God and our neighbor. Instead we should study and believe the Scriptures. Our main thing should be THE main thing, the Great Command (Luke 10:27^{xii}) to love God with all our heart!

What had the prophets' spoken about the Messiah? He would be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2^{xiii}) of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14^{xiv}). His main ministry would be in the tribal lands of Zebulon and Naphtali (Isaiah 9:1^{xv}). He would give sight to the blind and cause the deaf to hear and the lame to walk (Isaiah 35:5,6^{xvi}). He would be rejected and take our sins upon Himself (Isaiah 53:3-5^{xvii}). He would be horribly maimed (Isaiah 52:14^{xviii}). His hands and feet would be pierced (Psalm 22:16^{xix}), and He would die with criminals. He would be buried in a rich man's tomb (Isaiah 53:9^{xx}). His body would not decay and would rise after three days (Psalm 16:10^{xxi}; Hosea 6:2^{xxii}; Isaiah 53:10,11^{xxiii}). Why did they not look to what the prophets had spoken?

²⁶ *Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?”* Luke 24:26 This is what they all had missed. It was necessary for the Lamb of God to bear the sins of the world along with the justice those sins deserved before He returned to the glory He had with the Father before He came into the world (John 17:5^{xxiv}). That was the mission described so clearly in Isaiah 53. ⁵ *But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. ⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned-every one-to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. ⁷ He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth.*

⁸ *By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people? ⁹ And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth. ¹⁰ Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. ¹¹ Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be*

satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities. ¹² *Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors.* Isaiah 53:5-12. The chapter is so descriptive of Jesus that it is no longer read in synagogues and Jewish schools. See it as a tool to witness to Jews at (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cGz9BVJ_k6s).

²⁷ *And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.* Luke 24:27 Jesus did not start with Isaiah. He started with Moses. Moses said God would raise up a person from among the Jewish people, someone like himself, and to Him we *must* listen (Deuteronomy 18:15^{xxv}). Moses left the palace and joined his people to take them out of slavery through the wilderness to the promised land. Jesus left the heavenly palace to be with us and take us out of the slavery of sin, through the wilderness of life, and to the promise land of our heavenly home.

Perhaps Jesus explained the picture of the penalty for sins seen in the sacrifices (Acts 26:22,23^{xxvi};10:42,43^{xxvii}). We would all love to hear Jesus explain the Scriptures. Did He use Isaac as a type, going up Moriah, carrying the wood of sacrifice, and Abraham's promise that God would provide the sacrifice? Did He speak of Abraham's faith in resurrection when he told the servant that he and the boy would return (Genesis 22:5,6^{xxviii})? Maybe He went all the way back to the Garden of Eden and reminded them that God provided the covering for the first couple's nakedness through the blood of a lamb (Genesis 3:21^{xxix}) and the promise that the seed of the woman would crush the serpent's head but in the process be bitten in the heel (Genesis 3:15^{xxx}). Then Jesus went through the prophets, hitting the highlights for lack of time to cover them all. And He did not stop there but interpreted to them in *all* the Scriptures the things concerning Himself (1 Peter 1:11^{xxxi}). I imagine He reminded them His first and last words on the cross were from psalms that pointed to what was taking place (Psalm 22:1^{xxxii}; 31:5^{xxxiii}). What a Bible study that was! Maybe in heaven we can get a replay of that afternoon.

²⁸ *So they drew near to the village to which they were going. He acted as if he were going farther,* ²⁹ *but they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent." So he went in to stay with them.* Luke 24:28,29 Their spirits were lifting, or maybe I should say soaring, as Jesus explained from Scripture the climactic accomplishments that had taken place over the last three days. They came to the fork in the road near Emmaus and it looked like Jesus would keep going, so, eager to hear more and being later in the day, they urged Jesus to spend the night at their lodging.

The Holy Spirit can do the same teaching with us as we study the Scriptures. He can show us Jesus in all the Bible. We just need to pray, study, and let Him interpret the Word to us. You can get an introduction from my book *Jesus Concealed in the Old Testament* or in a much more thorough work, *The Emmaus Code*.

³⁰ *When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them.* ³¹ *And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight.* Luke 24:30,31 The stranger obviously knew how the Scriptures applied to Jesus much better than they did. They would naturally ask Him to say the blessing

before they ate. When Jesus said the blessing, He most likely spoke as He always did in prayer, "Father, blessed are you O Lord God, King of the universe, who gives us bread from the earth." They must have thought, "Father"? That was how Jesus prayed. And at that moment their eyes were opened. As He passed the bread to them, they could see the nail holes which confirmed their thoughts. Instantly, He vanished.

³² *They said to each other, "Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?"* Luke 24:32 Their hearts were bursting with joy, but not just because they had seen Him alive and witnessed the miracle of Him vanishing, but because He opened up the Scriptures to them. That is to have our eyes opened. People around the world read the Bible and can't see Jesus. And all over the world eyes are opened by the Holy Spirit and they begin to see Jesus. The psalmist taught us to pray, *"Open my eyes, that I may behold wonderful things out of your Law"* (Psalm 119:18^{xxxiv}). The most wonderful thing we can see in the Law is Jesus. Isaiah called Him the Wonderful Counselor (Isaiah 9:6^{xxxv}). And when we behold the Wonderful One in His Word (John 1:14^{xxxvi}), our hearts burn within us. He is everything perfect that we could desire. Jesus, reveal Yourself to us in your Word, just as you showed Yourself to Cleopas and Mary. Make our hearts burn with the revelation of You!

³³ *And they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem. And they found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together,* ³⁴ *saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!"* ³⁵ *Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he was known to them in the breaking of the bread.* Luke 24:33-35 They just walked seven miles to Emmaus and now they knew they had to go back and encourage the others with what they had seen and heard. They left Jerusalem that morning after the women returned. They walked seven miles one way, had a meal and walked or ran seven miles back. It must have been dark by that time.

Upon arriving the disciples told the couple that the Lord had appeared to Simon, meaning Peter.^{xxxvii} That confirmed what the women had said early that morning. Then Cleopas told their story of how Jesus had explained from Scripture that what had taken place was a fulfillment of God's Word and how they realized who He was when He broke the bread. Cleopas and Simon would be two male witnesses. The disciples would have to accept it now. Their hopes began rise again. **It was not the end... it was the beginning!**

Questions:

- 1 Who did Jesus meet and where were they coming from?
- 2 Why couldn't they recognize Jesus?
- 3 Why did they say Jesus was simply a prophet?
- 4 What was the irony of their statement in verse 21?
- 5 What had the prophets said about the Messiah?
- 6 Which chapter clearly describes Jesus' mission?
- 7 Where did Jesus start His explanation of the prophets?
- 8 What else may He have touched on in the Torah?
- 9 How did they come to recognize Him?
- 10 How did Jesus' Bible study affect them?

ⁱ **John 19:25 (ESV)**

²⁵ but standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.

ⁱⁱ Quoting I. H. Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke* p.894

Preaching the Word - Luke, Volume II: That You May Know the Truth.

ⁱⁱⁱ **Deuteronomy 21:23 (ESV)**

²³ his body shall not remain all night on the tree, but you shall bury him the same day, for a hanged man is cursed by God. You shall not defile your land that the LORD your God is giving you for an inheritance.

^{iv} **Isaiah 35:5-6 (ESV)**

⁵ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; ⁶ then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute sing for joy. For waters break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert;

^v **Zechariah 9:9 (ESV)**

⁹ Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

^{vi} **2 Corinthians 5:21 (ESV)**

²¹ For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

^{vii} **1 Peter 2:24 (ESV)**

²⁴ He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.

^{viii} **Isaiah 53:9 (ESV)**

⁹ And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth.

^{ix} **Mark 14:62 (ESV)**

⁶² And Jesus said, "I am, and you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven."

^x **Matthew 26:62-63 (ESV)**

⁶² And the high priest stood up and said, "Have you no answer to make? What is it that these men testify against you?" ⁶³ But Jesus remained silent. And the high priest said to him, "I adjure you by the living God, tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God."

^{xi} **Matthew 27:63 (ESV)**

⁶³ and said, "Sir, we remember how that impostor said, while he was still alive, 'After three days I will rise.'

^{xii} **Luke 10:27 (ESV)**

²⁷ And he answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself."

^{xiii} **Micah 5:2 (ESV)**

² But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days.

^{xiv} **Isaiah 7:14 (ESV)**

¹⁴ Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

^{xv} **Isaiah 9:1 (ESV)**

¹ But there will be no gloom for her who was in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time he has made glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

^{xvi} **Isaiah 35:5-6 (ESV)**

⁵ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; ⁶ then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute sing for joy. For waters break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert;

^{xvii} **Isaiah 53:3-5 (ESV)**

³ He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. ⁴ Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. ⁵ But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.

xviii **Isaiah 52:14 (ESV)**

¹⁴ As many were astonished at you— his appearance was so marred, beyond human semblance, and his form beyond that of the children of mankind—

xix **Psalms 22:16 (ESV)**

¹⁶ For dogs encompass me; a company of evildoers encircles me; they have pierced my hands and feet—

xx **Isaiah 53:9 (ESV)**

⁹ And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth.

xxi **Psalms 16:10 (ESV)**

¹⁰ For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption.

xxii **Hosea 6:2 (ESV)**

² After two days he will revive us; on the third day he will raise us up, that we may live before him.

xxiii **Isaiah 53:10-11 (ESV)**

¹⁰ Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. ¹¹ Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see (the light of life) and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities.

xxiv **John 17:5 (ESV)**

⁵ And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.

xxv **Deuteronomy 18:15 (ESV)**

¹⁵ “The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers—it is to him you shall listen—

xxvi **Acts 26:22-23 (ESV)**

²² To this day I have had the help that comes from God, and so I stand here testifying both to small and great, saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses said would come to pass: ²³ that the Christ must suffer and that, by being the first to rise from the dead, he would proclaim light both to our people and to the Gentiles.”

xxvii **Acts 10:42-43 (ESV)**

⁴² And he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one appointed by God to be judge of the living and the dead. ⁴³ To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”

xxviii **Genesis 22:5-6 (ESV)**

⁵ Then Abraham said to his young men, “Stay here with the donkey; I and the boy will go over there and worship and come again to you.”

⁶ And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son. And he took in his hand the fire and the knife. So they went both of them together.

xxix **Genesis 3:21 (ESV)**

²¹ And the LORD God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them.

xxx **Genesis 3:15 (ESV)**

¹⁵ I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.”

xxxi **1 Peter 1:11 (ESV)**

¹¹ inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories.

xxxii **Psalms 22:1 (ESV)**

¹ My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, from the words of my groaning?

xxxiii **Psalms 31:5 (ESV)**

⁵ Into your hand I commit my spirit; you have redeemed me, O LORD, faithful God.

xxxiv **Psalms 119:18 (ESV)**

¹⁸ Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law.

xxxv **Isaiah 9:6 (ESV)**

⁶ For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

^{xxxvi} **John 1:14 (ESV)**

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

^{xxxvii} Why didn't they mention Mary Magdalene? Probably it was their attitude regarding women as a witness. But by the time that John wrote, the church was mostly Gentile and would value the testimony of John 20:16.