

Jesus walked out of the tomb on Sunday morning. He appeared to Mary Magdalene, and then to Peter, as well as Cleopas and another disciple on the road to Emmaus. Those two ran back to Jerusalem and told the disciples of their encounter with Jesus. The upper room must have been a buzz of excited speculation. But we find out from Luke's record in Acts that even after Jesus appeared over a period of forty days, the disciples were still expecting Jesus to establish an earthly kingdom. ⁶ *So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?"* Acts 1:6 That means to kick out the Romans and subjugate the surrounding nations as King David had done. Jesus told them that will come in God's time, but they had a job to do in the meantime. They were to wait for the Holy Spirit who would empower them to be witnesses to the world (Acts 1:8ⁱ).

³⁶ *As they were talking about these things, Jesus himself stood among them, and said to them, "Peace to you!"* Luke 24:36 Or as a t-shirt expresses it in southern vernacular, "Shalom Y'all." Just as He disappeared from the dinner table, He now appeared among them. "Shalom!" Yes, now we can have peace with God for Jesus has removed our sin debt by paying it in full. And we can have peace with others because Jesus finished work made it possible for us to receive the Holy Spirit.

This was the most profound utterance of the word. The Hebrew word means to be safe. Because of Jesus' sacrifice and victory over death, our eternal souls are safe. It also means to be well. Our redeemed souls could not be more well. And it implies favor. We now have the favor of God upon our lives for we have the righteousness of Christ. Jesus says to us today in the midst of the pandemic, "Shalom!" In every situation we face we should have the shalom of God (John 14:27ⁱⁱ).

³⁷ *But they were startled and frightened and thought they saw a spirit.* Luke 24:37 You would have thought He was a ghost too. Remember the last time they saw Him He was hardly recognizable as a man (Isaiah 52:14ⁱⁱⁱ). They knew He died! But there He was speaking with the voice that was so familiar to them. John 20:19^{iv} adds the detail that the doors were locked. He appeared as suddenly as He disappeared when sitting with the Cleopas and the other disciple (24:31^v).

³⁸ *And he said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts?"* ³⁹ *See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me, and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.*" Luke 24:38,39 While they were trying to make sense of it, He asked them why they were troubled and doubting. After all, He did tell them it would happen. Didn't He raise others from death? They were hiding out wondering how they could continue without Him, and there He was. What would you think if a deceased parent or mentor suddenly stood by talking with you?

This passage has Jesus' last "I Am" declaration though we only see it in the original Greek text. Directly translated from Greek, Jesus said, "It is Myself, I Am!"

Jesus helped relieve their fears by showing them the wounds in His hands and feet. All the other wounds and bruises must have no longer been visible. He encouraged them to touch His body to see that He wasn't a spirit. It is interesting that He didn't mention blood, for His blood had been poured out for them. Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 15:50^{vi} that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. Every cell in our bodies is

nourished and has waste removed by our blood. My guess is that His resurrected physical body was instead animated by the Spirit.

If that is the case, then that is what our heavenly bodies will be like. The Scriptures indicate that our bodies will be transformed to be like His body. The Apostle Paul wrote, ²⁰ *But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,* ²¹ *who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.* Philippians 3:20,21 He will take the matter that was your body and remake into a body like His eternal body. We see here that He could appear wherever He wanted to be. Paul called it putting on the imperishable (1 Corinthians 15:50^{vii}). Jesus will do that with each of our bodies wherever the atoms may be *by the power that enables Him even to subject all things to himself.* There was nothing left in the grave when He walked out of it because what was there had been transformed. But how gracious of Him to leave the marks that caused His death as evidence that our sin debt was paid. Even forty years later when John saw Jesus in heaven as the Lamb of God, there remained the marks that caused His death (Revelation 5:6^{viii}), the receipt for full payment! Until that day comes, our Accuser may point out our failures to God (Zechariah 3:1^{ix}), but Jesus can then point to the receipt.

⁴⁰ *And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet.* ⁴¹ *And while they still disbelieved for joy and were marveling, he said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?"* ⁴² *They gave him a piece of broiled fish,* ⁴³ *and he took it and ate before them.* Luke 24:40-43 It was joy that kept them from believing. It seemed too good to be true, too amazing, so they were hesitant to just accept it. This is another indication of the authenticity of the account. If men were making it up, they would not mention their hesitancy to believe.

To help them accept that His body was physical, Jesus asked for something to eat. They gave him a broiled fish and He ate it in front of them. Then they knew it had to be true! Jesus had literally come back to life (Acts 10:41^x). John would later face those who claimed it was only Jesus' spirit they saw. He wrote in his first letter that their hands had handled the living Word of God (1 John 1:1^{xi}). Anyone could claim they saw an apparition, and many people do. They could say the person is still living, and they are. But no one other than Jesus and those He raised physically walked out of the grave. The Maker of matter can employ matter however He wishes. After all, He speaks, and it comes into being. The physical resurrection is an important point in this Gospel. That kind of physical transformation from death is unique in human history. It is not repeatable except by the power of that enables Him to subject all things to Himself.

⁴⁴ *Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled."* Luke 24:44 The record of Him telling them is in Luke 18:31. ³¹ *And taking the twelve, he said to them, "See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished.* The Word of God had to come to pass. How is it that they could miss all the prophecies even after Jesus pointed to them? They wanted the Second Coming without the first, but before that our souls needed to be redeemed with something better than the blood of bulls and goats (Hebrews 10:5^{xii}). The Scriptures should have informed them that: The seed of the woman would crush the head of the serpent but be bitten in the heel (Genesis 3:15^{xiii}). The Lord would provide the sacrifice for us (Genesis 22:14^{xiv}). A virgin will

conceive and give birth to a son and He will be called Immanuel (Isaiah 7:14^{xv}). To us a child is born to us a son is given. He shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6^{vi}). And the Lord will lay on Him the iniquity of us all. His life will become a guilt offering (Isaiah 53:6^{vii}; 10^{viii}). They pierced my hands and feet (Psalms 22:16^{ix}). By His wounds we are healed (Isaiah 53:5^{xx}). They divide my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing (Psalm 22:18^{xxi}). He made His grave with the wicked and with the rich in His death. Out of the anguish of His soul He will see and be satisfied (Isaiah 53:9^{xxii}, 11^{xxiii}). God will not let His Holy One see decay (Psalm 16:10^{xxiv}). After three days He will revive us that we might live in His presence (Hosea 6:2^{xxv}).

Leon Morris has said, "The solemn division of Scripture into the law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms (the three divisions of the Hebrew Bible) indicates that there is no part of Scripture that does not bear its witness to Jesus."^{xxvi} In other words, Jesus was saying every section of Scripture points to Him. He is God's theme in the whole Bible.

In all three settings on Easter day, the women at the tomb, the Emmaus Road, and the upper room, **the proof presented to the witnesses was the Word of God.** The women were told to remember His words. Cleopas and Mary and the eleven were given a Bible study on why things had to happen as they did. Jesus did not want their faith to be based solely on His physical presence, but on the Word of God. Skeptics completely miss the point when they try to explain away the resurrection with such theories as mass hallucination, an idea they have never demonstrated. It is the Word on which our faith is to be based. They were all rebuked for not believing the Word. *"Don't you remember that He told you?" "O foolish and slow of heart to believe." "Did not Christ have to suffer these things."* How different their reaction to the crucifixion would have been had they believed the Scriptures. Even today many look on the cross as a great tragedy instead of a great victory, a travesty instead of the greatest display of love ever seen (John 15:13^{xxvii})! That is because they do not know, understand, or believe the Scriptures.

⁴⁵ *Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures,* Luke 24:45 Let us pray each time we open the Word that Jesus would open our minds to understand the Scriptures (Psalm 119:18^{xxviii}). The meaning is obvious, but the depths are for those who are willing to surrender to the Spirit and let Him open our minds and teach us. I think when we get to heaven, we will be overwhelmed over and over by the riches in this God breathed Word. Testimony after testimony tell of how the Word of God got into a person's soul until they finally came to Christ. Many Muslims have attested to visions of Jesus quoting John 14:6^{xxix}, declaring that He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Other former Muslims testify that they heard that Jesus said to love their enemies (Matthew 5:44^{xxx}) and they could not stop thinking about it. They had to find out why Jesus was so different from Mohammed.

⁴⁶ *and said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead,* ⁴⁷ *and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.* ⁴⁸ *You are witnesses of these things.* Luke 24:46-48 Jews called the coming Messiah the Great Light (Isaiah 9:2^{xxxi}). Why is it that they could not see the Messiah's light was to illuminate the world (Isaiah 42:6^{xxxii}; 49:6^{xxxiii})? The resurrection was just the beginning. The disciples were witnesses of these things, which means how Jesus fulfilled the Scriptures. Now they were

to fill Jerusalem and the whole world with the revelation of how the prophecies were fulfilled (Acts 1:8^{xxxiv}). The Messiah had come. He had taken our sins upon Himself and become our guilt offering. He conquered death. He will return to reign on the earth (Revelation 11:17^{xxxv}; Daniel 2:44^{xxxvi}). That is the Light, the truth! Everyone needs to know repentance and forgiveness of sins is possible in His name.

⁴⁹ *And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.*” Luke 24:49 This was a final word of instruction to the Apostles. He would see them again on the shore of Galilee and at the ascension, but Luke puts a key instruction here. Stay in Jerusalem until the promise of the Father comes upon you. The promise came through the prophet Joel (Joel 2:29^{xxxvii}), that in the last days God would pour out His Spirit on all flesh. Ezekiel also predicted that God would change our heart of stone to a heart of flesh (Ezekiel 11:19^{xxxviii}). The power from on high is for us to live in newness of life and spread the Light: Christ in us and the fulfilled prophecies. We share the wonderful news that if we repent there is forgiveness through Christ, the gift of eternal life, and the infilling of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38^{xxxix}).

⁵⁰ *Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and lifting up his hands he blessed them.* Luke 24:50 Acts 1:12^{xl} tells us they were only a Sabbath day's journey from Jerusalem. That is 2000 paces. Bethany must have extended over the top of Olivet (John 11:18^{xli}). Was this possibly the site of the crucifixion or resurrection? One archeologist suggests that was the case. One traditional site honored by the Crusaders is now a Muslim shrine. The Crusaders built it with the top open to remind people that Jesus ascended, but the Muslims roofed it. The surrounding courtyard has huge pillar bases and altars from churches of long ago.

⁵¹ *While he blessed them, he parted from them and was carried up into heaven.* Luke 23:51 As Jesus was ascending, He was pronouncing a blessing over the disciples. Was it the Aaronic blessing from Numbers (6:24-26^{xlii})? Since the words were not recorded, I would guess that was the case. If it was something uniquely different, you would think they would have remembered it and recorded it. Jesus was carried up into the clouds and the disciples stood there staring up into the sky.¹⁰ *And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes,¹¹ and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."* Acts 1:10,11 The angels' words are in agreement with the prophet Zechariah's prediction. He wrote,⁴ *On that day his feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives that lies before Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall be split in two from east to west by a very wide valley, so that one half of the Mount shall move northward, and the other half southward.* Zechariah 14:4 The nations will have gathered to attack Jerusalem and the remnant of Jews that have survived will turn to Jesus who descends to rescue them. Just as Jesus departed from the Mount of Olives so will He return in the same way. The mountain will split under His feet. And what do you know, geologists say there is a fault line right there in the direction described waiting for that moment.

The disciples had watched Jesus ascend into heaven. Now they were to wait for the Holy Spirit to empower them to be Jesus' witnesses. When Jesus appeared in that upper room, He told them, *"As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you."* John 20:21b^{xliii} Did you know there was a spiritual pattern of this in the Old Testament? Before Elijah was taken up into heaven, his protégé, Elisha, asked if he could have a double

portion of his spirit. He wanted the anointing that was upon Elijah in an even greater way. Elijah told him that if he saw him depart, then he would know God answered his prayer. Elisha did see Elijah ascend in a chariot of fire similar to the way the disciples saw Jesus ascend. The robe of Elijah represented his identity and anointing. Elisha tore his old clothes representing his old identity and put on Elijah's robe (2 Kings 2:9-12^{xliv}).

The disciples left behind their old identities at Pentecost and clothed themselves in Christ. Romans 13:14^{xlv} tells us to put on, literally to clothe oneself, the Lord Jesus Christ. And that is what the disciples did. And that is what we are meant to do as well!

⁵² And they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, ⁵³ and were continually in the temple blessing God. Luke 24:52,53 Jews are commanded to worship God alone (Luke 4:8^{xlvi}). Critics tell us that the disciples made Jesus into God only after decades had passed. They do not understand the written record and try to claim it was written much later than it actually was. The disciples worshiped Jesus as God! They understood the triune oneness at least from the ascension onward. How can I say that for sure? Because Jesus opened their eyes to understand the Scriptures. That is why in writing the Gospels they applied Scriptures about God to Jesus as I have clearly shown in my book *Divine Messiah?*.

It was forty-three days since the crucifixion when Jesus ascended. After the crucifixion they were in the depths of despair. Now, having seen Jesus alive and heard His teaching and having their eyes opened to the Word, they could see the glorious plan of salvation and what Jesus had accomplished. They were a part of this plan as those who would officially communicate what they had seen and heard. They were going back to wait in Jerusalem for the promise of the Father, the infilling of the Holy Spirit, and while they waited, they were continually in the temple blessing/praising God.

Should we be any different from those disciples? Are your eyes opened to understand the Scriptures? And if we do understand, shouldn't we be just as joyous and full of praise to God? Have you received the promise of the Holy Spirit? Jesus said that just as a father delights to give his children good things when they ask, so God delights to give the Holy Spirit to the those who ask (Luke 11:13^{xlvii}). It is the power to live as a witness that Jesus is risen. He saves. He redeems us. He lives in us and loves people through us. What a holy privilege! Let us be continually praising God! Amen?

Questions:

- 1 What were Jesus' greeting to the disciples?
- 2 Why did they doubt?
- 3 What did Jesus' declare and invite them to do?
- 4 What will our heavenly bodies be like?
- 5 How did He prove He had a physical body?
- 6 What words did Jesus remind them of?
- 7 What prophecies had they not understood?
- 8 Where were the witnesses directed for evidence?
- 9 In what way did Jesus help them to see truth?
- 10 What did they need to wait for?
- 11 How will Jesus return?

ⁱ **Acts 1:8 (ESV)**

⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

ⁱⁱ **John 14:27 (ESV)**

²⁷ Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.

ⁱⁱⁱ **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—

^{iv} **John 20:19 (ESV)**

¹⁹ On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you.”

^v **Luke 24:31 (ESV)**

³¹ And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight.

^{vi} **1 Corinthians 15:50 (ESV)**

⁵⁰ I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.

^{vii} **1 Corinthians 15:50 (ESV)**

⁵⁰ I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.

^{viii} **Revelation 5:6 (ESV)**

⁶ And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth.

^{ix} **Zechariah 3:1 (ESV)**

¹ Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him.

^x **Acts 10:41 (ESV)**

⁴¹ not to all the people but to us who had been chosen by God as witnesses, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.

^{xi} **1 John 1:1 (ESV)**

¹ That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life—

^{xii} **Hebrews 10:4 (ESV)**

⁴ For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

^{xiii} **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.”

^{xiv} **Genesis 22:14 (ESV)**

¹⁴ So Abraham called the name of that place, “The LORD will provide”; as it is said to this day, “On the mount of the LORD it shall be provided.”

^{xv} **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.

^{xvi} **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.

^{xvii} **Isaiah 53:6 (ESV)**

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.

^{xviii} **Isaiah 53:10 (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.

^{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 53:5 (ESV)**

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.

^{xxi} **Psalms 22:18 (ESV)**

¹⁸ they divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots.

^{xxii} **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.

^{xxiii} **Isaiah 53:11 (ESV)**

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.

^{xxiv} **Psalms 16:10 (ESV)**

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

^{xxv} **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.

^{xxvi} -as quoted in Preaching the Word - Luke, Volume II: That You May Know the Truth.

^{xxvii} **John 15:13 (ESV)**

¹³ Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.

^{xxviii} **Psalms 119:18 (ESV)**

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

^{xxix} **John 14:6 (ESV)**

⁶ Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

^{xxx} **Matthew 5:44 (ESV)**

⁴⁴ But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,

^{xxxi} **Isaiah 9:2 (ESV)**

² The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone.

^{xxxii} **Isaiah 42:6 (ESV)**

⁶ "I am the LORD; I have called you in righteousness; I will take you by the hand and keep you; I will give you as a covenant for the people, a light for the nations,

^{xxxiii} **Isaiah 49:6 (ESV)**

⁶ he says: "It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the preserved of Israel; I will make you as a light for the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth."

^{xxxiv} **Acts 1:8 (ESV)**

⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

^{xxxv} **Revelation 11:17 (ESV)**

¹⁷ saying, "We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, who is and who was, for you have taken your great power and begun to reign.

^{xxxvi} **Daniel 2:44 (ESV)**

⁴⁴ And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall the kingdom be left to another people. It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever,

^{xxxvii} **Joel 2:29 (ESV)**

²⁹ Even on the male and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit.

^{xxxviii} **Ezekiel 11:19 (ESV)**

¹⁹ And I will give them one heart, and a new spirit I will put within them. I will remove the heart of stone from their flesh and give them a heart of flesh,

^{xxxix} **Acts 2:38 (ESV)**

³⁸ And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

^{xl} **Acts 1:12 (ESV)**

¹² Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away.

^{xli} **John 11:18 (ESV)**

¹⁸ Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles off,

^{xlii} **Numbers 6:24-26 (ESV)**

²⁴ The LORD bless you and keep you; ²⁵ the LORD make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you;

²⁶ the LORD lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.

^{xliii} **John 20:21 (ESV)**

²¹ Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you."

^{xliv} **2 Kings 2:9-12 (KJV)**

⁹ And it came to pass, when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me. ¹⁰ And he said, Thou hast asked a hard thing: *nevertheless*, if thou see me *when I am* taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so. ¹¹ And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, *there appeared* a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

¹² And Elisha saw *it*, and he cried, My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces.

^{xlv} **Romans 13:14 (ESV)**

¹⁴ But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

^{xlvi} **Luke 4:8 (ESV)**

⁸ And Jesus answered him, "It is written, "'You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve.'"

^{xlvii} **Luke 11:13 (ESV)**

¹³ If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"