

Our **GUIDE**

for little ones

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IN THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

Lesson 57

The Travelers to Emmaus

Luke 24:13-32

Saturday, the day after Jesus was crucified, was a day of despair for the followers of Jesus. They had believed that Jesus was the Savior, the Redeemer, the great Son of David who would, like David, be King in Israel. And now He's gone. Their hopes are dashed. All seems lost.

Then, on Sunday morning, things begin to change. Some very excited women tell Jesus' disciples that He has *risen*. Angels told them so. Then, these women say, they actually, for a couple of minutes, saw Jesus Himself! So Peter and John run to the tomb. They see that it is indeed empty — except for the grave clothes. But they didn't see any angels. And they didn't see Jesus.

The disciples, and some other of Jesus' followers, came together on Sunday to talk about these strange and unex-

pected happenings. Everything, to them, seemed so ... so ... *unreal*. A resurrection like that of *Lazarus* they could understand. But *this*, the resurrection of *Jesus*, if there really *was* a resurrection, is so *different*. Undisturbed grave clothes. Sudden, brief appearances to some women. And now ... nothing.

Especially puzzling, however, was the *cross*. Why did Jesus *die*? If He really is the Messiah, the Son of David, must He not *reign*? Must He not *rule*? Do not the Psalms speak even of a *world-wide* dominion? And would He not, like His father David, rule in *Jerusalem*?

Note to Parents: These papers are intended for the younger Sunday School students — grade 3 and below. Vocabulary and concepts are such that children in this age group, even the 3rd graders, will profit most if the stories are read *to* them, not *by* them. Most lessons have two stories, for two sittings if that proves to be beneficial. Our hope is that parents will find these lessons to be useful tools in the teaching of Bible stories and Bible truths to their children in the “off” season.

That was the dream of the Jews. Of the *disciples* too. And a *death* of the Messiah just didn't *fit* with a dream like *that*. No matter how hard they tried, the disciples couldn't figure it out. All the rest of the morning, and on into the afternoon, they struggled with this problem.

Two of these followers of Jesus lived in Emmaus, a village about seven or eight miles away. They therefore had a couple of hours of walking ahead of them before supper time. So they decided to head for home.



On their way home they continued to talk about their great problem. And they didn't notice that a man appeared suddenly behind them — out of nowhere. The man caught up with them quickly and walked for a few minutes beside them, just listening. Then He asked, “What is this that you are talking about, and that makes you so sad?”

They heard the man's voice. They saw His face. But they didn't know it was Jesus. Jesus made sure of that. Jesus, you see, was appearing to these two travelers not just to let them know that He had indeed *risen*, but to help them with their *problem*. He would help them understand the *cross*. After *that*, He will let them see who He is.

The two travelers right away explain to Jesus their difficulty. It's Jesus of Nazareth, they said. He was a mighty prophet. But He was crucified by the Jews. We thought He was the *Messiah*, the one who would *redeem* Israel. With

His *death*, everything seems to have gone *wrong*. But now there are rumors that He *arose*. We just can't figure it out.

Listen to Jesus' answer. “O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken.”

Yes, *all* that the prophets have spoken. That was the disciples' problem — they did not pay attention to *all* of the Scriptures. Were they *right* in looking for a Messiah who would be a great King out of David's line? Yes. Were they *right* in expecting that the rule of this King would be worldwide? Yes. But is that *all* that the prophets foretold about the Messiah?

No, it wasn't. Foolishly, the Jews had always *overlooked* prophecies that showed what *kind* of a King the Messiah would be. Jesus' disciples did too. They looked at David. They saw that God had given David great victories over his enemies — *earthly* enemies. They saw that David ruled over a great kingdom — an *earthly* kingdom. If the Messiah must sit on David's throne, then the Messiah's kingdom must also be ... *earthly*. That's what the Jews thought. And that's what they *wanted*.

But what, then, about the prophecy of *Isaiah*? What did *Isaiah* *mean* when he said, “He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter”? Well, the Jews didn't know about *that*, but they were sure that that prophecy could *not* have been about the *Messiah*. That just wouldn't *fit*.

Foolish, they were. And Jesus will show the two travelers to Emmaus

why. Beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He opened up to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. Jesus must have started with the very first of God's promises — the promise to Adam and Eve — of a *Savior* from ... *sin*. He must have talked to the travelers to Emmaus about the *sacrifices*, the killing of animals, as a picture of atonement for ... *sin*. He must have shown them how Isaiah's prophecies spoke of one who would be wounded for our ... *transgressions*, and bruised for our ... *iniquities*. Always, you see, it was the same. Whether it was the shedding of blood to provide a covering for Adam and Eve, or the sprinkling of blood on doorposts of houses in Egypt, or the brazen serpent on



a pole in the wilderness, or the offering of animal sacrifices in the temple — always the pictures were pointing to deliverance from ... *sin*. And that was Isaiah's prophecy about the Messiah — He would be “despised and rejected of men”; He would be “numbered with the transgressors”; He would make “his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death”; He would “bear the sin of many.”

And that's only a small part of it. Everywhere the Scriptures make clear that the real enemy of God's people is ... *sin*. It is *sin* that separates us from God, and will separate us from Him *forever* — unless there is a *Savior*.

From what, then, do God's people need to be delivered? Do they need deliverance from poverty, perhaps? Or

from sickness? Or from the Romans? Do they need a Messiah that will give them earthly bread, and heal them when they get leprosy?

All the way to Emmaus the two travelers must have listened in wide-eyed wonder. Never before had they heard anything like this. Clearer and clearer were the Scriptures becoming. More and more it looked as if the prophets had indeed foretold a Messiah that would be exactly like ... *Jesus*. If this stranger is *right*, then the death of Jesus *fits*, and fits *perfectly*. “Oh,” they must have thought, “what fools we have been.”

All too soon, as it seemed to them, they reached their home in Emmaus. They wanted to hear more, and more, and more. So they urged the stranger to come into their home and stay overnight. Jesus did enter their home. He sat at their table. He Himself took the bread, prayed before them, broke the bread, and gave it to them — and then they recognized Him. They saw who He was. And in that split second, He was gone, vanished out of their sight.



How Well Did You Listen?

1. To whom did Jesus appear on the road to Emmaus?
2. What did Jesus call them when they told Him their problem? At the end, did they understand why He had called them that?
3. What kind of a Messiah should the Jews have been looking for?
4. Why did the two travelers invite Jesus into their house?

5. What happened after Jesus prayed and when He was breaking the bread for them?

Jesus' Appearance to the Disciples

Luke 24:33-43

Can you imagine how thrilling the resurrection of Jesus was to His followers, on that first Resurrection Sunday? It thrilled the women. And surely also the travelers to Emmaus. Not only had they *seen* Him, but they had been *taught*, for two hours, by the Master Teacher. They were the very first to be taught, by the risen Lord, why the cross was *necessary*.

And then they learned something also about the *resurrection*. For, at the moment that they recognized Him at their table, Jesus *disappeared*. That could mean only one thing — that, though He had risen indeed, His resurrected body was not the physical, earthly, flesh-and-bones body that had been put in the grave. He was not back — to live again among them as before. And already they were beginning, just beginning, to understand that that was really *okay*. Why? Because ... because ... He had *finished* what He had come to *do*.

Though it was just a *beginning*, it was *astounding*. Could they keep it to themselves? Even overnight? No. They must share this great good news with the rest of Jesus' followers. So, though evening was probably fast coming on, and though it would mean another couple

of hours of walking, they headed straight back to Jerusalem.

Perhaps it was while they were on the way, that Jesus made the fourth of His appearances. It was to Peter — alone. Peter *needed* that. *All* of the disciples wanted to see Jesus — so that they would know, for *sure*, that He was really risen. Peter had also *another* reason. Ever since the cock crew early Friday morning, Peter was a miserable man. He had denied his Lord. Three times! With cursing and swearing he had said, "I know not the man." And then Jesus had turned and looked at him. Their eyes met. Yes, Jesus, his faithful Friend, *knew* what he had done. Peter was oh so ashamed. He wanted to be able to say to Jesus alone, "I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I'm sorry" — and then to hear Jesus say, "I forgive." Jesus knew all of that. So, before He showed Himself to His disciples *together*, He met Peter *alone*.



When, therefore, the travelers from Emmaus finally reached the house where the disciples of Jesus were gathered, they learned that they were not the only ones who had seen the Lord. Before they were able to say a word, the disciples cried, "The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared unto Peter."



After they entered the house, the doors were again bolted shut.

That is, *locked* — for fear of the Jews. Then the two travelers told their story, how Jesus

had walked and talked with them all the way to Emmaus, and how He had disappeared, from their table, at the very moment that they recognized who He was.

It was while they were telling their story, that, all of a sudden, Jesus Himself was there in the room, standing right among them — as if He had been there all the time. “Peace be unto you,” Jesus said.

No one answered. The disciples’ mouths must have dropped open. Their eyes opened wide. They were ... *terrified*.

Why? It was because of that *locked door*. And it was because they didn’t yet understand the *resurrection*. They believed, by now, that Jesus had come out of the grave. His grave, after all, was *empty*. And if the grave is empty, then Jesus’ real, physical, material body must have risen. The disciples were ready to *believe* that — if Jesus had come through the *door*. But the door was still *bolted shut*. Can what they are seeing, then, really be *Jesus*? No, they think, because a *real body* can’t go through *walls*. And if it’s not a *body*, then it must be ... a *spirit*, a *ghost*.

Ah, yes, that would be scary, wouldn’t it? But they were not seeing a ghost. The one who appeared suddenly before them *really was Jesus*. What came out of the grave early Sunday morning was Jesus’ *real, actual, human body*. Why, then, could it appear and disappear, and not be stopped by locked doors? Because the body was *changed*. No longer *physical*. No longer *material*. But still the *same*

body, the same person. A change in *form* — yes. Able to pass now through *walls* — yes. But still the *same Jesus*. That’s what the disciples had to learn.

And that’s what Jesus would teach them. “Why are you troubled?” He asks. “Behold my hands and my feet, that it is *I myself*.” You’re not seeing a *spirit*. You’re seeing *Me*.

How did Jesus *show* them that? Listen closely.

He said, “Behold my hands and my feet. Handle me and see. For a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.”

When they looked at His hands and feet, what did they see? They saw *nail prints*. When they touched Him, what did they feel? They felt a solid, flesh-and-bones *body*. Not, in other words, a spirit, or a ghost.

But was Jesus’ resurrection body *really* flesh and bones? No, it wasn’t. Flesh and bones are for life on this *earth*, not for life in *heaven*. Fact is, Jesus’ resurrected, spiritual, heavenly, glorified body could not even be *seen* by *earthly eyes*. Jesus was *showing Himself* to His disciples, and doing it in such a way that they would understand that the resurrection body, *though changed*, is the *same* body. He lets them see *nail prints*. He lets them touch a *solid body*.

And then, even this. Jesus asks, “Have ye here any meat?” They give Him a piece of broiled fish and some honey. And, while they watched, He *ate it*. Never could a *ghost* do that.

Did the disciples understand? Yes, they did. They knew very well that Jesus was not teaching them that His “new” body was physical, solid, and had need for earthly food. That *couldn't* be true — because He had passed through the *wall*. But this they now knew, that He who stood before them was indeed their *risen Lord*.

And they were *glad*.

How Well Did You Listen?

1. What did the two travelers to Emmaus do right after Jesus disappeared?
2. Why did Peter want to see Jesus?
3. What did the disciples think when Jesus suddenly appeared among them?
4. What did Jesus show to His disciples to prove that what they were seeing was *really* Jesus?

How Well Do You Understand?

1. Why was Saturday a day of despair for Jesus' followers?
2. When Jesus asked the two travelers why they were so sad, what did they answer?
3. Jesus told them that there was one important thing that they had not learned about the Messiah. Do you know what that was? How did Jesus show them that they *should* have known it?
4. What did the two

travelers to Emmaus learn from Jesus' sudden disappearance?

5. Why did Jesus appear to Peter when Peter was by himself?
6. Why did the disciples think they were seeing a ghost when Jesus appeared to them in the house?
7. Jesus said to His disciples, “... a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.” Did Jesus' resurrected body have flesh and bones?

Memory Verse

Luke 24:39 “Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself.”

Color the picture of a road.

