

Jesus is risen indeed!

Luke 24:36-49

Now as they said these things, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, "Peace to you." But they were terrified and frightened and supposed they had seen a spirit. And He said to them, "Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts? Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have." When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet. But while they still did not believe for joy, and marveled, He said to them, "Have you any food here?" So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb. And He took it and ate in their presence. Then He said to them, "These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me." And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures. Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And you are witnesses of these things. Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:36-49 NKJV).

Introduction

Earlier in the chapter it states that the women, Mary Magdalene, Johanna and the other Mary, went to the tomb with spices, probably to embalm the body of Jesus. But when they came there, all of a sudden, two angels appeared to them saying to them: "Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen!" (Luke 24:5-6 NKJV). With great joy, the women went to the disciples and told them what the Angels said to them! However, the disciples didn't believe the women, not immediately! Then it so happened that Jesus appeared to two men on the road to Emmaus (Cleopas and his friend Simon), and as Jesus walked with them, He expounded the Scriptures concerning Him. Jesus opened the Scriptures as He walked with them. And then after Jesus prayed with them, before they ate at a certain house, the

Scriptures say, that their eyes were opened, and they recognized Jesus. But there and then Jesus disappeared before their eyes like a ghost. In their haste the two decided to return to Jerusalem, which was about 12 kilometers far, to tell the disciples that they saw Jesus, and their message: "The Lord is risen indeed!"

1. Jesus appeared to His disciples

-- Jesus pronounced salvation: "Peace be to you."

The first words Jesus said to the disciples were "Peace to you."

Jesus most probably spoke in Aramaic, not in Greek or Hebrew. In other words, the word that He spoke was "Shalom." We translate "Shalom" with "peace" in English. Shalom, however, can mean different things in the Hebrew or Aramaic language. It means much more than the absence of war. According to one Hebrew Lexicon, it could mean "wholeness, prosperity, absence of danger, well-being or salvation." The meaning of "shalom" in this context probably means "Salvation." In other words, because Jesus rose from the dead, everything was now complete to put those who believe in Him, in the right relationship with God. The fact that Jesus rose from the dead testified to the fact that He never sinned as a man. The penalty of sin is death as Romans 6:23 reveals. But because Jesus never sinned, death could not keep Him in the grave! His death was a substitutionary one, on behalf of His people! As Romans 1:4 reveals: "and Jesus was declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." The words of Jesus on the cross, "It is finished" acquired its full meaning now. As Romans 4:25 says: "Jesus was delivered up for our offenses, and He was raised for our justification." The fact that Jesus was raised from the dead means that the Father accepted Jesus' atoning sacrifice on behalf of all believers. Now after all this happened, Jesus came and said: "Peace to you." Never before in human history did these words have such a loaded meaning. Jesus could have said to His disciples: "salvation is now certain for those who believe" or "Your sins are now forgiven" or "the just payment for your sins has been paid in full" or "now you have free access to the Father" or "the power of sin, Satan and death and the grave has been decisively broken". But Jesus chose to say: "Peace to you" or "Shalom."

-- Jesus appeared to them supernaturally with a glorified body (John 20).

Twice it is recorded in the gospel of John (John 20:19,26) that the doors were shut where the disciples were gathered, and then after that fact is mentioned, Jesus all of a sudden, just appeared in the midst of them! Jesus didn't come in at the back door! He also didn't come through the window! He all of a sudden, just appeared in their midst! "Like a ghost?!" It sounds like something out of a Star Trek film, not that I am a fan. Scientists cannot explain to you what happened here to Jesus. Neither can they replicate the event by doing experiments. What happened here was supernatural. It was a miracle if I may say so. Nobody can do what Jesus did there, in a natural body! No-one! Has anyone tried it? In this room? Walking through walls and that sort of a thing? No wonder the disciples were afraid! They thought they saw a ghost! What we find in the passage are explained clearly in 1 Corinthians 15:20-23; "But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. But each one in his own order: Christ the first fruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming." Jesus was the first man who was raised with a spiritual or glorified body never to die again! What was and is remarkable about that body, is that Jesus could eat food with it, the marks on His body, where he was crucified were visible, and other people could touch him. He was not a ghost! 1 Corinthians 15:42-49 explains how this body of Jesus is different from ours! "So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural, and afterward the spiritual. The first man was of the earth, made of dust; the second Man is the Lord from heaven. As was the man of dust, so also are those who are made of dust; and as is the heavenly Man, so also are those who are of the heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man"

(I Corinthians 15:42-49 NKJV). Jesus had a body vastly superior to any "Superhero's body" you will see in the movies! He was clothed with an indestructible, glorified body!

-- The unbelief of the first disciples and the contemporary church and world.

It is not surprising that the first disciples didn't believe that it was Jesus that appeared to them at first. What would have been our reaction if we saw Jesus "coming through the wall?" Even after Jesus showed them His pierced hands and feet and even after they touched Him, our text says that "they still did not believe for joy, and marveled." They were out of sorts. 'Can we blame them?', we may ask. After this, Jesus goes further and asks them if they have something to eat. Even after they gave Him broiled fish and after that He ate it, our text still doesn't indicate that they believed!! Some might have believed after that, but our text doesn't say so! Only after He mentioned the Scriptures, they started to believe! I quote, "Then Jesus said to them, "These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me." And He **OPENED** their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures." How did Jesus open their understanding? He, no doubt, did what He did to the two on the road to Emmaus! He expounded the Scriptures that was referring to Himself! What does the Holy Spirit want to convey to us through this? Miracles aren't enough for people to believe in Jesus! Even though the resurrection was a miracle and even though the Bible is based upon the supernatural and miracles, and even though the Bible is replete of miracles from Genesis all the way through to the ministry of Jesus, people don't believe in God just because of miracles. Even though many people come to faith because of a miracle, especially in the least reached areas, it is not enough for people to stay in the faith and to be grounded in the faith! Look at what happened with Israel after the exodus out of Egypt. God did mighty signs and wonders in the land of Egypt. He divided the Red Sea! He came down in a fire on Mount Sinai! He fed the Israelites for 40 years with manna from heaven, and still the Bible says God had no pleasure in those people because of their unbelief! And if we look at Jesus' ministry, how many miracles did

Jesus not do!? Jesus did thousands of miracle healings, no doubt in his ministry on earth! For sure some became disciples, but only 120 people were in the upper room at Pentecost! Many did NOT become His disciples just because of miracles and healings! Christ did something else to make them believe!

2. Jesus fulfilled Scripture and opened their understanding

-- **The content of what was fulfilled:** "it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise on the third day". The Scriptures tell us the following about Jesus and the Emmaus travellers: "And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He **EXPOUNDED** to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself" (Luke 24:27 NKJV). It was only after Jesus did that that they believed! There are literally over 300 prophecies that were fulfilled in the life, death, resurrection and glorification of Jesus Christ. Jesus said to His disciples: "These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me." Let's look of some of the most famous Scriptures in the Old Testament that refer to Jesus, especially the prophecies. I know that the whole of the Old Testament speaks of Jesus, but there are certain prophecies that shine very bright concerning Jesus.

-- Scriptures in the Law of Moses:

After the fall Of man God said the following: "So the LORD God said to the serpent: "Because you have done this, You are cursed more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly you shall go, And you shall eat dust All the days of your life. And I will put enmity between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel." (Genesis 3:14-15 NKJV). Who was the One who was to bruise the serpent's head? It was Jesus! When Jesus died on the cross, the fatal blow to the serpent was given. The devil's power was broken at the cross!

God tested Abraham and asked him to sacrifice his own son on the mountain Moriah. And just before Abraham did that, God said the

following to Abraham. Genesis 22:15-18 "Then the Angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time out of heaven, and said: "By Myself I have sworn, says the LORD, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son — blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore, and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies. In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice." (Genesis 22:15-18 NKJV). Jesus Christ was a direct descendant of Abraham, and He possessed the gates of His enemies and through Him, all the nations of the earth shall be blessed.

Before Jacob died, he blessed His son, Juda with the following blessing: Genesis 49:8-10; "Judah, you are he whom your brothers shall praise; Your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies; Your father's children shall bow down before you. Judah is a lion's whelp; From the prey, my son, you have gone up. He bows down; he lies down as a lion; And as a lion, who shall rouse him? The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, Until Shiloh, comes; And to Him shall be the obedience of the people" (Genesis 49:8-10 NKJV). Jesus Christ was a direct descendant of Juda. Jesus is called the Lion of Juda in the book Revelation. The obedience of the people is unto Him, because of His obedience unto death, death on the cross.

The nation of Israel sacrificed many sacrifices on God's command, and there was a particular sacrifice that had to be sacrificed once a year. Leviticus 16:9-10;21-22; "Then Aaron shall cast lots for the two goats: one lot for the LORD and the other lot for the scapegoat. And Aaron shall bring the goat on which the LORD's lot fell, and offer it as a sin offering. But the goat on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat shall be presented alive before the LORD, to make atonement for it, and to let it go as the scapegoat into the wilderness."; "And when he has made an end of atoning for the Holy Place, the tabernacle of meeting, and the altar, he shall bring the live goat. Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, confess over it all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions, concerning all their sins, putting them on the head of the goat, and shall send it away into the wilderness

by the hand of a suitable man. The goat shall bear on itself all their iniquities to an uninhabited land; and he shall release the goat in the wilderness” (Leviticus 16:8-10, 20-22 NKJV). The scapegoat was a type of Christ. God the Father laid on Jesus all His peoples' sins and led Him to die outside the city, on Golgotha (in the wilderness). What happened to Jesus on the cross was a fulfillment of this typology.

In Deuteronomy 18:15,17-19 the following is written: “The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear.”

"I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him. And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him” (Deuteronomy 18:15, 18-19 NKJV). Jesus Christ was the prophet who was to come. He was the fulfillment of this prophecy!

-- Scriptures of the Prophets:

Zechariah **12:10 states**; "“And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourn for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn” (Zechariah 12:10 NKJV). Who was pierced for our transgressions? In the cross of Jesus Christ, this prophecy was fulfilled.

The most famous passage in the Old Testament about the crucifixion is found in Isaiah 53:4-10; "Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. 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. He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth." " And they made His grave with the wicked— But with the rich at His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was any deceit in His mouth. Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief.

When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, And the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand" (Isaiah 53:4-7, 9-10 NKJV).

Daniël prophesied the following about Jesus Christ centuries before Jesus was born. Daniël 7:13,14; "'I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him. Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed" (Daniel 7:13-14 NKJV). Because of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, power, dominion and glory were given to Him, and Jesus referred to Himself as the Son of Man on many occasions while He walked the earth.

Jesus Christ rose on the third day from the dead.

Hosea 6:2 "Come, and let us return to the LORD; For He has torn, but He will heal us; He has stricken, but He will bind us up. After two days He will revive us; On the third day He will raise us up, That we may live in His sight" (Hosea 6:1-2 NKJV). The fact that Jesus rose on the third day was a fulfillment of this prophecy.

-- Scriptures in the Psalms

Psalms 22:2,16-19; "O My God, I cry in the daytime, but You do not hear; And in the night season, and am not silent."

"My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and My tongue clings to My jaws; You have brought Me to the dust of death. For dogs have surrounded Me; The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet; I can count all My bones. They look and stare at Me. They divide My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots" (Psalms 22:2, 15-18 NKJV). It is obvious that David didn't speak about himself in this Psalm but about Someone else. That Someone was Jesus Christ. Jesus' hands and feet were pierced in death.

After Pentecost Peter quoted Psalm 16:8-10 to prove that the resurrection of Christ was a fulfillment of this Psalm.

Psalm 16:8-10; "I have set the LORD always before me; Because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved. Therefore, my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; My flesh also will rest in hope. For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption" (Psalms 16:8-10 NKJV). Jesus didn't go to hell after His death to fight the devil! Before Jesus died, he said: "into Your hands I give My spirit." Meaning Jesus was united to the Father immediately after He died.

Psalm 69:7-9 "Because for Your sake I have borne reproach; Shame has covered my face. I have become a stranger to my brothers, And an alien to my mother's children; Because zeal for Your house has eaten me up, And the reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on me" (Psalms 69:7-9 NKJV). When Jesus died on the cross, the reproaches against God fell on Jesus. He bore our sins in His body on the tree.

Psalm 110:1,2,4 "The LORD said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool." The LORD shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion. Rule in the midst of Your enemies". "The LORD has sworn and will not relent, "You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek." (Psalms 110:1-2, 4 NKJV). After Jesus' resurrection and ascension, Jesus sat at the right hand of the Father and became the everlasting High Priest of those who will be saved. This prophecy came into fulfillment in Christ's glorification.

-- Christ must open your mind, to believe that Jesus rose from the dead. The natural man cannot accept the resurrection e.g. atheists, agnostics, Muslims. As the Scriptures said in Luke 24, Jesus opened the disciples' minds to understand the Scriptures. And when Jesus expounded the Scriptures to the Emmaus-travelers their hearts were burning within them! Jesus probably expounded the Scriptures to the disciples as well and in so doing opened their minds to understand the Scriptures. Only AFTER Jesus did that, did they comprehend the Scriptures and consequently believed!

Why is this important? Why did God give us the Scriptures? God preserved the Scriptures for us through the centuries for a reason! The crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ were planned by God before time and the world existed! It's called the covenant of redemption (Revelation 13:8; 1 Peter 1:18-20). God knew that Adam and Eve would sin in the garden of Eden! That is why He gave the first prophecy after the fall of man and why He gave so many prophecies over the centuries through the holy prophets. God worked everything according to His wise counsel through the centuries, with much care and precision so that we might believe that God is God and working everything for the believers good! There is a great Mastermind behind our existence, dear friend, an extremely intelligent Being, working behind the scenes, all the time! God gave all these prophecies through the centuries and then fulfilled more than 300 of them in Jesus Christ so that we would believe in Christ and the Scriptures! Miracles are all good and well, but our faith is not only built on miracles but on the testimony of fulfilled prophecies through the centuries, given by the Holy Spirit, through faithful men (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21-22). Only God knows the end from the beginning, and the fact that we have so many fulfilled prophecies demonstrates the omnipotence, wisdom and plan of God with the human race and with His elect! He is the one who sovereignly controls everything in time and space. God worked out His redemptive purposes with mankind through the centuries with much precision and care and made it known to us. The Bible stands alone among all the religions of the world when it comes to fulfilled prophecies. Like I said before, more than 300 prophecies came into fulfillment in the life, death, resurrection and glorification of Jesus Christ and about 2000 other prophecies in the Old Testament have already come into fulfillment! The Bible is in a class of its own! The fact that all these things came to pass should create in us an unwavering faith in the all-sufficiency of God and Scripture.

3. Jesus gave the Command and Task to the disciples

-- "**Repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in His Name**" (verse 47).

Note that REPENTANCE and forgiveness of sins should be preached in Jesus' Name!

Many people would want us to believe that we must "just believe." They say "Sola Fide!" But they don't understand without Biblical repentance there is no saving faith! They are like two sides of the same coin! You can't separate them! You can't believe in God without turning from your sins and idols! Faith without repentance won't work! Everywhere in the Old and New Testament we hear the cry of the prophets and the apostles and Jesus: "Repent and believe the gospel!" And we need faith in JESUS CHRIST! Not faith in faith, like the 'word of faith' movement, want us to believe! We cannot speak things into existence! We cannot create faith! Saving faith is given to us by God! And Jesus Christ is the one who saves! Not our faith and no other thing or doctrine! (John 14:6; Acts 4:12). There is salvation in no other Name, given among men under heaven! Forgiveness of sins comes only after repentance and putting your trust in Christ Jesus alone! That is the gospel that we should preach! Jesus died, bore the wrath of God, satisfied His justice, died in our stead and rose from the dead, defeating sin, Satan, hell and death!

-- It should be preached to all nations "ethnos" (verse 47)

This gospel is not only meant for some ethnic groups e.g. the Zulu's or the English. The word 'nations' in this portion means literally "ethne," meaning ethnic groups. God WILL have people among EVERY tribe, nation and ethnic group under the sun (Revelation 5:9;7:9). And the task Jesus gave His disciples 2000 years ago is still relevant for the church today. The task to preach the gospel is given for ALL disciples of Jesus Christ throughout all the centuries. If you have a mouth to speak and feet to walk then, God is calling you to proclaim HIS gospel wherever He sends you! You don't have to be a full-time evangelist or have some special gifting. God equips the called! He doesn't call the equipped! The gospel shouldn't only be lived out. That is of cardinal importance. We must live lives that honor God, we must live holy lives, but Jesus said: proclaim the gospel! Not 'preach everywhere and when necessary, use words' that slogan is unbiblical! Don't just stand there, preach! Open your mouth when the opportunity arises! Off course people will ridicule you, insult you and say all kinds of evil against you! But should that stop us? That didn't stop the early church or the church in China the past 60 years! Persecution there will be as Jesus

promised! Mission agencies make it clear that there are still 3 billion people on the face of the earth that don't know the true gospel! Of the 12000 distinct ethnic groups on the earth 4000 are classified as least reached people groups! That means in 4000 people groups the church is not big enough to evangelize the whole people group! Jesus said: this gospel must be preached to ALL ethnic groups and every creature under the sun (Mark 16:15). Are you involved?

-- The disciples were (literal) and the believers today are (spiritual) witnesses

The disciples along with 500 other brethren saw Jesus physically with their own eyes after His resurrection in a resurrected body according to 1 Corinthians 15:3-7. Thomas said he will not believe unless he puts his fingers in the wounds of Jesus. After he saw Jesus, Jesus said to him: "Blessed are those who do not see and yet believe" (John 20:29). Jesus referred to those who would not see Him physically in a resurrected body and to us, of course, because none of us, saw Him as they did. Jesus said to His disciples: "you are witnesses of these things." But are not all believers in Christ witnesses of Him as well? Everyone who is born again, who believes in Christ as Savior and Lord is a witness of His saving power and His power to forgive sins. Everyone who is born of the Holy Spirit is a witness of the miracle of the new birth and the abiding Holy Spirit! Don't say you are not a witness! Did Jesus not save you from any sin? Some people have been saved from drug and alcohol addictions, like me, others from sex-addictions, others from idolatry and ancestral worship, and others from legalism and Pharisaism, which in a way is the worst bondage of all! Every believer in Christ has a story to tell the world, and are witnesses for Christ!

-- The power and Gift and from above are promised to accomplish the task

Jesus said to His disciples: "Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high" (Verse 49).

Jesus referred to the Holy Spirit. He was the power from above. And we know the story: the Holy Spirit came down at Pentecost and baptized every one of the disciples and filled them with joy, boldness,

and power! Believer in Christ, has Christ empowered you to be His witness? We know that without the Holy Spirit we can do nothing. And we know that all believers have the Holy Spirit, don't they (1 Corinthians 12:3)? But the command in Scripture is clear! We must be filled continually with the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18) to be effective in God's service! If we quench and grieve the Holy Spirit, we will be ineffective in His service. The disciples had to wait for the power from on high! Are you continually waiting on God to be filled and to be empowered for His service and to be His witness?

Jesus died!

Jesus is risen indeed!

The tomb is empty!

Christ appeared to the disciples in a glorified, indestructible body!

Christ fulfilled the Scriptures!

Christ gave us a task to complete!

Go therefore and proclaim the gospel!

Forgiveness of sins is available!

The power of death, Satan, sin and hell have been decisively broken!

Peace be to you!

There is shalom for all those who turn from their sins and trust in the Savior!