

# Born to Die, to Rise Again

Luke 24:13-48

That morning... even the last couple of days had been nothing short of madness and chaos.

- His arrest.
- The mockery of those so called trials.
- Pilate was ready to let Him go, but for the Chief priests and all the other priests and Jewish leaders... they wouldn't let him. They demanded that he be crucified.
- What were they afraid of? Why all the hate?
- And there He was hanging on the cross... hanging on a cross and still caring about others...
- And then, it was over... He even cried out Himself in the midst of the pain and agony, "It is finished!"
- And so it was. Some came and asked for the body and they buried Him.

For a couple of days now it had been relatively quiet. His followers staying hidden away, fearful of their own arrest... and possible crucifixion.

Now today, **just this morning**, everything is stirring again and no one has any answers!

Conversations of His followers were filled with speculation and possibilities... but, no proof.

The **tomb was definitely empty**, but... some said **He was alive**... some said the **body was stolen**...

Had this been some sort of a **cruel joke**... a plan made up by the Pharisees to draw them out into the open.

The eleven remaining disciples stayed hidden, closed away together with several of the other followers of Jesus. But at least a couple of His followers decided to leave town...

Luke 24

<sup>13</sup> Now behold, two of them were traveling that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was seven miles from Jerusalem. <sup>14</sup> And they talked together of all these things which had happened. <sup>15</sup> So it was, while they conversed and reasoned, that Jesus Himself drew near and went with them. <sup>16</sup> But their eyes were restrained, so that they did not know Him.

<sup>17</sup> And He said to them, "What kind of conversation is this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?" <sup>18</sup> Then the one whose name was Cleopas answered and said

*to Him, "Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened there in these days?"*

The events of the week prior had taken its toll on these men and a multitude of others. Their lives were in a state of confusion and instability. The unspeakable had taken place and **their dreams and expectations had suddenly been crucified on a cruel Roman cross**. They had seen all their life dreams and hope buried in a tomb. And now, to add insult to injury, they say the Body was gone..., the tomb was empty.

But before we go on, let me ask you the question:

*How do **you** deal with life when life itself seems to be coming at you with every vile thing?*

*How do **you** move forward when your dreams and expectations have suddenly been dashed by actions and events **out of your control**?*

The point I want you to see very clearly this morning is that for Cleopas and his companion, as they headed to the village of Emmaus, they were going **down**. Physically, symbolically, and spiritually they were **going down**.

Emmaus was located on the lower, western foothills **down** off of the Judean Mountains. As they left Jerusalem they would have headed westward in the direction of the Mediterranean coast. Physically, Emmaus was lower in elevation and about eight miles from Jerusalem – a little less than half a day's journey, and normally an easy walk as most of it was **downhill**.

Even symbolically, no matter what direction you went from Jerusalem, in the Jewish mind you were **going down**; just as whenever you traveled to Jerusalem you would be going "**up to Jerusalem**". And so, for these two travelers, as they headed towards Emmaus, it was pretty clear that **symbolically** they were **going down**.

But it wasn't just a physical or symbolical move, more than anything else they were **going down spiritually**.

As they left Jerusalem,

- They were going **down**, away from the promises of the Fathers...
- They were going **down**, away from the declarations of the Prophets...
- They were going **down**, away from the dreams and expectations they had received while sitting at the feet of Jesus...

- They were going **down**, moving away from the power and the victory that was being made available through the **reality of the promised resurrection**.

And then, just like He does even today, Jesus joins with them in their **“pit”**.

He joins with them to bring them **back “up” again**.

But before any of us can truly be lifted out of our **“pit”**, we need to understand and clearly see:

1. The **reality of the pit** we are in, and
2. The **reason for the pit** we are in.

Jesus could have easily opened the eyes of these two men by declaring who He was at the time, but there was a greater lesson to be taught that day. Instead of helping the men to only believe **what they see with their own eyes**, He wants them to comprehend all that took place and **the reasons, the plans and the purposes** of God behind it all.

He wanted to **teach them once again to trust in God, no matter the situation**.

**Are you able to trust in God, no matter the situation?**

There’s actually a bit of humor in the next couple of verses –

*<sup>17</sup> And He (Jesus) said to them, "What kind of conversation is this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?" <sup>18</sup> Then the one whose name was Cleopas answered and said to Him, "Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened there in these days?"*

Undoubtedly, while these guys were **in the pits**, they were having a **major spiritual “pity party”**. Anybody here ever have their own **spiritual pity party**?

You know the ones where we are **complaining** and **reminding** God about the situation we find ourselves in. It’s what happens when we forget all about the verses that say:

*“In everything give thanks... (1 Thess. 5:18)”*

*“...giving thanks always for all things to God... (Eph 5:20)”*

*“All things work together for good... (Rom. 8:28)”*

*“Your heavenly Father knows what things you have need of... (Mat. 6:8)”*

And on and on...

But, let's face it, we don't understand what's going on in our lives 99% of the time. That's why we are **called to a life of FAITH... not sight.**

As difficult as it is, even in the darkness, we need to continually remember –

- Our God is THE One True Almighty God of the entire Universe
- Our God is Sovereign, reigning supreme over all of His creation
- Our God is Omnipotent, His power excels all others, everywhere and at all times
- Our God is Omniscient, He is all knowing and nothing takes Him by surprise
- Our God is Omnipresent, His divine presence encompasses all of His creation. He is distinct from His universe, but there is no place in His universe where He does not inhabit
- *And so, (His) thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways (His) ways, for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so (His) ways are higher than your ways, and (His) thoughts than your thoughts (Isa 55:8-9).*
- And yet, in the midst of all that our God is, His love brings Him to care about the smallest of sparrows... and He cares for you.

Even with the reality of the crucifixion, and the burial of the Lord Jesus, all of these things were actually a **working out of the plan of God** for the salvation of mankind.

When Jesus asked the two men why they were having such a downer of a conversation, they must have thought He was nuts. As a matter of fact, Cleopas' response makes it pretty clear that they thought He was nuts or at least totally uninformed –

*"Are You the only guy in all of Jerusalem that has no clue about what just happened? Haven't you heard about what's taken place these last few days? Did you just crawl out of a cave or something?"*

No, He walked out of it victoriously!

Okay, maybe it's the jokester in me, but I can't help thinking that Jesus was having to hold back a smile when He asked the next question –

*<sup>19</sup> And He said to them, "What things?"*

I love the humor of God, and we find it all throughout His Word.

I would imagine that at this point Cleopas and the other disciple probably looked at this "Stranger" like He was from Mars or something. But I believe that Jesus was setting them up... just so they could see their own lack of faith and ignorance of the words of the Prophets.

Cleopas and the other disciple began stating the case –

*So they said to Him, "The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a Prophet **mighty in deed and word** before God and all the people,<sup>20</sup> and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and crucified Him.*

If I were filming a dramatic presentation of this scene, I would have Jesus with a very serious look on His face, nodding His head up and down, looking with great interest and appearing to take in all of these amazing facts – all the while being the very One who was in the center of it all –

*"Hmmm, He was a Prophet was He? And the Chief Priests and rulers condemned Him to death and crucified Him? That's amazing!"*

But the disciples had more to tell Him –

*<sup>21</sup> But we were **hoping** that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, today is the third day since these things happened."*

*We were **HOPING** He would redeem Israel...*

They had lost faith in who Jesus is.

I'm sure Jesus would have loved to asked them what the significance of the third day was, but they weren't finished telling their story

*<sup>22</sup> "Yes, and certain women of our company, who arrived at the tomb early, astonished us. <sup>23</sup> When they did not find His body, they came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said He was alive. <sup>24</sup> And certain 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."*

*Okay, let's stop right here Cleopas, you guys say that the women said the tomb was empty...*

*You guys said that the women saw a vision of an angel and the angel said that Jesus was alive... But we understand that in Jewish courts a woman's testimony is worthless, probably because **women can be overcome by emotions and miss the truth when He's standing right in front of them...***

*So, a couple of the men went to check their story out and low and behold, the tomb WAS empty... Oh, and it's the third day too... **Gee, I wonder what happened?***

Well, fortunately **Jesus isn't nearly as sarcastic as I am**. As a matter of fact, He's kind and caring..., but He is also very direct with His answer to the men –

<sup>25</sup> Then He (Jesus) said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in **all that the prophets have spoken!**" <sup>26</sup> Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?" <sup>27</sup> And **beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.**

"I tell you what guys, while we're walking along here, let's have a little Bible study!"

Wow, wouldn't that have been awesome!

Beginning with Moses – the first five books of the Bible, the Pentateuch, the Jewish Torah, and then on through the Prophets and no doubt the Psalms:

- The seed of woman being bruised in the heel, while He bruises Satan in the head (Gen. 3:15)
- The multiple promises of God to Abraham that "...in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed (Gen 26:4)."
- Or the words of Abraham to his son Isaac, "God will provide Himself a Lamb... (Gen. 22:8)"
- The words of Jacob, now Israel to his son Judah, "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 (Gen 49:10)."
- The declaration of Moses that "The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear (Deut. 18:15)."
- The multiples of the Psalms that speak of both the coming King and the suffering Servant.
- The messages from the Prophet Isaiah, declaring *the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel (7:14).*
- That very Child shall **BE** the King, Himself <sup>6</sup> *For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.* <sup>7</sup> *Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David and over His kingdom (Isa 9:6-7).*

Through these passages they were expecting: the King, the Ruler, the Heavenly Kingdom, the Throne of David to be reestablished. So, Jesus no doubt would have also taught them from passages such as Isaiah 52 and 53

- Passages of Isaiah that spoke of His suffering, *Isa 53: <sup>5</sup> 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. <sup>6</sup> 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. <sup>7</sup> 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. <sup>8</sup> He was taken from prison and from judgment, and who will declare His generation? For He was cut off from the land of the living; For the transgressions of My people He was stricken. <sup>9</sup> 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. <sup>10</sup> 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. <sup>11</sup> He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, for He shall bear their iniquities.*

And on and on through **Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Micah**, prophesy after prophesy. Some would have spoken of **His suffering**, other would have spoken of His **reigning rule**. Jesus was putting all of the pieces of the puzzle together for these two men... and they were amazed by the truth of the word of God that, yes Messiah **was BORN TO DIE**. But it was also promised from the very beginning and all through the prophecies, that He would also **rise to LIVE AGAIN**.

It's not that they were ignorant of these things in their minds and understanding. They would have known these scriptures since their youth. What they needed was someone to show them the **scarlet thread** of the sacrificed Savior that tied them all together. As Jesus opened the scriptures, He tied them together to bring these men to a fullness of understanding.

Yet, they still missed the very One speaking to them

*<sup>28</sup> Then they drew near to the village where they were going, and He indicated that He would have gone farther. <sup>29</sup> But they constrained Him, saying, "Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent." And He went in to stay with them.*

*<sup>30</sup> Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. <sup>31</sup> Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight. <sup>32</sup> And they said to one another, "Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?"*

Oh my goodness. Can you even begin to imagine! Up until the time *He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them*, they had no clue who they were talking to... but they certainly understood that their hearts were burning within them as He expounded the Scriptures.

Was it the way He broke the bread, was it the prayer He said that was so familiar to what they had heard before, or was it simply the Holy Spirit of God opening their eyes to see and comprehend all that was before them?

Their **"Pity Party"** was now officially over. It was over because their eyes had been opened to the Truth and they had been with Jesus, the fulfillment of the Truth

*<sup>33</sup> So they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, <sup>34</sup> saying, "The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!" <sup>35</sup> And they told about the things that had happened on the road, and how He was known to them in the breaking of bread.*

*<sup>36</sup> Now as they said these things, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, "Peace to you." <sup>37</sup> But **they were terrified and frightened**, and supposed they had seen a spirit. <sup>38</sup> And He said to them, "Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts?"*

We are always troubled and there are always doubts when we either forget, or doubt the Word and the Promises we have learned. Or we simply are ignorant of these Promises of God toward us.

We need to continually remember to cast **all** our cares upon Him... because He cares for us. And He proved that care by coming to earth to die for our sin and the sin of all mankind... and then He rose again on the third day as a fulfillment of the promise of the Father.

Do you truly know Him?

Do you know the greatness of His love for you?

Have you ever surrendered your life into His eternal hands?

If you know Him, then let the Truth of His resurrection pull you out of the pit, and raise you up to walk victorious in Him.

Jesus shared with His followers that day, and I leave you with this Truth today...

*<sup>46</sup> ... "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to **suffer and to rise from the dead the third day**, <sup>47</sup> and that **repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.***

He was **Born to Die, to Live Again** for the glory of the Father and to draw all men to Himself.

His plans for you are eternal and much greater than the trials that will come upon you.

His purposes are eternal and He desires that you become a part of that plan and walk with Him both now and for all eternity.