

On the Road to Emmaus

Key Verses: *“Their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight. And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?”*
—**Luke 24:31,32**

Selected Scripture:
Luke 24:13-32

THE THIRD DAY AFTER

Jesus’ death, early on Sunday morning, Mary Magdalene was the first to see the risen Lord. (Mark 16:9-11; John 20:11-18) Shortly thereafter Jesus appeared to the other two women who had come to anoint his body, Mary the mother of James and Salome. (Mark 16:1; Matt. 28:1,9,10) Little is known of Jesus’ third appearance other than it was alone to Simon Peter. (Luke 24:34) None of the other writers of the New Testament mention this appearance with the exception of Paul, who in I Corinthians 15:5 said only, “He was seen by

Cephas,” Peter’s Aramaic surname. It is likely that Jesus wanted to personally encourage Peter after the guilt he must have felt from denying the Master three times. (Luke 22:55-62) Three things that attract Jesus to those seeking after him are love, penitence, and a study of his teachings. We see love and penitence expressed by the women and Peter in his appearances to them.

The narrative now turns to two of Jesus’ disciples who,

later the same day, were traveling by foot toward the village of Emmaus, some seven miles away from Jerusalem. (Luke 24:13) It is likely these two believed that walking and discussing the crucifixion and the empty tomb might bring some relief from the puzzling events of recent days. Perhaps the lack of understanding that troubled them stimulated the risen Jesus to come join them in their journey. He saw that they especially needed him, for their faith was sorely wounded.—vss. 14-24

Jesus expressed a gentle rebuke to the two walking toward Emmaus, telling them, “How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?” (Luke 24:25,26, *New International Version*) He then spoke to them the truth about himself as revealed in the Scriptures: “And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.”—vs. 27, *NIV*

The main point of Jesus’ words was that all that had happened was already predicted and written down by Moses and the prophets; and these things were now being fulfilled. Jesus wanted them to fully understand God’s plan and to know that although things sometimes look hopeless and doubts may come, they have to look no further than the Scriptures to understand what and why certain events have transpired. In this case, first Christ must suffer; then he is glorified. What a sermon!

Jesus did not reveal himself while on the road with these two disciples, but waited until the more relaxed time of enjoying a meal together. This might parallel our discernment of the Truth. Sometimes when we cannot understand a matter we gather information through Bible studies. Only after it has settled in our hearts, and we have fully digested what we have learned does a greater appreciation come to us. Our Key Verse points out the glorious enlightenment that came to these two disciples as a result of Jesus’ visit with them on the road to Emmaus. ■