

# Family Worship Booklet



God tells us that Ezra read from the book of the Law,  
day after day, and that the people of God  
were filled with joy!

**Friday - Luke 24:13-15 – Two men on the road to Emmaus.**

It's the Lord's Day, the day on which the Lord Jesus had risen from the grave. Two men, two anonymous followers of Jesus, are travelling the seven miles to the village of Emmaus from Jerusalem. As they walked, they are engaged in heated conversation, trying to make sense of all that they had seen and heard in the preceding days. It had been a Passover like no other, from the day that Jesus of Nazareth had entered the city on the back of a donkey accompanied by a tidal wave of enthusiasm expressed in the rousing reception from the crowd through to the astonishing events that had taken place surrounding his death on the cross on the hill of Golgotha; not least the sun standing still, the violent earthquake, and the rising of many people from the dead. You would have to have been there to have believed it all.

As they are talking Jesus comes along side them, and then joins them as they continue their journey from Jerusalem. This is the first appearance that Luke records of the risen Lord, but how did Jesus get to be on this road at this time? We know from what Luke writes to Theophilus in the book of Acts that the Lord appeared to many people in a variety of locations during a forty-day period after his resurrection and prior to his ascension to heaven. Luke also tells us that Jesus did this to prove that he was alive, give commandments to the Apostles through the Holy Spirit, and speak about the Kingdom of God. (Acts 1:3). We have got to remember that Jesus is now in his risen form and is no longer constrained by his physical body.

Interestingly, these men do not recognize Jesus when he first comes into their presence. Not because they couldn't see him but because they were kept from recognizing him. There are times when God does keep things from us, things that we later look back on and think to ourselves, 'why did I not see that at the time?' Sometimes it's our sin that fogs our perspective, but when we are with others, and they fail to see the obvious as we do, we can know that it's a work of the Lord.

As they walk, Jesus, listening to the back and forth of their conversation, asks them what they are talking about. It's not that he is ignorant of their discussion; instead, he is doing what he had so often done during his ministry, asking a question to provide the individual he is addressing with an opportunity to clarify their thinking before engaging with them. Maybe it is an approach we might consider adopting more often, as some of us tend to focus on letting others know what we think before even finding out the issue.

Q1. Who are these men travelling from Jerusalem to Emmaus?

Q2. What are they doing as they walk?

Q3. Why did they not recognize Jesus as soon as he approached them?

## Thursday Luke 24:1-12 – Disbelief reigns.

The women who saw the empty tomb and remembered His words were excited to share the news that Jesus *was* alive and had triumphed over death.

But who were these women privileged to be the first to tell others of the risen Jesus?

Mary Magdalene. The Gospels speak of this Mary as one from whom Jesus had cast out seven demons (Luke 8:2, Mark 16:9). She had also been present at the crucifixion (Mark 15:40 and John 19:25) and all four record the fact that she was here at the scene of the resurrection.

Joanna is mentioned in Luke 8:2 as one of the women who accompanied Jesus and provided for His needs. Luke tells us in Luke 8:3 that she is the wife of Chuza, the steward who helped manage Herod's affairs, so it is probable that she was probably someone who was privileged and had access to financial resources.

Mary, the mother of James is only mentioned here in connection with the resurrection appearances of Jesus. She is identified as the mother of one of the apostles, James, the son of Alphaeus, not James, the brother of John.

Sadly, even though they are known for their integrity, what these women have to say is not taken seriously. Luke says that “their words seemed to them like an idle tale,” ‘them’ being the apostles and other followers of Jesus. (The term ‘idle tale’ was used to describe the babbling of a fevered and insane man.) So, they weren't believed. Why not? Some commentators suggest that the testimony of women, in general, was not deemed authoritative, but still, surely this occasion, given who these women are, it has to do with sheer unbelief. Those in the room cannot fathom how what they are hearing could be true. There is one exception, though, Peter, ‘the denier,’ gets up and runs to the tomb to see for himself if there could be a scintilla of truth in it. What he finds when he gets to the tomb floods his heart with joy. He finds the linen shroud that Jesus' body had been carefully wrapped in lying on the ground. Jesus had risen from the dead just as; Mary Magdalene, Joanna and Mary, the mother of James, had said. There could be no doubt about it; they weren't making it up or imagining it in a grief-stricken state out of a sense of misguided fruitless hope. Jesus had risen from the grave!

Q1. What are the names of the women who were at the tomb?

Q2. What did these women do next?

Q3. Were they believed?

Q4. What did Peter do?

## Monday – notes not written due to unforeseen circumstances

## Tuesday – Luke 24:12 – The Resurrection.

**Correction** – On Friday, I wrote, “Interestingly, only John mentions the 100 lbs of spices (the 75 lbs referred to in John 19:39 was a Roman weight measurement) that Nicodemus brings - yes, the same Nicodemus who had climbed the tree to see Jesus and then became a believer.” **That was incorrect; Zacchaeus climbed the tree to see Jesus, not Nicodemus.**

We come now to the last chapter in the gospel of Luke, and as with the other three gospels, the resurrection of the Lord Jesus is the focus of attention. That is not insignificant, for if you take away the resurrection, then all that proceeds would be irrelevant. If you think that is a bit of an overstatement, read 1 Corinthians 15:12-20. The faith we own by the grace of God, given to us as a gift, stands or falls on the reality of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus from the dead. That’s why Satan, incapable of thwarting it, has placed heretics within the visible Church throughout her history to deny this glorious truth.

On the first day of the week, the day after the Jewish Sabbath, the Day we know as the Christian Sabbath or the Lord’s Day, women go to the tomb. Matthew names these women and Mary Magdalene and the other Mary (Matthew 28:1). This is not a macabre errand they are on, far from it. They will perfume the body of the Lord Jesus and prepare it thoroughly for this, its final resting place. But when they arrive, they find that the stone that had closed the entrance to the tomb had been rolled away. Very unusual. Luke says nothing about the earthquake that occurred as they had made their way to the tomb nor about the angel that had touched the stone and caused it to roll back (Matthew 28:2). When the women enter the tomb, they find that it is empty, the body of Jesus is gone.

None of the gospels tell us how the resurrection happened; no details are given. We are only informed of the aftermath. But what we can say is because Scripture tells us that it happened in the power of the Father (Acts 2:32,33, Romans 6:4, Galatians 1:1), the Son (John 2:18,19, John 10:18) and the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:11, 1 Peter 3:18).

- Q1. How important is the resurrection?
- Q2. Who visited the tomb and why? What did they find?
- Q3. Who was involved in the resurrection of the Lord Jesus?

## Wednesday – Luke 24:1-12 – The women at the tomb.

Once the women, among them Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of Jesus, and Joanna, see that the tomb is empty, and they don’t know what to make of it. This isn’t what they expected to find. Suddenly they realize that they’re not alone. Two figures, angels in the appearance of men, are standing beside them in shining garments. Just as angels had announced the birth of Jesus (Luke 2:8-15) so, now they are here to announce His resurrection. What’s gripping about this is that just as the astonishing news of Jesus’ birth was made to a few humble shepherds, now the announcement of this most astonishing event is announced by angels to a few women in a very low-key manner. No fanfare, no great rousing speeches, nothing, just a straightforward question and a few simple explanatory words.

You get the sense that the angels are surprised at the fact that the women are shocked/perplexed at the fact that Jesus isn’t in the tomb. For the angels, it’s simple – Jesus had said he would rise from the grave, so why are these women shocked by the fact that he has and is, therefore, no longer among the dead? We, because of our sinful nature, are adept at hearing what God says in His Word and then not taking it as fact.

Is there a greater lesson for us in this? Are we consciously aware of the truth that Jesus will only be found where there is resurrection life, in other words where He is worshipped in Spirit and in truth? If we are, then we should both be thankful for the privilege of being participants in such worship each Lord’s Day, and also desirous to give ourselves wholeheartedly to it.

To avoid any possibility of misunderstanding, the angels state clearly that Jesus is not present, but that he has risen from the dead. What a glorious declaration. One that has reverberated throughout the centuries since and brought untold blessings to billions of lives.

The angels then underscore what they have declared by reminding the women of what Jesus himself had said. Words that refreshed their memory and filled their hearts with joy, for Jesus had not somehow survived the ordeal of the cross; he had died and been raised again, and in so doing, become the conqueror of death in the process. This was news they had to share; so hurriedly and with great excitement, I am sure, they return to where the eleven apostles and other followers are gathered to tell them what they have seen and heard.

- Q1. Who are the women who come to the tomb?
- Q2. What do they find, and who speaks with them?
- Q3. On hearing that Jesus has risen, what do the women do?