

Hope for the Life of the World

Thomas Robinson, *Easter – Living in Hope*, April 24, 2011

Luke 24:13-48

¹³ That very day two of them were going to a village named **Emmaus**, about seven miles from Jerusalem, ¹⁴ and they were talking with each other about all these things that had happened.

¹⁵ While they were talking and discussing together, **Jesus himself drew near** and went with them.

¹⁶ But their eyes were kept from recognizing him.

¹⁷ And he said to them, “*What is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk?*” And they stood still, **looking sad**.

¹⁸ Then one of them, named Cleopas, answered him, “*Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know **the things that have happened there in these days?***”

¹⁹ And he said to them, “*What things?*”

And they said to him, “*Concerning **Jesus of Nazareth**, a man who was **a prophet** mighty in deed and word **before God and all the people**, ²⁰ and how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up to be **condemned to death**, and **crucified him**. ²¹ **But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel**. Yes, and besides all this, it is now **the third day** since these things happened. ²² Moreover, some **women of our company** amazed us. They were **at the tomb early in the morning**, ²³ and when they **did not find his body**, they came back saying that they had even seen **a vision of angels**, who said that he was alive.*

²⁴ *Some 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.***”

²⁵ And he said to them, “*O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!* ²⁶ *Was it not necessary that the **Messiah** should suffer these things and enter into his glory?*”

²⁷ And beginning with **Moses** and all the **Prophets**, he interpreted to them **in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself**.

²⁸ So they drew near to the village to which they were going. He acted as if he were going farther, ²⁹ but they urged him strongly, saying, “*Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the **day is now far spent.***” So he went in to stay with them.

³⁰ When he was at table with them, **he took the bread and blessed and broke it** and gave it to them. ³¹ And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he **vanished** from their sight.

³² They said to each other, “*Did not **our hearts burn within us** while he talked to us on the road, while he **opened to us the Scriptures?***” ³³ And they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem.

And they found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, ³⁴ saying, “*The **Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!***”

³⁵ Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he was **known to them in the breaking of the bread**.

³⁶ As they were talking about these things, **Jesus himself stood among them**, and said to them, “*Peace to you!*” ³⁷ But they were **startled and frightened** and **thought they saw a spirit**.

³⁸ And he said to them, “*Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts?* ³⁹ *See **my hands and my feet**, that it is **I myself**. Touch me, and see. For a spirit does not have **flesh and bones** as you see that I have.*” ⁴⁰ And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet.

⁴¹ And while they **still disbelieved for joy** and were **marveling**, he said to them, *“Have you anything here to eat?”* ⁴² They gave him a piece of **broiled fish**, ⁴³ and he took it and ate before them.

⁴⁴ Then he said to them, *“These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.”*

⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, ⁴⁶ and said to them, *“Thus it is written, that the **Messiah should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead**, ⁴⁷ and that **repentance and forgiveness of sins** should be proclaimed in his name to **all nations**, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things.”*

The Morass of Broken Hopes

The week began with such hope and ended so cruelly From *“Blessed is the King...”* to a cross and tomb! How could things have gone so wrong? A new leader? A new movement?

The Gospels show that none of Jesus’ many disciples expected his crucifixion or thought that anything could follow it. They were scared, perplexed, disappointed. Male disciples were in hiding. The women went to the tomb with spices to cover the smell of death.

Then things began to happen. An empty tomb. Women convinced by men they thought were angels. But the apostles didn’t believe it. Peter amazed but not understanding. Jesus had prepared them for the unexpected but had not taught them a structure of doctrine about death and resurrection. It was important that they experience the facts/ the events first and then come to an understanding of the meaning of those events.

Engaging the Mind with New Vision

Jesus challenged the two traveling to Emmaus and the disciples later to think clearly. To let the events open their minds to new understanding. No closed mind. Jesus’ resurrection revealed new meaning/power in his crucifixion. Death was conquered! It illuminated his identity. It challenged long received ways of interpreting scripture. It sparked new Hope.

First the fact/event. Jesus challenges the disciples to accept their own experience. Look!

Touch. Think. Remember. What was happening went against their preconceptions, beliefs. The final physical resurrection. The same person but new, beyond death. More solid, real.

Then the Scriptures. Jesus led them from Genesis to the prophets and writings. They needed to see that they had always read these scriptures one way that shaped their expectations. He opened their minds to notice texts and meanings they had devalued or misread. These events were the exact culmination of the story of Israel leading to a Messiah for the world.

Burning the Heart with New Passion

But something more happened. Along with the illumination of mind, an inner fire was lit.

The two on the road especially noticed it because they had not realized they were talking with Jesus. The words meant that there is hope; the world is profoundly full of God’s grace, power; God has done a new thing, as he promised. Jesus is our living Lord.

Jesus allowed them to recognize him not in the words alone but in the broken bread, that marked a deep personal relationship and echoed *“This is my body, given for you.”* Mind and heart united in the transformation of broken hopes into a vibrant new faith and certainty.

Guiding the Life with New Mission

“You are witnesses!” This doesn’t stop. You live for this. You die for this. This is your future and the hope of all the world renewed. God has unimaginable joy for you. He is risen!