

Jesus' Resurrection and Ascension**Lesson Scope:** [Luke 24](#)*References in brackets pertain to Luke 24 unless otherwise noted***Lesson Focus**

Many of the Jews considered Jesus a great teacher, miracle worker, and maybe even a prophet. But they had seen Him crucified, and now they considered Him dead. The Jewish leaders, though, were uncomfortable with the whole matter. They remembered some of the prophecies Jesus spoke regarding His resurrection. Thus they sealed the tomb and placed a guard around it.

The disciples mourned the loss of their Rabbi and Master and all the hopes that they had had of Jesus' kingdom. The women were bold enough to honor His body with proper burial rites. Yet it appeared that they all forgot the promise of Jesus' resurrection. They were greatly perplexed upon discovery of an empty tomb.

The grave could not hold Christ, for He is the Resurrection and the Life. Because of Christ's death and resurrection, man can have remission of sins and hope of eternal life. The resurrection and ascension are the climax and conclusion of Jesus' earthly ministry. All that He taught is validated by His resurrection and ascension. His death seemed to bring a shadow upon the disciples' belief and understanding about the mission and message of Jesus. However, these scenes stimulated new life into their faith and became the dynamic that propelled them into service. In fact, apart from this experience, they could have had no message to share.

This lesson is foundational to the Christian faith. No other religion serves a leader who voluntarily laid down his life, who by his power rose from the dead, and who was able to overcome gravity to ascend to heaven where he came from. These events prove Jesus' divinity. All mankind was created with earthly limitations, but Jesus, the Creator of all life, is unable to be held in the control of created powers!

Lesson Aim: To show the significance of Jesus' resurrection and ascension.

Theme Verses: [Psalm 16:10-11](#). For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

Lesson Text

"He Is Not Here, but Is Risen"

[Luke 24:1-6](#) Now upon the first *day* of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain *others* with them. ²And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre. ³And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus. ⁴And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments: ⁵And as they were afraid, and bowed down *their* faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead? ⁶He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee,

"He Expounded Unto Them ... the Scriptures"

[Luke 24:13-47](#) And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem *about* threescore furlongs. ¹⁴And they talked together of all these things which had happened. ¹⁵And it came to pass, that, while they communed *together* and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them. ¹⁶But their eyes were holden that they should not know him. ¹⁷And he said unto them, What manner of communications *are* these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad? ¹⁸And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days? ¹⁹And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people: ²⁰And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him. ²¹But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, today is the third day since these things were done. ²²Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre; ²³And when they found not his body,

they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive. ²⁴And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found *it* even so as the women had said: but him they saw not. ²⁵Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: ²⁶Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? ²⁷And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself. ²⁸And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and he made as though he would have gone further. ²⁹But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them. ³⁰And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed *it*, and brake, and gave to them. ³¹And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight. ³²And 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? ³³And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them, ³⁴Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon. ³⁵And they told what things *were done* in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread. ³⁶And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace *be* unto you. ³⁷But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. ³⁸And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? ³⁹Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. ⁴⁰And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them *his* hands and *his* feet. ⁴¹And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? ⁴²And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. ⁴³And he took *it*, and did eat before them. ⁴⁴And he said unto them, These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning me. ⁴⁵Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, ⁴⁶And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: ⁴⁷And that re-

penitance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

"He Was Parted From Them"

Luke 24:50-53 And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. ⁵¹And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. ⁵²And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy: ⁵³And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen.

Questions for Study

"He Is Not Here, but Is Risen"

1. In what ways did the women display weakness of faith? the disciples?
2. From the four Gospels, list some proofs of the resurrection.
3. Why is the resurrection foundational to the Gospel message?

"He Expounded Unto Them ... the Scriptures"

4. Why is the resurrection so perplexing to human reasoning?
5. How do we know Jesus had the same physical body after His resurrection? How was it different?

"He Was Parted From Them"

6. What commission did Jesus give to His disciples before His ascension?
7. What blessings do we have today because of the ascension?
8. What characterizes those who are watching for the Lord's return?

Analyzing the Passage

The women came to embalm Jesus' body with spices early on the first day of the week (24:1). But they found an empty tomb! Two heavenly messengers reminded them of Jesus' words of His promised resurrection (24:6). This occurrence on the first day of the week marked the beginning of a new dispensation. The old was now past. Thus the first day of the week became the day of worship and rest for the early church.

The resurrection was possible because of divine power. During an earthquake, an angel rolled back the stone (Matthew 28:2). Only by divine power can death be reversed.

Jesus "expounded" (24:27) to the two on the way to Emmaus of all that

the prophets had to say of the Messiah. "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things?" (24:26). The provision of salvation was not possible except by voluntary suffering and the shedding of blood.

When the two disciples discovered that their visitor was Jesus (24:31), they immediately returned seven miles to Jerusalem to tell the other disciples. When they arrived, they were told that Jesus had revealed Himself to Peter (24:34). Jesus then appeared in their midst before them all. After the evidence proved His resurrection, Jesus further taught them the meaning of all the astonishing events that had occurred the past few days (24:44-45).

Principles and Applications

"He Is Not Here, but Is Risen"

1. The resurrection began a new dispensation from the Old to the New (24:1). Around the ninth hour of the day when Jesus hung on the cross, He cried, "It is finished." He then bowed His head and died. The resurrection proved this was not the end of His life. Instead, His cry revealed the end of His earthly work as well as the fulfillment of the Old Covenant. The Old Covenant specifically focused on the children of Israel. Now His resurrection began a New Covenant between God and His people. Every person can enter this New Covenant, male or female, bond or free, Jew or Gentile.

2. The resurrection was a fulfillment of Jesus' message concerning Himself (24:2-6). Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6). His message of truth and life appeared to be proven false at His death. But Jesus also prophesied He would rise again the third day. And so He did! His words were not some made-up fable, but He who had power over death also has power to keep His word.

3. The resurrection proves that Jesus is the essence of Life (24:5). Death is the result of sin. Jesus, in rising from the dead, proved His divinity and His power over the curse of death. "In him was life; and the life was the light of men" (John 1:4). Death could not conquer Him who is Life! All who accept the provisions of salvation will be given eternal life.

"He Expounded Unto Them ... the Scriptures"

4. The resurrection brought perplexity to human reasoning (24:13-16). Everyone who witnessed the crucifixion of Jesus knew He had died.

They had seen Him pierced in His side. The reports of an empty tomb conflicted with the evidence of His burial and His tomb being guarded. It just could not be true. Yet Jesus' resurrection was an act of the divine. Therefore, it is beyond the capabilities of humans to reason out and must be accepted by faith.

5. The resurrection completed the fulfillment of numerous Old Testament Scriptures (24:25-27). The prophecies regarding Jesus clearly indicated that He would suffer and die (Isaiah 53). It was the only way for Jesus to be glorified (1 Peter 1:11). Psalm 16:10 foretold that His body would not see corruption. The justice of God demanded the shedding of blood for sin. Jesus became the sinless sacrifice by His death, and the living Saviour by His resurrection.

6. The resurrection brings peace to troubled hearts (24:36-38). The disciples were fearfully huddled together in a room, likely trying to make sense of the events as well as the reports of an empty tomb. Though Jesus' sudden presence frightened them, He brought great joy and peace to the disciples and calmed their fears. Today, Jesus' presence within man's heart brings peace and joy.

7. The resurrection is the foundation of the Gospel message (24:46-47). Life in Christ is only possible because Christ is alive forever! "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins" (1 Corinthians 15:17). Without the resurrection of our Saviour, no one could overcome the power of sin and of death. All would be condemned to die. "But now is Christ risen from the dead.... In Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Corinthians 15:20-22).

"He Was Parted From Them"

8. The ascension brought divine blessing on the followers of Christ (24:50). Jesus promised His disciples that when He would return to His Father, He would send them power by the Holy Spirit (24:49). After His ascension, the Holy Spirit came ten days later at Pentecost. The Holy Spirit's presence was integral for guiding the apostles in the formation of the church and remains needful for the continuation of church life today.

9. The ascension took Jesus back to heaven (24:51). In returning to heaven, Jesus took His place at the right hand of the throne of God. He presently is interceding on our behalf. It is through Him that we pray to the Father. Jesus also promised His disciples that He would return to

heaven to prepare a place for them (John 14:3).

10. The ascension inspires meaningful worship and provides true joy (24:52-53). Our worship today surrounds the fact of Jesus' love for us in providing salvation. He gives us power for victory. His great sacrifice calls for our very best in dedication and service. Let us be faithful today so we are prepared to join the unnumbered multitudes in heaven praising Him forever. "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing" (Revelation 5:12).

Important Teachings

1. The resurrection began a new dispensation from the Old to the New (24:1).
2. The resurrection was a fulfillment of Jesus' message concerning Himself (24:2-6).
3. The resurrection proves that Jesus is the essence of Life (24:5).
4. The resurrection brought perplexity to human reasoning (24:13-16).
5. The resurrection completed the fulfillment of numerous Old Testament Scriptures (24:25-27).
6. The resurrection brings peace to troubled hearts (24:36-38).
7. The resurrection is the foundation of the Gospel message (24:46-47).
8. The ascension brought divine blessing on the followers of Christ (24:50).
9. The ascension took Jesus back to heaven (24:51).
10. The ascension inspires meaningful worship and provides true joy (24:52-53).

Answers to Questions

1. In what ways did the women display weakness of faith, the disciples? The women went to the tomb to embalm the body of Jesus with spices. It did not occur to them that Jesus would not be there. The disciples, who were hiding in fear, would not believe the testimony of the women. Peter needed proof, so he checked the tomb and corroborated the words of the women, but he was still puzzled as to the meaning of it. When Jesus finally did appear to them, they mistook Him for a spirit and only when Jesus showed them His injured body could they believe He rose from the dead.

2. From the four Gospels, list some proofs of the resurrection.

The greatest proof was the empty tomb along with the neatly folded cloth used to wrap Jesus' body. Men could not have rolled away the sealed stone, removed and folded the cloth enshrouded on Jesus' body, and stole His body while the soldiers stood guard. The empty tomb was discovered by the women and verified by the disciples. The soldiers were given a bribe to keep silent about the affair. Jesus also revealed Himself to various women and disciples in the days following.

3. Why is the resurrection foundational to the Gospel message?

Though Jesus' death provides the shed blood needed for the remission of sins, it is His resurrection that overcame the curse of sin, which is death. The resurrection provides power to live in victory over sin. Without Jesus' resurrection, all men would be destined to die without hope.

4. Why is the resurrection so perplexing to human reasoning?

No man has ever had the power to overcome his own death. Though some could believe a spirit cannot be bound by death, Jesus had lived as a man, so it could not seem possible that He had power over His own death. Without understanding and believing the divinity of Christ, the resurrection becomes a mere story. Only with spiritual perception and faith can the resurrection be understood.

5. How do we know Jesus had the same physical body after His resurrection? How was it different?

The marks of the brutality He faced during His suffering and death were still visible. In asking for food, He still had physical needs that needed to be met.

It was different, as He had the ability to appear and disappear at will.

6. What commission did Jesus give to His disciples before His ascension?

Jesus told them they would become His apostles who would go throughout the whole world, proclaiming the Good News of the Gospel. Their work was to begin the formation of the church of Jesus on earth. First, they were to go to Jerusalem to wait for the promise of the Father, the Holy Spirit.

7. What blessings do we have today because of the ascension?

Because of Jesus' promise of the Comforter after His ascension, we can experience the presence of the Holy Spirit in our hearts today. In as-

ending to heaven, Jesus took His place at the right hand of the Father. His present work is one of a high priest, interceding for His people. His presence there allows us to "come boldly to the throne of grace." His ascension was accomplished with the promise to prepare a place for His followers and to come again to claim His own.

8. What characterizes those who are watching for the Lord's return?

Those looking for the return of Christ will be ones who are more interested in spiritual values and beliefs than in material things. They will be characterized by their nonresistance and returning evil with good. They will be interested in the spiritual welfare of those who are lost as well as each other within the church. They will make future plans according to the will of God and with the imminence of the return of Christ in focus. Finally, they will live and walk carefully so they are prepared to "meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thessalonians 4:17)

Summarizing the Lesson

"But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you" (Romans 8:11). The resurrection makes it possible for all to receive eternal life. Believing in Christ will prepare us for Jesus' return to claim His bride, the church. Only those who have prepared for the coming of the Bridegroom will be ready to enter into the marriage supper of the Lamb. Keep your lamp trimmed and burning!

Research Guide

1. Psalm 16:10 and Psalm 68:18 are regarded as prophecies related to Jesus' resurrection and ascension.
2. Read the parallel passages in Matthew 28; Mark 16; John 20; and Acts 1 for more insight.