

Dispelling Doubts”

April 27, 2025

Luke 24:33-45

I. Introduction

Denying the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ has always been a major tactic used by Satan and his emissaries in their attack on God and Scripture—both in Luke’s day as well as in ours. Everyone understands that if Jesus didn’t rise from the dead, neither His words nor the rest of Scripture can be believed. [1 Corinthians 15:17](#) says, “If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins.” Jesus predicted His resurrection; all four Gospels record Him saying so, e.g., [Matthew 12:38-40](#); [Mark 10:32-34](#); [Luke 18:31-33](#); [John 2:18-22](#). Later, the Apostles proclaimed it; [Acts 4:33](#) says, “With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus.” If Jesus did not rise from the dead, then the Old Testament, Jesus’ own claims, and the Apostle’s teachings were false, and Christianity collapses as a lie. To help dispel doubts about Jesus’ resurrection, Luke, a physician and historian, recorded 4 of the 9 appearances of Jesus after His resurrection.

As we come to today’s Scripture, it was the evening of Resurrection Sunday—Easter. Jesus had already appeared at least 4 different times on this 1st day of the week—He had appeared to Mary Magdalene ([John 20:11-18](#)), to the other women in the Garden ([Matthew 28:9-10](#)), to Peter ([Luke 24:34](#)), and to the 2 Emmaus disciples ([Luke 24:13-32](#)). Now to dispel the doubts of His disciples, Jesus appeared to those who were in hiding. John recorded this same appearance and a similar one a week later, [turn to John 20:19-29](#).

So many things had happened that day and so much was unexplained that ten of the Apostles, plus other disciples met together that evening and shared their experiences with one another. Because they were frightened, they hid in a room with locked doors. The disciples were in hiding “for fear of the Jews,” expecting any minute that the temple police would arrive to end this whole movement by arresting all of them. Jesus had warned them in [John 15:20](#), “No servant is greater than his master. If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also.” The authorities had executed their Master and so the disciples feared the same thing would happen to them.

II. Jesus' Appearance

A. The Scene In the first few verses, Luke set the scene. After Jesus broke the bread at the beginning of the meal in Emmaus, the eyes of Cleopas and the other disciple “were opened and they recognized Him and He disappeared from their sight” (Luke 24:30-31). So, “they got up and returned at once to Jerusalem.” Arriving at the secret meeting place in Jerusalem, they “found the Eleven and those with them, assembled together.” “The Eleven” stood for the 11 Apostles, just as “the twelve” had done before the betrayal and death of Judas Iscariot. When they arrived, the room must have been filled with excitement as Mary Magdalene, the other women, and Peter told their stories of having seen Jesus Christ. “Then the two told what had happened on the way, and how Jesus was recognized by them when he broke the bread.”

B. Jesus' Arrival But as they were telling their story, suddenly something happened that was far more startling than the arrival of the temple police; “While they were still talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them.” Jesus suddenly appeared among them. He immediately “said to them, ‘Shalom--Peace be with you,’” not only because it was a common greeting, but also, they were “startled and frightened.”

After what they had just been hearing, one might expect the disciples to heave a sigh of relief; what they had heard was true and then perhaps, even sing a hymn of praise, or fall down in worship like Thomas did a week later when he said, “My Lord and my God!” But they were afraid because they thought “they saw a ghost or a spirit.” It wasn’t what Jesus looked like that scared them—Mary had mistaken Him for the gardener (John 20:15); the two disciples thought He was just another traveler on the road to Emmaus, what startled them was His sudden, supernatural appearance. Since no human being could suddenly materialize out of nowhere in a locked room, they panicked and thought they were seeing a ghost. Mark 16:14 gives a little insight into the reason for their response, Jesus “rebuked them for their lack of faith and their stubborn refusal to believe those who had seen him after he had risen.” They were unable to believe—in their minds it was just too good to be true—things like this just don’t happen in real life.

C. Jesus gave physical proof Jesus’ rhetorical questions, “Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds?” served as another mild rebuke to the frightened disciples. There was no reason for them to panic. Trying to calm them down, Jesus had greeted them with the common greeting of the day: “Shalom”—

“Peace be with you.” John’s Gospel says that Jesus said it again later on when the disciples were more attentive and not quite so scared out of their wits. The “God of peace” had raised Jesus from the dead and there was nothing to fear (Hebrews 13:20-21). Then to help give them peace and to reassure them that He was not a ghost or a spirit, Jesus gave 3 proofs of His bodily resurrection.

First, He showed them His hands and feet so that they could examine them. To Thomas, a week later, He even offered the wound in His side. **Second**, He invited them to touch His body to see that it was flesh and bones. Jesus’ body was a real, physical body which could be seen, could speak, and could be touched. But “They still did not believe it because of joy and amazement.” This was really too good to be true. Like Jacob when he got the news that Joseph was alive in Gen. 45:26-28 or those who had prayed for Peter’s release from prison in Acts 12:12-16, the disciples were torn between hope and skepticism. **Finally**, seeing that they were not fully convinced, Jesus offered further proof; “He asked them, ‘Do you have anything here to eat?’” He took “a piece of broiled fish...and ate it in their presence.”

We can’t explain how Jesus suddenly appeared among the disciples, or how a human body can be solid flesh and bones and pass-through closed doors, or how it can be glorified and still carry the marks of the cross. Paul wrote about a similar question, turn to 1 Corinthians 15:35-44. 1 John 3:2 puts it this way: “Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him.” Although we may not understand, we can be sure that as children of God, we will have a similar body when we are raised into eternal life with Christ.

D. Jesus gave Scriptural proof Once the disciples were convinced that Jesus was real flesh and blood, He then reminded them of Scriptural proof for His life and resurrection. Just as He had done with the 2 disciples on the road to Emmaus, Jesus reminded the disciples gathered in that locked room of what the Old Testament said about the Messiah. For the Jews, their Bible; our Old Testament is called the “*Torah, Nevi'im, and Kotevim*,” i.e., the Law, the Prophets, and Writings. The Law or the “Law of Moses” is the Pentateuch—Genesis through Deuteronomy; the “Prophets” include the historical books Joshua thru 2 Kings and the major and minor prophets beginning with Isaiah and ending with Malachi; the “Psalms” or the Writings are made up of Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, 1 & 2 Chronicles, Ezra,

Nehemiah, Esther, Ruth, and Daniel. In other words, Jesus used the entire Old Testament in His Scriptural proofs for the disciples.

Since the disciples had been taught incorrectly by the rabbis regarding the Messiah, Jesus had to reteach them the proper interpretations. Just like on the road to Emmaus, “He opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures.” He explained things so that they could understand; He was able to take all they had seen and heard and experienced and relate it to Old Testament prophesy. Gen. 12:1-3 promised that the Messiah would come through the line of Abraham; Gen. 49:10 said He would be of the tribe of Judah; 2 Sam. 7:16 added that He would be of the line of David. Isaiah 7:14 predicted that He would be born of a virgin; Micah 5:2 that He would be born in Bethlehem. Psalm 41:9 said He would be betrayed by a close, trusted friend. Isaiah 50:6 and Micah 5:1 say that He would be beaten, spit on, and have His beard pulled out. Psalm 22 said that soldiers would gamble for His clothing and that He would be crucified. Zech. 12:10 said that He would be pierced. Psalm 16:8-11 predicted that He would rise from the dead. To dispel their doubts, Jesus may have turned to Isaiah 53 which included many details—turn to Isaiah 53:1-12.

1. Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? The “arm of the Lord” was Jesus Christ; the power & message of God were seen in Jesus’ miracles and teachings.
2. He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. Jesus came as a baby, a tender shoot. He didn’t suddenly appear on the scene as an adult man. Just like a plant growing in a place where it isn’t expected, a place where the ground isn’t prepared or even watered—dry ground; Jesus’ appearance was unexpected by Israel. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. Jesus was born in a manger to a poor, humble family. To outward appearances there was nothing special about Him—there was no halo around His head.
3. He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. He wasn’t recognized. Many had the same opinion as Nathaniel did in John 2:46: “Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?” Later, at the end of His ministry, He was betrayed by Judas and disowned by Peter. The rest of the disciples ran away that night in the Garden of Gethsemane.
4. Surely, he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. He took on the sins of the world. He healed others but when trouble came His way, they cried, “Crucify Him!” As He hung on the cross, others screamed, “You saved others, save yourself!”

5. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. *Physically on the cross and emotionally, carrying the sins of the world, He was crushed—punished—so that we might be saved from an eternity in hell.*
6. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. *This is why, as He hung on the cross, He prayed, “My God. My God, why have you forsaken me?” When He took on the sins of the world, God the Father turned His back on Him.*
7. He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. *The Jewish leaders questioned and beat Him. Pilate and the soldiers mistreated Him, but He said nothing; He didn’t retaliate.*
8. By oppression and judgment, he was taken away. *Oppression by the Jews, judgment by the Romans led to His crucifixion. And who can speak of his descendants? For he was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of my people, he was stricken. He had no earthly descendants because of His untimely death. Romans 5:8 says, “While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”*
9. He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth. *Although He was sinless, He was crucified with 2 criminals. But following His death, He was buried in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea one of the 3 richest men in Jerusalem at that time.*
10. Yet it was the LORD's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the LORD makes his life a guilt offering, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand. *Many will be saved from hell through Jesus’ sacrifice for sin. This was God’s will from before time began.*
11. After the suffering of his soul, he will see the light of life and be satisfied; by his knowledge, my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities. *After His agony and death on the cross for the world’s sins, He rose to new life. Jesus was the 1st fruit of those rising from the dead, but through faith in Him others will follow. “For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” (John 3:16)*
12. Therefore, I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many and made intercession for the transgressors. *As Philippians 2:9-11 says, “Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”*

III. Conclusion

Jesus knew that in 40 days He was going to ascend back to heaven and 10 days later the Holy Spirit would come to empower Christians. Then believers were going to be sent into the world to make disciples. They were going to be sent to share their own personal experiences, but, more importantly, they were to share the truths of the Word of God. With this in mind, they (and we today) had to know that the Old Testament teachings were proof that the Christ of the Gospels didn't invent Himself, nor was He the invention of some people in the 1st century. Jesus Christ is the absolute fulfillment of divine prophecies that had been recorded in the Bible. Unlike many in the early days of the church, we cannot touch and feel the Lord Jesus, but we can rest our faith on the Word of God—turn to 1 John 1:1-5. The lives and horrific deaths of the early Christians are undeniable proof of their belief in what they had seen and believed.

In the introduction to his Gospel, Luke wrote in Luke 1:3-4, “Since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, I too decided to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.” Today's world wants to destroy everything “Christian.” We need to remember that Jesus Christ isn't someone invented years ago; He really is the Son of God who, as prophesied hundreds of years earlier, came to die for the sins of the world to bring peace with God (Rom. 5:1) and the peace of God (Phil. 4:6-7). Jesus is real and He has risen from the dead.

C.S. Lewis summed it all up this way: “*A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic—on a level with the man who says he is a poached egg—or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God; or else a madman or something worse. You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit at Him and kill Him as a demon; or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.*” “Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God” (John 1:12).