

International Bible Lessons Commentary

Luke 24:36-53

International Bible Lessons
Sunday, April 7, 2013
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The **[International Bible Lesson](#)** (*Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series*) for **Sunday, April 7, 2013**, is from **Luke 24:36-53**. **Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further** follow the verse-by-verse *International Bible Lessons Commentary* (formerly, *Bible Lesson Forum*) below. **Study Hints for Thinking Further** discuss the five questions below to help with class preparation and in conducting class discussion; these hints are available on the **[International Bible Lessons Commentary](#)** website. For additional **International Bible Lesson Commentaries**, see the complete and comprehensive **[International Bible Lessons Commentary Index](#)**. The weekly **[International Bible Lesson](#)** is posted each Saturday before the lesson is scheduled to be taught at <http://InternationalBibleLessons.org> and in **[The Oklahoman](#)** newspaper.

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(Luke 24:36) While they were talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you.”

While the followers of Jesus were talking about His post-resurrection visit with the two on the road to Emmaus, Jesus startled them when He suddenly appeared in their midst. He had “caught them talking about him;” so, the time was perfect for Him to affirm before them what the eye witnesses had said about seeing him risen from the dead. He confirmed everything that had been said about him.

(Luke 24:37) They were startled and terrified, and thought that they were seeing a ghost.

For centuries, many people have believed in ghosts (the departed souls or spirits of those who have died – many tragically or in battle). In Deuteronomy (chapter 18:10, 11; see also 15), God forbids people from speaking to ghosts or spirits (or trying to speak to ghosts or spirits—demons can impersonate the ghost of a dead person). If Jesus were a ghost, the disciples would have broken the law of God by speaking to him, and Jesus would have broken God’s law by appearing to them. The Bible does not deny the existence of ghosts, but that does not mean that ghosts exist. Some people reason that ghosts are actually demonic spirits, because in Jesus’ parables (see Luke 16:19-31) He taught that no one can come back from the dead and speak to us. Jesus spoke a word of peace to them to quiet their fears of the unknown or their fears of possible judgment.

(Luke 24:38) He said to them, “Why are you frightened, and why do doubts arise in your hearts?”

Jesus asked them why they were frightened of him. In the use of questions, Jesus wanted His listeners to examine themselves in an effort to discover the reasons for their thinking or behavior. He wanted them to examine why they had doubts, because they should have accepted the testimony of their eyewitnesses. Instead, in their hearts or by their choices, they doubted what good and reasonable witnesses had seen and reported to them.

(Luke 24:39) Look at my hands and my feet; see that it is I myself. Touch me and see; for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.”

Jesus appeared to them in order to remove all of their doubts and fears. Since He lived in a glorified and resurrected human body, and since He had not changed His love for them and His willingness to forgive them when they sinned and repented, He appeared to them in human flesh and bones, though glorified. Jesus now sits in glorified human flesh and bones at the right hand of God, and we await His return in His glorified human body as visible King of kings.

(Luke 24:40) And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet.

Whereas Jesus had told Mary not to touch or embrace him, because He had not yet ascended to His Father, in this appearance He invites them to touch him and see the marks of the nails that had pierced His hands and feet. Jesus went to great efforts to show them that He was a real person and not a spirit without a body.

(Luke 24:41) While in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering, he said to them, “Have you anything here to eat?”

Disembodied spirits cannot eat. Jesus did not need to eat at that time; He asked for the food to prove that He had a real human body, though changed because He could appear or disappear anywhere in an instant even in a room with locked doors. Jesus did not ask for anything to drink because he had told them at the Last Supper that he would not drink wine again until He returned.

(Luke 24:42) They gave him a piece of broiled fish,

Fish was the most common and least expensive food to eat. Jesus multiplied five fish miraculously and fed fish to a crowd of more than 5000. Jesus cooked fish and fed His disciples after His resurrection. Some of His disciples were fishermen. Jesus commanded His disciples to fish for people, and the Greek name for fish has five letters that represent “Jesus Christ God’s Son Savior.”

(Luke 24:43) and he took it and ate in their presence.

A ghost or spirit may not be able to hold a physical object. To prove that He had a real resurrected physical body, though glorified, Jesus could hold the fish with His hands, chew it with His teeth, and swallow the fish. Though this may seem trivial or obvious to us today, Jesus was trying to remove all doubts from His disciples so they would choose to believe in their hearts that Jesus had indeed risen from the dead.

(Luke 24:44) 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, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.”

Just as Jesus had told the two on the road to Emmaus, He told these disciples that He had come to fulfill the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms (or all the Scriptures). For further proof that He had risen from the dead, Jesus referred them to what He had told them previously during His public ministry. He was the same person who had done what He had said; nothing had happened to him that He had not expected and had foretold. In addition, all that had happened to him the Hebrew Scriptures had foretold. Everything had happened according to God’s perfect plan.

(Luke 24:45) Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures,

Jesus physical appearance; His previous teaching; the Bible’s predictions; all confirmed that Jesus was the Messiah that God had promised to send and He had risen from the dead. Jesus personally opened their minds so they could rightly interpret the Bible. Later, Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to the disciples and all who believe in him so all believers can understand the Bible. The Holy Spirit still helps believers understand the Bible today.

(Luke 24:46) and he said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day,

Jesus helped them see this truth so they would have both His appearances and the Scriptures as two types of witnesses to His resurrection and the perfect timing of His resurrection, which would not have been foretold and accomplished without the action and perfect timing of God. Over time, the Holy Spirit that Jesus sent to them helped them understand more and more about the intention and meaning of His death.

(Luke 24:47) and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.

Jesus taught that repentance (turning from the practice of all known sins as

condemned in the Bible or turning from self-centeredness to Christ-centeredness) and God's forgiveness of sins was to be proclaimed in His name: "forgiveness of sins" included our forgiving others as God has forgiven us. The preaching in Jesus' name to all people is necessary, and His grace and power are necessary for repentance and forgiveness of sins.

(Luke 24:48) You are witnesses of these things.

These human witnesses to these events surrounding the suffering and death and resurrection of Jesus, and the Scriptures are two witnesses that confirm the actual facts of these events. Today, the Scriptures and the life changing new birth that believers experience through faith in Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit are two witnesses to unbelievers of the truth of the Christian faith.

(Luke 24:49) And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high."

God the Father promised to them that they would receive the Holy Spirit. Jesus the Messiah is the Son of God, who sends the Holy Spirit into believers. The Holy Spirit is the "power from on high," Who helps believers witness for Jesus Christ. He opens the minds of believers so they can witness persuasively, and He opens the minds of unbelievers so they can think clearly, respond to the truth, and believe in Him.

(Luke 24:50) Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them.

Jesus walked with them as He walked with the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. This short walk enabled the disciples to believe more strongly that Jesus had a resurrected and divinely empowered body that had been crucified and buried. He removed all doubts during His walk, and He was available to them to answer any further questions they might have thought to ask on the way. Their conversations gave them further proof that Jesus indeed was alive.

(Luke 24:51) While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven.

Jesus was not only blessing them by giving them parting words of benediction; rather, He was blessing them by His very presence in their midst and by the words He had spoken during all this time. His appearance was not brief. He needed to explain to them what He was returning to heaven to do, and that they should not expect him to appear anymore to them in ways that they had recently experienced. The next step for them was to wait until they received the promised Holy Spirit; then, they would be His witnesses to all people beginning in Jerusalem.

(Luke 24:52) And they worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy;

They worshiped Jesus because they knew conclusively that Jesus was the divine Son of God, who was worthy of their worship. By worshiping Jesus, they were not breaking the commands of God in the Scriptures to worship God alone. The resurrection and the teaching of Jesus and worshiping Jesus brought them great joy, and led to their obeying Jesus by returning to Jerusalem.

(Luke 24:53) and they were continually in the temple blessing God.

The disciples of Jesus the Messiah were Jews, who practiced their faith. They spent almost all of their time in the Temple of God that Jesus had cleansed and had called His Father's house of prayer. They worshiped God, blessed God, and made God happy by all they said and did. Perhaps they also expected to receive the promised Holy Spirit in the Temple. Of course, they received the Holy Spirit unexpectedly when they were in the upper room.

Five Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further

1. When Jesus appeared to His disciples, He said, "Peace be with you." Why did He say that and what did He mean?
2. Why would it be important for Jesus to prove to them that He was not a ghost?
3. Why do you think God the Father and Jesus decided to leave the marks of His crucifixion on His hands and feet rather than remove these scars when they glorified His resurrected human body?
4. Why did Jesus ask His disciples for fish to eat but did not ask for anything to drink?
5. From these verses, what are all followers of Jesus supposed to tell others about Jesus, and why is this Good News?

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