

**CHRIST SHOULD SUFFER AND ON THE THIRD DAY RISE FROM THE DEAD–Biblical commentary by
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Luke 24, 35-48

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

As they were saying this, Jesus himself stood among them. But they were startled and frightened, and supposed that they saw a spirit. And he said to them, “Why are you troubled, and why do questionings rise in your hearts? See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me, and see; for a spirit has not flesh and bones as you see that I have.” And while they still disbelieved for joy, and wondered, he said to them, “Have you anything here to eat?” They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate before them.

Then he said to them, “These are my words which 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.” Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things.

If none of the evangelists describes the moment of the Jesus' resurrection, all, in different ways, indicate to us how the communities of all times can experience the risen Christ. Today's reading is from Luke's gospel chapter 24, 35-48

It is known as the the episode of the disciples of Emmaus. In this passage, there are five important distinct moments indicating valuable guidance for the community of believers of all times. The first is that Jesus was recognized at the moment of the breaking of the bread. It is an allusion to the Eucharist where Jesus, the son of God, becomes bread, food of life, when received , one is able to become bread one selve, being the food of life, breaking their lives for others, they become sons of the same God.

In this dynamic, received and communicated love, one experiences the resurrection of Christ. Therefore the first indication: Christ is recognized in the breaking of the bread.

The second is when Jesus manifests himself, and this is a characteristic of all the evangelists, he is always in the middle. Jesus does not put himself on high, nor in front, that would have created a hierarchy amongst those near to him. Jesus puts himself in the middle with all the disciples around him. There is an equal

relationship with him. In the middle, Jesus does not attract attention to himself, nor does he absorb the energy of his disciples, but communicates his energy to them and leads them towards to what is their assignment.

And when Jesus manifests himself, he does not wish peace, he does not say “peace be with you”, but gives peace, representing that which is needed for the full happiness of humanity. In this passage, the disciples are bewildered because for them Jesus is dead and they cannot explain how they find him alive, so Jesus wants them to understand that he is not a spirit, but a person that has the divine condition.

The divine condition does not cancel the physicality of the person, but expands and transforms it. It is in this sense that St. Paul in the first letter to the Corinthians (1. ch.15, v. 44) says: “...sown as an animal body, it is raised as a spiritual body”.

To understand what is about to happen the evangelist writes this strange expression. “*These are my words which I spoke to you, while I was still with you,*” How could this be? “*--when I was still with you*” He is here at this moment, but now in a different way, so the possibility of the experience of the risen Christ for the believers of all time, is naturally in a different way.

Then Jesus opens the mind to the scriptures. How does Jesus do this? He had done this at Emmaus with the disciples to help them understand. The scriptures are read with the same spirit with which they were written, that is the love of God for humanity. So to understand the scriptures an absolute value must be put in their own lives the absolute love of God for humanity.

This makes the scriptures understood. This is why the evangelist says: “*... he opened their minds to understand the scriptures*”.

So in the end, Jesus does not absorb the disciples for himself, nor entices them, but communicates his strength and forces them to go forward. And here is the final mandate. Sending all the population, meaning the gentiles, *to preach conversion*, the change in one’s life. The conversion in the gospels means the radical change in one’s life, one’s own conduct, in the scale of values, not live for oneself, one’s own needs, but for the good and needs of others.

This attitude of a radical break with one’s past and the orientation of one’s own life for the good of others results in *the forgiveness of sins*. Jesus says, “*Conversion for the forgiveness of sins*”, meaning the cancelation of sins, not as it has been translated “*and that repentance and forgiveness of sins*”

Jesus adds with a polemic note “*.. beginning from Jerusalem*”. The evangelist uses the sacred term of Jerusalem, to indicate the religious institution. The religious institution for Jesus, Jerusalem is associated to the gentiles. They also have need of conversion to obtain the forgiveness of sins.