

*"They shall
mount up...*

ON EAGLES' WINGS

*... with wings
as eagles."
Isaiah 40:31*



AERY NUGGETS

The Road to Emmaus

Luke 24:13-35

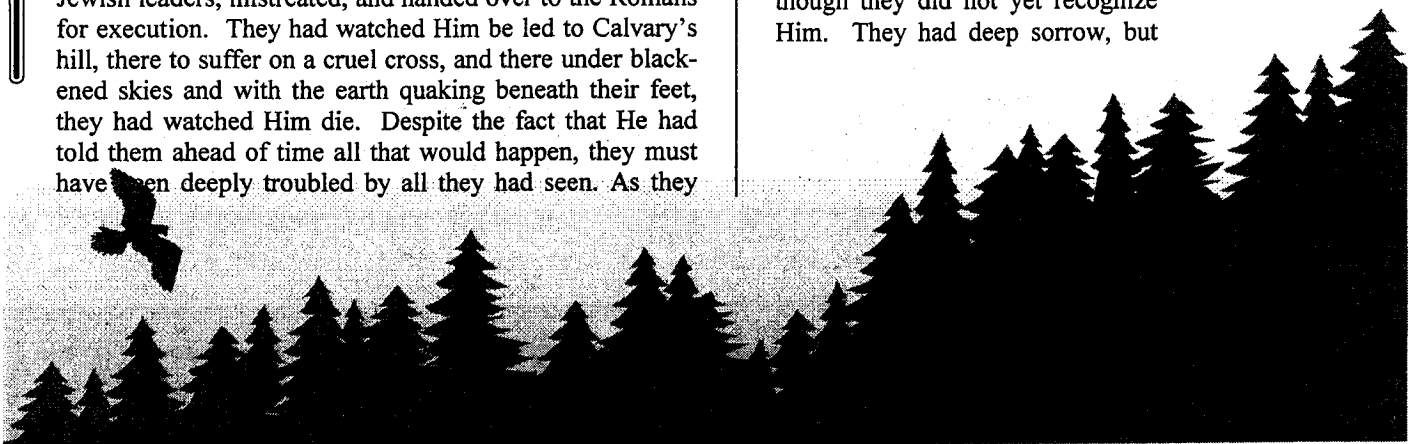
Steven J. Faulkner

As we open this beautiful portion, we find two of the Lord's disciples walking together on the road leading from Jerusalem to the village of Emmaus, a journey of 7 or 8 miles. Cleopas was the name of one of the two travelers, and the name of the other is not given. As these two companions walked along, they were deep in conversation; they were perplexed, and their hearts were very heavy. Much had happened in Jerusalem in the past few days, and these events now occupied all their thoughts. They were disciples of Jesus; and like many who had thronged about Jesus as He walked before the people in Galilee, they had heard His wonderful words—words full of love and grace, and authority and wisdom. These disciples had seen His mighty works—He had fed 5000 people with only five loaves of bread and a couple fishes, and He had calmed the sea. He had healed the sick and had even raised the dead. But as His disciples, they had come also to know Him personally and had come to love Him. They believed Him to be the Messiah, the hope for the redemption of Israel. But then in the past week, they had seen Him arrested by the Jewish leaders, mistreated, and handed over to the Romans for execution. They had watched Him be led to Calvary's hill, there to suffer on a cruel cross, and there under blackened skies and with the earth quaking beneath their feet, they had watched Him die. Despite the fact that He had told them ahead of time all that would happen, they must have been deeply troubled by all they had seen. As they

watched their Lord be laid in the tomb, all their hopes must have seemed to be crumbling. Then on this first day of the week, the third day since these events had occurred, these disciples awoke to reports of an empty tomb and of visions of angels, and reports that this One that they loved so much had risen from the dead. Those reports must have been so hard to believe—they had seen Him die and be laid in the tomb. Small wonder that the disciples were so perplexed and absorbed in thought and conversation as they walked along.

It was at just this time that the Lord Himself came to them, but their eyes were "holden" and they did not recognize Him. Being so absorbed, I imagine they scarcely noticed this stranger as He came among them on the road. But isn't it just like the Lord to draw near His own when in times of trouble and deep sorrow? This is the same Lord Jesus who had walked with His disciples in Galilee, who had rebuked the storm when they had been frightened, and who had washed their feet. He was risen, but He still loved His own individually and hearkened to them in their time of sorrow seeking to comfort them. He is the same today as well! He knows our troubles and our burdens, and He comes to us at just such times to comfort and encourage. "Though in glory I am seated, e'en the softest word I hear; and the voice of little children, soundeth sweetly in Mine ear."

The Lord came among these two and began to draw them out, though they did not yet recognize Him. They had deep sorrow, but



soon this sorrow was to be turned to great joy! In verse 17 we read, "What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another as ye walk and are sad?" The Lord knew very well the sorrows of their hearts, but as yet, these two disciples did not seem to be looking to Him for the answers. Do we ever react that way? When faced with problems and sorrows that we don't understand, do we talk to others instead of the Lord about those things? At His prompting, they began to reveal their thoughts, which of course He was quite aware of already—thoughts of Him and all that had happened. They poured out their broken hearts about their Lord Jesus, the events that had occurred, and the reports of the empty tomb. While their hearts still ached, the Lord Himself began to minister to them by opening up His word to them. We read in verse 25, "O fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken; ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?" Isn't that so often the case with us? In times of sorrow, I sometimes find that my pain is primarily due to a senseless slowness to believe the promises of God in His word. And as Christians, we have so many promises to lay hold of! Just think of the promise in Hebrews 13:5, "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." No matter how much or how little we have in this world, we have the promise that our Lord will never leave us nor forsake us. We also read in John 14:3, "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." My dear friend, if you are saved, you need never fear. We will never be forsaken of the Lord in this life, come what may; and soon enough, the Lord will come and take us to be with Himself forever. With such promises, why should we ever be anxious or fearful? We must not be slow to believe the promises of God's Word.

So then, the Lord opened the scriptures beginning with Moses and the prophets, and He revealed one by one all those prophecies and types in the Old Testament scriptures which spoke of Himself. Can you imagine it? The Lord Himself ministered to them by revealing Himself in His word. Some have said that they wish they could have been there to hear that ministry, and I guess I wonder who could not wish that! But in fact, this is just what we have today when we open God's Word and prayerfully read. Our risen Lord knows all about our sorrows and comes to us in our times of need, seeking to minister to us through His word. Who is it but the Holy Spirit that reveals Christ to us in the scriptures, and when that is done, what blessing we have! We receive peace, strength and joy in having Christ ministered to us, and when absorbed in this, how small the troubles of this world become! And, how precious is such sweet fellowship as in times when Christians are enjoying together the precious things of Christ in His word. Isn't this a beautiful picture of what we are to be about while walking this wilderness path?

I expect this walk to Emmaus went very quickly for these two disciples. However long the actual trip was, I imagine these two were scarcely aware of the time. Suddenly, they were in Emmaus and at the door of their house, but they were not at all ready for the fellowship to end. The Lord made as though He would go on, but they constrained Him "abide with us." It has been said that Christ will not force Himself upon anyone—but I promise you that if you make time for the Lord and constrain Him to be part of your family life, He will be there. You may have as much time with Christ as you want! I love this picture of these two constraining the Lord Jesus to come into their home

to abide with them. He entered their home to tarry with them, they no doubt hoping to continue the wonderful conversation. Do we invite the Lord to come into our homes? That time around the table when we as families open God's Word and read, and that time which we spend in prayer as a family is, I believe, precious. This is just what our families need, isn't it? To sit as it were at the feet of Jesus, and have communion with Him!

When the Lord sat down to eat with them, we read that He took bread and blessed it, and brake and gave to them. It was at this point that they recognized Him. He had first opened the scriptures to them; now He opened their eyes, and what they saw was wonderful! It was the Lord!! Can you imagine!? The one that they longed for, the one they loved, but whom they had seen die, now was revealed before them alive, just as He had said! I expect their mouths dropped open, and their hearts were flooded with immense joy!

He then vanished out of their sight, but we do not hear them complain. He was alive, and suddenly I believe that the truth of all He had told them about Himself came flooding upon them. He was risen, and All that He had said was true! What unspeakable joy!!

Do you have that joy? If you are a child of God, if you have come to know the Lord Jesus as your Savior, then I have no doubt that you have a thrill of joy as you hear this account of the empty tomb and the risen Lord! The hearts of these two disciples burned within them as He had ministered the scriptures to them, and do not our hearts burn within us as we hear the old, old story of Jesus and His love told again and again? I hope that is true of each one who reads this paper. If so, then I would guess that like these two happy disciples, you are anxious to share this news of the risen Christ with others. I believe they dropped what was left of their dinners, and without washing so much as a dish, they were back on the road to Jerusalem, quickly retracing their steps to get back to the eleven to tell what they had seen.

Again I ask, do you have this joy? Do you believe that the Lord Jesus is alive and that He is the Christ? If you do not, then you will not find much comfort or joy in the words of this account. But just consider the appeal of the Spirit of God written for you in John 20:30,31, "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." You have the authority of God's Word that Jesus is alive. Will you believe? This same Lord Jesus is alive today and seated in glory, but He longs to hear your prayers and provide for your needs. He loves you so much that He once came into this world to die on a cross and open up the gates of Heaven if you will but believe on Him—"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16.)

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