

“On the First Day of the Week”

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Time matters. The Christian concept of time is filled with Jesus' presence as he enters *our lives* and into *our space and time* through the church's liturgical marking of time. In Christian liturgical time, Jesus' death and resurrection is not simply a past, historical event, but he is present **now** in his church through our observing of days and weeks and years. Christians affirm in their concept of time not only that Jesus died and rose again, but that Jesus died and rose again **for you**, and the gifts of forgiveness, life, and salvation are present **for you**, right here, right now, in Christian liturgical time.

Time is a part of our lives that we seldom think or talk about, except when we complain that we do not have enough of it. Few people think of time as holy and a gift of God, but time is sacred, a trust from God to live in his creation with joy and contentment. Time is marked by Christians in a special way in their liturgical life because Christ entered time. By his presence in the creation to make all things new he changed our reckoning of time forever. From the beginning, early Christians lived with a clarity about how, through Christ's resurrection, eternity now bore in upon our finite time. They lived in that tension between a life lived toward the end-time within time itself, that tension between the now and the not yet. By their accounting of days and weeks and years, Christians gave meaning to time. Their time-keeping proceeded from Jewish time-keeping, and also proclaimed that now all was fulfilled in Christ.

Liturgical time allows the church to proclaim time's sacred character as Christ-centered. Through Sunday as the day of worship and rhythms of the Church Year, the church teaches how our days and weeks and years are shaped and formed by the reality that Jesus entered our time and space. This rhythm shows us how we are to truly live in God's gift of time as temporal beings baptized into Christ's eternal life. The structure of time says as much about us as a people as anything else we do or say as Christians.

Christians today are generally oblivious to the church's unique way of looking at time. A clear sign of this loss of time as sacred is our

thorough neglect of Sunday as the central day of worship. For the first three hundred years of Christianity the church organized time by the week, and Sunday was the day of celebration of God's restored creation because God's Son rose from the dead on that day. Early Christians regarded Sunday as "the Lord's day . . . an eighth day of creation, a day beyond the Sabbath rest, 'the beginning of another world' . . . the conclusion of the first creation and the new creation . . . 'the image of the age to come.'"¹ God's re-creation came to completion in the resurrection of Christ. Reverence for Sunday as the holy day was the way early Christians gave *thanks* to God for the redemption of all creation in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and *petitioned* him to continue to act as Savior in their midst through the Gospel and the Sacraments. The church saw Sunday as the day in which the future blessings of the kingdom were now present in the midst of the worshiping assembly. In a very real sense, "the last day, "the eschaton" had begun. (Heb. 1:2) The Church's view was eschatological, that is, Christians saw that on Sunday through the presence of Jesus Christ in Word and Sacrament, the things of eternity were present. The celebration of the Lord's Supper on the Lord's day demanded this view of Sunday and of Christian worship:

In the eucharist the church met the sacramentally present Christ, risen and bringing the new creation, risen and revealed to his disciples in the breaking of bread. Eschatologically the meal was a participation in the end time -- a foretaste of the kingdom rather than an expectation of its [future] coming. Historically, it was a meeting with the crucified and risen Christ now present with his church rather than a recollection of the events of his career. Until the sixteenth century, we have no evidence of a significant Christian community that did not celebrate the eucharist on the Lord's day. But in the first century and the second, we have no evidence that any commemoration of a particular event ever helped shape a Lord's day celebration of the new creation. General commemorations of specific points in sacred history were not present until well into the fourth century. Until then, and for a long time after,

¹See P. V. Marshall, "The Little Easter and the Great Sunday," *Liturgy* Vol.1 #2 (1980) 28 who quotes the *Epistle of Barnabas* 15:8b-9, Ignatius' *Ad Magnesios* 9:1, and Basil's *De Spiritu Sancto* 27 in support of his view.

the Lord's day simply marked the presence with his church of the resurrected Christ.²

It was only after the Edict of Milan in A.D. 312 as the church's liturgy grew that there was a shift from Sunday as the primary way of measuring time in the church to both a weekly and yearly rhythm.

Much has been said so far about Sunday as the Lord's Day and the day of worship, but where does this come from? Does not the Old Testament give a commandment that says we should worship on the Sabbath (Saturday), the seventh day of the week? If we look carefully at the both the Old and New Testament understandings of the Sabbath we shall see that the Sabbath, like the Temple, was provisional until the Messiah came to fulfill both temple and Sabbath by his presence in the creation, as well as through his suffering, death, and resurrection.

A careful reading of the words and deeds of Jesus in the Gospels shows why the Christian church moved from worship on the Sabbath to worship on the first day of the week. That move from Saturday to Sunday doesn't come unannounced like a bolt out of the blue. Throughout his ministry, for instance, Jesus became involved in Sabbath controversies – invariably with miraculous healings – that pointed to him as Lord of the Sabbath, King of the new era of salvation. That new era of salvation is fully revealed in Jesus' own resurrection on “the first day,” or, alternatively, the “eighth day.” Every Lord's Day is a celebration of Jesus' resurrection, of “the Dawn from on high” (Lk 1:78), the real presence of Christ. That presence was in his ministry of healing on the Sabbath and is now in his ministry of healing on the eighth day in his ministry of Word and Meal. There is a great deal of Biblical precedent for understanding Sunday as the day of worship and as the eighth day in which God is continuing to make all things new.

The Time Framework in Luke's Resurrection Narrative

Time matters. In Luke's final, resurrection chapter the calibration of time is part of his structure and gives theological meaning to the profound shift that takes place during the three days of Jesus' passion, death, and resurrection. Lk 23:56b should be included in Luke's resurrection account for both theological and philological reasons. The theological reasons have to do with the way Luke in 24:1 measures time in reference to the Sabbath mentioned in 23:56b and then refers to the

²P. V. Marshall, “The Little Easter and the Great Sunday,” 29.

“third day” in 24:7, 21, 46. Of the synoptic evangelists, Luke takes the greatest care to show that the three-day period of Jesus’ passion and resurrection begins on the Day of Preparation (Friday—Thursday night in modern terms) with Jesus’ Passover (22:14) and ends with the Emmaus meal on Sunday, the first day of the week.

In between, Jesus takes his Sabbath rest in the tomb, and only Luke explicitly states that the Sabbath rest was observed “according to the commandment” (ἐπιτολή -- 23:56b), a reminder that the observance of this day was according to the OT stipulation to remember the seventh day, the day of worship according to the old covenant. The Sabbath commemorated both *creation* (Ex 20:8–11) and the *exodus redemption*—the *new creation* (Deut 5:12–15). In his final chapter, Luke develops a Sabbath theology that is fulfilled in the burial of Jesus and the transition to the resurrection, which together comprise Jesus’ “exodus” (9:31).

Luke uses *σάββατον*, “Sabbath” a second time in 24:1 in the phrase τῆς δὲ μιᾶς τῶν σαββάτων, literally, “on the first [day] from the Sabbaths,” but translated by most as “on the first day of the week.” The shift from 23:56b to 24:1 is the shift from the old covenant to the new and marks the beginning of the Sunday announcement to the women that Jesus has risen from the dead. Matthew (28:1), Mark (16:2), Luke (24:1), and John (20:1) all introduce the day of the resurrection with similar phrases that designate it as the first day (μία) after the Sabbath (σαββάτων).

There is another dimension to the time framework of the gospel’s resurrection narratives. While all four canonical gospels refer to Easter as “the first day of the week,” they describe the *time* of day with various expressions. Matthew refers to “the dawning” (28:1; τῆς ἠρωσκούσης) and Luke refers to “deep dawn” (24:1; ῥηθρου βαθέως). Mark indicates that it is “very early” (16:2; λίαν ἠρωϊ), and John says that it was “early, while still dark” (20:1; ἠρω σκυτίας ἔτι οὐσσης). None of these really contradicts the others. Perhaps these references to the time of day have theological ramifications.³ The emphasis of Matthew, Mark, and Luke is on the coming of light, while John features the transition from darkness. Each views the time on the first day of the week from the perspective of

³ Cf. G. R. Osborne, *The Resurrection Narratives: A Redactional Study* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1984), 198–99.

darkness or light. Since light was created and separated from darkness on the first day of creation (Gen 1:1–5), viewing the resurrection from the perspective of darkness and light would enhance the thesis that in Lk 24:1 the evangelist is introducing “the first day of the week” as the eschatological, eighth day, which ushers in the new creation represented by the new week.⁴ The shameful embarrassment of Jesus’ crucifixion and the horror of his death are now surmounted as light banishes darkness at the dawn of this new day, the day of resurrection, the first day of the new era of salvation.⁵

As soon as Easter Sunday, the first day of the new week, is introduced by Luke in 24:1, there is a shift in how this day is to be perceived. Easter is not just another day, but the climactic day of the three-day sequence. Luke uses the expression τῆς τρίτης ἡμέρας, “on the third day,” or an equivalent expression to designate the day of resurrection within the passion predictions and statements (9:22; 18:33; 24:7, 21, 46).⁶ Luke never uses τρεῖς, “three,” in connection with the

⁴ Such an eschatological view of the Sabbath forms the conclusion of Augustine’s *Confessions*, book 13, chapters 35–37 (trans. R. S. Pine-Coffin [New York: Penguin, 1961] 346):

³⁵ O Lord God, grant us peace, for all that we have is your gift. Grant us the peace of repose, the peace of the Sabbath, the peace which has no evening. For this worldly order in all its beauty will pass away. All these things that are very good will come to an end when the limit of their existence is reached. They have been allotted their morning and their evening.

³⁶ But the seventh day is without evening and the sun shall not set upon it, for you have sanctified it and willed that it shall last for ever. Although your eternal repose was unbroken by the act of creation, nevertheless, after all your works were done and you had seen that they were very good, you rested on the seventh day. And in your Book we read this as a presage that when our work in this life is done, we too shall rest in you in the Sabbath of eternal life, though our works are very good only because you have given us the grace to perform them.

³⁷ In that eternal Sabbath you will rest in us, just as now you work in us. The rest that we shall enjoy will be yours, just as the work that we now do is your work done through us. But you, O Lord, are eternally at work and eternally at rest. It is not in time that you see or in time that you move or in time that you rest: yet you make what we see in time; you make time itself and the repose which comes when time ceases.

⁵ G. R. Osborne, *The Resurrection Narratives*, 99, comments: “Resurrection is not only the vindication of Jesus’ death but also a sign of the new life that results from it.”

⁶ So also does Matthew (16:21; 17:23; 20:19). Mark does not use this expression.

resurrection.⁷ τῆς τρίτης ἡμέρας, “on the third day,” refers to the climactic day of the three-day sequence: the day on which Jesus rises from the dead.⁸ Luke has shown his interest in the three-day sequence of passion and resurrection by demarcating the three days more clearly than the other evangelists. In Luke 24, he repeats passion statements three times (24:6–7, 25–27, 44–47), each time noting the “third day,”⁹ and he is the only synoptic evangelist to use this expression in his resurrection account.¹⁰ “The first day of the week” in 24:1 (τῆς ἡμέρας μιᾶς τοῦ σαββάτου) is then called “the third day” in 24:7 (τῆς τρίτης ἡμέρας), linking together Jesus’ predictions of his passion and resurrection in 9:22 and 18:33 (cf. 9:44; 17:25) and the fulfillment of those predictions on this first day of the week.¹¹

⁷ “After three [τρεῖς] days” occurs in the passion predictions in Mark (8:31; 9:31; 10:34). τρεῖς, “three,” is also used in Mt 26:61 and Mk 14:58 in testimony before Caiaphas quoting Jesus’ prediction that he will destroy and rebuild the temple in three days and in Mt 27:40 and Mk 15:29 at the cross by the crowds who quote the same prediction. Luke does not include those references to the resurrection in his passion narrative. Mt 12:40 also uses τρεῖς, “three,” four times concerning the sign of Jonah, and that passage is unique to Matthew, absent in Luke.

⁸ Hearing Lk 13:32 in the context of an eschatological discourse also reinforces that “the third day” is the eschatological day of resurrection: “on the third day I am brought to my goal” (τῆς τρίτης ἡμέρας τελειοῦμαι). J. Fitzmyer, *Luke X–XXIV* (The Anchor Bible. New York: Doubleday, 1985), 1031, argues that τελειοῦμαι, “I am brought to my goal,” could be understood in a “spatial” sense, i.e., that “on the third day Jesus will be brought to the end/goal of his journey,” or in an eschatological sense, i.e., “being brought to the end/goal of my life.” Fitzmyer disagrees with E. E. Ellis, *The Gospel of Luke* (New Century Bible. Rev. ed. London: Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 1974), 190, who sees τελειοῦμαι in line with its usage in Hebrews, a reference “to Jesus’ consecration, through death and resurrection, to his high priestly work.” But regardless of whether one agrees with Fitzmyer or Ellis (or both or neither), 13:32 is another proleptic anticipation in the ministry of Jesus of the eschatological fulfillment of his work “on the third day.” Thus, Luke 13:32 foreshadows Luke 24. Cf. also R. Dillon, *From Eye-Witnesses to Ministers of the Word: Tradition and Composition in Luke 24* (Rome: Biblical Institute, 1978), 263, n. 100; R. Tannehill, *Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts*. Vol. 1: *The Gospel according to Luke* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986), 153 ff.

⁹ τῆς τρίτης ἡμέρας, “on the third day,” occurs in the first and third passion statements at 24:7, 46. τρίτην ταύτην ἡμέραν, “this third day,” occurs in 24:21 and is the time frame for the second passion statement, 24:25–27.

¹⁰ Mt 26:61; 27:40, 63–64; Mk 14:58; 15:29 occur prior to the resurrection accounts in those gospels.

¹¹ R. Dillon, *From Eye-Witnesses*, 14, says:

Its [the women’s Sabbath rest] particular value to Lk, however, is that it sets the stage, chronologically, for the subsequent phases of the paschal happenings: “the first day of the week” (24, 1 = Mk), when the action can continue, and the distinctively Lucan kerygmatic thereof: “the third day” [24:7, 21b, 46]. In short, here is the carefully constructed time-framework in which the Lucan Easter story will be told. The ...

John's gospel too, Jesus has a breakfast of fish with his disciples (Jn 21:9–14).

In Acts 10:41, Peter's sermon to Cornelius includes the apostle's claim to be a witness to the resurrection of God's Anointed One: Peter was among those "who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead."¹³ Thus in Luke's table fellowship matrix, Jesus' meals after his resurrection are significant in apostolic preaching as an attestation that the disciples were present with their risen Lord. The Emmaus meal is part of God's pattern of table fellowship with his people—a pattern that stretches back to the creation and will continue in the Christian church through these last days until the Lord returns. The Emmaus meal is particularly important *because it is the first post-resurrection meal described in Luke-Acts, and it helps define the significance of all Jesus' fellowship meals, both before and after the resurrection.*

Luke 24 is the pivotal "hinge" of the evangelist's two-volume work, Luke-Acts. In this chapter many of the themes that Luke develops in his gospel find their fulfillment. The Emmaus narrative is the place where other threads are woven in together into Luke's table fellowship matrix. These include Luke's geographical perspective, the theme of divine revelation, proclamation from prophecy and pattern, and the eucharistic motif.¹⁴

The structure of the Emmaus account helps to communicate Luke's theology.¹⁵ Five concentric circles ("circular journeys," or "ring

¹³ Cf. also συναλιζόμενος, "eat together," in Acts 1:4.

¹⁴ J. Fitzmyer, *Luke X–XXIV*, 1557–59, sees four motifs in the Emmaus narrative: (1) geographical; (2) revelatory; (3) Christological as fulfilling OT prophecy; and (4) eucharistic. R. Dillon, *From Eye-Witnesses*, 69–155, argues that 24:35 recapitulates the major theme of the Emmaus story, namely, that the mission of the church will be centered in the apostolic community's table fellowship, which involves both the words of Jesus and the Meal of Jesus. J. Dupont, "The Meal at Emmaus," *The Eucharist in the New Testament*. Ed. J. Delorme (Baltimore: Helicon, 1964), 105–21 maintains that the focus of the story is the breaking of bread, where Jesus distributes the Eucharist. B. P. Robinson, "The Place of the Emmaus Story in Luke-Acts," *NTS* 30 (1984), 493–94, sees the Lukan themes of journey, fulfillment of prophecy, recognition, and hospitality converging but gives special attention to the hospitality theme, concluding that "all Christian fellowship meals [are] proleptic celebrations of the coming Kingdom."

¹⁵ See the structural studies of X. Léon-Dufour, *Resurrection and the Message of Easter*, Trans. R. N. Wilson (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1974); J. D'Arc, "Catechesis on the Road to Emmaus," *Lumen Vitae* 32 (1977) 62–76; "Un grand jeu d'inclusions dans 'les pèlerins d'Emmaüs,'" *La nouvelle revue théologique* 99 (1977) 143–56; *Les pèlerins d'Emmaüs*; R. Meynet, "Comment établir un chiasme: A propos de 'pèlerins d'Emmaüs'" (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1977); F. Schneider and W. Stenger, "Beobachtungen zur Struktur der Emmauserikope (Lk 24,13–35)," *Biblische Zeitschrift*

structure," typical of Luke) carry the hearer from the outer circle to the center and back, journeying from Jerusalem and returning to Jerusalem.

24:13 **5** Two of **them** [α□τω□ν] **on that very day** [□ν α□τ□□ τ□□ □μέρ□] were journeying ... from **Jerusalem** [□Ιερουσαλήμ] ...

24:14 **4** and they **were conversing with one another** [□μίλουν □ρ□ς □λλήλους] ...

24:15 **3** **And Jesus himself** [κα□ α□τ□ς □Ιησου□ς], after drawing

near, was journeying with them,

24:16 **2** but **their eyes** [□φθαλμο□ α□τω□ν] **were held back** [□κρατου□ντο] **so as not to recognize him** [μ□ □□γνω□ναι α□τόν].

24:17–30 **1** *The Catechesis on the Road and the the Bread*

24:17–18 The Setting for the Catechesis on the Road

24:19–24 The Christology of the Emmaus Disciples
24:25–27 The Kerygma of the Catechesis on the

Road
24:28–30 The Meal of Jesus

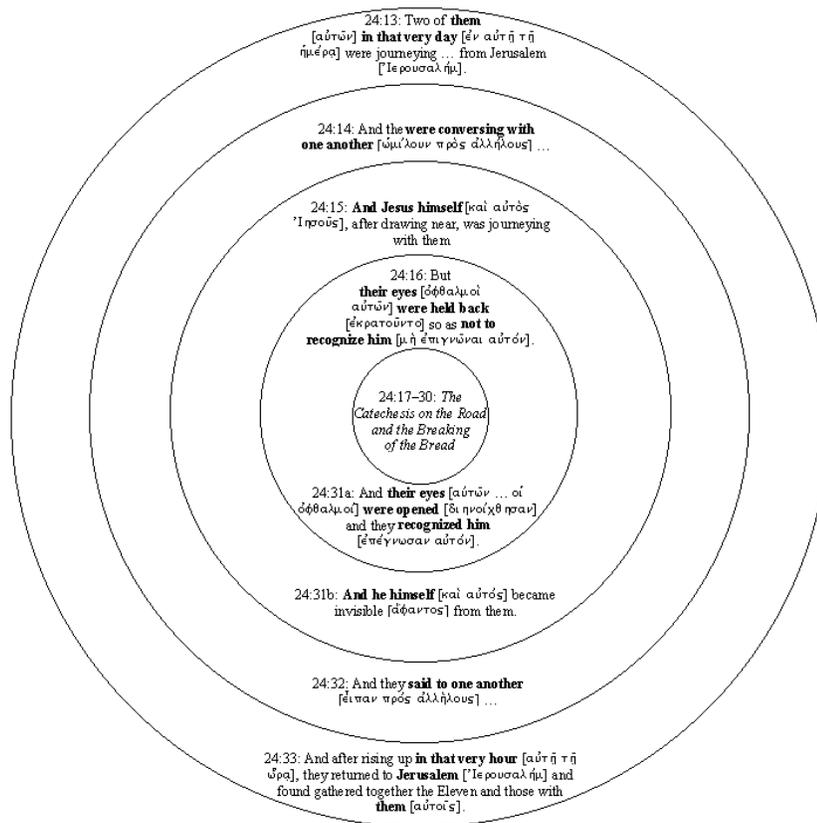
24:31a **2'** And **their eyes** [α□τω□ν ... ο□ □φθαλμοί] **were opened** [διηνοιχθησαν] and they **recognized him** [□□εγνωσαν α□τόν];

24:31b **3'** **and he himself** [κα□ α□τός] became invisible [□φαντος] from them.

24:32 **4'** And they **said to one another** [ε□□□αν □ρ□ς □λλήλους] ...

24:33 **5'** And after rising up **in that very hour** [α□τ□□ τ□□ □ρ□], they returned to **Jerusalem** [□Ιερουσαλήμ] and found gathered together the **Eleven and those with them** [α□τοι□ς].

24:34–35 The conclusion: The exchange of reports in Jerusalem.



The conclusion: 24:34–35: The exchange of reports in Jerusalem.

The correspondence between the events preceding and those following the catechesis and meal may be perceived more easily in the scheme below. (See also figure 10.)

The fifth circle: 24:13 Two of **them** [α□τῶ□ν] **on that very day** [□ν α□τ□□ τ□□
□μέρ□] were journeying ... from Jerusalem
[□Ιερουσαλήμ].

24:33 And after rising up **in that very hour** [α□τ□□ τ□□ □ρ□],
they
returned to **Jerusalem** [□Ιερουσαλήμ] and found
gathered
together the Eleven and those with **them** [α□τοι□ς].

The fourth circle: 24:14 And they **were conversing with one another** [μίλουσ
οις

[ἀλλήλους] ...

24:32 And they **said to one another** [εἶπαν οἱ ἀλλήλους]

...

The third circle: 24:15 **And Jesus himself** [καὶ αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦς], after drawing near, was

journeying with them.

24:31b **And he himself** [καὶ αὐτός] became invisible [φαντοῦς] from them.

The second circle: 24:16 But **their eyes** [οφθαλμοὶ αὐτῶν] **were held back**

[κρατοῦντο] so as **not to recognize him** [μὴ ἴγνωσιν αὐτόν].

24:31a And **their eyes** [αὐτῶν ... οἱ οφθαλμοί] **were**

opened

[διηνοίχθησαν] and they **recognized him** [ἔγνωσαν

αὐτόν].

The center circle: 24:17–30 *The Catechesis on the Road and the Breaking of the Bread*

The conclusion: 24:34–35 The exchange of reports in Jerusalem.¹⁶

The Four Outer Circles around the Meal at Emmaus (24:13–16, 31-33)

It is important to identify the time, the place, and the persons of this incident in relationship to the Lukan literary context. As we already observed, Luke has preserved a careful time framework of the three days. They began with the Day of Preparation (Good Friday), when the hour of the passion began and the power of darkness arrived. For three hours while Jesus was on the cross, darkness dominated the Day of Preparation, which ended as Jesus' body was laid in the tomb. During the Sabbath Day of rest in the tomb, darkness clouded the disciples' understanding of Jesus. But then the Sabbath Day gave way to Easter Sunday, the first day of the week, the day of resurrection, the eschatological day, the eighth day. This day began at "deep dawn" (24:1; ῥοθρου βαθέως), in early morning darkness. But toward evening, when

¹⁶ This scheme draws on X. Léon-Dufour, *Resurrection*, 161–62, and R. Dillon, *From Eye-Witnesses*, 81, n. 34, who summarizes Léon-Dufour's argument.

the day is already far spent (24:29; ἵτι ῥῆς ἡσπέραν ἵστιν καὶ κέκλικεν ἡδη ἡ ἡμέρα, “because it is toward evening and the day has already declined”), the darkness of ignorance is dispersed when the disciples’ eyes are opened and they recognize Jesus. For the first time, the disciples see that God’s plan of salvation culminates in the death and resurrection of the Christ. This movement from darkness to light over the three-day period highlights the third day, when, as the passion and resurrection predictions foretold, the Christ rose from the dead.

Luke frames this three-day period with meals. It began with Jesus’ Passover as the Day of Preparation began at sundown (Maundy Thursday according to our calendar). It concludes with the Emmaus meal as the first day of the new week (Easter Sunday—the eighth, eschatological day) draws to a close. Rooted in the OT history of the exodus, God specified that the Passover meal was to be celebrated by his people with a pilgrimage to *Jerusalem* (Deut 16:2, 5–6, 16). The new Passover, the Last Supper of Jesus with his disciples, also took place in *Jerusalem*, the place where Jesus’ “exodus” was to be accomplished (9:31). This was consistent with Luke’s geographical perspective, since 9:51–19:28 chronicled Jesus’ journey to Jerusalem. But the first meal that the resurrected Lord has with his disciples, the Emmaus meal, takes place *outside of Jerusalem*. This also is consistent with Luke’s geographical and theological perspective. For the Emmaus meal inaugurates the meal fellowship of the early Christian communities. The location outside Jerusalem anticipates the expanding geographical areas where the new Meal will be celebrated by the church. Acts will record how Christian communities will gather “on the first day of the week ... to break bread” (Acts 20:7) *wherever* they are. In that respect, the new meal fellowship, first celebrated in house churches, resembles the very first Passover meal, which was eaten by the Israelites in their homes in Egypt, far from Jerusalem.

The two Emmaus disciples are not among “the Eleven” but could well be from among the seventy(-two). They return to Jerusalem in order to consult with the Eleven and those with them (Lk 24:33). The entire group of disciples constitutes the paschal witness, but who are the ones who first have the Scriptures opened up to them and who recognize the Lord in the breaking of the bread? They are not the Eleven, but two *out of “the rest,”* (24:9), and Luke carefully makes this distinction clear in 24:33–35. This is surprising. One might expect Luke to relate the narrative of the risen Christ’s appearance to Peter. In fact, the entire Emmaus account is framed by the reports of Peter’s visit to the empty tomb (24:12) and the

Lord's appearance to Peter (24:34), but Luke offers no description of the appearance.

Luke's underlying purpose may be to balance the testimony of Peter with a detailed narrative in which the Lord appears to two lesser disciples and then opens up the Scriptures concerning himself and reveals himself in the breaking of the bread.¹⁷ The church's agenda in Acts, although beginning with the Eleven, will soon include a greater circle of followers. These other followers too have access to Jesus' presence through understanding the Scriptures Christologically and through recognizing him in the Lord's Supper. The participation of these other, lesser disciples in Christ's mission is foreshadowed by his appearance to the Emmaus disciples.

The fifth circle: 24:13 Two of **them** [α□τω□ν] **on that very day** [□ν α□τ□□ τ□□
τ□□
□μέρ□] were journeying ... from Jerusalem
[□Ιερουσαλήμ].
24:33 And after rising up **in that very hour** [α□τ□□ τ□□
□ρ□],
they returned to **Jerusalem** [□Ιερουσαλήμ] and
found
gathered together the Eleven and those with
them
[α□τοι□ς].

¹⁷ Cf. R. Dillon, *From Eye-Witnesses*, 65–67, 94–99. He concludes:

The fact that “the Eleven and their company” are the speakers of the formative confession, and that they speak it *first* before the travelers' report, is all true to the Lucan concept of the apostolic circle as primary μάρτυρες τη□ς □ναστάσεως α□του□ (“witnesses of his resurrection”) *Acts* 1,22). This view of the church's origins accounts for the unexpected conclusion Lk composed for the Emmaus narrative. The Eleven *et al.* speak first of the founding Easter experience of Peter, and only then (v. 35) do the two pilgrims announce their experience. The Petrine apparition and the testimony of the apostolic circle thus obtain logical priority in the building of the church. Not that the travelers' encounter is thereby devalued; Lk has recounted it first, after all! On the contrary, the happening “on the road” is authenticated and confirmed by being incorporated into the united Easter witness of the apostolic assembly (p. 98; emphasis Dillon).

Indeed, no discovery or vision of any individual is the foundation or beginning of the church. Rather, the risen Lord's catechesis to the whole community of his followers is the source of the church's understanding.

This fifth, outermost circle describes the circular movement of the two Emmaus disciples from Jerusalem to Emmaus and back to Jerusalem. This journey is catechetical. They are transformed from catechumens into initiates—believers with understanding—through the teaching of Jesus on the road (literally, “in the way” [24:32, 35]), where their hearts burn, and through the breaking of the bread, when their eyes are opened. The round-trip journey recapitulates the journey of the entire gospel, which began with *doubting* Zechariah in the temple (1:5–25) and ends with joyful *worshippers* in the temple (24:52–53). It is also a précis of Jesus’ ministry of table fellowship and catechesis, beginning with his sermon in Nazareth (4:16–30) until his Passover on the night in which he was betrayed (22:14–20).

The fourth circle: 24:14 And they **were conversing with one another**
 [μιλουν ρος λλήλους] ...
 24:32 And they **said to one another** [εσαν ρος
 λλήλους] ...

As one proceeds into the narrative, the subject turns to the content of the conversation of the disciples on their journey to Emmaus. There is a parallel between 24:14 and 24:32 because of the similar nature of the activity of the Emmaus disciples. “They were conversing with one another concerning all these things that had happened” (24:14). The issue here is the proper understanding of the facts of the passion and resurrection. The transformation in the disciples’ understanding takes place “in the way” (24:32). The conversation with Jesus on the road causes the disciples’ hearts to burn, as they later recall (24:32). Between 24:14 and 24:32 the disciples are led from skepticism to faith in Jesus’ passion and resurrection. It is apparent from 24:17–24 that as they began the journey, they completely failed to understand the passion and resurrection facts. And they were not alone; these facts were not understood in the larger apostolic community (24:11).

The Emmaus disciples’ progress from ignorance toward enlightenment is heightened by Luke’s travel motif. Jesus spoke to them and opened up the Scriptures for them “as he was speaking ... in the way” (24:32; ρος λάλει ... εν τω οδω). Luke often uses οδός, “road, way,” as a technical term for catechesis (see 1:67–80). The hearer is reminded of the lengthy catechesis of Jesus to his disciples *on the road* to Jerusalem (9:51–19:28). At the start of that journey too, the disciples had no comprehension of Jesus’ impending passion and resurrection (9:22, 44–45). What caused the hearts of the Emmaus disciples to burn was that

Jesus was *speaking* to them on the road and *opening up* the Scriptures for them. In this conversation on the road, the topic was the passion and resurrection facts.

By the time this fourth circle is completed, a dramatic change has come over the disciples. The mystery of the things that have happened has been revealed by the risen Lord. But the disciples recall that during Jesus' conversation with them on the road, even though the Lord spoke to them and opened up the Scriptures to them, they still did not have opened eyes (24:32). The catechesis on the road—the exegetical lesson in hermeneutics—*by itself* did not enable them to recognize the presence of the risen Lord. The instruction in the Word was a necessary precondition for recognizing Jesus, but Luke demonstrates in his conclusion that the Word is to be combined with the breaking of the bread (24:35, where $\epsilon\nu\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \delta\omicron\omicron$, “in the way,” occurs again). The teaching alone was not sufficient but was complemented with the meal. Nor would the meal alone be enough. The meal must be received with knowledge of the prior catechesis, which furnishes the proper understanding of the passion and resurrection facts according to the Scriptures. The same was true in 7:36–50, where a Pharisee invited Jesus to dine with him, but while he enjoyed table fellowship with Jesus, he did not believe that Jesus had the ability to forgive sins, and so he did not receive the forgiveness of his sins, while the sinful woman did.

The third circle: 24:15 **And Jesus himself** [$\kappa\alpha\ \alpha\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \omicron\ \text{I}\eta\sigma\omicron\upsilon\ \omicron\ \zeta$], after drawing

near, was journeying with them.

24:31b **And he himself** [$\kappa\alpha\ \alpha\ \tau\omicron\zeta$] became invisible [$\omicron\ \phi\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\zeta$]
from them.

Jesus enters the narrative (24:15) and then departs from it (24:31b) in this third circle. Between these verses, the presence of Jesus guides the direction of the narrative and elevates it to a higher level. Luke introduces Jesus into the Emmaus story with the intensive pronoun in $\kappa\alpha\ \alpha\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \omicron\ \zeta$ $\omicron\ \text{I}\eta\sigma\omicron\upsilon\ \omicron\ \zeta$, “and Jesus himself,” and $\kappa\alpha\ \alpha\ \tau\omicron\zeta$, “and he himself,” is repeated in 24:31 as Jesus exits the narrative. The intensive $\kappa\alpha\ \alpha\ \tau\omicron\zeta$, “and he himself” (24:15, 25, 28, 31) is Luke's stylized expression for Jesus in the Emmaus account.¹⁸

¹⁸ Cf. J. Fitzmyer, *Luke I–IX*, 120. A. Ehrhardt, “The Disciples of Emmaus,” *NTS* 10 (1963–64), 184, comments: “In general it may be said that in our story $\alpha\ \tau\omicron\zeta$ [“he himself”] takes the place of the personal pronoun, something which is typical for the Septuagint, and in the New Testament especially for Luke.”

The narrative emphasizes Jesus' appearance by introducing him with "after drawing near," $\epsilon\gamma\gamma\acute{\iota}\sigma\alpha\varsigma$, a participle subordinate to the main verb in 24:15, "was journeying," $\sigma\upsilon\nu\epsilon\omicron\rho\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\epsilon\tau\omicron$.¹⁹ As the Emmaus disciples proceed toward their destination, Jesus *draws near* to them. In Jesus, *the kingdom of God draws near* to them. Up until chapter 24, Luke has used $\epsilon\gamma\gamma\acute{\iota}\zeta\omega$, "to draw near," to refer to a gradual movement toward the consummation of the kingdom in Jerusalem with the death and resurrection of Jesus. Now that the kingdom has arrived through Jesus' death and resurrection, Jesus draws near to the Emmaus disciples to reveal the essence of the kingdom by opening up the Scriptures to them and making himself known in the breaking of the bread. In Jesus the kingdom is now present but not yet seen by them. (Luke also uses $\epsilon\gamma\gamma\acute{\iota}\zeta\omega$ in 24:28 in connection with $\epsilon\omicron\rho\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\omicron\nu\tau\omicron$, "they were journeying," as all three together draw near to their destination.)

The second part of the third circle (24:31b) contains obvious parallels to the first part (24:15). Just as Luke dramatically introduced Jesus into the Emmaus story with the intensive $\kappa\alpha\iota\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\varsigma\ \epsilon\iota\varsigma\ \epsilon\upsilon\sigma\epsilon\beta\alpha\iota\omicron\varsigma$, "and Jesus himself," so now he reports Jesus' departure with the same intensive pronoun as Jesus "himself [$\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\varsigma$] became invisible [$\epsilon\phi\alpha\nu\tau\omicron\varsigma$] from them" as soon as he was recognized. His disappearance is more clearly miraculous and supernatural than his appearance. The third circle of the Emmaus story—the framework of Jesus' dramatic appearance and miraculous disappearance—is the backdrop for *the opening of Scripture and the opening of the disciples' eyes as an eschatological moment that has its focus in the breaking of the bread*.

The second circle: 24:16 But **their eyes** [$\epsilon\phi\theta\alpha\lambda\mu\omicron\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\ \tau\omega\ \mu\epsilon\tau\omicron$] **were held back**

[$\epsilon\kappa\ \kappa\rho\alpha\tau\omicron\upsilon\ \mu\epsilon\tau\omicron$] so as **not to recognize him** [$\mu\epsilon\tau\omicron$

¹⁹ J. Fitzmyer, *Luke X–XXIV*, 1557–58, writes:

The disciples are en route to Emmaus, "making their way" (*poreuomenoi*, v. 13) and Christ comes to "walk with them" (*syneporeueto autois*, v. 15). Note the double use of *en te hodo*, "on the road" (vv. 32, 35). It is precisely the geographical setting in which Christ instructs them about the sense of the Scriptures. Thus at the end of the Lucan Gospel the appearance-story *par excellence* takes place, not only in the vicinity of the city of destiny, toward which Jesus' entire movement in the Gospel has been directed, but his final and supreme instruction about the relation of his destiny to that which Moses and the prophets of old had announced is given "on the road." The subtle, yet highly deliberate, use of this Lucan motif is not to be missed.

□□ιγνω□ναι α□τόν].

24:31α And **their eyes** [α□τω□ν ... ο□ □φθαλμοί]

were opened

[διηνοιχθησαν] and they **recognized him**

[□□έγνωσαν

α□τόν].

These two verses are linked together by shared vocabulary (three key words in common) and by one contrast with antonyms:

24:16	ὄφθαλμοὶ ...	έκρατουόντο ...	έπιγνωναί αὐτόν
24:31α	διηνοιχθησαν ...	ὄφθαλμοὶ ...	έπέγνωσαν αὐτόν ...
24:16	eyes	were held back ...	recognize him
24:31α	were opened ...	eyes ...	recognized him

The language in these verses is remarkably parallel. The parallelism involves the words that form the heart of the narrative itself, preparing us for the catechesis on the road and the breaking of the bread. The purpose of this second circle in Luke's framework is to describe the condition of the disciples before and after the opening up of the Scriptures and their recognition of Jesus in the breaking of the bread. The motif of eyes and minds closed to the kerygma of Jesus crucified and resurrected—the rejection of that kerygma—has been woven throughout the gospel, but here that motif is reintroduced and overcome by the motif of being opened to God's plan of salvation and being enabled to recognize the risen Christ.

Luke uses the metaphor of closed and opened eyes (□φθαλμοί) for the disciples' spiritual condition in both 24:16 and 24:31α. In the gospel, the state of the eyes may describe understanding by faith or misunderstanding—unbelief—of God's revelation in Jesus. Closed or opened eyes refer not to physical vision, but to an eschatological understanding of the work of Jesus. The motif stretches back beyond the Lukan writings to the very beginning of salvation history in Genesis 3. The phrase used in Lk 24:31 for their "eyes were opened" is διηνοιχθησαν ο□ □φθαλμοί, the same phrase used in the LXX in Gen 3:7, where the eyes of Adam and Eve are opened to the knowledge of good and evil and they recognize their nakedness. There is a striking irony here. The opened eyes of Adam and Eve are the first expression of the fallen creation that

recognizes that the image of God has been defaced and obliterated by disobedience; but the opened eyes of the Emmaus disciples are the first expression of the new creation that recognizes that the image of God now is restored through the new Adam, the crucified and risen Christ. This motif provides a clear transition from the old creation to the new, establishing the Emmaus meal as an eschatological event.

The meal of broken bread at Emmaus reverses the first meal, the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Through the meal distributed by the risen Christ, eyes are now opened to see in Jesus the Seed of the woman promised in Gen 3:15. The disciples will be sent to proclaim this message throughout the creation (cf. the shorter ending of Mark and Mk 16:15 in the longer ending; also Lk 24:47; Acts 1:8). The table at which they now sit is the messianic table because, as they recognize, the Messiah is present with them at this table. Just as Adam and Eve's eating of the forbidden fruit was the first recorded meal of the old era of the creation which fell into sin, so this meal at Emmaus is the first meal in the new era begun with Christ's resurrection. So this meal takes place on the first day of the week, the start of God's new work of new creation in Christ (cf. 2 Cor 5:17).

The two words used to contrast the condition of the eyes— $\square\kappa\rho\alpha\tau\omicron\upsilon\square\nu\tau\omicron$, “were held back,” in 24:16 and $\delta\iota\eta\nu\omicron\iota\chi\theta\eta\sigma\alpha\nu$, “were opened,” in 24:31a—are theological passives that imply that God is the agent of the closing and opening of the disciples' eyes. $\kappa\rho\alpha\tau\acute{\epsilon}\omega$, “to hold, grasp,” is rare in Luke.²⁰ In 24:6 it means that the disciples' eyes were prevented from recognizing Jesus²¹ (the antonym of the expression in 24:31a referring to the opening of the eyes). “Were held back” by God is consistent with the messianic passion secret in Luke, where the divine plan of salvation is hidden from the disciples so they do not understand it (e.g., 9:44–45; 18:31–34, with the theological passives $\square\alpha\rho\alpha\kappa\epsilon\kappa\alpha\lambda\upsilon\mu\mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu\omicron\nu$, “was hidden,” in 9:45 and $\kappa\epsilon\kappa\rho\upsilon\mu\mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu\omicron\nu$, “was hidden,” in 18:34; cf. also 8:4–15 regarding the hidden meaning of the parables and the doctrine of election). The incomprehensibility of God's mysterious ways and the overpowering joy of salvation when they are revealed and seen is underlined by the contrast of the closed and opened eyes. $\delta\iota\alpha\nu\omicron\iota\gamma\omega$, “to open,” is also rare in Luke. Except for 2:23, it is found only in Luke 24,

²⁰ It occurs only here and in 8:54 in the gospel and in Acts 2:24; 3:11; 24:6; 27:13. In every case it means “to hold, seize,” with the exception of Acts 27:13, where it means obtaining one's purpose, and here in Lk 24:16, where it refers to holding eyes shut.

²¹ W. Michaelis, $\kappa\rho\alpha\tau\acute{\epsilon}\omega$, *TDNT* 3:911.

where it refers to the opening of eyes in 24:31a (“their eyes were opened,” ἀνοίχθησαν οὐκ ὀφθαλμοί); the opening of Scriptures in 24:32 (“he was opening to us the Scriptures,” διήνοιγεν ἡμῖν τὰς γραφάς); and the opening of the disciples’ minds to understand the Scriptures in 24:45 (“he opened their mind to understand the Scriptures, διήνοιξεν αὐτοὺς τὸ νοῦν τοῦ συνιέναι τὰς γραφάς”).²² In all three instances the meaning is essentially the same. Divine revelation enlightens the darkened minds of sinful people with the knowledge of God’s salvation in Christ.

Finally, the two verses in the third circle also use the same verb for “recognize”: ἐπιγινώσκω.²³ This word may allude to 1:4. In the prologue Luke chose ἐπιγινώσκω, “recognize, know with assurance,” instead of γινώσκω (simply “know”). Luke wants Theophilus to *know the certainty* of the things about which he has been catechized—the Gospel of Jesus’ death and resurrection. Luke makes the same choice of verb in this third circle of Luke 24. This Gospel is hidden from the eyes of the Emmaus disciples until 24:31, when a similar certainty is imparted to them and they recognize Jesus as crucified and risen. The entire Emmaus pericope is framed by this dialectic—the movement from closed eyes (24:16) to recognition (24:31)—and Luke’s entire gospel is framed by recognition (1:4; 24:31). In the breaking of the bread, not just the Emmaus disciples, but also Theophilus and the entire church come to recognize, know, and believe the profound truth concerning the things with which they have been catechized.

The Center Circle: The Catechesis on the Road and

²² διανοίγω, “to open,” occurs three times in Acts: in 7:56 Stephen describes the heavens as opened; in 16:14, where the Lord opened Lydia’s heart to the words of Paul; and in 17:3, where Paul opens (explains) the Scriptures in Thessalonica. In all three instances, there is a precedent in Luke 24.

²³ R. Bultmann, γινώσκω κλπ., *TDNT* 1:703 claims that ἐπιγινώσκω, “recognize,” “is often used instead of γινώσκω [‘know’] with no difference in meaning.” But Moulton, J. H., and G. Milligan, *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament*. Reprint. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans), 1980, 236, affirms Dean Robinson’s (*Eph.*, p. 248 ff.) conclusion that “the verb [ἐπιγινώσκω, “recognize”] denotes not so much fuller or more perfect knowing, as knowing arrived at by the attention being directed to (ἐπί) a particular person or object.” *MM* states that the papyri support Robinson’s conclusion.

J. Fitzmyer, *Luke I–IX*, 300, claims that the literal translation of ἐπιγινώσκω is “may come to know” and notes that “the verb *epiginoskein* in Lucan usage means either ‘to recognize’ an object or fact, or ‘to learn’ or ‘acquire knowledge’ (see Acts 19:34; 22:24; 23:28; 24:8, 11). Being a compound verb in *epi-*, it may imply the acquiring of profound knowledge.”

the Breaking of the Bread (24:17–30)

The center circle of the Emmaus narrative may be divided into four sections, beginning with an introduction that sets the stage for Jesus' catechesis on the road to the two disciples (24:17–18), followed by the presentation of the incomplete Christology of the Emmaus disciples (24:19–24). Then in the catechesis of Jesus, he presents *his* Christology (24:25–27). The center circle closes with the meal at Emmaus (24:28–30). This circle therefore comprises the revelation of the true knowledge of Jesus through the catechesis on the road and the breaking of the bread.

The Setting for the Catechesis on the Road (24:17–18)

There are two aspects of the setting that inform the actual catechesis itself. First, the content of the catechesis is anticipated for the hearer of the gospel, and second, the participants are described in greater detail than in the outer circles.

The Content of the Catechesis

An indication of the content comes from the first words spoken by the risen Christ in Luke: “What are these words [οἱ λόγοι οἱ οὗτοι] that you cast at one another while you are walking along?” (24:17). The substance of the conversation between the Emmaus disciples before Jesus met them was the passion and resurrection facts. Now with his first words, the risen Jesus enters the disciples' conversation concerning the recent events in Jerusalem.

By the phrase “these words” (οἱ λόγοι οἱ οὗτοι) Jesus affirms a Word motif that was first stated in the prologue (1:1–4), where Luke affirms that he is writing a narrative (διήγησιν) of the things (ἔργων) that have been accomplished: that eyewitnesses who became ministers of the Word (ἠρέται ... του λόγου) delivered the tradition about those accomplished things to him and that the purpose of his gospel is faith's certainty (σφάλειαν) concerning the words (λόγων) with which his hearers have been catechized (κατηχήθης). But this Word motif cannot arrive at its goal apart from Luke 24, for the prologue's intentions are not realized until the risen Christ lays out for the apostles the kerygma of the emerging church. In actuality, the prologue shows the progression of Luke's Word motif from the narration of the events of Jesus' life and ministry (ἐργων ... ἔργων, “concerning the events”; 1:1) to certainty concerning the words catechumens have been taught (ἐργων οὖν κατηχήθης λόγων, “concerning the words by which you have been catechized”; 1:4). The progression is from facts to faith in Jesus through the proper understanding of those facts.

The prologue comes to fruition through the *preaching and believing of the kerygma* in Luke 24. Luke refers to his gospel in Acts 1:1 as his “first word” (πρωτον λόγον), suggesting that the whole gospel itself fits under the category of “Word.” Thus, Jesus’ simple question in 24:17 suggests that the content of Jesus’ catechesis will be the words that form the kerygma of the crucified and risen Christ. In Luke’s day this kerygma was already being referred to by the early Christian communities as “the Word.” An essential part of the table fellowship matrix is an exposition of the OT Scriptures that entails a proper interpretation of the passion and resurrection facts, implying that OT Scripture and passion and resurrection facts (found in the NT) are essential for table fellowship. In the church’s worship vocabulary, *the Word is to precede and accompany the Sacrament*.

A second indication of the dialog’s content comes from Cleopas’ response to Jesus’ question: “Do you alone sojourn in Jerusalem and you do not know [γνωσ] the things that have happened [τη γενόμενα] in her in these days?” (24:18). The focus of concern is on “the things that have happened,” a reference to the passion and resurrection of Jesus. Similar phrases will be used throughout Luke 24 as shorthand for the three-day sequence of passion, death, and resurrection.²⁴ This phrase also looks back to the prologue and confirms that the “narrative concerning the events that have come to fulfillment among us” (1:1) refers to the sacred events that occurred in Jerusalem. Thus Cleopas’ response, though incredulous, affirms that the core of the dialog concerns the kerygma of the dying and rising one, who is, in fact, the hoped-for Redeemer (24:21).

The wider context of the setting also hints at the goal of the catechesis. Throughout the gospel Luke has stressed the necessity of true knowledge. Imparting the profound knowledge of the kerygma is set forth as the purpose of the gospel in the prologue of Luke (1:4: “in order that you come to recognize completely the reliability concerning the words by which you have been catechized,” να την ερ τον κατηχήθης λόγων τον σφάλειαν). The lack of such knowledge or understanding is a malady continually confronted by the disciples²⁵ and

²⁴ Lk 24:19: τιν περ του Ιησου του Ναζαρηνου, “the things concerning Jesus of Nazareth”; 24:27: τιν περ αυτου, “the things concerning himself”; cf. 24:35: τιν εν τω δω “the things in the way.” Cf. also the neuter plural phrases in 24:8–11 describing Jesus’ words predicting his death and resurrection and the words of the women describing the fulfillment of Jesus’ words.

²⁵ Lk 18:34: οκ γινωσκον τιν λεγόμενα, “they did not know the things that were spoken.” In 24:18 the Emmaus disciples accuse Jesus of the ignorance of which they

the inhabitants of Jerusalem.²⁶ The true knowledge of the presence of the risen Christ in their midst will come to the Emmaus disciples through the breaking of the bread (24:35: ος γνωσθη αυτοις εν τω κλάσει του ρτου, “how he was known to them in the breaking of the bread”).

Thus the setting of the center circle (like the framework of the chiasm, which forms the outer circles) already anticipates the essence of what Jesus’ catechesis on the road and breaking of the bread will reveal. Luke’s reiteration of his themes is a powerful literary device to persuade the hearer. His inspired narrative of Jesus’ words and deeds is certain, as he assured Theophilus in the prologue (1:4).

The Participants in the Catechesis

At this point the narrative provides further details about the participants in the scene, including the name of one of the disciples: Cleopas. This shortened version of the Greek name Κλεόπατρος may also represent the Semitic name Κλωπας, Clopas. Mary, the wife of Clopas, is mentioned in Jn 19:25, and Clopas and Cleopas may in fact be the same person. That assumption seems to lie beneath the early church’s tradition, mentioned by Hegesippus (cited by Eusebius),²⁷ that Cleopas is Clopas, brother of Joseph, making Cleopas the uncle of Jesus himself, and that the unnamed Emmaus disciple is Cleopas’ son Simeon, later the second bishop of Jerusalem, the leader of the Jerusalem church after

themselves are guilty: οκ γνωσ τ γενόμενα εν ατω εν ταις μέραις ταύταις, “who does not know the things that have happened in her [Jerusalem] in these days.” See also 9:45: “They did not understand [γνωέω] this word, and it was hidden from them.”

²⁶ Lk 19:42: ε γνωσ εν τω μέρ ταύτ κα σ τ προξ ερήνην, “if only you—even you—had known in this day the things that have to do with peace”; 19:44: ενθ ω οκ γνωσ τ εν καιρω εν της επισκοπης σου, “because you did not know the appointed time of your visitation.”

²⁷ Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, iii, 32. J. McHugh, *The Mother of Jesus* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1975), 212–16, 244–45, discusses Hegesippus as cited by Eusebius with respect to the relationship within Jesus’ family between Clopas and Joseph and their sons. McHugh’s conclusions (pp. 244–45) as to the relationships in Jesus’ family rely on the report of Hegesippus that Cleopas was the father of Simeon, the second bishop of Jerusalem. McHugh gives two translations of Hegesippus that are here conflated into one: “After the martyrdom of James the Just (*nephew of Joseph and of Clopas*) on the same charge as the Lord, his [i.e., Jesus’] uncle’s child Simeon, the son of Clopas, is next made bishop. He was put forward by everyone, he being yet another cousin of the Lord” (pp. 245 and 245, n. 21; emphasis McHugh). Cf. also J. M. Creed, *The Gospel according to St. Luke: The Greek Text, with Introduction, Notes, and Indices* (London: Macmillan, 1930), 295; E. E. Ellis, *The Gospel of Luke*, 276; and I. H. Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, 894.

A.D. 70.²⁸ Cleopas would have been recognized by Luke's hearers as a prominent figure in the church at the time when Luke's gospel was beginning to circulate. The inclusion of Cleopas' name would have lent authority to the resurrection narrative and all of Luke's gospel. It also would have emphasized the continuity between the meal of Jesus at Emmaus and the meals of the early church. The father of the bishop of Jerusalem ate with Jesus at Emmaus, as did his son, who now eats the Meal of Jesus with the church. If Cleopas is part of the family of Jesus, then the Emmaus narrative may have been handed down as part of Jesus' family history.²⁹

Cleopas asks Jesus, "Do you alone sojourn [παροικεῖς] in Jerusalem and you do not know the things that have happened in her in these days?" (24:18). This description of Jesus has possible theological overtones within Luke's table fellowship matrix. In the NT παροικέω, "to sojourn, to live as a (resident) alien" occurs only here (24:18) and in Heb 11:9 (while παροικία, "a sojourn, stay," occurs in Acts 13:17; 1 Pet 1:17; and πάροικος, "sojourner, stranger, a person in exile," occurs in Acts 7:6, 29; Eph 2:19; 1 Pet 2:11). Only here do any of these related words describe Christ. The Emmaus disciples perceive Jesus as a Passover pilgrim to Jerusalem (not a permanent resident) who somehow missed the news of the crucifixion. This instance of the verb is often dismissed as having no theological significance and as unrelated to the word group elsewhere in the NT.³⁰ But does Luke have an important though cryptic allusion in this reference to Jesus?

As the Son of the Most High (1:32) without a human father, Jesus truly is a sojourner on earth, not a native son at home on earth or even in Jerusalem. Ironically, Cleopas' question of him is, in some ways, a confession of his true identity. A major theme of the Emmaus story is that after his resurrection, Jesus, the visitor in Jerusalem, sojourns with his

²⁸ Many have suggested that Cleopas' companion on the road to Emmaus was his son Simeon. Origen, in *Contra Celsum*, ii, 62, 68, first named Simon as this companion. Cf. J. M. Creed, *The Gospel according to St. Luke*, 295: "Zahn connects the tradition (Orig. C. Cels. ii. 62, 68) that Cleopas's unnamed companion was Simon with the statement in Eus. H. E. iii. II that the apostles appointed Simeon, the son of Clopas, cousin to the Lord, to succeed James as Bishop of Jerusalem." For a fuller discussion of Cleopas and Simeon, see A. A. Just Jr., *The Ongoing Feast* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1993), 72–75.

²⁹ Cf. E. E. Ellis, *The Gospel of Luke*, 277; B. Reicke, *The Roots of the Synoptic Gospels* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986), 49–52.

³⁰ Cf. K. L. and M. A. Schmidt, *pároikos*, *TDNT*, Abridged, 790, on 24:18 and παροικέω. K. L. and M. A. Schmidt, *πάροικος*, *TDNT* 5:853, note: "παροικεῖν might simply mean 'to live.'"

people wherever they may go—to Emmaus or the ends of the earth. Jesus came from a far country to secure for himself a kingdom (cf. 19:12), to bring Israel out from bondage and lead her to her true and permanent home. The infancy narrative stressed how Jesus fulfills the Scriptures and Israel's ancient hopes. Zechariah and Elizabeth, Joseph and Mary, and Simeon and Anna represent the faithful remnant of Israel awaiting redemption.

Luke 24, with its emphasis on the death and resurrection of Jesus in fulfillment of the Scriptures, highlights Jesus' visitation and identification with Israel. OT Israel sojourned, and in fact that is the main occasion for the use of the word group in the NT. Israel sojourned in Egypt (□αροικία, "a sojourn" [Acts 13:17]; □άροικος, "sojourner, stranger" [Acts 7:6]). Heb 11:9 recalls how Abraham sojourned (□αροικέω) in the Promised Land, living in tents—temporary dwellings. Acts 7:29 refers to Moses, who was temporarily a sojourner (□άροικος) in Midian before returning to Egypt to deliver Israel. 1 Pet 1:17 and 2:11 speak of the Christian life as a temporary sojourn here on earth, where Christians are strangers in this world (□αροικία, "a sojourn" [1 Pet 1:17]; □άροικος, "sojourner" [1 Pet 2:11]). Finally, Eph 2:19 tells how those in Christ are *no longer* strangers or temporary sojourners in relation to God but are permanent members of God's household and fellow citizens with God's saints.

If the people of Israel were "sojourners," then Jesus, the Son of Man, embraces in his very person the same tension that Israel experienced and Luke's church now experiences. As Son of God and Son of Man, he is both a stranger in the hostile, fallen world and the Redeemer of the world (cf. Lk 24:21). Crucial for Luke's gospel is the manner in which Jesus receives sinners in the world and the way in which sinners in the world receive him. For example, in Luke 9 and 10, Jesus sent the Twelve and the seventy(-two), respectively, telling them that those who received them received Jesus himself and those will be received by him on Judgment Day. (This Christological principle is summed up in 9:48.)

In so many table scenes,³¹ Jesus shows the hospitality of God to the world's rejected outcasts. Jesus is known for eating with sinners and publicans, the disenfranchised. The redemption of the world through Jesus Christ and his divinely ordained suffering and death show God's gracious

³¹ Cf. D. R. Dumm, "Luke 24:44–49 and Hospitality," *Sin, Salvation, and the Spirit*. Ed. D. Durken, (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1979), 231–39 whose insights concerning this theme in Luke were instrumental in the formulation of this argument. Cf. also J. Koenig, *New Testament Hospitality* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985).

hospitality toward his fallen creation. Jesus, as the one who comes from afar, opens up the Scriptures (24:27, 32, 45) to show the disciples the divine hospitality that has come to full expression in the messianic kingdom.

The breaking of the bread is the intimate celebration of this divine hospitality. What is at stake for the disciples and all Israel is the manner in which they receive or reject this stranger, who comes and is known in the breaking of the bread. Will they receive him with the same open hospitality as Jesus showed to strangers during his earthly life? Or will they meet him with hostility and rejection.³²

The two Emmaus disciples become foundational for the new Israel when they accept what is, in fact, a *divine* invitation to banquet eschatologically with the Son of God. The historical narrative is also didactic, teaching the church how and where she will recognize her Lord. The common ground where the divine Son meets humankind and humankind meets the divine Host will be at the table. In table fellowship God offers his gracious hospitality, and in his supreme form of table fellowship—the Lord’s Supper—he extends his forgiveness to sinners in the true, real presence of Jesus in bread and wine. Fellow creatures of “flesh and bones” (cf. 24:39) have the opportunity to reciprocate hospitality by receiving in this Meal the divine mystery of God’s redemptive action in Jesus Christ. Fellowship around God’s Table—the Sacrament of the Altar—is therefore a confession of unity in faith in Jesus, of common understanding and doctrinal agreement. This hospitality at the fellowship of the Table is also eschatological, pointing to and proleptically participating in the heavenly table fellowship at the eternal messianic banquet, where God’s hospitality reaches its final fulfillment.³³

Luke uses the participants in the catechesis on the road to Emmaus to focus on the table fellowship matrix. Cleopas, if indeed he is the brother of Joseph and therefore the uncle of Jesus, does not recognize a member of his own family but considers Jesus a stranger to Jerusalem and to the passion and resurrection facts. The identification of Jesus as

³² Cf. Heb 13:1–2 and the many other NT exhortations for Christian hospitality. D. R. Dumm, “Luke 24:44–49 and Hospitality,” 236, comments: “At Emmaus, it was only *after* the disciples had offered hospitality to the stranger that he was revealed to them (Luke 24:29–31). ... *The ultimate hospitality is, then, an entertainment of divine mystery in human life.* Table hospitality is but a sign” (emphasis Dumm).

³³ D. R. Dumm, “Luke 24:44–49 and Hospitality,” 238, comments: “In the heavenly banquet ... table-fellowship becomes a sign of definitive fulfillment and ultimate freedom.”

the sojourner sets up the theme of hospitality in which Cleopas and the other disciple demonstrate their eagerness to host this stranger who has opened up the Scriptures to them. In turn, it is Jesus who will truly show God's hospitality by revealing his true identity in the breaking of the bread. The theme of hospitality merges directly into the themes of recognition and table fellowship, both of which come to a climax when Jesus breaks bread.³⁴ The themes of the journey, hospitality and table fellowship, and recognizing Jesus all lead to the eschaton, when the Christian's journey of faith will be completed; when he will no longer be a sojourner, but a permanent resident of the New Jerusalem; when he will be seated at the eternal wedding feast; and when he will recognize Jesus and see him face to face.

The Christology of the Emmaus Disciples (24:19–24)

The catechesis on the road to Emmaus dominates the pericope by virtue of the amount of material that Luke allocates to this dialogue between Jesus and the disciples. Although Luke has already introduced the main themes into the narrative in the outer circles (24:13–16), it is during the catechesis on the road that they are enfolded.

The discussion of the passion and resurrection facts begins with Jesus asking, "What sort of things?" (24:19). The Emmaus disciples respond with their own interpretation of the events of Jesus' life. The catechesis on the road juxtaposes three differing Christologies, that is, understandings of Jesus. At stake here is the correct perception of who Jesus is. First, the Emmaus disciples give their own incomplete Christology (24:19; "the things concerning Jesus of Nazareth," τὰ ἔργα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ Ναζαρηνοῦ). Next they report the rejection of Jesus by the religious leaders in Jerusalem because of their false Christology (24:20). Finally, the apex comes when Jesus presents his Christology (24:25–27; "the things concerning himself," τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ), based on the evidence of the OT Scriptures. The presentation of these three competing Christologies encapsulates the previous twenty-three chapters of Luke, dedicated to the portrayal of the life and teaching of Jesus of Nazareth. Every major

³⁴ H. Flender, *St. Luke: Theologian of Redemptive History* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1967), 80–81, unites the hospitality and journey motifs of Luke: "Alongside the journey motif the hospitality accorded to Jesus is a characteristic of Luke. He treats the two motifs as parts of a single whole. In Jesus 'God himself visits the people, hidden in the guise of the wanderer refreshing himself as a guest in their home'. In the Emmaus story (Luke 24:13–35) this twofold motif of wanderer and guest comes out clearly." (Flender cites W. Grundmann, *Das Evangelium nach Lukas* [Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1961] 27–28, and W. Grundmann, "Fragen der Komposition des l. 'Reiseberichtes,'" *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 50 [1959] 253.)

group that has interacted with Jesus in the gospel is represented here, and the definitive word concerning the proper Christology is given by the risen Lord himself by means of an exegetical lesson in OT messianic interpretation.

The goal of the catechesis on the road, however, is more than a historical summation of the events of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. Luke takes the hearer of the gospel from the level of historical information to faith—faith engendered by Jesus' *interpretation* of these events against the backdrop of the OT. *Therefore, the goal is faith—faith to believe in the fulfillment of all that the prophets had spoken about the suffering of the Christ and his subsequent entrance into glory. Faith in Christ—properly understood—is the goal of the catechesis on the road.*

The catechesis on the road also establishes the pattern for Christian worship. The catechesis is Christology, and its vehicle—teaching—is the first element in the table fellowship matrix, serving as *preparation for the meal*. The Christological interpretation of the Scriptures teaches the disciples about Jesus. *In Christian worship, this same teaching will be accomplished by the Service of the Word, which precedes the Service of the Sacrament.*

The entire catechesis on the road is dominated by the question of the risen Christ: “What sort of things?” (24:19; οἱ α...). As the colloquium begins in earnest, the passion and resurrection events are the issue.³⁵ The catechesis on the road is framed by the question of Jesus in 24:19 (οἱ α...) and his interpretation of the things concerning himself (τὸ ἐπεὶ αὐτοῦ) in the OT in 24:27. By having Jesus begin, guide, and end the catechesis, Luke implies that *Jesus' Christology is the norm for his gospel and the norm for the church.*

Luke's account also accents the change that takes place in Jesus' role. Jesus begins as the questioner but ends up as the teacher. Similarly, Jesus will begin the Emmaus meal as the guest but end as the host at the table, distributing the bread. Thus Jesus dominates the whole pericope by his words and deeds.

Jesus' own interpretation of “the things concerning himself” (24:25–27) is set in relief by following the Emmaus disciples' unabashed

³⁵ The neuter plurals in 24:8–11, 14, 18, 19, 21, 26–27 all refer to the passion and resurrection facts.

confession of their Christological hope (24:19) and their *Christological lament* (24:20–24). These two dimensions of the Emmaus disciples' theology form the two phases of Christology that Luke has developed in his gospel: (1) the prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, the prophet who (they had hoped) would redeem Israel (24:19, 21) and (2) the prophet *rejected* and delivered up by the chief priests and rulers, condemned to death, and crucified (24:20). The first phase represents the disciples' hope; the second represents their lament. Only after they understand the passion and resurrection will the second phase be a source of comfort and hope.

There are three dimensions to the disciples' ongoing Christological statement (24:19): first, the title "Jesus of Nazareth"; second, the characterization of the one bearing the title, "a prophet mighty in deed and word"; and third, the two audiences who witness the work of the one bearing the title, "God and all the people." In essence, this is the Christology of the Emmaus disciples. (The Christology of the chief priests and the rulers [24:20] is different because they did not view Jesus as a prophet mighty in deed and word.) The death of Jesus is such a recent and unexpected phenomenon that the disciples have not incorporated it into their Christology. *At this point, Jesus' death is antithetical to their beliefs about him.* Therefore 24:20 is not a part of the confession of the disciples' *faith* in Jesus but is a recitation of subsequent facts that indicate how the Passover events, in their view, went tragically awry. It is the beginning of their lament (24:20–24) that Jesus' crucifixion and death dashed their hopes. Therefore, the death of Jesus is not part of the Christology entailed by the three aspects of their confession in 24:19.

Jesus of Nazareth

The designation "Jesus of Nazareth" (24:19) urges the hearer to go back and consider Jesus' roots in the gospel. This is part of Luke's overt hermeneutic in chapter 24, for in 24:6 the women are told by the angels to remember Jesus' words *in Galilee*. Now in 24:19, the Emmaus disciples, recalling the origins of Jesus by the title "Jesus of Nazareth," point the hearer back to 1:26–38, where another angel (Gabriel) was sent "to a town of Galilee named *Nazareth*" to announce Jesus' virginal conception by the power of the Holy Spirit (cf. also 2:4, 39, 51). But most important of all, "Jesus of Nazareth" directs the hearer back to Jesus' programmatic sermon *at Nazareth*, where he announced that his ministry would be one of release and forgiveness (see 4:16–30).

A Prophet Mighty in Deed and Word

There is a close relationship in Luke's writings between the title "Jesus of Nazareth" and the prophet Christology that reflects the miracle-working character of Jesus' ministry. However, there is a second phase of Lukan prophet Christology, the rejected prophet. The essence of the OT prophetic office is that the prophet is both miracle worker and suffering servant. In 24:19–20, the Emmaus disciples express this twofold Christology: first in 24:19, the prophet of mighty wonders and then in 24:20, the prophet rejected. But the disciples never understood the two as aspects of the one Messiah. The complete Christology begins with Jesus, the "prophet mighty in deed and word," and ends with Jesus as the one rejected by the chief priests and rulers, condemned to death, and crucified.

These two phases apply not only to Jesus, but also to Moses and to *all those who stand in the prophetic tradition*, such as Elijah, Elisha, John the Baptist, and also those today who occupy the office of the prophetic and apostolic ministry. The parallel between the OT and the NT is drawn explicitly in Acts 7:22 within Luke's theology in Stephen's account of salvation history. Just as the Emmaus disciples confess Jesus as a prophet "mighty in deed and word" (δυνατὶς ἐν ἔργῳ καὶ λόγῳ; Lk 24:19), so Stephen describes Moses as "mighty in his words and deeds" (δυνατὶς ἐν λόγοις καὶ ἔργοις αὐτοῦ; Acts 7:22).³⁶ The rejection of Jesus by his own people is a fundamental part of the Mosaic pattern in Acts 7:35–40. The placement of Moses in the account of salvation history in Acts 7 engages in the same kind of step-parallelism utilized in the infancy narrative between John the Baptist and Jesus, where Jesus is similar ("parallel") but greater (the "step"), but in Acts 7 the comparison is between Moses and Jesus. In Acts 7:37, Moses, the rejected miracle worker, points to Jesus, who is the greater prophet: "This is the Moses who said to the Israelites, 'God will raise up for you a prophet from your brethren like me.' " The figure of Moses is parallel to Jesus not only as a miracle-working prophet, but also as rejected: "Our fathers refused to obey him [Moses] but thrust him aside, and in their hearts they turned to Egypt" (Acts 7:39). Jesus is the fulfillment of a long tradition of prophets rejected by a "stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears" who "always resist the Holy Spirit" (Acts 7:51). The prophets were killed because they "announced beforehand the coming of the Righteous One" (Acts 7:51–53).

³⁶ R. Dillon, *From Eye-Witnesses*, 122–23, 138, and 254–60, also sees Acts 7:22 as parallel to Lk 24:19 and as a development of the prophet Christology.

The motif of the rejected prophet continues throughout Acts, first with the apostles, then with the deacons Stephen and Philip, and finally with Paul. The first NT prophet rejected to the point of death is Stephen, who, like Jesus (Lk 3:22; 4:18), is full of the Holy Spirit (Acts 7:55; $\square\lambda\eta\rho\eta\varsigma$ $\square\nu\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\mu\alpha\tau\omicron\varsigma$ $\square\gamma\acute{\iota}\omicron\upsilon$) and is put to death because of his teaching (Acts 7:58–60). The ministry of St. Paul is replete with miracles and wonders. Rejected by Jews, Paul turned to the Gentiles. His journey toward martyrdom, begun in Acts 19, takes him through Jerusalem to Rome, as was “necessary” (the divine $\delta\epsilon\iota\omicron$; Acts 23:11).³⁷

God and All the People

The Emmaus disciples’ statement about Jesus’ prophetic character concludes with the unusual designation that Jesus was a prophet mighty in deed and word “in the presence of God and all the people” (24:19). Luke often recorded that Jesus’ deeds and words were done before the “people” (here $\lambda\acute{\alpha}\omicron\varsigma$), but it is unusual to acknowledge that Jesus was this kind of prophet before God.

The preposition $\square\nu\alpha\nu\tau\acute{\iota}\omicron\nu$ is exclusively Lukan, occurring five times. It may convey the sense of “before” or “in the presence of” (BAGD lists Lk 20:26; Acts 8:32) or “in the sight or judgment of” (BAGD, Lk 1:6; 24:19; Acts 7:10).³⁸ Throughout his gospel, Luke’s demonstrates that Jesus is the “prophet mighty in deed and word” come to accomplish God’s redemptive plan. Therefore, the expression “in the presence of God” (24:19) is a significant statement of Luke’s Christology from the divine perspective as it reflects the messianic expectations of the OT. It is not simply a flawed Christology from the perspective of the people. Jesus’ prophetic character before God, as it fits into the divine plan of redemption, was already anticipated in the infancy narrative with the same phrase. Zechariah and Elizabeth were “righteous before God” ($\delta\acute{\iota}\kappa\alpha\iota\omicron\iota$... $\square\nu\alpha\nu\tau\acute{\iota}\omicron\nu$ $\tau\omicron\upsilon$ \square $\theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$ \square ; 1:6), and they too had a part in God’s plan of redemption in Jesus.

Using the same divine standard—“in the presence of God”—the Emmaus disciples evaluated Jesus as a mighty prophet, on par with the prophets and martyrs of the OT. Jesus is a mighty prophet in the judgment of God because his deeds and words were in conformity with the OT

³⁷ R. Dillon, *From Eye-Witnesses*, 125, n. 163.

³⁸ MM, 211, states that the sense of “in the presence of” is “peculiar to the Lukan writings in the NT.”

messianic expectation and the prophetic tradition in particular. He was like Moses and Elijah and Elisha in his miraculous accomplishments and divine preaching, thereby fulfilling the expectations of the Emmaus disciples for God's Messiah. They were so convinced that Jesus exhibited messianic characteristics that they go on to say that "we were hoping that he is the one about to redeem Israel" (24:21). The Christology expressed by the Emmaus disciples in 24:19 is not so much in error as it is incomplete. It is deficient because it has no place for a scandalously executed Messiah. To the Emmaus disciples at this point, the cross was a scandal that shattered their hopes, not the fulfillment of God's ordained plan. Only after Jesus opens their eyes and minds will they be able to embrace the cross.

The Prelude to the Kerygma of the Catechesis (24:19–24)

In the Emmaus story, there is no explicit mention of the resurrection until 24:34 (ἐγέρθη κύριος, "the Lord has risen"). The references to the "third day" (24:21) and to the missing body and vision of angels (24:22–24) hint at it. The Christian hearer of the gospel knows the end of the story, but as yet the Emmaus disciples do not. For them, the puzzling circumstances and data require interpretation. Also, Luke has carefully described the chronology and the Christian hearer of the gospel knows that Sunday, the first day of the week, the third day in the sequence of Jesus' passion and resurrection, is theologically significant as the first day of the new creation, the day of the resurrection, the eighth, eschatological day. Here in the transition from the old Sabbath observances to Sunday, the eschatological day, there is a new reckoning of time because of the earth-shattering events of "these days" (24:18; ταῖς ἡμέραις ταύταις). According to Luke's time sequence, the new era of salvation has dawned, the eschaton has arrived, and in Luke the first celebration of that new era of salvation will take place at Emmaus.

The resurrection will be introduced subtly into the Emmaus narrative by virtue of the fact that it is the risen Christ who opens up the Scriptures and makes himself known in the breaking of the bread. Jesus' kerygmatic words of catechesis in 24:25–27 are unintelligible without the prelude of 24:19–24. The prelude's report of Jesus' embarrassing death by crucifixion and the disturbing news of an empty tomb and a vision of angels sets the stage for Jesus' teaching from the OT Scriptures the necessity of his suffering and rising again.

Lk 24:21 calls to the hearers' attention the two major thoughts of this section: the concept of one who would redeem Israel, "But we were hoping that he is the one about to redeem Israel" (οὐ μὲν εἰς δὲ ἐλπίζομεν

τι ατός στιν μέλλων λυτρουσθαι τιν Ισραήλ), and the concept of the resurrection, veiled from the disciples but suggested to the hearers of the gospel by the phrase “this third day” (τρίτην ταύτην μέραν). Although λίζω, “hope,” is not prominent in Luke’s salvation vocabulary,³⁹ here in conjunction with “to redeem” and the hint of resurrection, “hope” anticipates the connection between “hope” and the resurrection in Acts.⁴⁰ Luke ends both his gospel and Acts with a reference to the hope of Israel. In Lk 24:21 it is the hope of redemption for Israel. In Acts 28:20 Luke quotes Paul: “It is because of the *hope of Israel* that I am bound with this chain.” For the Emmaus disciples it would be natural to think ethnically “in terms of the redemption of God’s own people, Israel”⁴¹ but Acts reveals that the new Israel includes Gentiles as well as Jews. The reference at the end of Acts to Paul expounding the Scriptures to the Jews is phrased in language similar to Jesus’ opening of the Scriptures to the Emmaus disciples toward the end of Luke:

Acts 28:23 He was explaining, testifying to the kingdom of God and persuading them about Jesus both *from the Law of Moses and from the Prophets* [ὅ τε του νόμου Μωϋσέως κα των προφητων].

Lk 24:27 And after beginning *from Moses and from all the prophets* [ὁ Μωϋσέως κα ὅντων των προφητων], he explained to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

There is also a reference to a three-day sequence in both contexts (Lk 24:21; Acts 28:17).⁴² Both Luke 24 and Acts 28 stress that the bringing of redemption to Israel fulfills the OT promises, which were the basis for the *hope* of Israel. These promises were specific enough to reveal that redemption would come through an individual, “*the one about to redeem Israel*” (Lk 24:21; μέλλων λυτρουσθαι τιν Ισραήλ).

“About” or “going to (soon),” μέλλω, (24:21) is also part of Luke’s salvation vocabulary. In many contexts it helps convey the impending accomplishment of God’s purposes in Jesus Christ. These purposes

³⁹ The verb occurs in Lk 6:34; 23:8; 24:21; Acts 24:26; 26:7.

⁴⁰ The noun λπίς, “hope,” absent from all the gospels, occurs eight times in Acts. It is associated with resurrection in Acts 2:26; 23:6; 24:15; 26:6–7; 28:20.

⁴¹ I. H. Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, 895.

⁴² However, while Paul does speak to the Jews in Acts 28:17–22 after the three days, his exegetical preaching in Acts 28:23–28 was on a later day.

involve Jesus' passion (9:31, 44; 22:23), judgment (3:7; 21:7, 36), and the kingdom (19:11).⁴³ μέλλω, "about," links 24:21 to these earlier passages in Luke's gospel and places Luke's use of λυτρουσθαι, "to redeem," within the evangelist's motif of the redemption of Israel through the suffering and death of Jesus in fulfillment of the Scriptures (especially 9:31, 44).

The verb λυτρόομαι, "to redeem," occurs only here in Luke's gospel and never in Acts. What did the Emmaus disciples mean? They were not yet able to see the cross as God's means of redemption. Their concept of redemption likely included political and social dimensions, freedom from Roman tyranny through a messianic deliverer⁴⁴ Jesus fit the OT messianic pattern as "a prophet mighty in deed and word" (24:19). They probably expected him to continue the pattern of Moses and the other OT prophets, whose redemptive work encompassed Israel as a nation set apart from other nations. That expectation makes perfect sense from the perspective of the old covenant. Also in keeping with the OT perspective is their failure to consider the other part of the OT prophetic pattern, rejection, as part of Israel's redemption. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and many others were resisted and rejected, but that hindered or even prevented God's salvation from coming to those who rejected them. Prior to Jesus, what prophet ever brought salvation through his own rejection or death?⁴⁵

The hearer, however, detects the irony in these words. Through the cross Jesus *did redeem Israel*. "Redeem" (λυτρόομαι) recalls the infancy narrative, where the noun λύτρωσις, "redemption," is heard from Zechariah in 1:68, "Blessed [be] the Lord, the God of *Israel*, because he has visited and made *redemption* [λύτρωσιν] for his people," and from Anna in 2:38, "She gave thanks to God and spoke about him to all who were waiting for the *redemption* [λύτρωσιν] of *Jerusalem*."⁴⁶ Looking back at these representatives of the faithful remnant of OT Israel in the

⁴³ Cf. also its uses in 7:2; 10:1; 13:9; 19:4. Most of these passages, including 24:21, use the present infinitive for the action about to take place. BAGD says that the meaning of μέλλω can approach "begin" (BAGD, 1 c α; 21:7). It can serve "as a periphrasis for the fut[ure]" (BAGD, 1 c β) or denote "an action that necessarily follows a divine decree," thus "*is destined, must, will certainly*" (BAGD, 1 c δ; 9:44; cf. 9:31).

⁴⁴ In Acts 7:35 Stephen calls Moses "ruler and redeemer" (ἄρχοντα καὶ λυτρωτήν).

⁴⁵ Samson would be an exceptional OT example (Judg 16:28–30).

⁴⁶ D. L. Bock, *Proclamation from Prophecy and Pattern: Lucan Old Testament Christology* (Sheffield: JSOT, 1987), 86, comments that the phrase "the redemption of Jerusalem" "is unique for the Old and New Testaments, though the concept seems to be drawn from Isa. 52.9. The term is taken as a virtual synonym for the 'consolation of Israel' found in Luke 2.25. In fact, these two ideas are fused together in Luke 24.21."

infancy narrative anticipates the hermeneutical principle in 24:25–27: the OT shows the necessity of the death and resurrection of Jesus. In Luke 1–2, the infant Jesus is portrayed as the hope, the consolation, and the redemption of Israel. The evangelist purposely expressed thematic and verbal links between Luke 24 and the infancy narrative to show that Jesus the Messiah has accomplished the redemption of Israel. The words of OT saints in the opening chapters of the gospel are the foundation for understanding Jesus' words in 24:25–27.

What verses might Jesus have quoted as pointing to his death and resurrection on the third day? While we cannot be certain, likely candidates include the OT resurrection accounts in 1 Ki 17:22–24; 2 Ki 4:32–37; 13:21 and the OT promises of resurrection, including Is 25:6–9; 26:19; Ezek 37:1–14; Hos 6:2–3, which speaks of “the third day”; Jonah, which also speaks of Jonah's return to the land of the living on the third day (1:17); Daniel 12:2–3; and Pss 16:9–11; 23:6; 73:24.

Throughout the gospel, Luke uses “on the third day” (τῆς τρίτης ἡμέρας) exclusively as a reference to the final day of the three-day sequence, when Jesus rises from the dead. “The third day” is used in 24:7, 21, 46 to portray Easter Sunday as the final, climactic day in salvation history. This was anticipated throughout the gospel, reaching fulfillment in this final chapter (24:21), where it becomes a fundamental part of the Lukan kerygma that is to be proclaimed by the emerging church in Acts (Lk 24:46). There can be no doubt that “on the third day” is part of Luke's resurrection Christology, a reference to the resurrection occurring on the first day of the new week of God's new creation, the eighth, eschatological day. The “third day” (24:21) prepares the hearer for the risen Christ to open the scriptural meaning of his resurrection to the disciples. In that way it is a necessary link to the next verses.

Lk 24:22–24 confirms that the eyes of the disciples were closed. All the elements of the resurrection truth were present, but they were unable to perceive it. They even introduced the concept of the third day in connection with the hope of the redeemer in 24:21. They know of the empty tomb, the vision of angels, and that “him they did not see” (24:24). The frustrated hope for a redeemer (24:21) and the quandary of the empty tomb (24:22–24) are integrated and resolved in the catechesis on the road in 24:25–27. That combination is the perfect foil for Jesus' interpretation of the Scriptures, in which the necessity of his suffering before his glory is expounded as the proper hermeneutical approach.

The Kerygma of the Catechesis on the Road (24:25–27)

The core of the catechesis on the road is 24:25–27, in which, for the Emmaus disciples, Jesus exegetes Moses, the prophets, and all the OT Scriptures. *This first climax of the Emmaus story and of the gospel itself accomplishes two aims:* (1) In 24:26, the kerygma of the gospel is forged into one simple statement: “Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and enter into his glory?” (2) In 24:27, a scriptural foundation is provided for this kerygma: “And after beginning from Moses and from all the prophets, he explained to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.” These two features provide for the hearer of the gospel a precise lens that brings into sharp focus who Jesus is and what he has done in accomplishing God’s plan of salvation.

The Disciples’ Lack of Faith (24:25)

Jesus’ rebuke of the disciples’ lack faith in 24:25 is a criticism of their deficient Christology, which was the cause of their sad faces (24:17; σκυθρωποί, “sad faced”).⁴⁷ Jesus’ rebuke declares their understanding of his ministry as a foolish failure to believe prophecy.

In the catechesis on the road the two parties now reverse roles. Jesus shifts from inquiring guest to teacher and host, and the incredulous disciples who chided and lectured Jesus are admonished and set straight. Then the narrative turns from the Christology of the Emmaus disciples to the true Christology of Jesus himself, which is introduced by the emphatic “And he himself said to them” (καὶ αὐτὸς ἐπεὶ εἶπεν ἑαυτοῦς; 24:25).

Within the framework of Luke 24, Jesus’ rebuke of the Emmaus disciples is parallel to the angels’ rebuke of the women (24:5–7): neither the women nor the disciples should have been so slow to believe in the resurrection because of the prophecies. For the women, it was Jesus’ own prophecies in Galilee; the Emmaus disciples are to remember *both* the OT prophecies as well as the prophecies of Jesus. In both cases the question is one of *faith*—faith to believe all that the prophets have spoken, *including the final prophet, Jesus*, who on three occasions predicted his passion (9:22, 44; 18:31–32) and twice promised that it would be followed by his resurrection (9:22; 18:33). The women recalled the passion predictions in Galilee (Lk 9:22, 44) and reported the resurrection to the apostles and other disciples (24:9), but “these words appeared before them as nonsense, and they were not believing them”

⁴⁷ R. Dillon, *From Eye-Witnesses*, 132, suggests that 24:17 and 24:25 “enclose what is spoken in between within the framework of the messianic passion-mystery.” The sad faces (24:17) and slow hearts (24:25) frame the deficient Christology expressed in 24:18–24.

(οἱ ἰστοὺν ἀταίᾳ; 24:11). In the infancy narrative, Zechariah's doubt contrasted with Mary's acceptance of the angelic message. So too now, the male disciples' lack of faith is made more glaring by their disregard for the report of the believing women. The unbelief of "the Eleven and ... all the rest [masculine plural]" (24:9) is now represented by the two Emmaus disciples who were "foolish and slow in heart to believe" (24:25).

The catechesis on the road serves as *preparation for the meal at Emmaus*. It accomplishes its goal: faith in the suffering and rising Christ. Jesus' rebuke of the disciples reprimands their lack of faith⁴⁸ in the true Christology that includes rejection, suffering, crucifixion, and resurrection. Their lack of faith came from not understanding the prophecies. But now *Jesus the teacher* explains the hermeneutical key that opens the Scriptures so that the hearts, slow to believe (24:25), become burning (24:32). The issue of faith or its absence is central to the Lukan themes of recognition versus the failure to recognize, opened or closed eyes, comprehension or misunderstanding of the passion and resurrection facts. The evangelist moves from physical seeing and hearing to spiritual perception in the heart, from ignorance and unbelief to faith. True remembering (24:6, 8) comes from a Christological understanding of Moses and the prophets—a goal only *the risen Christ* can accomplish in the Emmaus disciples.⁴⁹

The personal presence and instruction of the risen Lord is the element that sets this act of teaching apart from all others. The first instruction comes from the risen Lord himself. The three days of passion and resurrection are pivotal in the fulfillment of Scripture by Jesus of Nazareth. The resurrection itself is *the sign of fulfillment*, bringing to completion the kerygma of suffering before glory and also the table fellowship of Jesus. The teaching of the risen Christ readies the Emmaus disciples for the meal

⁴⁸ As an articular infinitive, τοῦ πιστεύειν, "to believe," explains in what way they were ἄνοητοι καὶ βραδεῖς τῶν καρδῶν, "foolish and slow in heart."

⁴⁹ R. Dillon, *From Eye-Witnesses*, 133, emphasizes God's personal role in creating faith:

The veil of mystery is now to be lifted, according to divine determination, in the only way it could be lifted: by the personal presence and instruction of the risen Lord, who "opens" the scriptures by showing their realization in himself. ... The "things concerning Jesus of Nazareth" that the travelers could not grasp (v. 19) are now the focal point of the Easter exposition of all Scripture. No more than the events themselves could the Scripture by itself beget faith in the messiah's triumph; *only he can bestow that as his personal gift* (emphasis Dillon).

Cf. also R. Tannehill, *Narrative Unity I*, 127, 281–84, on the irony of 24:17–25.

with the risen Christ in 24:28–30 by giving them faith to believe all that the prophets had spoken. Later in Christian worship, the teaching of the proper understanding of Jesus' suffering and of the real presence of his body and blood in his Supper will be prerequisite for participating in the Meal in which the guests receive the forgiveness of sins for their own resurrection life.

To Believe All That the Prophets Have Spoken (24:25)

Jesus builds the faith of the Emmaus disciples on the foundation of the prophets. This prophetic theme will dominate the kerygmatic statements in Luke 24 and become progressively broader. The angels had appealed only to the words of Jesus, who is the culmination of the prophetic line (24:6–8). Jesus himself first cites “the prophets” (24:25), then “Moses and ... all the prophets ... in all the Scriptures” (24:27), and finally “the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms” (24:44). This last description (24:44) is the fullest and refers to the three parts of the Hebrew canon: the Torah; the Prophets; and the Writings, represented by Psalms, the largest book in the Writings and of particular messianic significance in Jesus' passion.⁵⁰ Yet all three of Jesus' appeals (24:25, 27, 44) should be understood as encompassing the entire OT, since the Christological, prophetic voice of the Spirit sounds forth from every passage of the inspired canon. That Christological perspective is the hermeneutical lens through which Jesus teaches his disciples to look as they view the OT. Luke's repeated use of $\alpha\lambda\lambda\omicron\varsigma$, “all,” in 24:25–27 emphasizes the totality of the prophetic witness. The hearer is struck that the OT provides a prophetic witness that is, in its totality, Christological. According to Jesus, his passion and resurrection as the sign of fulfillment is the major thrust of the whole OT.

This motif of the fulfillment of the Scriptures is a prominent Lukan emphasis throughout the gospel and Acts.⁵¹ Earlier in his gospel Luke anticipated the culmination of prophetic fulfillment in Jesus' passion and resurrection by demonstrating that Jesus is the last and greatest prophet, the promised prophet like Moses, and the fulfillment of the prophetic line. In the programmatic text of 4:16–30, the evangelist began his portrait of Jesus by developing a Christology that is embodied in figures from the OT like Elijah and Elisha. They served as patterns of Christ, patterns

⁵⁰ Psalm 22 in Lk 23:34–35; Ps 69:21 (MT 69:22) in Lk 23:36; and Ps 31:5 (MT 31:6) in Lk 23:46

⁵¹ Cf. Lk 18:31; 20:17; 22:37; Acts 2:22–28; 3:13–18; 4:10–11; 8:30–35; 10:39–43; 13:26–41; 17:2–3; 26:22–23; 28:23. R. Tannehill, *Narrative Unity I*, 193, says Lk 20:17 is “a specific Scripture in which this suffering and glory are prophesied.”

characterized by teaching, miracle working, and rejection.⁵² The type of Christ *par excellence* is Moses who, like all the prophets, taught, performed miracles, and was rejected by many of those to whom he was sent to minister. Throughout Luke-Acts, the evangelist engages in step-parallelism between those in the prophetic tradition before Jesus, such as Moses, Elijah, Elisha, and John the Baptist, and Jesus himself, the greatest prophet and the fulfillment of the prophetic tradition. Jesus surpasses all the other prophets because his crucifixion and resurrection usher in the new era of forgiveness and release from bondage, the goal of Jesus' messianic mission (Lk 4:18–19).

When Jesus reproves the Emmaus disciples for neglecting the prophets, he is pointing to the prophets themselves as well as to their utterances. For their lives and ministries of teaching, miracles, and rejection adumbrate Jesus' teaching, miracles, and crucifixion. The Emmaus disciples are foolish because they did not take to heart (1) the lives of the prophets; (2) Jesus' incorporation of the prophets into his own life and ministry;⁵³ and (3) the prophetic life of Jesus himself. Had they listened to the voice of the prophets, they would have understood the necessity of the Christ's suffering before entering into glory.

*The Kerygmatic Passion and Resurrection Formulae and
the Proof from Moses and the Prophets (24:26–27)*

Lk 24:26, posed in the form of a concise rhetorical question, “Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and enter into his glory?” contains the passion formula “the Christ to suffer” (□αθει□ν τ□ν χριστόν) and the resurrection formula “enter into his glory” (ε□σελθει□ν ε□ς τ□ν δόξαν α□του□). The verse reminds the hearer of themes Luke has developed throughout his gospel.

First, “was it not necessary” (□δει) indicates the inexorable destiny of Jesus within God's plan of salvation. But now that goal of his journey has been reached. The angels too used δει□ (“it is necessary”) in 24:7 when recalling for the women Jesus' passion predictions of 9:22, 44. That

⁵² R. Dillon, *From Eye-Witnesses*, 136, observes that in Lk 24:13–35 and Acts 3:12–26 the entire OT Scriptures are considered ... globally as *prophecy*, and their authors are all *prophets*. ... It probably accounts for the fact that, in the gospel's programmatic episode at the beginning of the public ministry, Jesus' instruction at the synagogue in Nazareth is based on a prophet's text rather than a pericope from the Torah (Lk 4,17ff./Is 61,1f) (emphasis Dillon).

⁵³ E.g., Lk 4:16–30; 7:18–35; 22:37; 23:30, 32–36.

passage too, like 24:26, invites the hearer to look back into the gospel to see how the evangelist has developed the kerygma. This same methodology of remembering recalled how the infancy narrative spoke of Jesus as the source of redemption for Israel (see 24:21) and as the one who will cause the fall and resurrection of many in Israel (see 2:34). He himself experienced that “fall” of rejection to death and that “resurrection” so that he might be the source of salvation.

Second, the crucifixion and death of Jesus at the hands of the chief priests and rulers is now summarized with a passion formula in the phrase “for the Christ to suffer these things” (ταυτα ... παθειν τον χριστον; 24:26). In Luke this Christology of the suffering Messiah draws on Isaiah 52–53 and the psalms.⁵⁴ “To suffer” (παθειν) has been part of Luke’s passion vocabulary (9:22; 17:25; 22:15). Lk 24:26 recapitulates the Christology of the suffering Messiah from Luke’s entire gospel. “For the Christ to suffer” (παθειν τον χριστον) will be repeated in 24:46 as a succinct encapsulation of Lukan passion theology. “Suffer” (ασχω) will be part of the early church’s kerygmatic preaching of Jesus’ crucifixion and death (Acts 1:3; 3:18; 17:3).

Third, the resurrection of the Christ who suffered is invested with new meaning by means of a new formula: “to enter into his glory” (εσελθειν ες τον δοξαν ατου). The resurrection entails not only the empty tomb, but also Jesus’ ascension and session at the right hand of the Father, Jesus’ final eschatological destiny. Jesus is already in the state of glory as he walks with the Emmaus disciples, for all things have been fulfilled. In conjunction with the “third day” in Lk 24:21, “to enter into his glory” completes the Lukan theology of the resurrection and demonstrates that it is the sign of fulfillment of the OT and of Jesus’ journey to Jerusalem.⁵⁵ The

⁵⁴ Jesus quotes Is 53:12, the conclusion of the fourth Isaian Suffering Servant Song (Is 52:13–53:12) in Lk 22:37. Lk 11:22 alludes to a different part of the same verse (Is 53:12), and Lk 24:25 and 24:27 draw on the entire Suffering Servant theme of Isaiah. The passion narrative draws on the psalms (e.g., Psalm 22 in Lk 23:34–35; Ps 69:21 [MT 69:22] in Lk 23:36; Ps 31:5 [MT 31:6] in Lk 23:46).

⁵⁵ G. R. Osborne, *The Resurrection Narratives*, 122, says:

Both “third day” (v. 21) and “enter into glory” (v. 26) emphasize resurrection as the fulfillment of prophecy, an emphasis which meshes well with Luke’s total view of Jesus’ ministry. The event was foreordained by God and foretold by the prophets, and, according to Luke, truly understood only within the context of the sacrificial meaning of his death. The other Gospel writers viewed the cross through the empty tomb, but Luke views the empty tomb through the cross. Christ’s post-resurrection “glory” is thus part of the passion and provides a transition to the proclamation of the early church.

kerygmatic statement in 24:25–27 helps forge together the kerygma of the suffering and resurrected Christ, the fulfillment of Scripture, and the table fellowship of Jesus in the Emmaus narrative. These kerygmatic verses encourage the hearer to go back and see how these themes have been developed earlier in the gospel and in the OT. Luke's motif of *proclamation from prophecy and pattern* applies to the OT and to the prophetic ministry of Jesus, who is himself the architect and pattern for all previous prophets and all subsequent apostles and ministers of the gospel.

Finally, the kerygmatic passion and resurrection formulae of 24:26 are supported by the scriptural foundation given by the risen Lord himself in 24:27. Jesus expands upon his reference to the prophets in 24:25 with a hermeneutical *tour de force* through the entire OT: "And after beginning from [ὁ] Moses and from [ὁ] ⁵⁶all the prophets [πάντων τῶν προφητῶν], he explained to them in all the Scriptures [ἐν ἅσαις ταῖς γραφαῖς] the things concerning himself" (24:27). Moses and the prophets will be expanded in 24:44 to include the psalms.⁵⁷ Already back in 16:29–31 Jesus linked Moses and the Prophets with the resurrection from the

While the passion formulae in 24:26 and 24:46 are identical (παθεῖν τὸν χριστόν, "the Christ to suffer"), the resurrection formula in 24:46 is the familiar ἐναστήναι ἵνα κενρωθῆται τὸ τρίτον ἡμέραν, "rise out of the dead on the third day."

⁵⁶ N. Geldenhuys, *Commentary on the Gospel of Luke* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1952), 637, n. 12, claims: "The second ἀπό ["from"] ... before πάντων ["all"] indicates that Jesus drew His exposition from each individual prophetic book." A. Plummer, *The Gospel according to St. Luke* (The International Critical Commentary. Reprint. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1985), 555, says: "There is nothing incredible in the supposition the He quoted from each one of the Prophets." W. Arndt, *Luke* (Reprint. St. Louis: Concordia, 1986), 490, notes: "It seems better ... to think of the Evangelist as viewing the OT as a whole, every book having been produced by a prophet or prophets. ... The symbols and types, pointing to the Messiah's work and person, of which, as we know especially from Hebrews, the OT contains a great number, were included."

⁵⁷ But what of that strange, last addition in Luke 24:44, "and in the Psalms"? D. Bock, *From Proclamation from Prophecy and Pattern*, 148 speaks to this question:

Jesus, in the entrusting of his spirit to the Father, follows the pattern of the innocent righteous saint and fulfils specifically the plan of God for the innocent sufferer. Luke 24.46 points to the climax of the Passion narrative. It is intended to have the reader see that though Jesus suffered, surely he was righteous, a key Lucan theme in Acts.

The allusions from the Psalms point to the context in which Jesus suffered by the plan of God. He suffered in the pattern of innocent righteous saints in the hope that God would vindicate him and therefore validate his claims about himself. With the resurrection, Jesus' vindication occurred and all things were fulfilled so that now witnesses could be sent out with the message about Jesus as the suffering but raised Christ who can offer forgiveness of sins (Luke 24.44-47).

dead. The doctrine of resurrection is consistent with the OT Scriptures. Now Jesus goes farther by expounding the doctrine of *his* resurrection as a teaching found “in all the Scriptures” (24:27). The tenor of the verse is that Jesus did more than cite isolated prophecies of his passion and resurrection. The implication is that the very fabric of the entire OT is Christological. Every thread and theme leads to and centers in the crucified and risen Christ.

The Meal of Jesus (24:28–30)

The primary thrust of the Emmaus narrative is *table fellowship*. As in the earlier Lukan meals of Jesus, the *teaching of Jesus* and the *meal of Jesus* must be considered together.⁵⁸ The teaching functions as *preparation* for the meal, where reconciliation takes place. The catechesis on the road by the risen Lord prepares the Emmaus disciples for the recognition of the reality of his resurrection in the breaking of the bread.

What is the high point of the Emmaus narrative? There are, in fact, two climaxes, the first preparatory for the second. The first summit is the teaching of Jesus that takes place in 24:25–27, where the risen Christ opens up the Scriptures to the disciples. For the hearer or reader of the gospel, the tension mounts: will the disciples be led to believe in the reality of Jesus' resurrection, and will they recognize that it is Jesus himself who is instilling that belief? The first climax prepares for the greater climax when Jesus is recognized in the breaking of the bread in 24:30–31. The tension is resolved in the second climax as the disciples recognize that it was Jesus who taught them; he is risen indeed! *The teaching and the breaking of the bread together form the summit of Luke's entire gospel*. The Emmaus narrative is the first time a disciple of Jesus recognizes *by faith* that *Jesus is the suffering and rising Messiah prophesied in the OT*. The teaching of Jesus in 24:25–27 creates burning hearts as the disciples yearn for divine revelation that will explain the events that have baffled them (24:19–24). It is not the teaching, but the breaking of the bread in 24:30 that is *the moment of revelation*.

⁵⁸ R. Dillon, *From Eye-Witnesses*, 154, says that Jesus' teaching and meal constitute “a single act” (emphasis Dillon). X. Léon-Dufour, *Sharing the Eucharistic Bread* (New York: Paulist, 1987), 28, says: “The conclusion is unavoidable: the word of God was always joined to the shared meal.” Cf. also I. H. Marshall, *Last Supper and Lord's Supper* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 124–25.

This question must be asked: Why does Jesus choose to reveal himself in the breaking of the bread?⁵⁹ As the following discussion will relate, *the order of teaching then eating sets the pattern for the early Christian meals in Acts. That order is also reflected in the church's liturgical worship by the Service of the Word (teaching) followed by the Service of the Sacrament (meal).* In the Emmaus narrative, the combination of these two elements—teaching and eating—is neatly phrased in Luke's concluding verse in 24:35: “And they were expounding the things in the way [τὰ ἐν ταῖς ὁδοῖς] and how he was known to them in the breaking of the bread [ἐν τῷ κλάσει τοῦ ἄρτου].”

The setting of the breaking of the bread in 24:28–29 is parallel to the setting of the opening dialog in 24:17–18. But although the *participants* are the same (Jesus, Cleopas, and the unnamed disciple), there are two marked differences in the settings. First, the *place*: the dialog occurs on the road (24:17), whereas the meal takes place after arriving at the village (24:28). Second, the *time*: the journey occurs during the day (24:13), whereas the meal at Emmaus comes at the close of the day (24:29). These two points call for discussion: the place (24:28) and time (24:29) of the meal. A third feature to investigate is the disciples' invitation to Jesus to join them in the meal and his acceptance (24:29).

The Place of the Meal (24:28)

The place of the meal is closely tied to Luke's journey motif, for 24:28 is filled with Lukan vocabulary characteristic of the journey.⁶⁰ The disciples' arrival at Emmaus signals the end of the journey and the end of Jesus' catechesis on the road. The statement that Jesus “seemed to be journeying farther” raises a question in the mind of the hearer of the gospel, who already knows from 24:15 what the Emmaus disciples do not yet know: that it is Jesus. Where would Jesus be going “farther”? Back at the start of the Lukan travel narrative, the evangelist indicated that

⁵⁹ This question is also posed by R. Dillon, *From Eye-Witnesses*, 105:

Why was the *fractio panis* [“the breaking of the bread”] the moment? Why was it precisely that which brought the decisive disclosure (ἐγνώσθη [“he was known”; 24:35])? Better still: what is the relationship between the “eye-opening” of the *fractio* [“breaking”] and the “scripture-opening” of the journey (τὰ ἐν ταῖς ὁδοῖς [“the things in the way”; 24:35]) in the scrupulous economy of Lk's narrative?

⁶⁰ ἐγγίζω, “to draw near,” and πορεύομαι, “to journey” (twice in 24:28). See, for example, comments on 9:51–57; 19:28–29, 37, 41. Cf. J. Fitzmyer, *Luke X–XXIV*, 1567, on the double use of πορεύομαι, “to journey,” in 24:28 as a reflection of Luke's geographical perspective. He concludes: “The goal of their walk is reached, but it is also the climax of the story.”

Jesus' ultimate destination was his "being taken up" (ἐνάλημψις; 9:51)—that is, his ascension (ἐναλαμβάνω; Acts 1:2, 11). His "exodus" (ἐξοδος; 9:31) would be from earth back to heaven, whence he came. Jesus "seemed" or "acted as if" (ἵκασθαι) he were going farther because he was!

But the disciples invite this "one who sojourns" (24:18) on earth to remain with them longer, and he graciously accepts. After all, he was the one who initiated the conversation and who was able to explain the things that had been unfathomable to them. No wonder the disciples desired his presence.

But why at Emmaus? The location outside Jerusalem for Jesus' first post-resurrection meal is a significant part of the table fellowship matrix within Luke and adds to Luke's geographical perspective. The meals of the new covenant are founded on the death and resurrection of Christ for the benefit of the whole world, so they will be celebrated outside Jerusalem as well as within.

The Time of the Meal (24:29)

The time reference in 24:29 ("because it is toward evening and the day has already declined," τί ἵκασθαι ἔσπερον ἵκασθαι καὶ κέκλικεν ἡ ἡμέρα) reminds the hearer of Jesus' other meals in Luke's table fellowship matrix that occurred when the day was drawing to a close, particularly the feeding of the five thousand (9:12–17) and the Last Supper (22:14–38). The connection with those other climactic meals heightens the significance of the meal at Emmaus. It also creates a certain sense of urgency and expectation. The glory of the risen Christ is about to shine forth into the deepening shadows, and the new era that began that morning with Christ's resurrection is about to be revealed. This motif is apparent also in the church's use of 24:29 in the liturgy of Evening Prayer. The time when "the day is almost over"⁶¹ reminds the church of the fleeting brevity of human life. The end of this earthly era approaches, but so too does the Lord, whose return in glory will reveal him fully to the eyes of all. Then the church will never again need to pray "stay with us, Lord, for it is evening, and the day is almost over"⁶² for he shall be with us—and we with him—in the fullest sense forevermore.

The Invitation to the Meal and Jesus' Acceptance (24:29)

⁶¹ *Lutheran Service Book* (St. Louis: Concordia, 2006) p. 243.

⁶² *Lutheran Service Book*, p. 243.

In 24:29, μένω, “stay, remain, abide,” occurs twice, once in the invitation “abide with us” (μεινων μεθω) and once in the description of Jesus’ acceptance of the invitation, “he entered in to abide with them” (εσηλθεν του μειναι σν ατοις; an infinitive of purpose). Christ’s presence at a house (and probably including a meal) was indicated by this same verb in 19:5, where Jesus said to Zacchaeus, “For today in your house it is necessary for me to abide [μειναι].” Then in 19:9 Jesus described the result of his saving presence being accepted by Zacchaeus: “Today salvation happened to this house.” Jesus brings the abiding presence of God’s salvation through the forgiveness of sins. Jesus said it was necessary (δει) for him to abide (μένω) with Zacchaeus, and the Emmaus narrative suggests that Jesus, who had approached the disciples and initiated the conversation, planned all along to join them in a meal in order to complete his revelation to them. The Emmaus meal was part of the unfolding of God’s Easter plan. Jesus’ presence with the Emmaus disciples has an added quality compared to his stay with Zacchaeus, for he is now the risen Lord.

Luke’s use of μετά, “with, among,” and σύν, “with, together,” in connection with μένω, “stay, abide, remain,” highlights the presence of Christ at the meal. These words are often found in Luke’s description of Jesus’ table fellowship and in Luke’s real presence theology.⁶³ See 1:26–38 and 22:24–27.)⁶⁴ Further, εσέρχομαι, “to enter in,” is used in Lk 7:36; 19:7; and Rev 3:20 to describe the action of Jesus entering the homes of sinners (a Pharisee; Zacchaeus; any penitent sinner) to bring salvation in the forgiveness of sins. In Lk 24:29, εσέρχομαι, “to enter in,” is followed by an infinitive of purpose, “to abide with them” (του μειναι σν ατοις), underlining Jesus’ intent to be present with the disciples at the meal at Emmaus. This and the teaching were the essential reasons for his journey with them. The disciples’ urgent effort (αραβιάζομαι, “to urge strongly”) to persuade Jesus to remain with them reinforces the importance of the presence of Christ at the table with the Emmaus disciples.

⁶³ Lk 5:29; 7:36; 15:2, 29–31; 22:15, 21; 24:29–30

⁶⁴ W. Grundmann, σύν-μετά, TDNT 7:796, notes:

σύν [“with”] and μετά [“with”] are particularly important in connection with meals, for the meal creates fellowship, Lk. 15:29 f.; 7:36. Jesus eats with publicans and sinners; His adversaries take offence at this, Mt. 9:10 f.; Mk. 2:16; Lk. 15:2. Judas’ betrayal is especially shameful as a breach of table fellowship, Mk. 14:18, 20; Lk. 22:21. Jesus had a particular desire for this fellowship (Lk. 22:15) and He looks forward to its restoration and fulfillment in the Father’s kingdom, Mt. 26:29, cf. also 8:11; 25:10.

Thus the hearer is led to note the invitation and its acceptance. The stranger who intruded into the disciples' conversation becomes first their guest and finally their host. The setting for Jesus' table fellowship is now in place.

The Breaking of the Bread and the Recognition (24:30–31)

The climactic moment is reached in 24:30–31 when Jesus reclines with the two disciples, takes bread, blesses it, breaks it, and as he is giving it to them (the imperfect εἰδου), their eyes are opened to recognize him, and then he disappears from their sight. Almost every word in these two verses also occurs in other significant meal contexts in Luke's gospel. Much of the vocabulary also will recur in Acts.

Although the chiasmic structure calls for distinguishing between them (see the outline of the structure above), the breaking of the bread in 24:30 cannot be separated from the opening of the eyes, the recognition, and Jesus' disappearance in 24:31. These two verses are linked grammatically as one Greek sentence and complete thought. Lk 24:30 leads straight into 24:31. Together they describe the meal of Jesus at Emmaus, focusing first on the physical action at the meal (24:30) and then on the theological revelation to the disciples that Jesus, the Messiah who suffered, is risen from the dead (24:31).

24:30 καὶ ἐγένετο

ἐν τῷ κατακλιθῆναι αὐτὸν μετὰ αὐτῶν
λαβὲν τὸ ἄρτον
εὐλόγησεν
καὶ κλάσας
εἰδου αὐτοῖς

And it came to pass that
while **he was reclining at table** with them,
having taken the **bread**,
he blessed;
and **having broken**,
he was giving to them.

Diagrammed in this way, the important relationships between the words of 24:30 are apparent. The hearer is alerted to see in 24:30–31 the climax of the Emmaus story and the recapitulation and resolution of many Lukan themes, for in the breaking of the bread Jesus is recognized

as the suffering, righteous Messiah risen from the dead. The constellation of words in 24:30 is composed of vocabulary found in other Lukan meals.⁶⁵

- 7:36 καὶ ἐσελθὼν εἰς τὸν οἶκον τοῦ Φαρισαίου κατεκλίθη.
And **having entered into** the home of the Pharisee, **he reclined at table**.
- 9:15–16 καὶ κατέκλιναν πάντας. λαβὼν δὲ τοὺς ἑντε ἄρτους ... ἐλόγησεν αὐτοὺς καὶ κατέκλασεν καὶ ἔδιδου τοῖς μαθηταῖς ἀραθειῖν αὐτοὺς ἄλλοι.
And they made them all **recline**. And **having taken** the five **loaves of bread** ... **he blessed** them and **broke** and **was giving** to the disciples to set before the crowd.
- 14:1 καὶ ἐγένετο ὡς τὸ ἔλθειν αὐτὸν εἰς οἶκον ... σαββάτου φαγεῖν ἄρτον.
And it came to pass when he **entered into** a house ... on a Sabbath in order to eat **bread**.
- 14:8 ὅταν κληθῆς ὅς τις εἰς γάμους, μὴ κατακλιθῆς εἰς τὸν πρωτοκλισίαν.
When you are invited by someone to a wedding feast, do not **recline at table** in the first couch.
- 22:19 καὶ λαβὼν ἄρτον εὐχαριστήσας ἔκλασεν καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς λέγων ...
And **having taken bread**, after giving thanks, he **broke** and **gave** to them, saying ...
- 24:30 καὶ ἐγένετο ὡς τὸ κατακλιθῆναι αὐτὸν μετὰ αὐτῶν λαβὼν τὸν ἄρτον ἐλόγησεν καὶ κλάσας ἔδιδου αὐτοῖς.
And it came to pass that while he was **reclining at table** with them, **having taken** the **bread**, **he blessed**; and **having broken**, **he was giving** to them.

⁶⁵ ἐσερχομαι, "to enter in," in the preceding verse, 24:29, is found in the descriptions of Jesus' meal in 7:36, 44–45; and ἔρχομαι ... εἰς, "to enter ... in," is found in 14:1. Also, εὐχαριστέω, "to give thanks" (22:17, 19), is a synonym of ἐλογέω, "to bless," in 9:16; 24:30. And κατάκειμαι, "recline," in the meals at 5:25, 29; 7:37 is a synonym of three other words: κατακλίνω, "recline," in 7:36; 9:14–15; 14:8; 24:30; ἀναπίπτω, "recline," in 11:37; 14:10; 17:7; 22:14; and ἀνάκειμαι, "recline," in 22:27.

Lk 7:36 and 14:8, in particular, are pivotal in Luke's table fellowship matrix as it teaches about God's eschatological kingdom (see 7:36–50 and 14:1–24). The apex of the Emmaus meal at 24:30 recalls the feeding of the five thousand and the Last Supper, both of which were portentous instances of the breaking of the bread. How shall the hearer of the gospel understand the relationship between those meals before the Last Supper, the Last Supper itself, and the Emmaus meal after the resurrection? What do each of these meals of Jesus recorded in the gospel contribute to the Christian catechumen's understanding of his own participation in the Lord's Supper?

As Jesus had prophesied (22:16, 18), he establishes table fellowship with his disciples after his resurrection. Two of Jesus' three post-resurrection meals recorded in the NT are in Luke 24: at Emmaus in 24:28–32 and at Jerusalem in 24:41–43. (The third is in Jn 21:12–13.) In these post-resurrection meals, it is bread (Lk 24:30; Jn 21:13) and/or fish (Lk 24:42–43; Jn 21:13) that make up the meal. None of these three accounts mentions wine.⁶⁶ The narrative of the Last Supper indicates that the cup of wine is essential for celebrating the Supper “in remembrance” of Jesus and according to his words, and Jesus connects the cup with the advent of the kingdom of God.⁶⁷ Even though the accounts of Jesus' two post-resurrection meals in Luke 24 do not mention wine, they are part of Luke's depiction of Jesus' table fellowship. In 24:35 the disciples will look back at the Emmaus meal and describe it as “the breaking of the bread,” a phrase that later will denote the communal celebration of the Lord's Supper by the early church (Acts 2:42; cf. also Acts 2:46; 20:7).

The only other NT references to Jesus' post-resurrection table fellowship are in Acts 1:4 and 10:41. In Acts 1:3–4, before his ascension, the risen Lord will speak to the disciples about the kingdom of God (λέγων τὸ ἔρπ τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ θεοῦ), and while eating with them (συναλιζόμενος),⁶⁸ he will command them to wait for the promise of the

⁶⁶ However, Jesus and the Emmaus disciples reclined (Lk 24:30), indicating a typical Jewish meal of table fellowship, and such a meal normally would include wine. If a Jewish supper lacked wine, it would be considered deficient or even scandalous, especially on a festive occasion (cf. Jn 2:1–11).

⁶⁷ Lk 22:17–18, 20; similarly Mt 26:29; Mk 14:25; 1 Cor 11:25–26.

⁶⁸ See LSJ, s.v. συναλιζω, on Acts 1:4: “eat salt with, eat at the same table with, Act. Ap. 1.4.” BAGD offers three alternatives: (1) “eat (salt) with”; (2) “bring together, assemble, [or in the passive voice] come together”; (3) the variant reading συναλιζομαι, “spend the night with ... be with, stay with.” MM, 601–2, discusses Cadbury's argument for συναλιζομαι as opposed to συναλιζομαι and its two meanings.

Father. The juxtaposition of teaching and eating is significant because it conforms to Jesus' pattern of ministry prior to his death and resurrection. In Acts 10:41, after a strong kerygmatic statement about the death and resurrection of Jesus (Acts 10:39–40), Peter will narrate how God made the risen Christ manifest “not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, who ate and drank [συνεφάγομεν καὶ συνεπίομεν] with him after he rose from the dead.” These references indicate that the risen Jesus continued the table fellowship pattern of *teaching about the kingdom* (which came through his passion and resurrection) and *eating and drinking*.

The Emmaus meal is pivotal because it continues Jesus' pre-resurrection table fellowship and begins the church's table fellowship in celebration of Easter. As an act of “the breaking of the bread” (24:35), it serves as the “connecting link”⁶⁹ between the earlier meals of Jesus with his disciples and the later celebrations of the Lord's Supper by the early Christian church. Jesus' post-resurrection meals reminded the disciples—and remind the church today—that the risen Lord intends for his church to continue to gather at table in remembrance of him and in anticipation of the eternal banquet. The Emmaus meal in particular reminds the church of the reality of Christ's presence with his church at table. And the Emmaus meal, like the Lord's Supper, is a revelatory proclamation that Jesus, who suffered and died, is now risen (cf. 1 Cor 11:26).

Though every meal in the gospel has its own significance, the Emmaus meal, due to its singular character as the first meal after the resurrection, differs from the meals that precede and follow it. To ignore the evangelist's careful shaping of the table fellowship matrix by mislabeling all of Jesus' meals as the Christian Eucharist would be to miss the unique doctrinal significance of the Last Supper and Lord's Supper. On the other hand, the Emmaus meal would also be mislabeled if it were called an ordinary meal. How ordinary is it for the risen Christ to teach on the road, break bread, and personally reveal himself as the crucified and risen Lord in fulfillment of the messianic promises of the OT? Though most

Cf. H. J. Cadbury, “Lexical Notes on Luke-Acts: III. Luke's Interest in Lodging,” *JBL* 45 (1926) 310–17.

⁶⁹ R. Dillon, *From Eye-Witnesses*, 105. Dillon emphasizes that in the meals of Jesus' earthly ministry and also in the church's celebrations of the Lord's Supper “the ‘breaking of the bread’ is associated with the *instruction concerning [Jesus'] person and mission* of which he, the earthly Master, had established the prototype” (p. 105; emphasis Dillon).

commentators classify the Emmaus meal either as the church's first Eucharist or as an ordinary meal, this commentator views it as a unique meal within the Lukan table fellowship matrix. In the teaching and at the meal Christ himself is present, revealing himself, strengthening faith in his atoning death and resurrection for the forgiveness of sins, and uniting his disciples with God.

The Emmaus meal is different from Jesus' prior meals, including the Last Supper, because Jesus had not yet experienced the passion and resurrection. The Last Supper of Jesus is different from all prior meals, for it is there that he first declared the bread to be "my body, which is being given on behalf of you" and the cup to be "the new testament in my blood, which is being poured out on behalf of you" (Lk 22:19–20). The Last Supper is the only meal that Jesus instructed his disciples to repeat in his remembrance (22:19). The Emmaus meal is unique since in the breaking of the bread, Jesus is *for the first time* recognized as the crucified and risen Messiah.

Yet there is a common bond between the Emmaus meal, the meals of Jesus during his earthly ministry—including the Last Supper—and the early Christian celebrations of the Lord's Supper (Acts 2:42, 46; 20:7). All these meals are *acts of table fellowship* where Christ is *present to teach and eat* with his people. Therefore each meal of table fellowship is *revelatory*, and the meal at Emmaus is the first post-Easter revelation. All of Jesus' meals are connected in one way or another to the cross and the resurrection. At these meals, Jesus proclaims the kingdom of God, often with explicit teaching about his death and resurrection. As he breaks bread he reveals his salvific and eschatological mission. Jesus' table fellowship is itself an expression of the new era of salvation. Moreover, each meal is sacred because Jesus is accomplishing sacred purposes through it. Jesus hallows each meal by his presence. And Jesus' presence is a sacred mystery—the mystery⁷⁰ that the Son of God (Lk 1:35) became incarnate in order to suffer, die, rise on the third day, and so "enter into his glory" (24:26)—the glory glimpsed proleptically in the transfiguration (9:28–36) but first revealed to the disciples at the Emmaus meal.

Lk 24:13–53 is the evangelist's post-resurrection teaching about the sacred mystery of the crucified and risen Christ's presence in his

⁷⁰ In 1 Tim 3:16 μυστήριον, "mystery," encompasses Christ's incarnation, ministry, resurrection, and ascension and the church's preaching of Christ.

church. This final section of the gospel provided the early church with a fitting example of what may have led to the practice of “mystagogical catechesis.”⁷¹ This was the predominant method of catechesis in the early church through the fourth century. In “mystagogical catechesis,” some teaching about the Sacraments occurred before catechumens were baptized and communed for the first time during the Easter Vigil, but the mystery of Christ’s presence and the full theological meaning of the Sacraments were expounded afterward during the week following Easter. The sacramental mysteries were unveiled for the newly baptized only after they had experienced those mysteries. In a similar way, as the Emmaus disciples converse with Jesus along the road, at that time they are only partially aware of the significance of the teaching they receive. They remain unaware of the reality of Jesus’ presence with them up until that point in the meal when they recognize Jesus in the breaking of the bread. Only after they experience the revelations of Jesus in his interpretation of the OT Scriptures and in his breaking of the bread do the disciples finally understand the mystery of his resurrection and his abiding presence with them.

The Emmaus meal reinforces the pattern for Christian liturgy set by Jesus himself during his earthly ministry. The liturgical rhythm of teaching and eating, evident throughout Luke, has deep roots in the OT. At Emmaus Jesus’ twofold ministerial practice has been transformed and has received heightened significance through the events of the three-day sequence. The three days of passion and resurrection are capped by the Emmaus meal. The revelation of Jesus as the risen Christ, who lives forevermore, gives table fellowship an added eschatological dimension. The new era of salvation that has begun will never end, and the resurrection life revealed at Emmaus will continue at the eternal banquet in the presence of Jesus, whose glory will then be fully revealed. Table fellowship of teaching and breaking bread becomes the occasion for the presence of the eschatological kingdom because it is a celebration of the new covenant that is founded on Christ’s death and resurrection.

The first fellowship meal in the new era begun with Jesus’ resurrection comes at Emmaus, where the order once again is clearly set

⁷¹ See also H. M. Riley, *Christian Initiation: A Comparative Study of the Interpretation of the Baptismal Liturgy in the Mystagogical Writing of Cyril of Jerusalem, John Chrysostom, Theodore of Mopsuestia, and Ambrose of Milan* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic Univ. of America Press, 1974), and *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press).

forth: teaching then eating, *the Word of God followed by a meal with God*. In Acts this same divine pattern of teaching and eating is followed in the table fellowship practice of the church (Acts 1:1–4; 2:42). Luke's summary of the entire Emmaus episode lays the foundation for early Christian worship: "And they were expounding the things in the way and how he was known to them in the breaking of the bread" (24:35). *This is the pattern preserved in the Divine Service: the Service of the Word followed by the Liturgy of the Lord's Supper.*

The Recognition and the Faithful Response (The Second Circle and Conclusion; 24:31 and 24:35)

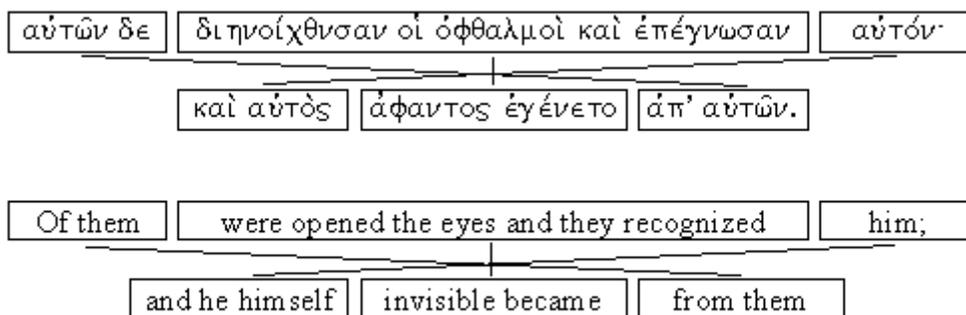
The purpose of the gospel, as stated in the prologue (1:4), is to give the certainty of faith to Theophilus concerning the words by which he was catechized. Those words no doubt centered on the words of Jesus himself—the words of which the angels reminded the women (24:6–8); the words that the women reported to the Eleven and the rest of the disciples (24:9–11); the words that Jesus himself explained to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus (24:25–27); and the words that those two then relayed back to the Eleven and the rest (24:33–35). *The pattern of catechesis in Jesus' words is therefore firmly in place in Luke 24, and that pattern will be continued by the church.* Those words focus on the identity of Jesus as the suffering, righteous Messiah who was crucified and raised from the dead. The moment of recognition brings the hearer to the goal. As Jesus is recognized, the certainty of faith is given.

The moment of recognition in 24:31 leads to the faithful response by the Emmaus disciples in 24:35. Similar language ties these two verses together, with 24:31 preparing for and making possible 24:35. The structure of 24:31, the moment of recognition, reflects the structure of the Emmaus narrative itself. Both are chiasmic, focusing on a central event and recapitulating the whole of Luke's gospel. Immediately outside the center circle of the teaching of Jesus (24:17–27) and the meal of Jesus (24:28–30; see figure 10), Luke places another chiasm, at the moment of recognition. This chiasm emphasizes the climactic moment when the eyes of the disciples are opened to recognize the risen Christ. The chiasmic structure suggests a number of observations about the moment of recognition.

The Outer Circle: The Emmaus Disciples

In the outer circle stand the Emmaus disciples: *their* (αὐτῶν) eyes are opened by God; Jesus disappears *from them* (ἀπὸ αὐτῶν). The moment of recognition is for the benefit of the Emmaus disciples. They frame the scene of revelation. Although the Emmaus account (and the entire gospel) has been about *Jesus*, the events first were for *the Emmaus disciples* (even as Luke originally was written for Theophilus [1:1–4]). The teaching on the road about the passion and resurrection of the Christ—the opening of the Scriptures—was first for them; now the revelation in the breaking of the bread is for them.

Yet these events are not for the two Emmaus disciples exclusively; they are for the benefit of the entire church. Those two disciples are part of the continuum of all who have received revelations from God. Those two disciples are representatives of all Jesus' disciples, and they are members of the one holy catholic church, extending from OT times to the parousia. Thus they are part of the eschatological community of saints—the true catechumenate. God's people waited millennia for this moment of revelation, and for two millennia since the Emmaus events the church has remembered this climactic moment in God's plan of salvation.

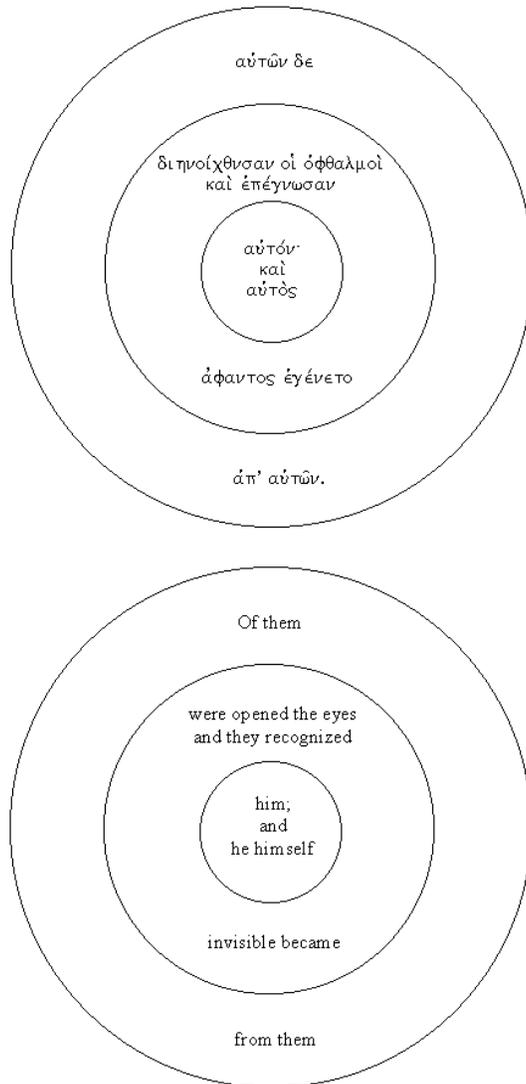


- A** Of them
B were opened the eyes and they recognized
C him;
C' and he himself
B' invisible became
A' from them.

The Center Circle: Jesus

The center of the circle and of the chiasm is Jesus: "him; and he himself" (αὐτόν· καὶ αὐτός). *This is the first time in Luke's gospel that anyone recognizes the risen Christ!* Luke does not use the name of Jesus (Ἰησοῦς) here but uses the pronoun "he himself" (αὐτός). In the Emmaus narrative this pronoun is Luke's most common term for Jesus (24:15, 25,

28, 31). He is introduced into the story and departs from it under this description. Jesus is at the center of 24:31 and at the center of the Emmaus narrative. The dramatic Christophany is an eschatological moment, the apex of the Emmaus account and the event that reveals that God's OT plan of salvation has been fulfilled by Jesus.



The First Half of the Transitional Circle: The Moment of Recognition

The intermediate circle provides the transition. It shifts the focus from the disciples to Jesus and then back to the disciples by means of the actions described by the verbs. It first describes the recognition: their "eyes were opened and they recognized" him (διηνοιχθῆσαν οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ καὶ ἐπέγνωσαν; 24:31). This is language familiar from the Emmaus account and the entire gospel, The opening of their eyes in 24:31 (αὐτῶν δε

διηνοίχθησαν οὐκ ὀφθαλμοῖς, “and their eyes were opened”) is contrasted with their closed eyes in 24:16 (οὐκ ὀφθαλμοῖς ἀκρωτῶν κρατουμένων, “but their eyes were held back”; the theological passive in both verses implies that God is the agent). But the opening of their eyes (24:31) complements Jesus’ opening (διανοίγω) of the Scriptures in 24:32 and the opening (διανοίγω) of the disciples’ minds to understand the Scriptures in 24:45. The repeated motif of opening emphasizes that the recognition scene has *revelation* as its theme.

In this context “recognize” (οὐκ ἔγνωσκω) is one of Luke’s many synonyms for faith. In the prologue (1:4) the same verb describes the purpose of Luke’s gospel: to recognize, with the certainty of faith, the reliability of Christian catechesis. The Emmaus disciples may have known the historical facts about Jesus’ passion and resurrection (24:18–24), but they do not understand the meaning of those facts (24:25). The goal of Jesus’ catechesis—and of the Emmaus narrative—is for the hearer “to believe in all the things that the prophets spoke” (24:25). At the beginning of the story in 24:16, the disciples’ eyes were kept from perceiving Jesus; at the end of the story, the veil is taken away. *Faith’s certainty* (οὐκ σφάλεια; 1:4) comes only when Christ interprets the passion and resurrection facts and reveals himself in the breaking of the bread.

Luke brings the narrative to a close with the words “And they were expounding [ἐξηγουμένων] the things in the way and how he was known [ἐγνώσθη] to them in the breaking of the bread” (24:35). Luke’s use of “were expounding” and “was known” reminds the hearer of the prologue once more. Luke implied that his gospel is another “narrative [διήγησιν; cf. ἐξηγουμένων in 24:35] concerning the events that have come to fulfillment among us” (1:1), and its purpose is so the hearer may “know, recognize” (οὐκ ἔγνωσκω; 1:4) the true catechesis. The gospel is a record of God’s accomplishments of his saving plan in Jesus; *the gospel is God’s catechesis through the evangelist St. Luke.*⁷² By the close of the Emmaus

⁷² J. Fitzmyer, *Luke I–IX*, 292, notes:

The *pragmata* [“matters, things, events”; 1:1] about which Luke writes can be compared to the “facts” or “happenings” that any historian would be interested in. But as the Lucan account unfolds, the reader learns that the “events” are not being recounted merely as facts, nor even with the concern of a secular historian (ancient or modern). They are for Luke events of salvation-history, and the significance of them depends on the way one interprets the fulfillment mentioned. In the concrete, the “events” refer not only to the deeds of the ministry of Jesus, his passion, death, burial, and resurrection, but also to the sequel to all this, the spread of the “word of the Lord” from

account (24:35), the hearer would understand that Jesus had accomplished the purpose of his catechesis to the two disciples, and the Emmaus narrative has also accomplished God's purpose for those who hear the gospel. The gospel has revealed that the time of fulfillment came, and the events of salvation history were accomplished through the deeds of Jesus in his ministry, culminating in his death and resurrection. The passion and resurrection facts related at the beginning of the Emmaus journey (24:18–24) are now understood by faith, since Jesus himself interpreted the facts on the road. The journey of the Emmaus disciples—and of those who hear the gospel—has brought them to a knowledge of the true catechesis about Jesus.

But the full knowledge of faith comes not only from understanding the passion facts, but also from recognizing Christ in the breaking of the bread. At the end the Emmaus journey, as the disciples sit at table, Jesus is made known to them as the crucified and risen Savior. Luke's theological passive "was known" (ἐγνώσθη; 24:35) implies the same agent as his passives in 24:16 (ἐκρατοῦντο, "were held back") and 24:31 (διηνοίχθησαν, "were opened"): God alone opens eyes by imparting faith (cf. 1 Cor 2:6–16). The recognition of Jesus in the breaking of the bread (Lk 24:31) is so important that the disciples emphasize it again in 24:35. Most significant in the evangelist's summary (24:35) is the way in which the two elements, *Jesus' exegesis of "the things in the way" and the recognition of him "in the breaking of the bread"* complement each other. Teaching and eating, Word and Sacrament, form the foundation of Christian worship, in which catechesis prepares for and leads to Eucharistic fellowship (see Acts 2:42).⁷³

The prologue and the Emmaus story frame Luke's gospel. Faith rests upon *certainty* about the *catechetical* tradition of the church, and that catechesis is now being passed on through Luke as sacred Scripture (Lk 1:4). The full catechesis of the church includes the "things" (24:35)—the facts—about Jesus' passion and resurrection, as well as the *knowledge* (1:4; 24:31, 35) of the presence of the crucified and risen one in the breaking of the bread. The journey of Jesus, from heaven to earth (the infancy narrative), to Jerusalem, and back to heaven (24:51), will now set in motion the journey of the Christian church. Acts will document how the

Jerusalem to the end of the earth in the activity of the chosen witnesses.

⁷³ D. A. Losada, "El episodio de Emaús: Lc 24, 13–35," *Revista bíblica* 35 (1973) 9, concludes that "Scriptures and Eucharist appear as the indispensable elements for a total encounter with the Lord" (translation by A. Just).

disciples are now empowered to go out into the world, armed with “the word and the bread ... the means to mission.”⁷⁴

The Second Half of the Transitional Circle: The Moment of Disappearance

Perhaps the most surprising feature of the Emmaus narrative is that Jesus, the moment he is recognized, disappears from sight. Why? With the crucifixion and resurrection, the table fellowship of Jesus has been transformed. He no longer reclines at table as he did during his earthly ministry, for he is now present with the church in a new way. The presence and disappearance of Jesus at the Emmaus meal helps prepare the church to understand that Jesus will be present yet unseen at the church's eucharistic meals. Emmaus is the transitional meal between the pre-resurrection meals of Jesus' earthly ministry, including the Last Supper, where he physically and visibly ate with his disciples, and the church's continuing celebrations of the Lord's Supper, where Jesus is

⁷⁴ G. R. Osborne, *The Resurrection Narratives*, 124. In full he says:

The word and the bread are the means to mission. Luke wants to show that the presence of the Lord in teaching and eucharistic fellowship empowers the church for participation in Jesus' mission to the lost (cf. [Luke 19:10](#)). Verse 32 [24:32] graphically illustrates this point; the disciples' hearts “burned within” them when Jesus “opened the Scriptures” in the recognition experience. Mission is the result of this recognition as the disciples rush back to Jerusalem to tell the Eleven about the Risen Christ. Verses 33–35 tell about that triumphant return “to Jerusalem.” Verse 33 combines both temporal (“at that same hour”) and geographical (“to Jerusalem”) factors. The result of recognition is mission; both are linked with the resurrection and Jerusalem as the starting point for the church's outreach (pp. 124–25).

See also R. Dillon, *From Eye-Witnesses*, 107, 113, 153, 212, 216–17, and especially 227–96. Dillon chooses the *mission enterprise* as his “focal point for distilling and refining the message of St. Luke that chapter 24 conveys” (p. 267). He also points to the “Lucan blending of christology and ecclesiology, drawing out the *missiological consequence* of the Master's path to glory through passion and death” (p. 278; emphasis Dillon). Dillon also comments:

As risen Lord, present in word and sacrament, he shows himself the *goal and meaning of all the scriptures*, and he imparts to his followers that ministry of the word which continues to unlock the secret otherwise hidden away in the sacred pages. *His voice* is what continues to be heard in that ministry of the word (thus [Dt 18:15, 18] can be invoked by his witnesses, [Acts 3,22–23](#)), for it is only *in personal encounter with him*, and from that perspective, that the whole mystery of God's plan of salvation is opened to the eye of faith.—That is, in the final analysis, the teaching of the Emmaus story (p. 155; emphasis Dillon).

present in flesh and blood, yet unseen. The church, like the Emmaus disciples, is to recognize, with the opened eyes of faith, that Jesus is truly present in the breaking of the bread (cf. Acts 2:42, 46; 20:7).

The stranger who walked with the Emmaus disciples on the road, who became their guest and then their host at the meal, is a stranger no more. Every time the church follows his institution and gathers to celebrate the new testament in his blood, he is present as the unseen host, feeding his church with his body, which he gave into death on the cross, and with his blood, shed for the forgiveness of sins. The old covenant meals have passed away. The eschatological meal—the Lord's Supper—will be the feast of the church until that day when Jesus again eats with his disciples at “the marriage feast of the Lamb in his kingdom, which has no end.”⁷⁵ When the Passover “is fulfilled in the kingdom of God” (Lk 22:16). In the meantime, the church rejoices in the presence of Jesus' eschatological kingdom through the teaching of his words and the breaking of the bread. The tension between the kingdom already inaugurated and the final consummation of that kingdom is reflected in the Emmaus narrative by Jesus, who initially is visible, then disappears, tantalizing the church as she waits for his visible return (Lk 21:27; Acts 1:11).

Eschatological Time after the Resurrection – Luke 24:36-53

Three interconnected scenes bring Luke's gospel to a close and help illustrate that we are now living in the eighth, eschatological day: Jesus' appearance to his disciples, when he greets them with peace and eats roasted fish in their presence (24:36–43); his final teaching to them, in which he promises to send upon them the Holy Spirit from the Father (24:44–49); and his ascension (24:50–53). A key issue for the interpretation of these final three scenes is their chronology. The opening words of 24:36, “while they were speaking,” *give the appearance* that the three scenes in 24:36–53 all take place on Easter Sunday, the first day of the week, and are associated with the Emmaus account. But the first two chapters of Acts portray the ascension as occurring after forty days (Acts 1:3) and Pentecost after fifty (Acts 2:1), giving rise to what the early church called “the Great Fifty Days.” Why does Luke give the impression in his gospel that all three of these scenes belong with the Easter Sunday events?

⁷⁵ *Lutheran Worship* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1982) p. 144.

The Emmaus story included five time notices (24:13, 18, 21, 29, 33), marking the day as Sunday, the first day of the week, the third day in the sequence of Jesus' passion and resurrection. *Easter institutes a new reckoning of time*: the new era of salvation has dawned and the eschaton has been inaugurated. The revelation of this by Jesus himself first takes place at the Emmaus meal.

After the last time reference in the Emmaus story (24:33), *no further time notices occur in the rest of Luke's gospel*. Luke blends together the last three scenes of his Gospel in such a way that no delineation of time appears to separate them from Easter. *He wants the hearer of the gospel to recognize that, once bread is broken and eyes are opened to the reality of Christ's presence, the community of the faithful live in the inaugurated eschaton*. In his Word and in his Supper, the crucified and resurrected Christ is truly present now, even though his disciples on earth do *not yet* enjoy full, complete communion in his presence. Time cannot separate disciples from their risen Lord or from Easter's promise of resurrection for them too. The church now lives in the eternal Sabbath rest of Easter Sunday. This is why the early Christians had an eschatological perspective on liturgical time, with Sunday as the eighth, eschatological day. The church's liturgical calendar, which grew around Easter, helps foster this Christological view of time. Instead of marking off passing years according to the secular world's clock, the church's calibration of time ever revolves around Easter, returning to Easter each Sunday and moving from Easter toward the resurrection of all flesh. The past is never lost, since the entirety of salvation history is recapitulated every Lord's Day, and indeed every single day, for the baptized already have been buried and raised with Christ (Rom 6:3–4).

The Eighth Day Today

The ramifications of all of this for us are enormous. Early Christians marked the beginning of their life in Christ at baptismal fonts that were eight-sided to indicate that this is when they entered eternity by their union with Christ and his death and resurrection. Many baptismal fonts around the world down to this day are eight-sided. We would do well to restore fonts that reflect this eternal dimension of our life in Christ, but even more to speak and act in our churches with baptism as the constituting event initiating us into a life with Christ that never ends. Sunday was the primary day of worship for early Christians because this was the day when Christ rose. It is for this reason that his crucified and resurrected flesh was offered to the community in bread and wine at the Lord's Supper each Sunday. With Christ's bodily presence, the eschaton

had arrived and Christians were now living in the eighth day of the new creation.

Today we like to say that Sunday is a little Easter. But for early Christians, Easter was a *big Sunday*, the day of worship. We must restore Sunday not only as the day of worship, but also restore it as the day in which the Lord's Supper is celebrated as the moment when heaven and earth come together in Christ. The more we learn to live eschatologically, that is, to live knowing that Jesus Christ, the eternal one, lives among us and within us, the more local congregations will reflect in their worship the confidence and authenticity of Christ's redeeming action.⁷⁶

⁷⁶ This paper was adapted from four sources: A. A. Just Jr., *The Ongoing Feast*. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1993; *Luke 1:1-9:50*, Concordia Commentary (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1996); *Luke 9:51-24:53* Concordia Commentary (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1997); and *Heaven on Earth: The Gifts of Christ in the Divine Service* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2008).