

# Bible Workshop


## Developing Bible study skills

### 13. “And their eyes were opened” (Lk. 24:31; Gen. 3:7)

Peter Forbes

**T**HIS STUDY is designed to highlight a number of different aspects of Bible study, as follows:

- that Bible study is not difficult or the preserve of the intellectual
- the need to give careful attention to the text
- the value of comparing Scripture with Scripture
- the value of following up quotations
- the value of recording and preserving information found.

 You will find useful:  
A computerised Bible

#### The two on the Emmaus road

When the two who had talked with Jesus on the road to Emmaus broke bread with Jesus, who had seemed to be a stranger, “their eyes were opened, and they knew him” (Lk. 24:31). This study will:

- demonstrate that the record is not just talking about recognition
- show that a contrast is being drawn between Adam and Eve and the two who met with Jesus
- highlight other areas of the New Testament which show that the work of Jesus reversed the separation that Adam and Eve’s sin created.


As always when we are reading Scripture, we should be asking the question, Have I read that or similar language elsewhere? If we think about the question, we might remember an occasion when the language occurs elsewhere, but maybe we cannot think of another part of Scripture where it occurs. An option we have is always to follow up the marginal references.

However, in my Bible there is no marginal reference against any of the words in this verse, so that is no help. Having read the passage nu-

merous times over the years, a link with the Old Testament just ‘came to me’ as I was reading on one occasion. However, if we use a computerised Bible we could search on some of the words. For example, if we search on the combination of words ‘eyes’, ‘opened’ and ‘knew’ we will see that there are only two occasions in Scripture where those three words occur in the same verse.

#### Links with Genesis 3

Before concluding that there is a link between Luke 24:31 and Genesis 3:7 we should examine the context of the two passages and see if there are any other similarities in addition to the repeated words.

 Examine the contexts of Luke 24:31 and Genesis 3:7 and note any similarities

Luke 24:30-32 records the meeting between the risen Jesus and the two who had been on the road to Emmaus; in particular it speaks of the way that Jesus was revealed to them while they were eating food. Genesis 3 records the first sin; Eve and then Adam took of the fruit of the tree of life and as a consequence were condemned to death.

There are a number of similarities, and also contrasts, between the two passages:

#### Similarities

- On both occasions two people were involved, and probably on the road to Emmaus it was a husband and wife just as in the garden of Eden.
- On both occasions there was eating.

#### Contrasts


- Whereas in Genesis 3 Eve “took” the fruit, in Luke 24 the bread was given to them.
- Whereas in Genesis 3 eating was forbidden, in Luke 24 it was commanded.
- Whereas in Genesis 3 the eating brought shame, in Luke 24 it brought a wonderful realisation.

So it is reasonable to think that the language in Luke 24:31 was chosen specifically to remind us of Genesis 3:7. This should cause us to ask the question, Why should we be reminded of Genesis 3:7 when we read about the two on the road to Emmaus?


### Links with other passages

Additionally, we have probably noticed that the language used in Luke 24:30 echoes the language used when Jesus inaugurated the Last Supper, though these two were not present on that occasion. Compare Luke 24:30 with Matthew 26:26. So we might extend our questioning to ask, Should we be expecting to see other references in the New Testament which associate Jesus' sacrifice with Eve and Adam taking and eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil and their subsequent expulsion from the Garden of Eden?

Now it might be that we cannot think of any other places where there are such links. However, this is not a reason to dismiss the idea. Simply record your findings by making marginal notes of the quotations and try to remember the topic as you read Scripture. Maybe other links will come to mind now you have seen one area where the links are made.

 Record against Genesis 3:7 the link with Luke 24:31 and vice versa, and look for other links as you read Scripture

On the other hand, you might have already seen some links between Jesus' sacrifice and the events of early Genesis. If so then you have expanded your understanding of the whole topic, and it would be useful to record, in some way which helps you, the fact that there are other places where similar ideas can be found.

 Record in some way other places where similar ideas can be found

There is no other commentary on the Bible so helpful as the Bible itself. There is not a difficult passage in the Bible that is not explained and made clear by other passages of the Bible, and this book is marvellously useful in bringing to light those other parts of the Bible that throw light upon the portion that is being studied.

R. A. Torrey in the introduction to *The Treasury of Scripture Knowledge*, a compilation of cross-references and one of the most valuable aids to Bible study.

An area that comes to mind for me is John 6. In John 6 Jesus is contrasting his sacrifice, and eating his flesh, with the manna in the wilderness. Twice in John 6 Jesus speaks of eating and living for ever (vv. 51,58). Again, my Bible does not have any marginal references against those words in John. However, we might remember that the concern of God in the Garden of Eden after Eve and Adam had eaten of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil was that they would eat of the tree of life and live for ever. But if this link does not come to mind, a search on words using a computerised Bible reveals that similar language occurs in Genesis 3:22.

Having noticed this link, we should be alert to the possibility that there are others. Here are three which are contrasts:

- "labour" (Jno. 6:27; cf. Gen. 3:19)
- "never hunger" (Jno. 6:35; cf. Gen. 3:19)
- "I will in no wise cast out" (Jno. 6:37; cf. Gen. 3:24).

### Lessons from the links

There is no value in just making links between different parts of Scripture. Unless there is an exhortation or rebuke (2 Tim. 3:16) then there has been no benefit from our study.

The lesson that we can learn from the links we have seen above is this. Whereas Eve and Adam destroyed the relationship that they had with God and so were condemned to death outside the Garden of Eden, the sacrifice of Jesus has restored that degree of fellowship for those who are entitled to eat of the bread and drink of the cup. We might say that Jesus has taken us back into the Garden of Eden as far as fellowship with God is concerned.

In this study, along with looking at marginal references, we have thought about trying to remember where we have read similar language in Scripture. We have also noticed that, when there is reference to an earlier part of Scripture, there may be both similarities and contrasts being made. Also, we have noticed that a quotation does not have to match the exact words. There are times when the ideas are drawn out of a longer passage.