



FAMILY STUDY

The Stranger



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"The Stranger"

It had been an incredible week. It was the talk of the town. Nothing like this had happened in Jerusalem in quite a long time. In fact, nothing like this had ever happened. The unusual man who had come from Nazareth and turned their town upside-down was gone. He had ridden in on a donkey only a week or so earlier, with worn sandals on his feet and the calloused hands of a carpenter, yet He spoke as a king. And He had been killed for it. Somehow, there was a feeling in the air that the events which had unfolded in Jerusalem would have a significance which was greater than anyone could see.

They talked about it as they walked along. "The way he was talking, I thought we were finally going to get out from underneath the thumb of the Romans."

"No. The more I think about it, He couldn't have been the one..."

"Why didn't He fight the charges? He hadn't done anything, had He?"

"And what about the women? They were going on and on about His body being gone and angels and all."

"Yeah, but when do *they* ever make sense?"

"But what about that guy who was blind? He can see now..."

The two travelers were headed to a village called Emmaus. It was a seven mile walk, but it surely wouldn't afford them enough time to figure out what had happened. They talked and talked, but it just didn't seem to make sense. What were they to do now?

"Excuse me, would you mind if I joined you on your journey?"

The voice came from behind them. The two travelers turned to find a stranger coming up alongside them. "I couldn't help hearing a little bit of your conversation," the stranger said, "What are you talking about as you walk along?"

One of them looked at the other and frowned. Was this guy for real?

"What are we talking about? We're talking about all the commotion in Jerusalem last week!", one of them answered, "What else is there to talk about? Where have you been the last few days? In a tomb?"

The stranger smiled to himself knowingly. "Tell me. What's been happening?" He asked politely. The two travelers exchanged another glance and sighed heavily as they began to repeat the account of the confusing events which had taken place. Little did they know how near the answers were.

Failing to Recognize Jesus as the King of Kings

You see, although the two travelers knew ABOUT Jesus, He was still a stranger to them. It was nothing new. After all, nearly all the world failed to recognize Him. To most people, then and now, Jesus is a stranger.

Read John 1:9-13

The travelers hadn't gotten to know Jesus as they could have, from a close study of the Scriptures or from personal interaction. But if we're to know Jesus, we must do both.

Getting to Know Him... Christ in the Old Testament

There are numerous references, both direct and implied, to Christ in the Old Testament. The birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus fulfilled all of the Old Testament prophecies about the Messiah. It WAS possible to recognize

Jesus as the Messiah as He fulfilled Old Testament prophecies right before people's eyes. Below are just a few Old Testament references to Christ.

References to Christ in the Old Testament (partial list)

Genesis 3:14-15	Isaiah chapter 9:6-7	Micah 5:2
Genesis 22:7-8	Isaiah 50:6	Zechariah 9:9, 12:10
Psalms 22	Isaiah chapter 53	
Isaiah 7:14	Hosea 6:2	

Getting to Know Him... Christ in the New Testament

Just as the Old Testament looks forward to Christ as its entire focal point, the New Testament looks BACK at Him, calling us to walk in His grace through faith and obedience. The birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus warranted four distinct accounts; the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Some of these books record details left out in the other gospels, but everything recorded in each gospel did, in fact, happen. There is no disagreement between the gospels, and each was written for a different audience.

Matthew, Mark, Luke and John all provide excellent information about the character of our Savior, and the rest of the New Testament demonstrates for us how Jesus works in the lives of believers and how we should walk in His light.

Getting to Know Him... A Personal Relationship

Of course, learning about Jesus from His Word will do little good if it is not accompanied by a personal relationship with Him. In fact, Jesus offers us the closest kind of relationship. For those who believe in Him are *children* of God. And this standing with God is available to anyone who will come to Christ with a repentant, willing, and believing heart.

Jesus' Prayer and Desire for All Believers in Him

John 17:20-26

Believers Become Children of God

John 1:12-13 Romans 8:14-17 Philippians 2:14-16 1 John 3:1-2

The two travelers on the road to Emmaus finished giving their account of the past week's events to the stranger who walked along with them. But they still weren't able to make sense of it all. But then, quite unexpectedly, the mysterious stranger explained the whole thing to them from the very Scriptures they were supposed to have understood. Suddenly, it was all starting to make sense. As they reached Emmaus, they invited the unusual man to dine with them. And then, the stranger took the bread, gave thanks, and...

There was something strangely familiar... Something the men had seen before... The way the mysterious man broke the bread was just like... Jesus! Then, their eyes were opened, and they recognized Him... (Luke 24:31) This stranger wasn't a stranger at all. It was Him! He was alive! It had been no stranger who had explained the significance of the events in Jerusalem as they traveled the road. It was, in fact, the Lord Himself—the very center of it all! Jesus was alive, and He was right before their eyes all along.

The travelers had opened their hearts. But Jesus had opened their eyes. And the stranger was a stranger no more.

Don't let Jesus be a stranger to you. He loves you, and He's ready for you to let Him in. Open the Scriptures and learn about Him. Open your heart and invite Him in. And if you'll open your Bible and your heart, He will open your eyes... And Jesus will be a stranger no more.