

# **STRANGER THINGS IN THE BIBLE**

## The Disappearing Act

I usually talk to you about one story that is a stranger thing bible story. Today I will do that and more. There are strange moments in Jesus' ministry where he just disappears. To further that note, Jesus also had the ability to just walk away from danger. Yet, I am mildly amazed that Jesus did no such thing in his crucifixion narrative. He made men fall down in one other stranger things story in the garden of gethsemane. Jesus could have walked away from death. He chose to stay on the cross. He chose not to be made king by men. Let's look at both sides of Jesus disappearing act.

On one side is the disappearances. In Luke 24 we find Jesus' walking on the road to Emmaus with two men. They do not recognize Jesus. I feel there is a lesson here about faith, belief, and the ability of Jesus to hide his true self. The Bible talks a lot about being blind to God. These men go on to talk about happened to Jesus and that they thought he was the Messiah going to save them. Then Jesus pours on them the Old Testament scriptures proving that they got the purpose of the Messiah wrong.

I find it interesting that they ask Jesus to come stay with them. He accepts and they end up at a table eating. Funny enough, Jesus' appearances and food are common. As they break bread their eyes were open. Then like a stranger thing, Jesus disappears. Look at verse 32 "They asked each other, *"Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us."* I think the point is not that Jesus disappeared. It is more about communion and letting the word of God sink in.

I suspect Jesus disappeared directly because the purpose of his ministry on earth was to start a revolution through men. I heard a saying the other day that Jesus did not need to take the world by force as many wanted. No, He was going to change hearts that will change the world. Then those two men go to the disciples and tell the story. All of a sudden Jesus appears in the room. Again, He eats fish. Verse 44 says *“He said to them, “This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.”* Then Jesus takes them out to Bethany and He ascends or disappears into the heavens. The point? They all went on their way rejoicing and praising God. Change hearts to change the world!

Again, in Luke 4 we find Jesus reading from the word in the temple. He purposely stops in the middle of a verse. Then He closes the scroll or drops the mic. The religious can't see it. They attempt to throw Jesus off a cliff. Yet, He just walks on through the crowd. How? I think they were blind to God and Jesus plainly disappeared. So many people say God does not exist because they can't see Him. It appears to be a convenient excuse of believers. Yet, the Bible is pointing out that no matter if you did see Jesus or did see the word, many did not believe. He and the scriptures were right before them yet, they chose to be blind.

In John 6 we, again, find Jesus feeding people. They were stunned by the miracles. Interestingly enough, Jesus feeds and teaches them the word. He called himself the bread of life. Jesus made an analogy about eating His flesh and drinking His blood. Many disciples of John walked away. They could see miracles but they could not see God in Jesus or the word. Some however, wanted Jesus to rise up now. They did not have the heart to see God. Instead, they wanted miracles and freedom from the Romans. It says that they tried to make Him king by

force. Yet, the next verse has Jesus finding a quiet place. I think He walked away from the crowd and disappeared.

Finally, I just want to touch on the garden and the ascension. In John 18, Jesus has the Roman guard before Him. This is fascinating! Jesus asks them who they want and they say Jesus. Don't they see Him? He's standing right there. Then Jesus says I am he and they all fall down. Then Jesus asks them again who they want. Again, they say Jesus.

Then in Acts 1 We have a re-telling by Luke of the assertion into Heaven. Look at verse 6 *“Then they gathered around him and asked him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?”* After all this time the disciples were still looking for the military Messiah in Jesus. Then we have angels saying to them *““Men of Galilee,” they said, “why do you stand here looking into the sky?”* In a nut shell, they are saying why are you looking the wrong way? Why are you looking for a fight? Why are you not understanding the word of God? Why did you not see God and His plan in Jesus. I can hear Jesus saying about John the Baptist in Matthew 11:

*“As John’s disciples were leaving, Jesus began to speak to the crowd about John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed swayed by the wind? 8 If not, what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? No, those who wear fine clothes are in kings’ palaces. 9 Then what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. 10 This is the one about whom it is written: ‘I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.’*

Can you see Jesus as He really is or has, He disappeared from your eyes?