

Luke 24:42

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb.

Analysis

And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb (οἱ δὲ ἐπέδωκαν αὐτῷ ἰχθύος ὀπτοῦ μέρος καὶ ἀπὸ μελισσίου κηρίου). The disciples offered ichthyos optou (ἰχθύος ὀπτοῦ, "broiled fish")—ordinary food from a recent meal. Some manuscripts include apo melissiou kēriou (ἀπὸ μελισσίου κηρίου, "from a honeycomb"), though this phrase is textually uncertain. Both fish and honey were common Palestinian foods; their ordinariness is significant—this was not a vision or spiritual experience but physical, mundane reality.

The offering of food serves Jesus' apologetic purpose. Ancient Jews and Greeks believed spirits could appear but not eat physical food (Tobit 12:19, where the angel Raphael explains he only seemed to eat). By requesting and consuming food, Jesus proved His resurrection was bodily, not merely spiritual. The Greek epedōkan (ἐπέδωκαν, "they gave") indicates the disciples' response to His request (v. 41: "Have ye here any meat?")—they cooperated in His demonstration.

Fish holds special significance in Luke's Gospel and early Christianity. Jesus called fishermen as disciples (5:1-11), multiplied fish to feed thousands (9:10-17), and ate fish with disciples post-resurrection (John 21:9-13). The Greek word ichthys (ἰχθύς) became an early Christian acronym: Iēsous Christos Theou Yios Sōtēr (Jesus Christ, God's Son, Savior). This meal demonstrated resurrection reality and foreshadowed the church's mission.

Historical Context

This meal occurred in Jerusalem on resurrection Sunday evening (Luke 24:33-36). Fish was a staple food in first-century Palestine, especially after Jesus made fishermen His disciples (Luke 5:1-11). Broiled fish suggests a recently prepared meal—the disciples had gathered to eat when Jesus appeared. Honeycomb was prized as a sweet delicacy in a culture lacking refined sugar. The combination of fish and honey represents ordinary Palestinian cuisine, emphasizing the resurrection's historical, physical reality rather than mystical spirituality. Later church fathers cited this passage extensively against Docetic and Gnostic heresies that denied Christ's real humanity and physical resurrection.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. Why was eating physical food crucial evidence that Jesus rose bodily rather than as a disembodied spirit?
2. How does the ordinariness of the food (fish and honey) strengthen rather than weaken the resurrection account?
3. What does Jesus' willingness to eat with disciples post-resurrection teach about the incarnation's permanence?

Interlinear Text

οἱ	δὲ	ἔπέδωκαν	αὐτῷ	ἰχθύος	ὀπτοῦ	μέρος	καὶ	ἀπὸ
G3588	And	they gave	him	fish	of a broiled	a piece	and	of
G1161	G1929	G846	G2486	G3702	G3313	G2532	G575	
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μελισσίου		κηρίου						
an honeycomb		G2781						
G3193								

