

The Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ

In the Name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, One God. Amen.

Aim

- ✠ To know about this great feast of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- ✠ To know the importance of the Ascension of the Lord.

Key verses

“Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight” (Acts 1:9)

“I am with you always, even to the end of the age” (Matt 28: 20)

What was the Ascension of Jesus Christ?

The Scriptures teach that 40 days after His resurrection, Jesus, in miraculous fashion, physically ascended (was lifted off the ground and began floating upward) to return to the glory of His Father and sit down at His right hand. This was a visible event, witnessed by His disciples on the **Mount of Olive** outside of Jerusalem. Having finished the work the Father had sent Him to do, Jesus now triumphantly returns to the glory of His Father. This event, along with Christ's birth, crucifixion, and resurrection, is the one of the major events of His earthly ministry. To this day it is celebrated by many Christians 40 days after Easter.

What passages of Scripture speak of the Ascension?

Luke 24:46-53 -- He told them, "This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and **repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in His name to all nations**, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high." When He had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, he lifted up his hands and blessed them. While He was blessing them, He left them and was taken up into heaven. Then they worshiped Him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God".

Acts 1:1-3, 8-11 -- In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach until the day He was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles He had chosen. After His suffering, He showed Himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that He was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God . . . But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." After He said this, He was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid Him from their sight. They were looking intently up into the sky as He was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen Him go into heaven."

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Mark 16:19-20 -- After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, He was taken up into heaven and He sat at the right hand of God. Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed his word by the signs that accompanied it.

Psalm 110:1-2 -- The Lord says to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet." The Lord will extend your mighty scepter from Zion; you will rule in the midst of your enemies.

See also Luke 9:51; John 6:60-62; Ephesians 4:8-10; 1Tim 3:16; Hebrews 1:3.

Why Did Christ ascend to the Father and what does it mean for us?

A. Christ ascended to prepare a place for those who believe in Him in heaven. Jesus is our forerunner. This gives us certainty of everlasting life!

John 14:2-3 -- "In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.

B. Christ ascended to send people to proclaim the saving gospel by the power of the Holy Spirit.

John 16:6-8 -- Because I have said these things, you are filled with grief. But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you. When He comes, He will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment.

John 20:21-23 -- Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent Me, I am sending you." And with that He breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

C. Christ Ascended to Intercede for us before the Father (He is our Priest).

Romans 8:34-35 -- Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died--more than that, who was raised to life--is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?

D. Christ ascended to sit down at the right hand of God to rule over His Church and the entire universe (He is our King).

The expression "**sitting down at the right hand of God**" means the glory and power of God the Father, means that Jesus returned to His glory, He now makes full use of this power. What does it all mean? It means that Jesus, our divine-human Savior reigns! He controls all for the good of His Church! Nothing happens outside of His control!

The ascension of our Savior is very important event which accomplished some wonderful and awesome things in the plan of God.

The Importance of Jesus-Christ's Ascension

On Easter we commemorate the resurrection of Christ--one of the four greatest events in human history since the creation of man. The others include:

1. The first great event and one anticipated since the fall of man, is **the incarnation**-- the moment in time when God descended to earth in the person of His Son to become true-yet sinless- human.
2. The second great event is **the cross** when our Savior died for our sins--the innocent bearing the penalty of the guilty.

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3. The third great event is **the resurrection**, when Jesus Christ was raised from death by the glory of the Father.

“In our culture, as in most cultures around the world, the ultimate symbol of foreboding and despair is the grave . . . Yet the bible shows us a grave--an empty grave--which is the picture of ultimate hope”

The ascension completes the resurrection. Without the resurrection Christ's death would be meaningless as far as the great issues of life are concerned. And without the ascension, the resurrection would also be incomplete. We would have a resurrected person, but not one who is now at God's right hand in the place of authority.

Why the Ascension of Jesus Christ was essential?

- **His Glorification** (John 17:5; Acts 7:55; Rev. 1:12-16) It meant a return to His pre-incarnate glory, but it also constituted a glorification of His humanity where He is the Forerunner of all believers who will follow.
- **His Session** (Eph. 1:20-23; Phil. 2:9; Heb. 1:3; 1 Pet. 3:22) It declared that He was in heaven, at God's right hand, the place of the highest honor and authority. It means the possession of the throne of God without dispossession of the Father.
- **His Intercession and Protection over His own** (John 17:11, Rom. 8:32, Heb. 4:14-16) it affirms His continuing ministry for us at God's right hand: kept by His presence with the Father and His work as High Priest. In this regard, it declares we have an advocate with the Father and a compassionate High Priest, one who cares for us with the greatest compassion and who both intercedes for us when we sin and prays for us in our need.
- **His Provision for spiritual power** (John 14:25-26; 16:7-10; Luke 24:49f; Acts. 1:8-11) It provided the means of His gift of the Comforter. Without the ascension, there would be none of the ministries of the Holy Spirit as we know it today: no indwelling, no baptism into Christ, and no filling. This would mean the absence of power over sin and power for witnessing. We would be a helpless people.
- **His Distribution** (Eph. 4:7-11) it affirmed His right to give gifts to His church.
- **His Preparation** (John 14:3, 4) it affirms His promise to prepare a home for His bride. When we lose a loved one who knows the Lord, one of the great comforts is the fact that our loved one has actually gone home and that we will someday be joining them.
- **Commission** (Mt. 28:19, Luke 24:44, John 12:32; 14:12; 17:11-23; Mark 16:19-20). By His commission I am referring to His earthly ministry and that He intends to continue this through the church. Continue it through you and me as we make ourselves available to Him as the risen and ascended Lord through the Holy Spirit His gift for ministry. As with Isaiah, this vision of Christ and its consequences to us, should mean “here I am Lord, send me; do with me according to your purpose.”

Glory is to God forever. Amen.