

Ascension Day

Introduction

John 1 v 1: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. ⁴ In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

John 1 v 14: And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

- Coming of Jesus (Christmas) always celebrated.
- Going of Jesus (Ascension day) usually goes by unnoticed.
- Jesus' ascension: just as much a part of the gospel, as His birth, death, burial and resurrection.

Mark 16 v 19: He (*Jesus*) was received up into heaven, and **sat down at the right hand of God**.

John 16 v 28 - Jesus: I came forth from the Father and have come into the world. Again, **I leave the world and go to the Father.**"

- He came from Heaven, where He ruled for eternity.
- He was manifested as a man here on earth for 33 years, to accomplish what the Father has sent Him to do. (The Gospel Message – to save and seek that which was lost)

What is the Ascension of Jesus?

- Jesus returned to Heaven (back to the God the Father) to be glorified, and continue His rule over all creation, for all eternity.

Today: look at the Ascension of Jesus.

- **Why is it important? 10 reasons.**
- **What does it mean for believers?**

1 Timothy 3 v 16: God was manifested in the flesh, Justified in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Preached among the Gentiles, Believed on in the world, **Received up in glory.**

(1) JESUS - ONLY TRUE & LIVING GOD

All other god's is false idols. They can now be found in tombs and graves:

- Bab - buried on Mount Carmel, Israel (Babism)
- Buddha - cremated in Kushinagar, India (Buddhism)
- Charles Russell - buried in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (Jehovah's witnesses)
- Joseph Smith - buried in Illinois, USA (Latter day saints and Mormonism)
- Allan Kardec - buried in Paris, France (Spiritism)
- Confucius - buried in Qufu, China (Confucianism)
- Muhammed - buried in Medina, Saudi- Arabia (Islam)
- Ron Hubbard - ashes was thrown into the Pacific Ocean (Scientology)

Hinduism has no one specific founder, and is a fusion of various beliefs. All dead.
Other religions with dead founders: Zoroastrianism, Tenrikyo, Taoism, Sikism, Baha i Faith.

Jesus' tomb is empty. He is in Heaven, Alive. We serve a living God.

- Christianity is not a religion like others - It is faith in a living Person.
- Looking at Him for salvation. Following the Master. Becoming like Him. One day being with Him forever.
- Relationship with a living God.

Luke 24 v 50 – Before Jesus ascended: He lifted up His hands and blessed them (*the disciples*).⁵¹ Now it came to pass, while He blessed them, that He was parted from them and **carried up into heaven**.⁵² And **they worshiped Him**, and returned to Jerusalem **with great joy**,⁵³ and were **continually in the temple praising and blessing God**. Amen.

- The disciples saw Jesus return to Heaven.
- Result was: Continuous Worship, Joy, Praise
- 2000 years later, it is continuing.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR US?

- I have a relationship with the true living God in heaven.
- Our relationship with Him results in Worship and Joy.

(2) JESUS RULES FROM HEAVEN (LORDSHIP)

Ephesians 1 v 20: (*God the Father*) **seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places**,²¹ far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.²² And **He put all things under His feet**, and gave Him *to be head over all things* to the church,²³ which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

- RIGHT HAND OF GOD: place of power, dominion, privilege, distinction, delight
- FAR ABOVE: Every ruler or authority, either man or angelic.
- ALL THINGS UNDER HIS FEET: Dominion over everything and anything.

Matthew 28 v 18: All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.....

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR US?

- Everything is under control. Our world is not a surprise to Jesus.
- Economy, secular society, wars, conflicts, cultures, weather patterns, your life: children, marriage, work.
- We can rest with Him in the boat.

(3) HOLY SPIRIT CAME

John 7 v 37: On the last day, that great *day* of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. ³⁸He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.” ³⁹But this He spoke **concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.**

- Those who believe on Jesus for salvation, receive Holy Spirit.

Acts 2 v 33 – Peter preaches on Pentecost: ³³Therefore being **exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear.**

- After His ascension and glorification, Jesus gave us Holy Spirit.

John 16 v 7: Nevertheless I tell you the truth. **It is to your advantage that I go away;** for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; **but if I depart, I will send Him to you.**

- Jesus is Emmanuel, God with us. Disciples lived every day with Jesus.
- We do the same. We live in constant communion with Holy Spirit.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR US?

- We have a Helper (John 14 v 16)
- He abides with us forever (John 14 v 6), in us and with us (John 14 v 17)
- We are not orphans (John 14 v 18)
- He teaches us all things (John 14 v 26)
- He reminds us of what Jesus said (John 14 v 26)
- He leaves His peace with us (John 14 v 27)
- He testifies of Jesus (John 15 v 26)
- He convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgement (John 16 v 8)
- He guides us into all truth (John 16 v 13)
- He will tell us of things to come (John 16 v 13)
- He will glorify Jesus (John 16 v 14)
- He empowers us to be witnesses, and martyrs (Acts 1 v 8)

(4) JESUS OUR ADVOCATE WITH THE FATHER

1 John 1 v 7: the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

⁸If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹**If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.** ¹⁰If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.

My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. **And if anyone sins**, we have an **Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous**. ² And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.

- Jesus is our advocate in Heaven.
- Jesus defends us, when satan brings an accusation.
- He is our Advocate, but also the One Who paid the fine for our sin.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR US?

- If we sin, and are honest, confess and turn away from our sin, Jesus defends us.
- When we sin, Fellowship with the Father is broken, but not Relationship.
- It only takes turning back to God to restore fellowship with Him.

(5) JESUS IS INTERCEDING FOR US

Romans 8 v 31: ³¹ What then shall we say to these things? If God *is* for us, who *can be* against us? ³² He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? ³³ **Who shall bring a charge against God's elect?** *It is* God who justifies. ³⁴ **Who is he who condemns?** *It is* Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who **is even at the right hand of God**, who also **makes intercession for us**.

- Jesus prays, intercedes for us in Heaven.
- No charges, accusations or condemnation will stand.

Hebrews 7 v 25: ²⁵ Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost **those who come to God through Him**, since He always **lives to make intercession** for them.

²⁶ For such a High Priest was fitting for us, *who is* holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens; ²⁷ who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people's, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself.

- Jesus saves us from the power of sin through His intercession.

Luke 22 v 31: And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift *you* as wheat. ³² **But I have prayed for you**, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to *Me*, strengthen your brethren."

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR US?

- Jesus represents us in Heaven. He prays on our behalf.
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(6) JESUS IS PREPARING A PLACE FOR US

John 14 v 2: In **My Father's house** are many mansions; if *it were* not so, I would have told you. **I go to prepare a place for you.** ³And if I go and prepare a place for you, **I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, *there* you may be also.**

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR US?

- There is room enough in Heaven for all believers. Provision is being made for you.

IMPORTANT!!!

John 14 v 6 - Jesus: "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

- **Only one way to Heaven, through Jesus Christ.**
- **You cannot enter the Kingdom of God, unless you are born again.**
- **There is only one name under Heaven given by which men can be saved.**

(7) OUR POSITION: IN HEAVENLY PLACES WITH HIM

Ephesians 2 v 4: But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, ⁵even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), ⁶and raised *us* up together, and **made *us* sit together in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus,** ⁷that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in *His* kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, ⁹not of works, lest anyone should boast.

- Through faith in Jesus, we are already delivered from the present evil world, and seated in Christ.
- We are no longer earthbound, but seek the things above, where Christ is seated.

Colossians 3 v 1: If then you were raised with Christ, **seek those things which are above**, where **Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God.** ²**Set your mind on things above**, not on things on the earth. ³For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴When Christ *who is* our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR US?

- We are freed from the world.
- Our God, our Love, our mission, our life-purpose, our destiny is in Heaven.

(8) ANSWERED PRAYER IN HIS NAME

John 16 v 16: "A little while, **and you will not see Me**; and again a little while, and you will see Me, **because I go to the Father.**"

¹⁷ Then *some* of His disciples said among themselves, “What is this that He says to us, ‘A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me’; and, ‘because I go to the Father’?” ¹⁸ They said therefore, “What is this that He says, ‘A little while’? We do not know what He is saying.”

¹⁹ Now Jesus knew that they desired to ask Him, and He said to them, “Are you inquiring among yourselves about what I said, ‘A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me’?” ²⁰ Most assuredly, I say to you that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; and you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into joy. ²¹ A woman, when she is in labor, has sorrow because her hour has come; but as soon as she has given birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world. ²² Therefore you now have sorrow; but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you.

²³ “And in that day you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, **whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you.** ²⁴ Until now you have asked nothing in My name. **Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.**

- Up to that point the disciples always came to Jesus with their questions and requests.
- Now He was going away, where should we go for counsel?
- Pray to the Father, in the name of Jesus.
- He will grant your requests for Jesus’ sake. Not because we are worthy, but because Jesus is.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR US?

- We have full access to the Father through prayer. He will answer.

(9) GIFTS TO THE CHURCH

Ephesians 4 v 7: ⁷ But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ’s gift. ⁸ Therefore He says:

“When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, And gave gifts to men.”

⁹ (Now this, “**He ascended**”—what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? ¹⁰ He who descended is also the One **who ascended far above all the heavens**, that He might fill all things.) ¹¹ And **He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,** ¹² for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, , for the edifying of the body of Christ, ¹³ till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;

- The giver of the 5-fold gifts is the ascended Christ.
- The gifts were given to equip the church to do the works of ministry.
- For edification and maturity

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR US?

- The church is well equipped to do the works of ministry.

- Edify one another.
- Grow in faith and maturity.

(10) SECOND COMING OF JESUS

Acts 1 v 9: Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. ¹⁰ And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, ¹¹ who also said, “Men of Galilee, **why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This *same* Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.**”

My father always says after our holiday visit to them: “You have to go away to come again!”

WHY IS JESUS COMING BACK?

1) TO FETCH HIS CHILDREN

1 Thessalonians 4 v 13: But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. ¹⁴ For **if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.**

¹⁵ For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive *and* remain until **the coming of the Lord** will by no means precede those who are asleep. ¹⁶ For **the Lord Himself will descend from heaven** with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. **And the dead in Christ will rise first.** ¹⁷ **Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.** ¹⁸ Therefore comfort one another with these words.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR US?

- Comfort and hope.
- In Christ we will live.
- We will see our loved ones, who die in Christ again.

2) VENGEANCE AND JUDGEMENT

2 Thessalonians 1 v 7:when the Lord Jesus is **revealed from heaven** with His mighty angels, ⁸ in flaming fire taking **vengeance on those who do not know God**, and on those **who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.** ⁹ These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, ¹⁰ when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed.

- Righteous judgement on 2 types of people
 - 1) those who do not know God: those who have rejected Him.
 - 2) those who have rejected the gospel message in disobedience.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR US?

- Stay on the narrow road. Obey the Word of God
- Preach the Gospel so that others might be saved.

3) RULE

Revelation 19 v 11: Now I saw **heaven opened**, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him *was* called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. ¹²His eyes *were* like a flame of fire, and on His head *were* many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. ¹³He *was* clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. ¹⁴And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. ¹⁵Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself **will rule them with a rod of iron**. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. ¹⁶And He has on *His* robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR US?

- Jesus is the Supreme Ruler. Every knee shall bow to Him, and every tongue confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord.
- Bow willingly now or be forced to bow later.

4) TO BRING REWARDS

Revelation 22 v 12: “And behold, **I am coming quickly**, and **My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work**. ¹³I am the Alpha and the Omega, *the* Beginning and *the* End, the First and the Last.” ¹⁴Blessed *are* those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the **tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city**. ¹⁵But outside *are* dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR US?

- Stay faithful. You will receive your reward on Jesus’ return: everlasting life with Him.

¹⁶“I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star.” ¹⁷**And the Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” And let him who hears say, “Come!”** And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.....

²⁰He who testifies to these things says, **“Surely I am coming quickly.”**

Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

²¹The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen.

AMEN

