

THE ASCENSION: Acts 1:9-11

Mark 16:19 ESV So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God.

Luke 24:50-53 ESV Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and lifting up his hands he blessed them. (51) While he blessed them, he parted from them and was carried up into heaven. (52) And they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, (53) and were continually in the temple blessing God.

Acts 1:9-12 ESV And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. (10) And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, (11) and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven." (12) Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away.

- I. Observations from the texts.
 - a. In harmonizing these two texts, what is the order of events?
 - i. He led them out as far as Bethany. Where is Bethany? Read Mark 11:1
 - ii. Lifting up his hands he blessed them.
 - iii. He finishes speaking to them.
 - iv. They were looking at Jesus.
 - v. He was lifted up.
 - vi. A cloud took him out of their sight (carried up into heaven).
 - vii. They continued to look up into heaven.
 - viii. Two men in white robes appeared among them.
 - ix. The two men question the Men of Galilee as to why they were continuing to look into heaven.
 - x. The two men tell the Disciples where Jesus went.
 - xi. The two men give promise of how Jesus will return.
 - xii. They worshiped Him.
 - xiii. They returned to Jerusalem (phrase in both accounts). What does this imply?
 - xiv. Luke provides the distance of Olivet to Jerusalem. (1,100 meters or $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile).
 - b. What six phrases did Luke use to describe the Ascension? Points i, ii, and iii seem to be the three verbs Luke used to describe the Ascension.
 - i. He parted from them and was carried up into heaven. Luke 24:51.
 - ii. "until the day He was taken up..." Acts 1:2
 - iii. "After He said these things, He was lifted up..." Acts 1:9 (NASB).
 - iv. "and a cloud took him out of their sight. (NASB-received) Acts 1:9 (NASB)
 - v. "And while they were gazing into heaven as he went..." Acts 1:10 (ESV)
 - vi. "This Jesus who was taken up from you into heaven..." Acts 1:11 (ESV)
- II. The Third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead. **The Apostles' Creed.**
- III. And the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father; and he shall come again, with glory, to judge both the living and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end. **The Nicene Creed.**

- IV. What other passages of Scripture refer to the Ascension?
- a. From Acts:
 - i. Acts 1:22 – criteria for Judas Iscariot’s replacement: time span & witness?
 - ii. Acts 2:33-35
 1. What happened to Jesus?
 2. What did Jesus receive from the Father?
 3. Who were the witnesses of the gift?
 4. For how long will Jesus be seated at the Father’s right hand?
 - iii. Acts 5:31-32
 1. How was Jesus exalted by God? That is, titles?
 2. What was Jesus to give?
 3. Who were witnesses of these things?
 - iv. Acts 7:55f – What did Stephen see?
 - v. Acts 9:3-5; Acts 22:6-8; Acts 26:13-15 – What did Saul see?
 - b. From the Epistles:
 - i. Romans 8:34 – What four things are said about Jesus historically?
 - ii. Colossians 3:1-2 & 3-10 –
 1. What is presupposed by Paul in verse 1?
 2. What then are we naturally to do?
 3. Why are we to live this way? (verse 3-4, 9-10)
 - iii. Ephesians 1:15-23, focus on 19-23:
 1. What did the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, do with Christ by His great power? There are at least five actions by God for Christ.
 - iv. Ephesians 2:6 – What Has God done with us in regard to Christ’s Ascension?
 - v. Ephesians 4:8-11 (Psalm 68:18)
 1. What did David foresee?
 2. What gifts did Christ receive for men? To what is Paul alluding?
 3. To what end are the gifts given?
 - vi. Philippians 2:8-11, 12-13
 1. What are the honors God gives to Jesus upon his exaltation?
 2. Therefore, what are we to do?
 3. What does God promise to do?
 - vii. 1 Timothy 3:16 – Summary of the ministry of Jesus: How was He taken up?
 - viii. Hebrews 1:3 – After what act did Jesus sit at the right hand of the Majesty on High?
 - ix. Hebrews 1:4-13; 2:9 –
 1. Why is the supremacy of Jesus over the angels so particularly stressed? Could such things as God said to Jesus ever be said to a creature?
 2. For what were angels created?
 3. Was Jesus for a time made lower than the angels?
 4. What is Jesus doing now? (Verse 3)
 - x. Hebrews 4:14 – How is the Ascension described?
 - xi. Hebrews 6:19-20 – What comfort do we have because of Jesus’ Ascension?
 - xii. Hebrews 7:21-25 – Therefore, because he always lives to intercede for them, he is able to save completely those who come to God through him. (ISV)
 1. What has God sworn regarding Jesus?
 2. What does Jesus hold permanently? Why?
 3. What is Jesus then able to do to the uttermost?
 4. For what purpose does Jesus “always lives”
 - xiii. Hebrews 8:1; 9:24-25 – What facts are said about Jesus?
 - xiv. Hebrews 12:2-3–
 1. What motivated Jesus?
 2. How is He described?

3. What was His reward?
 4. How does that relate to us and our continuing life on earth?
- xv. 1 Peter 3:22 – What fact about Jesus does Peter confirm in this letter?

- V. What is the Significance of the Ascension? (Dr. Robert L. Reymond, Systematic Theology, pp. 578-581)
- a. Proof of His victory (Ephesians 4:8).
 - b. A physical separation from the disciples, but, because of the Holy Spirit, an enhanced spiritual reality and spiritual communion. (1 John 1:1-4, 3:2)
 - c. “...so his ascension in turn was the means for his climactic exaltation and enthronement (*sessio*) at the Father’s right hand as Holy One, Lord, Christ, Prince, and Savior of the world.” (p. 579)
 - d. “He occupies the highest place of glory and honor which heaven can afford...” (p. 579)
 - e. “The nature of his lordship entitles him sovereignly to bestow gifts of every and of whatever kind upon men as he pleases.” (p. 579)
 - f. “...Upon his resurrection and ascension...as the fruit and reward for his labors on earth, Jesus as the Messiah was granted supreme lordship and universal dominion over men.” (p. 579)
 - g. READ PAGES 580-581
 - i. Something new occurred for Jesus at his ascension
 - ii. This new, universal mediatorial dominion is temporary (1 Cor. 15:24-28)
 - iii. “In sum, the ascension meant for the Son, as the divine-human Messiah, the assumption of the prerogatives of the messianic investiture on a universal scale, rights which were already his by right of nature as God the Son, but which he “won” or was “awarded” as the incarnate Son for fulfilling the obligations pertaining to the estate of humiliation intrinsic to the messianic investiture.” (p. 581)
 - h. Jesus central to all apostolic preaching.
 - i. The implication of Christ’s exclusive lordship over the entire world eliminates all pluralism.
 - j. God’s revelation to men is final and exclusive in Jesus Christ.
 - k. Salvation can be in no other name but Jesus.
 - l. He is the only qualified Mediator between God and man.
 - m. He is the One, as Lord, who will judge the quick and the dead at His appearing. (Acts 10:42; Romans 14:8-9; 2 Timothy 4:1-2)
 - n. “He is the One whose once-for-all offering up of himself as a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice is alone acceptable to God the Father, the “legal” representative of the Godhead, in the “great Transaction” of redemption and the canceling of sin, and whose high priestly intercession alone meets with the Father’s approval.” (p. 581)
- VI. **“In light of their exclusive claims for him, it is not surprising that the blessing and power of God rested upon the Apostles’ evangelistic efforts.” (p. 581)**