



Learn Your Bible

Resources to help you learn and understand the Bible

Short Study 011: The Ascension

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Read Acts 1:4-11

We celebrate the birth of Jesus at Christmas, his death and resurrection at Easter; but most of us seldom remember his ascension, forty days after Easter. Yet there are five important things that arise because of his ascension.

1. Confirming (read Hebrews 10:12). Notice the posture and position of Jesus on his arrival in heaven. These are not mere incidentals. "Seating" is a posture that suggests a work that is over; "at the right hand" is a position of honour. Now look at what Jesus said earlier, with his dying breath (read John 19:30). These expressions in Hebrews suggest that God the Father is confirming that His Son (Jesus) had successfully completed his mission (which was? Read 1 Tim 1:15 if you are not sure).

2. Sending (read John 16:7). Who did Jesus send? While Jesus was physically in the world, he could be in only one place at a time. After ascending to heaven, Jesus could send the Holy Spirit to take his place – not at a single location, but to dwell in multitudes of believers wherever they are in the world.

3. Preparing (read John 14:2). It's comforting to know that, at the end of a long journey, our destination will be at a place that has been prepared for our arrival. However long or arduous our life in this world, we can be assured that Jesus has prepared a place for our arrival in heaven.

4. Interceding (read Rom 8:34). The ascended Lord Jesus has been called "our man in heaven," for he represents humanity into which he was born and in which he died. What is Satan doing right now, according to Rev 12:10? If Satan is doing this against us, isn't it good to know that we have an advocate in heaven who is speaking on our behalf?

5. Waiting (read Heb 10:13). "Waiting" might not seem particularly thrilling, but what he is waiting for definitely is! What is to be our Lord's next great activity, following his ascension and this period of waiting, which will be the prelude to his ultimate triumph? (Read Acts 1:11 again, then Rev 22:20).

To think about: What advantages are there for us today in having the Holy Spirit with us instead of Jesus in the flesh?

To dig deeper: With the aid of a Bible Dictionary or Encyclopaedia, and the Bible references they point to, see what you can find out about the Second Coming of Jesus (sometimes called the *Parousia*).