

## THE ASCENSION OF JESUS

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*"And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. And they worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen." Luke 24: 50-53.*

Several years ago I stood on this very spot at Bethany where Jesus blessed His disciples and then ascended into the heavens. Even though I did not see the actual event my heart was thrilled as my mind tried to picture that day. Jesus, God in the flesh, had been born as a man, died for our sins, and finished His tour of duty. Now with His disciples looking on he visibly was carried into heaven. Those who saw it were thrilled, and the good news was told far and wide. We still have great reason to rejoice, and spread the reasons for His ascension. I find ten reasons why this glorious moment took place. **(1). To Be Our Forerunner:** *"Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec."* Heb. 6: 20. As Jesus took this trip back to glory, He was picturing what will happen to the saved on earth one day. He went first to prepare the way, and in the rapture all the redeemed will follow Him. He is not only the way, but has shown the way we will go. During His earthly ministry, He had urged believers to keep looking up, and up he went. We will be next. Are you excited and prepared for your leap into the skies? **(2). To Prepare A Place For Us:** *"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. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.*

John 14: 2-3. Doesn't that put goose-bumps on your goose-bumps? Right this moment Jesus is in glory preparing our eternal home, and all the surroundings that will thrill us there. If you are saved this ought to excite you, and if you are not, trust Jesus as Saviour, and join us in that city above. We do not know all the construction details, but it will be more glorious than our earthly mind can grasp. The song writer wrote "Heaven is a wonderful place, filled with glory and grace; I want to see my Saviour's face; Heaven is a wonderful place." **(3). To Give Us Many Gifts:** *"Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. Now that he ascended what is it that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things."* Eph. 4: 8-10. Jesus went back up to the father as the last step of His redemptive trip for mankind. Talk about gifts! Instead of guilt we believers now enjoy grace. We deserve to die for our sin, but He did it for us. He was made to be sin to make a way for ours to be forgiven, and His ascension guarantees we will do the same. We cannot begin to comprehend the gifts He has prepared for us in heaven **(4). To Offer Encouragement To Us:** *"Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession."* Heb. 4:14. He completed the work of the Father, and He is home interceding for believers day by day. The great plans for us go on, and He is there to see to all the details. We are not to become discouraged by the bumps in life's road, but hold fast and know in all, He is in charge. We will always have His constant attention. He knows our needs, the things we will face in our life, and He is in control backed with hundreds of promises that will not fail. **(5). To Pray And Intercede For Us:** *"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him,*

*seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."* Heb. 7:25. Once again scripture makes it clear that our existence is under His control, until we too leap to the heavens. Whatever earthly problems we face, it is wonderful to know He is constantly watching with daily help, and wisdom to impart to us. Our eternal lawyer, head of all things, and all powerful, knows just how to lead us. The child of God is never alone but represented constantly in Heaven by the Master. Praise God! **(6). To Send Us The Holy Spirit:** *"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come."* John 16:13. Those around him questioned why he was leaving, but it was then He spoke of the Holy Spirit. He, the Holy Spirit, would answer all their questions, grant power for miracles and give wisdom for the rest of their journey. We in our walk can rejoice that the Spirit dwells within, reveals scriptural meaning, and leads us day by day. It is through the power of the Holy Spirit, who lives within us, that we can live lives of victory in our daily walk. In devotions He whispers the deep scriptural meanings to our heart. Be alert to His presence, and you will feel when you do wrong, and be thrilled when you have decided right. **(7). To Oversee His Church On Earth:** *"I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet. Saying I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia."* Rev: 1: 10 & 11a. The Holy Spirit spoke for the trinity and outlined God's plans for the churches. With your Bible in your lap and the devotion of your heart set on hearing from God' the Holy Spirit will reveal many things to the believer today. He dwells within to draw our attention to the things of God. We are told to worship and witness in the spirit and He leads worship at our church. So often in my

long ministry I listened to and obeyed the Spirit in preaching. No pastor or church will ever accomplish the will of God without the leading of the Holy Spirit. **(8). To Work Through His People:** *"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also: and greater works than these shall he do: because I go unto my Father."* John 14:12. No challenge is ever too large and no job too hard that we cannot do it in the power of God. As Jesus sits by His Father, He wants to do great things through us, as His Spirit leads. He can and will work through His people as we obey Him. He has said He will be with us always. **(9). To Make His Enemies His Footstool:** *"But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God; From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool."* Heb. 10: 12-13. What an amazing picture! Beware all you powerful enemies of God, you cannot win, and death will make you like a footrest before the throne of God. Our president can insult Him daily and our legislators ridicule Him and seek to ruin the faith but the Trinity will bring all to judgment and will prevail. No power can match Him and Hell awaits those who reject Him. **(10). To Prepare For His Triumphant Return:** *"Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into Heaven."* Acts 1:11. Jesus rejoined His Father above so He could return in power and glory, to soon further carry out the will of God. This grand return will bowl over His enemies who will plead for the mountains to hide them from His presence. Only terrible defeat and death will engulf them *"for the wages of sin is death."* Rom. 6:23a. Believers will be on the side of the triumphant armies of the Lord who will stamp out evil forever and raise the victory flag of righteousness. Praise to our eternal God!