

## The Ascension of Jesus

So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

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. And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, 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.”

**Acts 1:6-11, ESV**

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Jesus’ ascension was His Father’s act of withdrawing Him from His disciples’ gaze upward (a sign of exaltation) into a cloud (a sign of God’s presence, Acts 1:9–11). This act was not a form of space travel, but the next step following the Resurrection of Jesus’ return from death to the height of glory. Jesus foretold the Ascension (John 6:62; 14:2, 12; 16:5, 10, 17, 28; 17:5; 20:17), and Luke described it (Luke 24:50–53; Acts 1:6–11). Paul celebrates it and affirms Christ’s consequent lordship (Eph. 1:20; 4:8–10; Phil. 2:9–11; 1 Tim. 3:16), and Hebrews applies this truth for encouragement of the faint-hearted (Heb. 1:3; 4:14; 9:24). Jesus Christ is Lord of the universe, a source of enormous encouragement to all believers. The Ascension was from one standpoint the restoration of the glory that the Son had before the Incarnation, from another the glorifying of human nature in a way that had never happened before, and from a third the start of a reign that had not existed in this form before. The Ascension establishes three facts:

1. Christ’s personal ascendancy. Ascension means accession. To sit at the Father’s right hand is to occupy the position of ruler on God’s behalf (Matt. 28:18; 1 Cor. 15:27; Eph. 1:20–22; 1 Pet. 3:22).
2. Christ’s spiritual omnipresence. In the heavenly sanctuary of the heavenly Zion (Heb. 9:24; 12:22–24), Jesus is accessible to all who invoke His name (Heb. 4:14), and powerful to help them, anywhere in the world (Heb. 4:16; 7:25; 13:6–8).
3. Christ’s heavenly ministry. The reigning Lord intercedes for His people (Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25). Though requesting from the Father is part of what He does (John 14:16), the essence of Christ’s intercession is intervention in our interest rather than supplication on our behalf (as if His position were one of sympathy without status or authority). In sovereignty He now lavishes upon us the benefits that His suffering won for us. From His throne He sends the Holy Spirit constantly to enrich His people (John 16:7–14; Acts 2:33) and equip them for service (Eph. 4:8–12).

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