

The Ascension of Our Father

Introduction

A. As we approach this subject there are two facets that we must keep in mind. The first has to do with understanding what the Ascension meant to the Lord Jesus, and second, how it was a part of His redemptive work in which we are identified.

B. While we tend to neglect the value of the Ascension, in the Bible this third aspect of the redeeming work of the Lord Jesus is described as highly important.

I. In the Ascension the Lord Jesus Returned Home as the Victorious Lord.

A. The Scripture

This is why it says: "When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men." Eph 4:8 (See Psalm 68)

And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross. Col 2:15 (See Gen 3:15)

B. The Explanation

The Lord Jesus was born into the world to defeat His enemies. They were and are, Satan and his demons, as well as the devastation caused by His enemies: error, sin, sickness, death, and Hell. (See I Cor 15:23-26, 55-58; Rev 21:4)

As the Scripture declares (Col 2:15; I John 3:8) the Lord Jesus **defeated** His enemies in the Crucifixion, **demonstrated** that victory in His Resurrection, and **displayed** that victory in His Ascension.

The picture of the Lord Jesus returning home in triumph (Psalm 68 and Eph 4:8) was based on a well know and rather common event when the Bible was being written. It was the celebration that occurred when a king went against his enemies and won the battle. As the king would return to his home (a fortress/castle city), he would lead a processional of his men. He would be riding in his royal chariot with his enemies chained to the chariot and walking alongside (**he led captives in his train**). His men would have wagons filled with the plunder they had taken in battle. As they proceeded into the city the king would be proclaimed as victorious and the soldiers would throw out of the wagons the spoils of their victory (**gave gifts to men**) to the people lining the streets.

What a wonderful time the Ascension was for the Lord Jesus. He had finished the work His Father had given Him to do. What a welcome He must have received when He returned home. Who can imagine the praise and adoration of the angels? What wonderful songs they must have composed for His homecoming. How delightful it must have been for the Lord

Jesus, to be so adored by angels, and probably by saints in Heaven, and most of all to receive the "well done" of His Heavenly Father.

II. In the Ascension the Lord Jesus Entered Into His Priestly Work of Intercession.

A. The Scripture

Now there have been many of those priests, since death prevented them from continuing in office; but because Jesus lives forever, he has a *permanent priesthood*. Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them. Such a high priest meets our need--*one who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens*. Unlike the other high priests, he does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. *He sacrificed for their sins once for all when he offered himself*. For the law appoints as high priests men who are weak; but the oath, which came after the law, appointed the Son, *who has been made perfect forever*. Heb 7:23-28

B. The Explanation

1. He has a **permanent** priesthood, Vs 23,24.
Once He assumed that office for us His ministry will never change. A contrast to the OT priests whose ministry terminated because they died.
2. He has a **powerful** priesthood, V25.
He is able to save us completely -- no area untouched by divine grace.
3. He has a **holy** priesthood, V26.
He alone can deal with a persons spiritual life. The doctor can the body, etc., but only Jesus Christ can the spiritual life.
4. He has an **authoritative** priesthood, 26.
He has the authority (right) and power (ability) to intercede and save us.
5. He has a **vicarious** priesthood, V27.
His work was done as our Substitute. We were identified in His work.
6. He has a **perfected** priesthood, V 28.
His work is complete -- nothing more needs to be done.

III. In the Ascension the Lord Jesus Displayed His Redemptive Provision for Us.

- A. In regard to salvation the message of the Ascension is **assurance**. Heb 10:21-23.
The Ascension indicated that His sacrifice on the cross was accepted by the Father.
- B. In regard to prayer the message of the Ascension is **invitation**. Heb 4:14-16
Because He is seated in the heavenlies He invites us to come and ask for our needs.
- C. In regard to fruitfulness the message of the Ascension is **enablement**. Eph 4:7,8
In the Ascension the Lord Jesus made provision for gifts of enablement to be given to all believers. One important gift was the Holy Spirit.

D. In regard to holiness the message of the Ascension is **provision**. Col 1:1-5
Because the Lord Jesus conquered sin and the world -- we can through believing and receiving His grace -- live above sin and the world, never perfectly, but yet powerfully.

E. In regard to Satan the message of the Ascension is **authority**. Eph 1:19-22; 2:6
Because the Lord Jesus is seated in the heavenlies -- signifying His victory over Satan and all wicked spirits, and because that authority has been given to all believers -- we can learn to live in freedom from Satan and wicked spirits if we will be honest and forsake our selfishness and sin. The following is a sample of how to utilize the victory of the Lord Jesus in a practical way.

A Suggested Affirmation For Times of Stress

Heavenly Father, I appeal to You for help. Please show me whatever sin I have committed so I may repent. I ask You to forgive me for my pride, my neglect of You, and my disobedience to Your Word. Please rescue me.

I confess before You that I have believed a lot of lies, and practiced them — particularly lies about You and about myself. Help me to confess and reject them.

In Your name, Lord Jesus, I take back from Satan all the ground I have given to him in believing these lies and putting them into practice. I choose to reject Satan and all the Kingdom of Darkness from my life.

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, I take charge of what is happening in my mind, emotions and body.

Whatever is of You, Heavenly Father, in what is happening within me, then I accept it, thank You for it, and depend on You for wisdom, guidance, and healing.

Whatever is not of You, Heavenly Father, in what is happening within me, whatever there is of **error** I have accepted, or the **work of the enemy**, then I reject it in Your name, and I bring the power of Your blood —Lord Jesus against it, and **against the source of it**, and I command it must leave me now. I refuse to submit to it.

(Maintain your trust in God, submission, and the position of authority given in the Ascension.)

Conclusion: In order to have the assurance, joy, power, and fruitfulness of the Ascension in our life we must surrender all the error and sin that contradicts this great event and give ourselves to Jesus Christ in full submission of faith and love.

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