



The Ascension of Jesus

Psalm 110 Acts 1:4-11 Luke 24:44-53

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The Ascension of Jesus into Heaven is the beginning of the “**End Times**”. We are living our lives in the *Last Days*. The Ascension of Jesus into Heaven was like the firing of the **starters gun** in a track meet; or the **click of the stopwatch**. The timer is going; the countdown to the **Last Day** began when Jesus ascended into Heaven. Time is now measured and limited; the day of grace gets shorter and shorter. **Only the Father in Heaven knows the exact time.**

When Jesus ascended into Heaven, the Disciples were gathered around Him; in addition, perhaps 500 other people were also there and witnesses to His Resurrection (1 Cor 15:6). At His Ascension, Jesus commissioned His disciples, and His Church, saying *Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you (Matthew 28:18-20)*. We are to proclaim Jesus’ death and resurrection so that people will repent and believe that their sins are forgiven (Luke 24).

In the Ascension of Jesus into Heaven, there are three promises that Jesus gives to you. These three promises guide us as we live our lives in faith in these *Last Days*.

1. The first promise is that Jesus is always with you.

Here is the very *last thing* that Matthew records Jesus saying before He ascended into Heaven:

Surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

MATTHEW 28:20

The presence of the risen and ascended Lord in your life is meant to comfort you and strengthen you. It means that you are never alone; it means the Lord Jesus is your unseen traveling companion through life. No matter what may happen, the Lord is with you. He is watching over you, protecting you, and making all things work for good in your life. Psalm: 46 teaches us that *The Lord is our refuge and strength, an ever present help in times of trouble* (Psalm 46:1). As you live your life in these **End Times**, in these **Last Days**, the Lord is right there with you. Jesus promised, *Surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.*

2. The second promise of the Ascension is that Jesus gives you His Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is the Third Person of the Holy Trinity who comes along side of you to guide, lead, and empower you in your Christian faith and life. Here is one of the promises that Jesus makes about the Holy Spirit:

And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept Him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for He lives with you and will be in you. JOHN 14:16-17

The main work of the Holy Spirit is to lead you to *repentance and faith* in the Lord Jesus.

The Holy Spirit works through the Word of God to **convict you of sin**; He exposes your *rebellion and immorality*; He convicts you of secret sins and uses guilt to alert you to sin. The Holy Spirit leads you to turn from your sins and confess them to God.

Then the Holy Spirit works through the Gospel and the Sacrament of Holy Communion to **forgive your sins**. He teaches you about Jesus,

and that through His death and resurrection, through His body and blood crucified and risen, forgiveness of sins has been earned for you. **The Holy Spirit comforts you and assures you that your sins are forgiven.** He gives you confidence and conviction that you belong to God and are accepted by Him.

This repentance: *turning from sin and trusting in Christ*, is how we live our lives during these *End Times*; in these *Last Days*. Your entire life is to be one of repentance: *turning from sin and trusting in Christ*¹! **It is the Holy Spirit at work within you!**

3. The third promise of the Ascension is that Jesus will return visibly and in great glory on the Last Day.

At the Ascension of Jesus, the angel echoed what Jesus had earlier taught:

"Men of Galilee," the angel said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven." Acts 1:11

Jesus said, "Then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven. And then all the peoples of the earth will mourn when they see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other. Matthew 24:30-31

The Return of the Lord Jesus is what all of history is moving towards. On the **Last Day**, everything in the world that we know and can see will **STOP** when Jesus returns. *A day is coming, and will soon be here, when Jesus will appear in the sky in great glory and power with all the holy angels.*

¹ The very first of Martin Luther's "95 Theses" reflects this: "When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ said, 'Repent' (Mt 4:17), He willed the entire life of believers to be one of repentance.

EARTH HISTORY WILL END

IT WILL BE JUDGMENT DAY.

The Crucified, Risen, and Ascended Lord Jesus will return to earth and raise the dead. Every single person ever conceived will rise from the dead and stand before Jesus.

Those who **rejected Christ** will be revealed by their **evil deeds** and declared **“guilty!”** of sin and condemned to an eternity in Hell.

Those who **trusted in Christ** will be revealed by their **good deeds** and declared **“not guilty!”** and ushered into the Kingdom of Heaven.

When you think about the Return of Jesus on the Last Day, be sure not to be deceived by the 2,000 year gap it might seem like a long time to us; but it's just a flash to God; these 2,000 years show that **God is patient and kind**, and He wants all men to come to faith and have eternal salvation. Don't grow apathetic in your faith and life!

The time is short.
The stopwatch is spinning;
The timer is counting down.

The Ascension of Jesus Christ marks the beginning of the **End Times**, the **Last Days**. Jesus gives you three promises as you live your life during these turbulent times.

1. **He is always with you**
2. **He has sent the Holy Spirit to work in your life**
3. **He will return suddenly and in great glory on the Last Day**

Amen!

Risen and Ascended Lord Jesus Christ, we believe that you are at the Right Hand of God the Father Almighty, **working all things for the benefit of Your people.** Give us a deep faith and constant trust in Your goodness and work in our lives, **grant us stability and peace as we live in these last days,** eagerly awaiting Your return on the Last Day. **Amen!**

Psalm 110

The Lord says to my lord:

“Sit at my right hand
until I make your enemies
a footstool for your feet.”

2 The Lord will extend your mighty scepter from Zion,
saying,

“Rule in the midst of your enemies!”

3 Your troops will be willing
on your day of battle.

Arrayed in holy splendor,
your young men will come to you
like dew from the morning’s womb.

4 The Lord has sworn
and will not change his mind:

“You are a priest forever,
in the order of Melchizedek.”

5 The Lord is at your right hand;
he will crush kings on the day of his wrath.

6 He will judge the nations, heaping up the dead
and crushing the rulers of the whole earth.

7 He will drink from a brook along the way,
and so he will lift his head high.

Acts 1:4-11

4 On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. 5 For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit." 6 So when they met together, they asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?" 7 He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. 8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." 9 After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. 10 They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."

Luke 24:44-53

Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." 45 Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, 46 and said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, 47 and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. 48 You are witnesses of these things. 49 And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high." 50 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.