**By A Road Before Untrod**

**A Bible Study on the Ascension of Jesus Christ**

**Introduction**

The actual event of the resurrection of the Body of Jesus of Nazareth had no human eyewitnesses, and so Jesus *presented Himself alive after His suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God.* [Acts 1:3]

Already on the approach to Jerusalem, during the Passover Festival week, and especially on the Day of Preparation (Maundy Thursday) at the Passover Meal, Jesus had prepared His disciples not only for His death and resurrection [Matthew 20:17-19], but also for His return to heaven. [John 14:1-4; 18-29] He prepared them for the era of the New Testament Church, a time in which His disciples would no longer see Him in His visible form on earth, not until the end of the world on the Last Day.

But He did take His eleven apostles with Him so that His departure, His ascension, would take place visibly before their twenty-two eyes, establishing an eye-witness testimony of the historical event to be established for the whole Christian Church.

**Luke 24:50-53**

 +Who? Jesus and the Eleven (Peter, John, James, Andrew, Philip, Thomas,

 Bartholomew (Nathaniel), Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, Simon the Zealot,

 and Judas son of James

 +Where? Bethany on the Mount of Olives. . .and then a return to Jerusalem

 +What? Jesus blesses them with the raising of His hands (Aaronic benediction?),

 *parts from them*. . .they worship Him. . .they return with joy and take that

 joyful worship into the Temple

 +How? Jesus is *carried up into heaven* (passive verb)

**Acts 1:1-12**

+Who? Jesus

 *the apostles* (1:2. . .antecedent to *them* (vv. 3, 4, 7, 10) *they* (vv. 6, 9, 10)

 *you* (vv. 7, 8, 11) *their* (v. 9). . .*men of Galilee* (v. 11)

 two angels (vv. 10-11)

 +Where? *Mount of Olives, a Sabbath Day’s journey away* [1/2 mile] (1:12)

 Return to Jerusalem (1:12)

 (and witness field—*Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, the end of the earth* (1:8)

 +When? in regards to the time of the Ascension *forty days* (1:3)

 in regards to how long the wait for the H.S.? *not many days* (1:5)

 +What? Jesus was *taken up* (1:1. . .again, passive verb)

 Jesus ordered them *not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait. . .*(1:4)

 As they gathered on the Mount of Olives, the disciples ask a question which

 reveals they do not yet get it. . .Jesus’ answer is true and instructive, and

 it is during this “final lesson” He *was lifted* (passive verb) *up* (motion)

 *and a cloud took Him out of their sight* [in Matthew 17, a bright cloud)

 *Two white-robed angels appear standing by them* (recalling the Easter tomb)

 and question the Eleven with a promise of the future

 +Why? wait in Jerusalem? *for the promise of the Father. . .Holy Spirit baptism* (1:5)

 were the apostles just standing there *looking into heaven. . .He will return in*

 *same way* (1:11)

 +How? *He was lifted up and a cloud took Him out of their sight* (1:9)

**FAQ**

 Did Jesus’ upward motion continue past the cloud that hid Him?

 What was the meaning, the purpose, the goal of this Ascension?

 1) To return to heaven, to be in Paradise again (Luke 23:39-43 *“. . .when*

 *You come into Your kingdom” “Today. . .”*) (Philippians 1:23)

2) To sit at the right hand of God on the throne of heaven

 Psalm 110

 Mark 16:19

 Acts 2:32-36

 Ephesians 1:15-23

 Ephesians 4:8-10

 Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14; 7:26; 8:1

 1 Peter 3:22

**Ascension Hymnody**

 **“Up Through Endless Ranks of Angels” 491 (Jaroslav Vajda)**

 **“On Christ’s Ascension I Now Build” 492 (Josua Wegelin 17th century)**

 **“A Hymn of Glory Let Us Sing” 493 (Bede 7th/8th century)**

 **“See, the Lord Ascends in Triumph” 494**

**(Christopher Wordsworth 19th century)**

 **“Look, Ye Saints, the Sight is Glorious” (Thomas Kelly 18th/19th century)**

**Conclusion**

**Who is in charge? From where is the power come? When is He present/does He come?**

**What is the blessing of His power and presence? Why does He come with power?**

**How does He come and rule?**