

“THE RESURRECTION BATHED IN ASCENSION GLORY”

Lev 16:15-17; Luke 24:1-8; Acts 1:1-11; Heb 9:11-14

The Resurrection begs to be seen in the light of what happens 40 days later. The great triumph of the third day is not that Jesus tore a hole in the ground so that we might escape death. Rather, its crowning conquest is that forty days later He tore a hole in the sky so that we might enter heaven.

I. THE RESURRECTION IS “INCOMPLETE” WITHOUT THE ASCENSION

A. The Resurrection Was Not a “Spectacle”

Jesus being raised the third day accomplished all that God intended it to do. Acts 2:24; Rom 4:25; Gen 3:15. But it was never intended as stand-alone event.

Rather, preparation for the next installment. Notice no eyewitnesses to the resurrection itself. An earthquake and two men in gleaming apparel. But Transfiguration (Matt 17:2) outshines His coming out of Joseph’s grave; more radiant and heavenly. No glory-cloud until Acts 1. Did not immediately produce clarity of understanding and faith: John 20:15; Matt 28:17; Acts 1:6.

B. Reflected in the Transitional Nature of Jesus’ Body

“Flesh and blood” that died on the cross, but with unusual powers. Cannot be precise as to difference between resurrected body not yet in glory, and then in full glory. Not yet Heb 7:16; Rev 1:14-18.

C. Keep Up With How The Lord Jesus Christ is Now

Now in the Most Holy Place (Heb 9:11-14). High school reunion. TIME magazine, 3/29/20. Misses the greatness and majesty and wisdom of the glorified Redeemer.

II. THREE PURPOSES OF THE ASCENSION

Three aspects of exaltation: 1) resurrection; 2) ascension; 3) session. Notice connection between resurrection and ascension.

A. The Ascension Declares That the Son of God Has Come Home!

Declaration in resurrection: Rom 1:1-4. But still on foreign battlefield, although victorious. Acts 1:1-11 He goes home; imagine hero’s welcome! Ps 98:1.

B. The Ascension Exemplifies our Glorification

The resurrection exemplifies what will happen to us; 1 Cor 15:22. “Made like Him, like Him we rise”; also, “like Him we ascend” to glory. We are now both raised and seated (ascended): Eph 2:4-7. We show glory now by living above circumstances.

MacLaren: “We have an Advocate and an Intercessor before the Throne; His prayer is always heard. Oh, brethren! how different our endurance would be, if we vividly believed that Christ was praying for us! How it would take the sting out of sorrow, and blunt the edge of temptation, if we realized that! O for a faith that shall rend the heavens, and rise above the things seen and temporal, and behold the eternal order of the universe, the central Throne, and at the right hand of God, the Intercessor for all who love and trust Him!”

C. The Ascension Accomplishes Our Eternal Union

Not yet united with Christ in person; present in the body = absent from the Lord (2 Cor 5:8). Our Lord breaks the barriers of time and space to secure our eternal, personal, and immediate union with Him; we will be present with the Lord. John 14:1-3

Conclusion