LESSON 14

Christ's Ascension and His Sitting at the Right Hand of God the Father

Read: Luke 24:49-53; Acts 1:1-11; Mark 16:19; Acts 7:54-56; Ephesians 1:20-23

I. Christ's Ascension

It was forty days since Jesus rose from the dead. He often appeared to His followers since then. Thus, there was clear proof of His resurrection. At last, the time had come for Jesus to leave this earth and to return to His Father in heaven.

The final appearance of Jesus to His disciples was in Jerusalem. They walked together to the Mount of Olives. There Jesus told the disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the coming of the Holy Spirit.

Likewise, Jesus further instructed His disciples, giving them the great commission, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost (Matthew 28:19)."

When Jesus had spoken His last message, He raised His hands to bless them. While they were watching, they saw Him rise from the ground. He rose higher and higher. Finally, a cloud hid Him from their view.

The ascension of Christ was a majestic event. His reception into heaven was, like His resurrection, an indication that His sufferings in place of His people were fully accepted by the Father.

Being ascended and seated at the right hand of God the Father, Christ continues to minister to His people, to the Church bought by His precious blood.

1. Q. How long did Jesus remain on earth after His resurrection? (Acts 1:3)

   A. Jesus remained on earth _ _ _ _ _ days.

2. Q. Where did Jesus then go?

   A. He ascended into _ _ _ _ _ _ to sit at the _ _ _ _ _ hand of God the Father.

3. Q. What does it mean that Christ sits at the right hand of God?

   A. He rules, protects, and prays for His people here on e _ _ _ _ . By His Spirit He is ever with them to sympathize with them in all their sorrows.

4. Q. Is Jesus with His people as He promised?

   A. Yes, with respect to His Godhead, grace and Spirit, He is never ab _ _ _ _ from them; but with respect to His _ _ _ _ _ nature, He remains in _ _ _ _ _ _ until He shall return to judge the living and the dead.

5. Q. From what place did Jesus ascend into heaven? (Acts 1:12)

   A. From the _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ .

6. Q. Where is heaven? (Luke 24:51)

   A. _ _ .

7. Before Jesus went to heaven, He said: "Lo, I am with you always" (Matthew 28:20).

   In which nature is Jesus always with His people?

   (a) In His human nature

   (b) In His divine nature

   (c) In both natures.

   Underline the correct answer.

8. Q. For how long did the apostle Peter say Jesus would remain in heaven? (Acts 3:20,21)

   A. "Until the times of _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ of all _ _ _ _ _ _ ."

9. Q. Of what does the ascension of Jesus assure His followers? (John 14:3)

   A. "I will come again, and _ ."

While Christ was on earth, He actively displayed a gracious sensitivity to all manner of human need. Now He is no longer here below in His human nature. He ascended into heaven. Christ has received the honour promised by the Father. He is now seated at the right hand of God.

This means that He shares in the glory and dominion of God the Father. However, this exalted Christ has lost none of His love and concern for His Church here on earth. In heaven Christ cares for all who seek help from Him in time of need. On their behalf He pleads for their acceptance on the basis of His own merits.

Christ sits at the right hand of God as the Head of His Church. He rules her by His Word and Spirit. In this way He bestows on the members of His Church the heavenly graces necessary for their salvation and comfort. The exalted Christ blesses sinners with the special grace of repentance. See Acts 5:31.

The power of our enemy is strong, but Christ is far stronger. He is able to protect His own dear children from enemies without and within. Christ will never let His children perish. He is their Shield and great Defender.

How blessed are all who may hide under the shadow of His wings!

II. His Sitting at the Right Hand of God

1. Q. What did Jesus do upon entering heaven? (Mark 16:19)

   A. He "_ _ _   _ _   _ _ _   _ _ _ _ _   _ _ _ _   _ _   _ _ _ ."

2. In Revelation 17:14 Jesus is declared to be "Lord of _ _ _ _ _ and King of _ _ _ _ _ ."

3. Q. What exalted position is Christ said to occupy in Ephesians 1:20-22?

   A. "He raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ , and _ _ _ _ _ , and _ _ _ _ _ , and _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ , and every name that is _ _ _ _ _ , . . . and hath put all things under his _ _ _ _ ."

4. Does Jesus have sovereign control over those who refuse to repent and do His will? (John 17:2a)

   (a) Yes

   (b) No

   Underline the correct answer.

5. Q. Does Jesus have sovereign control over the devil? (Matthew 8:16)

   A. _ _ _ .

III. His Present Activity

Christ's earthly ministry was of inexpressibly great value and so is His heavenly ministry. What great comfort He brought while He was on earth to those who came to Him with the burden of their sin and sorrow!

Now, being ascended, He still helps the needy in their various distresses. He prays for His Church, for all those who sincerely believe in Him. He still speaks, by His Word and Spirit, of peace and pardon to those who are troubled on account of their sinful and lost condition.

What a heavenly comfort can He bring when all seems lost from man's side, when the needy sinner no longer sees a way out. The peace He gives to the sinner, who sees himself as lost, is the best balm the human heart can ever know.

What can compare to Christ Himself, coming by His Word and Spirit, making it known to a lost sinner that He remembers him in love and mercy and prays for him as the great High Priest who prays for all His own.

In Ephesians 1:22 we read that Christ is "the head over all things to the church." God also had the Church in mind when He raised Him (Ephesians 20-22). The exaltation of Christ is not only an honour placed upon Jesus but also a direct benefit for the Church.

1. What is Jesus doing in heaven for all His people?
   (a) He _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _   _   _ _ _ _ _   _ _ _   _ _ _   _ _ _ _ _ _ (John 14:2b).
   (b) In heaven, Jesus is completing the establishment of His Kingdom.
   As Prophet He teaches by His Word and by His Spirit.
   (c) When God's children sin, Jesus serves as their _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ (1 John 2:1).
   An advocate is a person who speaks in support of someone.
   (d) As their Advocate "Jesus maketh _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ for us" (Romans 8:34).
   Intercession is a prayer on behalf of others.
   (e) As their King, Christ protects and defends His people against all their enemies.
   Satan is strong, but Christ is infinitely stronger than all our enemies.
   (f) From heaven, Jesus is pouring out His spiritual graces on His people. In Ephesians 4:8 we read:
   "He _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ up on high . . . and gave _ _ _ _ _ unto men."
   (g) Some of the spiritual gifts which Christ gives are: regeneration, repentance, conversion, faith, love, peace, and joy.
2. Q. What desire should the exaltation of Christ create within the hearts of His people? (Philippians 1:23b)
   A. To be _ _ _ _   _ _ _ _ _ _ _ .

A Pastoral Message

Christ's heavenly ministry is of great importance for the true believer today. Christ never fails to love His own. He remembers them continuously. To know by faith that He cares for us is a blessed comfort especially when we are in distress. When the Holy Spirit convinces us of our sinful and lost condition the most precious comfort is experienced when Christ, by His Word and Spirit, makes it known to us that He pleads our case with the Father. How blessed are those who know this heavenly love!

Someone may say, "I can believe that Christ comforts His children, but alas I know nothing of these great mercies in my own experience. Oh, I wish that Christ would also do something for me." The encouraging answer is He can help you, too. He can teach you to pray for that grace that He gives to His own people.

When a sinner begins to pray to God from the heart, that is a fruit of Christ's work. Christ can soften the hardest heart and cause it to pray. He is fully qualified to do this. Think of what happened on the day of Pentecost. How full of enmity were the Jews against Jesus; they crucified Him. However, when Christ sent His Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost three thousand sinners came to repentance and prayed for the first time. What He did for these three thousand, He has often repeated since.

Would He not be able to do it for you? **"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Matthew 7:7).** Be sure to persevere!

Evaluator: ____________________________