



Prayer Focus

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The Bridge from Passover to Pentecost - The Ascension of our Lord Jesus – Dr Jason Hubbard

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After the resurrection, Jesus taught his disciples about God's kingdom for forty days ([Acts 1:3](#)) and then he was "taken up" to heaven ([Acts 1:2, 11](#)). The cross and empty tomb are at the very heart of the gospel message proclaimed by Jesus's followers throughout history. However, for many evangelical Christians and churches, Jesus's ascension is simply an afterthought to Good Friday and Resurrection Sunday.

As we prepare for Pentecost 2021, I want to highlight ten aspects of Jesus's ascension in hopes that this climactic event will be an important bridge of understanding and inspiration for us linking Passover to Pentecost. Let's give attention to the Ascension!

First let's lay the biblical foundation of what we believe concerning our Lord Jesus! We believe and declare that Jesus Christ is God incarnate, fully God and fully man, that he was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, and offered himself as a substitutionary sacrifice for sinners. By the blood of his cross he satisfied the wrath of God, obtained for us eternal redemption, the forgiveness of sins, spiritual adoption as sons and daughters, life everlasting, and defeated the powers of darkness. He was raised bodily on the third day and ascended to the right hand of the Father,

there to make intercession for the saints ([Isaiah 53:1-12](#); [Matthew 1:18-25](#); [John 1:1-18](#); [Romans 8:34](#); [1 Corinthians 15:1-28](#); [2 Corinthians 5:21](#); [Galatians 3:10-14](#); [Ephesians 1:7](#); [Philippians 2:6-11](#); [Colossians 1:15-23](#); [2:15](#); [Hebrews 7:25](#); [9:13-15](#); [10:19](#); [1 Peter 2:21-25](#); [1 John 2:1-2](#); [3:8](#)).

10 Ascension Aspects

1. Prophecy of Psalm 110

One of the most frequently quoted Old Testament passage found in the New Testament is Psalm 110! Believers identified this passage as one of the most helpful in interpreting what was happening before their very eyes!

“The Lord says to my Lord: “Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool.” The Lord sends forth from Zion your mighty scepter. Rule in the midst of your enemies! Your people will offer themselves freely on the day of your power, in holy garments; from the womb of the morning, the dew of your youth will be yours. The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind, “You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek” (Psalm 110:1-4).

David’s themes are just as true for us today:

- The Messiah sits down at God’s right hand
- He extends his scepter, making everyone, even his enemies his subjects
- His followers volunteer to join him in his kingdom’s advance
- He reigns on their behalf assuming the role of God’s High King and Priest

2. Jesus continues to work after the ascension.

In [Acts 1:1–2](#) we read, “In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, until the day when he was taken up...” The small but important word **began** signals that Jesus’s ascension does not mark the cessation but the continuation of his work as Lord and Messiah.

3. Jesus’ ascension is his heavenly enthronement as King.

At Jesus’s ascension he is installed as the true king of the world. Jesus’s kingdom cannot be destroyed and will not pass away! According to [Revelation 3:21](#) Jesus conquered and sat down with his Father on his throne, where he receives unending praise ([Revelation 5:6–13](#)). Jesus will reign at God’s right hand until all enemies are subdued under his feet ([Psalm 110:1](#); [Acts 2:34–35](#); [1 Corinthians 15:25](#); [Hebrews 1:13](#)). Thus, God’s kingdom has been inaugurated through the enthronement of Jesus, who now sits on heaven’s throne and will return to consummate his kingdom on earth as in heaven.

4. Jesus’s ascension is his return to his Father.

Before and after his death and resurrection Jesus declares that he was sent by his Father and must return to his Father.

“I came from the Father and have come into the world, and now I am leaving the world and going to the Father” ([John 16:28](#); cf. [13:1, 3](#)).

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, and said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven” ([Act 1:8-11](#)).

[Daniel 7:13–14](#) (ESV), “I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the **clouds of heaven** there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed” ([Daniel 7:13-14](#)).

[Daniel 7:13-14](#) speaks of Jesus coming to the Father in heaven to receive vindication and authority at his ascension. Jesus Christ, fully God, returns to heaven now fully human as well.

“The ascension is the story of a body moving to heaven. It is not escape from the bodily realm, but the entry of humanity — in all our physical-ness — into heaven, the sphere of God. Far from diminishing the importance of the body, the ascension is the ultimate affirmation of bodily existence. The Son of God himself has a body — not as an historical convenience, but as a permanent presence in heaven” - David Matthias

He is crowned as King of Kings and Lord of Lords in the very middle of history, in fulfillment of [John 17:4-5](#),

“I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do. ⁵ And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed”

There has been no sweeter reunion in the history of the world than Jesus’s return to his Father! Perhaps the closest analogy is a courageous, wounded soldier returning to his loved ones after a hard-fought victory. Jesus fully accomplished his mission and glorified the Father on earth, and at Jesus’s ascension the Father glorifies the Son in heaven ([John 17:4–5](#)). Take heart that Jesus’s homecoming to his Father prepares the way for our homecoming to be with Jesus forever ([John 14:2–4](#)).

5. The ascended Lord Jesus is our heavenly mediator and high priest.

Jesus is the unique mediator between God and man ([1 Timothy 2:5](#)). His death and resurrection secure our forgiveness, justification, and reconciliation with God ([Romans 4:25–5:1](#); [2 Corinthians 5:18–21](#)). Note also that the exalted Lord Jesus is now in heaven interceding for his people as our true high priest and advocate ([Romans 8:34](#); [Hebrews 1:3](#); [7:25](#); [8:1](#); [1 John 2:1](#)). During his earthly ministry Jesus’s work was geographically limited — he didn’t teach in Ethiopia while healing in China. But now he is at work everywhere and able to hear and respond to his people’s prayers no matter

the time or place. He sympathizes with our struggles and promises to do whatever we ask in his name ([John 14:13–14](#); [Hebrews 4:15–16](#)).

6. The ascended Lord Jesus will return as King and Judge.

In [Acts 1:11](#) two angels explain to the disciples, “This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.” Jesus’s heavenly reign will one day be fully realized on earth ([Revelation 11:15](#); [19:10–16](#); [22:3](#)). Jesus taught us to pray, “Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven” ([Matthew 6:10](#)). At his return, the Lord Jesus will execute divine judgment, vindicating his people and judging his enemies.

7. Jesus is Reigning Now

Jesus Ascended! Not ascended passively but actively - He went up (Acts 1). Forty days after he rolled back the stone, he ascended to sit on the throne, reigning and ruling **Now** as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. He has been exalted above every name in this age and the age to come! Right now, we share in the ascended life of the ascended one. The ascension validated every aspect of Christ’s redeeming work for us, unleashing his active unrelenting reign over us! On the cross, Jesus offered up himself for our sins. Then in heaven, in triumph he offered up himself as the all sufficient sacrifice whose blood continues to cleanse us from all sin. Exaltation was the Father’s reward for Jesus’ unwavering submission to him for us.

8. Jesus’s passion and ascension are linked together forever!

He went from victim to victor, from worm to warrior, from humiliation to glorification, from tortured to triumphant, from degradation to exaltation, from a lowly bleeding Lamb to a glorified Lion-Lamb! The awful agony he once endured has been vindicated by the awesome dominion he now exhibits.

Jesus went from wearing a cruel crown of thorns to wearing a golden crown of glory, from robes dipped in blood to a kingly robe of splendor, from a mock scepter in his hand to a scepter of authority, from the insults of men to the worship of angels, from the filth of sin to the beauty of holiness.

See his head and hair, once soaked in blood, now dazzling white as snow... See the One whose eyes stung and dripped with blood, now blazing like fire... See his face, once swollen and raw from patches of His beard torn out... now shining brighter than the sun in all its brilliance... See his body, once stripped naked, now clothed in eternal majesty... See his hands pierced, now bleeding infinite splendor, See his feet once spiked to a stake of timber, now gleaming like burnished bronze... See his side once pierced and now hear him say, “This wound in my Heart is for YOU!”

“Every Wound now Bleeds Glory”

He is the fountainhead of all Glory! The One from Whom Glory flows! Glory that flows from Him, and through Him, and back to Him!

Revelation 5:6 describes this triumphant Lion of the Tribe of Judah as the Lamb of Glory, standing in the center of the throne, ‘looking as if he had been slain.’ Access has been granted to Behold **Glory!** The worship scene in Isaiah 6:1-8, shifted from the four

living creatures covering their faces and feet to *NOW* in Revelation 4-5, having eyes all around gazing on the glory of the Holy One! The scene shifts from the prophet Isaiah crying out '**Woe is me,**' to the redeemed in Revelation 4-5 crying out '**Worthy are You!**'

As disciples of Jesus, we enter into this ceaseless and unending praise, joining with the chorus of heaven night and day,

"Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power, riches, wisdom, strength, honor, glory and blessing" (Rev. 5:12).

9. Supremacy of Jesus

It's the Father's dream to see all things summed up in his Son! Gods' preordained plan and purpose is that Christ would have full supremacy in all things. Paul declares,

"making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth" (Eph. 1:9-10).

Jesus ascended. This was and remains the climactic outcome, the ultimate destination for which he descended into our world in the first place. As Scripture records:

. . . he also came down to the lower, earthly places.

The one who came down is the same one who went up.

He went up higher than all the heavens.

He did it in order to fill all creation

(Ephesians 4, NIRV, emphasis added).

Note that phrase: "in order to *fill* all creation." This will result, ultimately, in every corner of the universe giving *full* attention to the Ascension.

Jesus Christ is the All-Consuming One, the All-Sufficient One, the All-Satisfying One!

"He defies all human categories; there is no language that can adequately describe Him. He is the incomparable One! He remains in a class by himself...no duplicates, no clones. His importance eclipses all others. He outranks every other being in heaven, earth, or hell. He is the exalted One; for all eternity he holds the primary focus of our praises. He holds a position of unrivaled distinction, prestige, and majesty. He will be the joy of all peoples, the desire of all nations. He is the Victorious One. None of his enemies will prevail, he will defeat all of his foes unconditionally-both human and demonic and will emerge forever unthreatened, unhindered, and victorious over all opposition, permanently and forever. He is the Preeminent and Supreme One...in time and space and history he lays claim to the universe, it all belongs to Him. He is the all sufficient One. Nothing can exhaust his power or resources. He will forever prove totally adequate for all of our longings, fears, needs or heart cries. He is faithful and true!" -David Bryant, *Christ is All*

Christ sat down at God's right hand. He assumed the position of greatest power, and authority. This also privileges the Son with the closest intimacy with the Father, where plans are formed, counsel is taken, decisions are granted, and secrets are shared.

Being seated assumes Jesus' official installment as King! It was the beginning of a coronation celebration that anticipates the final day when every knee will bow to him and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father (Phil. 2).

"When Jesus sat down, he became permanently and unconditionally the absolute Sovereign of heaven and earth, without restrictions or rivals. Anything now that is incompatible with his reign will be dethroned and is destined to be destroyed. The rebellion of every human heart must be regarded as treason. On the other hand, the submission of every human heart to him will always be received and regaled as worship." -David Bryant, *Christ is Now*

10. The ascended Lord Jesus sends the Holy Spirit to his people.

The ascension of Jesus is about his enthronement over all and our empowerment by the Spirit. God promised in [Joel 2:28](#), "I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh," and this promise is fulfilled by the exalted heavenly Lord Jesus. The ascended Lord sent the Spirit to be present with his people ([John 14:16](#)), to empower them for worldwide mission ([Acts 1:8](#); [4:31](#)), and to transform them to live lives that reflect their king ([Romans 8:9-11](#); [2 Corinthians 3:18](#)).

Just before Jesus ascended, he commissioned his disciples to stay in the city until they were clothed with power from on High!

"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**." And 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 and were continually in the temple **blessing** God" (Luke 24:49-53).

"And when they had entered, they went up to the **upper room**, where they were staying, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot and Judas the son of James. ¹⁴ All these with one accord were **devoting themselves to prayer**, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers" (Acts 1:13-14).

"When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. ³ And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. ⁴ And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance" Acts 2:32-36 (ESV).

"This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing. For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says, "The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool." ' Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified" (Acts 2:32-36).

The disciples met together in the 'upper room' in one accord, 'praying and praising' joyfully for 10 days. After 10 days of around the clock worship-saturated prayer,

the **Sound** of a mighty rushing wind was released, a “Boom” in the “Upper Room,” as the Spirit of God was poured out upon them!

As John the Baptist earlier stated,

“This is he of whom I said, ‘After me comes a man who ranks before me, because he was before me.’ I myself did not know him, but for this purpose I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel.” And John bore witness: “I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes in and with the Holy Spirit.’” (John 1:30-33)

God-the-Son in our flesh who came to take away the sin of the world, is also the One who came to baptize in and with the Holy Spirit. The two works belong together. When these two titles are kept together the gospel is really ‘good news.’ Jesus-to-the-rescue takes away sin, and then baptizes humans in and with the Spirit of God.

The term baptize simply means to ‘immerse.’ The Greek text uses both ‘in’ and ‘with,’ the Holy Spirit. The ‘in’ relates to that which we are immersed into, and the ‘with’ speaks of that which saturates us or literally, overwhelms us. Therefore, Jesus the Baptist dunks us in and drenches us with the very life of the Triune God!

Dallas Willard uses the word ‘engulfment’ to describe this experience. Jesus promises an engulfment in the Spirit of God. He promises to cloth us or dress us with ‘power from on High.’ Jesus of Nazareth, God-in-flesh, redeems us from the power and grip of sin and then baptizes us, immerses us, soaks us, dresses us, saturates us, drenches us, and marinates us with the very Life of the Living God!

When the text says that Jesus ‘baptizes,’ it is in the present tense. In New Testament Greek the tenses of verbs speak of the time of action and the kind of action. The ‘present’ tense speaks of continuous action, literally ‘to keep on.’ Jesus is the one who keeps on baptizing in and with the Holy Spirit. In other words, He comes to keep on soaking us, keep on drenching us, keep on immersing us, keep on filling us with the Holy Spirit, until every fiber of our being radiates with the very presence of the Living God!

We see this confirmed in the story of the early church! Jesus promises, “in a few days you will be baptized in and with the Holy Spirit” (Acts 1:5). On the day of Pentecost, ‘they were all filled with the Holy Spirit’ (Acts 2:4). And then a few chapters later in Acts 4:31, the text says, “the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit” (Acts 4:31).

Paul says that it is God’s will that we ‘be filled with the Spirit.’ Not just once, twice, but over and over again!

“Therefore, do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit,” (Eph. 5:17-18).

Whereas wine can ruin one’s judgment leading to debauchery, in contrast ‘being filled with the Spirit,’ leads to empowerment, self-control and a life exhibiting the fruits of the Holy Spirit! It is the nature of Jesus to keep on giving his life to us. He fills us and keeps

on filling us in stages, 'grace upon grace' as John puts it, transforming us from, 'glory to glory' as Paul teaches us (2 Cor. 3:18).

Summary

As we approach **Pentecost 2021**, let's ask the Lord for a 'greater Pentecost,' a wave of the tangible presence and power of the Holy Spirit coming upon us with great revelation, with great anointing, and with great provision!

- Let's expect a BOOM in the UPPER ROOM, the coming sound of the Holy Spirit that brings us into a '**decade**' of harvest and wholistic discipleship of all nations! As John Robb says, "the book of Acts culture will release the book of Acts breakthroughs!"
- Let's ask the Lord Jesus for a fresh 'infilling' of the person and presence of the Holy Spirit. Let's **return** to the Holy Spirit, turning away from our own works to a total dependence on the Holy Spirit!
- Let's meditate on the exaltation and ascension of Jesus and give him his due reward! Let's return to the place of united worship-saturated prayer, around the throne, around the clock and around the globe all for the **Glory of the Lamb!**
 - And finally, since a primary role of the Holy Spirit is to glorify and exalt the Lord Jesus, let's partner with him and -Seek Jesus more fully for all He is by how we pursue and encounter him through prayer which leads us to...
 - Savor Jesus more fully for all He is by how we praise him and treasure him in worship which leads us to...
 - Speak of Jesus more fully for all He is by how we talk about him with other believers which leads us to...
 - Show Jesus more fully for all He is by how we imitate him in word and deed -which leads us to...
 - Serve Jesus more fully for all He is by how we minister to others for his sake -which leads us to...
 - Share Jesus more fully for all He is by how we introduce unbelievers to him as Lord and Savior!

For the Supremacy of Christ in all things,

**Dr. Jason Hubbard – Director
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