

The Ascension

Read Acts 1:1-3 *"In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. After his suffering, he showed himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God."*

Luke says that Jesus had given people *"many convincing proofs that He was alive."* We can still read these evidences today and ask ourselves and others if we think that Jesus was telling the truth or if He was a liar. This evidence Jesus gave to people over a period of 40 .

Ascension simply means to go up, you can ascend the stairs and then descend the stairs. Therefore this is about when Jesus went up.

Jesus and His disciples were gathered on the Mount of Olives, which overlooks Jerusalem, about 1km or just over half a mile away from the city walls.

These men were with Jesus for 3 years and still didn't understand everything, they always asked questions. Jesus told the disciples that they were asking a question to which the answer belongs only to God, because it is about His timing and His plan. He then told them not to be concerned with these things in the future but to focus on what He would like them to do then. *"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."*

He told them that they were to be witnesses not only in the capital Jerusalem but, in their province, neighboring province and to the whole earth.

Where is Jesus now? If He ascended, where did He ascend to? Luke writes here in Acts that He was taken up into the sky and then a cloud hid Him from sight. (Acts 7) *"looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. "Look," he said, "I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God."*

We can read about this again in **Hebrews 1**, where this time Jesus is described as 'sitting' at the right hand of God, He is sitting because He had finished His work.

This was not a surprise that Jesus left the earth. **John 15:26-27** *"When the Counselor/Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me. And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning."* **John 16:4-11** *"I have told you this, so that when the time comes you will remember that I warned you. I did not tell you this at first because I was with you. "Now I am going to him who sent me, yet none of you asks me, 'Where are you going?' Because I have said these things, you are filled with grief. But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and*

righteousness and judgment: in regard to sin, because men do not believe in me; in regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; and in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.”

Jesus ascended then so that the Holy Spirit could descend and finish His work with was to do with sin, righteousness and judgment.

The Devil thought that he had authority and power but when Jesus came, died on the cross and rose again, it was to defeat the Devil and show that it was not the Devil who had power over death but God, because Christ rose again, showing that death could not hold Him.

He also came because of righteousness. But now that He has ascended, how would people know about right behavior? The Holy Spirit .

The sin that Jesus says the Holy Spirit came to convict people of is 'unbelief'. Most did not believe that He was the Son of God, and so the Holy Spirit came to show them otherwise. This is still the work of the Holy Spirit today. Every Christian has come to the point in their lives when they were convinced that they needed to change what they think about Jesus Christ.

What do you think about Jesus Christ?