

Message Seven

Knowing the Ascension

RK Hymns: 124, 132

Scripture Reading: Acts 2:36; Heb. 2:9; 4:14-15; 7:26; 12:2; Eph. 1:19-23; 2:6

- Acts 2:36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made Him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you have crucified.
- Heb 2:9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little inferior to the angels because of the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor, so that by the grace of God He might taste death on behalf of everything.
- Heb 4:14 Having therefore a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast the confession.
- Heb 4:15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all respects like us, yet without sin.
- Heb 7:26 For such a High Priest was also fitting to us, holy, guileless, undefiled, separated from sinners and having become higher than the heavens,
- Heb 12:2 Looking away unto Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down on the right hand of the throne of God.
- Eph 1:19 And what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the operation of the might of His strength,
- Eph 1:20 Which He caused to operate in Christ in raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavenlies,
- Eph 1:21 Far above all rule and authority and power and lordship and every name that is named not only in this age but also in that which is to come;
- Eph 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,
- Eph 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.
- Eph 2:6 And raised us up together with Him and seated us together with Him in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus,

I. The Man-Savior's ascension is His inauguration into His heavenly office through the process of creation, incarnation, human living, crucifixion, and resurrection as God and man, as the Creator and the creature, and as the Redeemer, the Savior, and the life-giving Spirit, to execute God's administration and to carry out God's New Testament economy.

II. We need to see the objective aspect of the Lord's ascension:

- A. The Lord's ascension caused Him to be crowned with glory and honor—Heb. 2:9:
- Heb 2:9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little inferior to the angels because of the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor, so that by the grace of God He might taste death on behalf of everything.
1. Glory is the splendor related to Jesus' person; honor is the preciousness related to Jesus' worth—1 Pet. 2:7.
1 Pet 2:7 To you therefore who believe is the preciousness; but to the unbelieving, "The stone which the builders rejected, this has become the head of the corner,"
 2. Christ is glorious in state and honorable in rank; He is above all kings and rulers; this is His honor.
- B. The Lord's ascension caused Him to be enthroned for God's administration; Hebrews 12:2 says that Christ is now seated on the right hand of the throne of God:
- Heb 12:2 Looking away unto Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down on the right hand of the throne of God.
1. The fact that God in Christ is sitting on the throne means that God administers the entire universe from within Christ and through Christ, just as the light shines from within the lamp and through the lamp—Rev. 22:1, 3; cf. 21:23.
Rev 22:1 And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its street.

- Rev 22:3 And there will no longer be a curse. And the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His slaves will serve Him;
- Rev 21:23 And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon that they should shine in it, for the glory of God illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb.
2. Christ is now on the throne to administrate the entire universe; He is the unique Administrator, the King of kings and the Lord of lords; He is the Ruler of the kings of the earth—1:5; 17:14; 19:16.
- Rev 1:5 And from Jesus Christ, the faithful Witness, the Firstborn of the dead, and the Ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us and has released us from our sins by His blood
- Rev 17:14 These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and they who are with Him, the called and chosen and faithful, will also overcome them.
- Rev 19:16 And He has on His garment and on His thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.
3. His administrating is related to the universe, but His carrying out of God's New Testament economy is to propagate Himself for His reproduction to build up the church, His Body, which will issue in the New Jerusalem—cf. Acts 5:31.
- Acts 5:31 This One God has exalted to His right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.
- C. "Let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made Him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you have crucified" (2:36); in this verse the word *made* can be understood to mean "inaugurated"; in His ascension God inaugurated Christ into His heavenly ministry:
1. The Man-Savior, in His ascension, has been made the Lord to possess all; He is now the Lord to possess the whole universe, God's chosen people, and all positive things, matters, and persons.
 2. The Man-Savior, in His ascension, was made the Christ as God's Anointed (Heb. 1:9) to carry out God's commission.
- Heb 1:9 You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of exultant joy above Your partners";
- D. We are now one with Christ in His resurrection and ascension (Eph. 2:6); as a result, we have life and power in resurrection and also authority in ascension; when we contact our Lord, we need to have a realization of what He is, a realization of His status, position, and office.
- Eph 2:6 And raised us up together with Him and seated us together with Him in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus,

III. We need to see the subjective aspect of the Lord's ascension—cf. **Psa. 91:1; S. 4:7-8; 6:10:**

- Psa 91:1 He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High / Will abide in the shadow of the Almighty.
- S. S. 4:7 You are altogether beautiful, my love, / And there is no blemish in you.
- S. S. 4:8 Come with me from Lebanon, my bride; / With me from Lebanon come. / Look from the top of Amana, / From the top of Senir and Hermon, / From the lions' dens, / From the leopards' mountains.
- S. S. 6:10 Who is this woman who looks forth like the dawn, / As beautiful as the moon, / As clear as the sun, / As terrible as an army with banners?
- A. Christ in His all-transcending ascension transcended Hades (where the dead people are being held), the earth (where the fallen people are moving against God), the air (where Satan and his power of darkness are acting against God), and all the heavens (where Satan can go—Eph. 1:20-21; 4:8-10; Heb. 7:26; Job 1:6-12a; 2:1-6).
- Eph 1:20 Which He caused to operate in Christ in raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavenlies,

- Eph 1:21 Far above all rule and authority and power and lordship and every name that is named not only in this age but also in that which is to come;
- Eph 4:8 Therefore the Scripture says, "Having ascended to the height, He led captive those taken captive and gave gifts to men."
- Eph 4:9 (Now this, "He ascended," what is it except that He also descended into the lower parts of the earth?
- Eph 4:10 He who descended, He is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens that He might fill all things.)
- Heb 7:26 For such a High Priest was also fitting to us, holy, guileless, undefiled, separated from sinners and having become higher than the heavens,
- Job 1:6 Then one day, when the sons of God came to present themselves before Jehovah, Satan also came among them.
- Job 1:7 And Jehovah said to Satan, Where have you come from? And Satan answered Jehovah and said, From roving the earth and going about in it.
- Job 1:8 And Jehovah said to Satan, Have you considered My servant Job? For there is none like him on the earth, a perfect and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil.
- Job 1:9 Then Satan answered Jehovah and said, Does Job fear God without cause?
- Job 1:10 Have You not set a hedge around him and his household and all that he has? You have blessed the work of his hands, so that his possessions are spread throughout the land.
- Job 1:11 But stretch forth Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face.
- Job 1:12a And Jehovah said to Satan, Here is all that he has, in your hand; only do not stretch forth your hand against him. ...
- Job 2:1 Then one day, when the sons of God came to present themselves before Jehovah, Satan also came among them to present himself before Jehovah.
- Job 2:2 And Jehovah said to Satan, Where have you come from? And Satan answered Jehovah and said, From roving the earth and going about in it.
- Job 2:3 And Jehovah said to Satan, Have you considered My servant Job? For there is none like him on the earth, a perfect and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil. And he still holds fast his integrity, though you have moved Me against him to destroy him without cause.
- Job 2:4 Then Satan answered Jehovah and said, Skin for skin! Indeed all that a man has he will give for the sake of his life.
- Job 2:5 But stretch forth Your hand, and touch his bone and his flesh; and he will surely curse You to Your face.
- Job 2:6 And Jehovah said to Satan, Here he is, in your hand; only spare his life.
- B. In His ascension Christ passed through the heavens (Heb. 4:14) so that now He is not only in heaven (9:24) but is also higher than the heavens (7:26), far above all the heavens (Eph. 4:10).
- Heb 4:14 Having therefore a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast the confession.
- Heb 9:24 For Christ did not enter into a holy place made by hands, a figure of the true, but into heaven itself, to appear now before the face of God for us;
- Heb 7:26 For such a High Priest was also fitting to us, holy, guileless, undefiled, separated from sinners and having become higher than the heavens,
- Eph 4:10 He who descended, He is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens that He might fill all things.)
- C. Ephesians 1:19-23 reveals that there is a transmission from the ascended Christ to us; verse 22 says that God gave Christ "to be Head over all things to the church"; the phrase *to the church* indicates a transmission from the ascended Christ to the church, His Body:
- Eph 1:19 And what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the operation of the might of His strength,
- Eph 1:20 Which He caused to operate in Christ in raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavenlies,
- Eph 1:21 Far above all rule and authority and power and lordship and every name that is named not only in this age but also in that which is to come;

- Eph 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,
- Eph 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.
1. God gave the ascended Christ a great gift—the headship over all things; what God gave Christ to be is to the church; it is transmitted to the church, and the church shares it.
 2. Verses 20 through 22 show that God caused His power to operate in Christ in four steps: first, raising Him from the dead; second, seating Him at His right hand in the heavenlies; third, subjecting all things under His feet; and fourth, giving Him to be Head over all things to the church.

Eph 1:20 Which He caused to operate in Christ in raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavenlies,

Eph 1:21 Far above all rule and authority and power and lordship and every name that is named not only in this age but also in that which is to come;

Eph 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,
- D. In His ascension Christ was made the Head of the church, His Body, to express God in His fullness—Col. 1:18; Eph. 1:23; 3:19:
- Col 1:18 And He is the Head of the Body, the church; He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things;
- Eph 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.
- Eph 3:19 And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God.
1. The Head and the Body are one and form a universal man; with this divine matter there is neither the element of space nor the element of time; the Body is one with the Head in the divine life and in the divine Spirit.
 2. According to the divine viewpoint, we are one with the ascended Christ, and His ascension is also ours (2:6); here in this ascension we express Him in His fullness; since the transcending Christ is the embodiment of the Triune God (Col. 2:9), His transcending transmission includes all the rich dispensing of the Triune God to make us the fullness of Christ for His expression (Eph. 1:22-23; 3:19, 8).

Eph 2:6 And raised us up together with Him and seated us together with Him in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus,

Col 2:9 For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily,

Eph 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,

Eph 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

Eph 3:19 And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God.

Eph 3:8 To me, less than the least of all saints, was this grace given to announce to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ as the gospel
- E. In His ascension Christ was also made the High Priest in the heavens to bear us in the presence of God and to care for all our needs; in His ascension He was inaugurated into His priestly office—Heb. 2:17-18; 4:14-15; Psa. 110:1-4; Heb. 5:6; 7:26:
- Heb 2:17 Hence He should have been made like His brothers in all things that He might become a merciful and faithful High Priest in the things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.
- Heb 2:18 For being tempted in that which He Himself has suffered, He is able to help those who are being tempted.
- Heb 4:14 Having therefore a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast the confession.
- Heb 4:15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all respects like us, yet without sin.
- Psa 110:1 Jehovah declares to my Lord, / Sit at My right hand / Until I make Your enemies / Your footstool.

- Psa 110:2 Jehovah will send forth / The scepter of Your strength from Zion: / Rule in the midst of Your enemies.
- Psa 110:3 Your people will offer themselves willingly / In the day of Your warfare, / In the splendor of their consecration. / Your young men will be to You / Like the dew from the womb of the dawn.
- Psa 110:4 Jehovah has sworn, / And He will not change: / You are a Priest forever / According to the order of Melchizedek.
- Heb 5:6 Even as also in another place He says, "You are a Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek."
- Heb 7:26 For such a High Priest was also fitting to us, holy, guileless, undefiled, separated from sinners and having become higher than the heavens,

1. On the one hand, Christ is the High Priest interceding in the heavens for the churches (vv. 25-26; Rom. 8:34); on the other hand, He is the High Priest moving in the churches to care for them; in Revelation 1:13 Christ is depicted as the High Priest, as shown by His garment, a garment reaching to the feet, that is, a priestly robe (Exo. 28:33-35).

Heb 7:25 Hence also He is able to save to the uttermost those who come forward to God through Him, since He lives always to intercede for them.

Heb 7:26 For such a High Priest was also fitting to us, holy, guileless, undefiled, separated from sinners and having become higher than the heavens,

Rom 8:34 Who is he who condemns? It is Christ Jesus who died and, rather, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.

Rev 1:13 And in the midst of the lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment reaching to the feet, and girded about at the breasts with a golden girdle.

Exo 28:33 And you shall make on its hem pomegranates of blue and purple and scarlet strands, all around its hem, and bells of gold between them all around:

Exo 28:34 A golden bell and a pomegranate, a golden bell and a pomegranate, on the hem of the robe all around.

Exo 28:35 And it shall be upon Aaron when he ministers, and its sound shall be heard when he goes into the sanctuary before Jehovah and when he comes out, so that he may not die.

2. In Revelation 8 Christ is revealed as the Priest offering the incense at the golden altar: "Another Angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer, and much incense was given to Him to offer with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne" (v. 3).

Rev 8 be omitted.

IV. We need to see that we are in the Lord's ascension—Eph. 2:6:

Eph 2:6 And raised us up together with Him and seated us together with Him in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus,

- A. The entire age of grace is the time of the Lord's ascension—1:20.

Eph 1:20 Which He caused to operate in Christ in raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavenlies,

- B. Christ is not only in ascension but also in us—Col. 1:27.

Col 1:27 To whom God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory,

- C. Christ is still moving in His ascension; He is living, dwelling, staying, ministering, serving, working, and acting in His ascension:

1. He is in His ascension within us; this is why Paul tells us that we are seated together with Christ in His ascension—Eph. 2:6.

Eph 2:6 And raised us up together with Him and seated us together with Him in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus,

2. Within our being, there is an extraordinary person—the ascended Christ— Col. 1:27; Eph. 2:6.

Col 1:27 To whom God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory,

- Eph 2:6 And raised us up together with Him and seated us together with Him in the
 heavenlies in Christ Jesus,
3. The Lord today is in our spirit in His ascension—2 Tim. 4:22a.
 2 Tim 4:22a The Lord be with your spirit. ...
 4. In this ascension the Triune God moves in us, and this move becomes our history.
 5. Christ is the embodiment of the Triune God, and we are parts of this embodiment in
 His ascension—Rom. 8:10; 2 Cor. 13:5; Gal. 2:20; 4:19; Col. 2:9.
 Rom 8:10 But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is life
 because of righteousness.
 2 Cor 13:5 Test yourselves whether you are in the faith; prove yourselves. Or do you not
 realize about yourselves that Jesus Christ is in you, unless you are
 disapproved?
 Gal 2:20 I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives
 in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith in the Son
 of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.
 Gal 4:19 My children, with whom I travail again in birth until Christ is formed in you,
 Col 2:9 For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily,
 6. Whenever we are gathered together into His name, Christ is there with all His
 members in ascension, and this is God’s move within man—Matt. 18:20; Col. 3:1, 3-
 4; Eph. 1:20; 2:6.
 Matt 18:20 For where there are two or three gathered into My name, there am I in their
 midst.
 Col 3:1 If therefore you were raised together with Christ, seek the things which are
 above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God.
 Col 3:3 For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.
 Col 3:4 When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in
 glory.
 Eph 1:20 Which He caused to operate in Christ in raising Him from the dead and seating
 Him at His right hand in the heavenlies,
 Eph 2:6 And raised us up together with Him and seated us together with Him in the
 heavenlies in Christ Jesus,