

The Ascension of Our Lord

by Erlo Stegen

The sermon on the Ascension of our Lord emphasizes the significance of Jesus' glorified body, the fulfillment of prophecy, and the importance of being prepared for His return.

Scripture: Acts 1:9

Topics: "Readiness for Christ's Return", "The Ascension of Christ"

Description

Erlo Stegen emphasizes the significance of the Ascension of our Lord, explaining how Jesus, in His glorified body, was taken up into heaven before the disciples. He addresses the confusion surrounding this event, highlighting that Jesus' resurrection and ascension were fulfillment of prophecy and divine purpose. The sermon reminds believers that just as Jesus ascended, He will return, urging them to be prepared for His coming. Stegen warns that unconfessed sin can hinder one's readiness for the Lord's return, encouraging a life of repentance and vigilance.

Transcript

"And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven. Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey." (Acts 1:9-12).

Here we read of the Ascension of our Lord. While He was speaking to them He was taken up into Heaven.

Now the Ascension of our Lord has been the source of confusion to many throughout the ages.

There is a certain very well-known arch-bishop who said, "I am a thinking man. Is it possible that a person can stand in front of you and go up into Heaven?" Well that statement shows he is not a thinking man, he is totally ignorant and his mind has been blind concerning the Gospel.

Jesus had arisen from the dead in His new glorified body. He stood before the disciples and spoke to them in this glorified body. Jesus came out of the grave with a huge boulder of a few tons closing the entrance. He could pass through closed doors and rocks with His glorified body. The Bible records this in detail. The disciples gathered behind closed doors and Jesus appeared in their midst and spoke to them.

When the disciples came to the grave they found the stone rolled away, not because Jesus needed a door to get out, but for the disciples to go in and see that He has risen indeed. When the disciples entered and saw how the grave-clothes were lying they realised that His body wasn't stolen but that He has risen. The way they embalmed a person with spices and clothes in those days was similar to the way we put on plaster of paris. The head was embalmed in a separate piece to the body. Then the spices and clothes are allowed to dry and gets hardened around the body like plaster of paris. When Peter and John entered the tomb and saw the head-piece folded in one piece and the grave-clothes lying in their place without a cut they knew the only explanation was that He had arisen and passed through the grave clothes. That is the only way to get out of the grave clothes without cutting it.

Over the course of the next forty days Jesus appeared to them in various ways.

When Jesus died he was placed in a sepulchre. It was a room hewed from rock. Only the rich could afford such a tomb. Jesus was poor, He had not even a place to lay His head, a place to call His own. But a friend, Joseph of Arimathea, asked of the Romans if he could have His body and placed Him into his own tomb. Joseph was a member of the council and a rich man.

So God saw to it that all the prophecies regarding Jesus went into fulfilment.

"And He made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in His mouth." (Isaiah 53:9).

As the disciples stared into heaven the angels said to them, "Why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven."

So as He went into heaven so shall He return again. We who are alive and believe shall be taken up and meet Him in the air.

"For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night." (1 Thessalonians 5:2).

"And He shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. " (Matthew 24:31).

Are you ready for His coming? You won't rejoice at His coming if there's still unconfessed sin in your life. It's one thing to sing and pray, "Maranata - come Lord Jesus". It will be something quite different if He should come and find you unprepared.

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