

ASCENSION OF THE LORD



THE LESSON Acts 1:1-11

Theophilus, the first scroll I wrote concerned everything Jesus did and taught from the beginning, ²right up to the day when he was taken up into heaven. Before he was taken up, working in the power of the Holy Spirit, Jesus instructed the apostles he had chosen. ³After his suffering, he showed them that he was alive with many convincing proofs. He appeared to them over a period of forty days, speaking to them about God's kingdom. ⁴While they were eating together, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem but to wait for what the Father had promised. He said, "This is what you heard from me: ⁵John baptized with water, but in only a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

⁶As a result, those who had gathered together asked Jesus, "Lord,

are you going to restore the kingdom to Israel now?"

⁷Jesus replied, "It isn't for you to know the times or seasons that the Father has set by his own authority.

⁸Rather, you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

⁹After Jesus said these things, as they were watching, he was lifted up and a cloud took him out of their sight. ¹⁰While he was going away and as they were staring toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood next to them. ¹¹They said, "Galileans, why are you standing here, looking toward heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way that you saw him go into heaven."

THE RESPONSE Psalm 47

Clap your hands, all you people! Shout joyfully to God with a joyous shout!

¹Because the LORD Most High is awesome, he is the great king of the whole world.

²He subdues the nations under us, subdues all people beneath our feet.

³He chooses our inheritance for us: the heights of Jacob, which he loves.
Selah

⁴God has gone up with a joyous shout—the LORD with the blast of the ram's horn.

⁵Sing praises to God! Sing praises! Sing praises to our king!

Sing praises ⁷because God is king of the whole world! Sing praises with a song of instruction!

⁸God is king over the nations. God sits on his holy throne.

⁹The leaders of all people are gathered with the people of Abraham's God because the earth's guardians belong to God;

God is exalted beyond all.

THE EPISTLE

Ephesians 1:15-23

¹Since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God's people, this is the reason that ²I don't stop giving thanks to God for you when I remember you in my prayers. ³I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, will give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation that makes God known to you. ⁴I pray that the eyes of your heart will have enough light to see what is the hope of God's call, what is the richness of God's glorious inheritance among believers, ⁵and what is the overwhelming

greatness of God's power that is working among us believers. This power is conferred by the energy of God's powerful strength. ⁶God's power was at work in Christ when God raised him from the dead and sat him at God's right side in the heavens, ⁷far above every ruler and authority and power and angelic power, any power that might be named not only now but in the future. ⁸God put everything under Christ's feet and made him head of everything in the church, ⁹which is his body. His body, the church, is the fullness of Christ, who fills everything in every way.

THE GOSPEL Luke 24:44-53

⁴⁴Jesus said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the Law from Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms must be fulfilled." ⁴⁵Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures. ⁴⁶He said to them, "This is what is written: the Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷and a change of heart and life for the forgiveness of sins must be preached in his name to all nations,

beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹Look, I'm sending to you what my Father promised, but you are to stay in the city until you have been furnished with heavenly power."

⁵⁰He led them out as far as Bethany, where he lifted his hands and blessed them. ⁵¹As he blessed them, he left them and was taken up to heaven. ⁵²They worshipped him and returned to Jerusalem overwhelmed with joy. ⁵³And they were continuously in the temple praising God.