

LORD'S DAY 18

Q46. What do you mean by saying, "He ascended to heaven"?

A. That Christ, while his disciples watched, was taken up from the earth into heaven¹ and remains there on our behalf² until he comes again to judge the living and the dead.³

1. Acts 1:9 – "When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight."

Matt. 26[:64] – "Jesus said to him, 'You have said so. But I tell you, from now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven.'"

Mark 16[:19] – "So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God."

Luke 24[:51] – "While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven."

2. Heb. 4:14 – "Since, then, we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast to our confession."

Heb. 7:15[–25] – "It is even more obvious when another priest arises, resembling Melchizedek,"

Heb. 9:11 – "But when Christ came as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation),"

Rom. 8:34 – "Who is to condemn? It is Christ who died, or rather, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us."

Eph. 4:10 – "He who descended is the same one who ascended far above all the heavens, so that he might fill all things.)"

Col. 3:1 – "So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God."

3. Acts 1:11 – "They said, 'Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.'"

Matt. 24:30 – "Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see 'the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven' with power and great glory."

Q47. But isn't Christ with us until the end of the world as he promised us?¹

A. Christ is true human and true God. In his human nature Christ is not now on earth;² but in his divinity, majesty, grace, and Spirit he is never absent from us.³

1. Matt. 28:20 – "and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

2. Matt. 26:11 – "For you always have the poor with you, but you will not always have me."

John 16:28 – "I came from the Father and have come into the world; again, I am leaving the world and am going to the Father."

John 17:11 – "And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one."

Acts 3:21 – "who must remain in heaven until the time of universal restoration that God announced long ago through his holy prophets."

3. John 14:17[–19] – "This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him because he abides with you, and he will be in you."

John 16:13 – "When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come."

Matt. 28:20 – "and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Eph. 4:8 – "Therefore it is said, 'When he ascended on high, he made captivity itself a captive; he gave gifts to his people.'"

Eph. 12

also cited: Augustine, Tractates on the Gospel of John 50

Q48. If his humanity is not present wherever his divinity is, then aren't the two natures of Christ separated from each other?

A. Certainly not. Since divinity is not limited and is present everywhere,¹ it is evident that Christ's divinity is surely beyond the bounds of the humanity that has been taken on, but at the same time his divinity is in and remains personally united to his humanity.²

1. Acts 7:49 – "Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. What kind of house will you build for me, says the Lord, or what is the place of my rest?"

Acts 17:28 – "For 'In him we live and move and have our being'; as even some of your own poets have said, 'For we, too, are his offspring.'"

Jer. 23:24 – "Who can hide in secret places so that I cannot see them? says the Lord. Do I not fill heaven and earth? says the Lord."

2. Col. 2:9 – “For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily,”

John 3:13 – “No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man.”

John 11:15 – “For your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.”

Matt. 28:6 – “He is not here, for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay.”

Q49. How does Christ’s ascension to heaven benefit us?

A. First, he is our advocate in heaven in the presence of his Father.¹ Second, we have our own flesh in heaven as a sure pledge that Christ our head will also take us, his members, up to himself.² Third, he sends his Spirit to us on earth as a corresponding pledge.³ By the Spirit’s power we seek not earthly things but the things above, where Christ is, sitting at God’s right hand.⁴

1. 1 John 2:1-2 – “On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding.”

Rom. 8:34 – “Who is to condemn? It is Christ who died, or rather, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.

2. John 14:2 – “In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?”

John 20:17 – “Jesus said to her, ‘Do not touch me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’”

Eph. 2:6 – “and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,”

3. John 14:16 – “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever.”

John 16:7 – “Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Advocate will not come to you, but if I go, I will send him to you.”

Acts 2

2 Cor. 1:22 – “who has put his seal on us and given[a] us his Spirit in our hearts as a down payment.”

2 Cor. 5:5 – “The one who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a down payment.”

4. Col. 3:1 – “So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.”

Phil. 3:14 – “I press on toward the goal, toward the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.”