

The Clouds of Heaven (Dan 7:13-14)

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Introduction: We need to understand the strong implications behind the Biblical events we accept as fact.

- A. Why do we know Jesus is the Son of God?
 - 1. The historical facts surrounding His resurrection are a primary reason. **(Rom 1:3-4; 2 Cor 4:13-14)**
 - 2. The other signs Jesus performed strongly show He is the Son of God. **(Acts 2:22)**
 - 3. There is the large evidence of fulfilled prophecy as well. **(Psa 22:1,16-18)**
- B. Sometime we might summarize these events as “the cross.” **(1 Cor 1:18)**
 - 1. Included in the events of the cross would be His ascension on the clouds of heaven. **(1 Tim 3:16)**
 - 2. What if Jesus never ascended back to heaven? The entire gospel would collapse because we could not believe the New Testament. **(Jn 14:26-28)**

I. Jesus foretold His ascension

- A. Jesus raised the question of His ascension to unbelievers. **(Jn 6:62)**
 - 1. This event would be a powerful proof of everything He had been saying about being with the Father before His birth. **(Jn 8:54-58)**
 - 2. How many confess they believe this event? What should it mean to them?
- B. Jesus expected His followers to clearly believe in His ascension after His resurrection but before they witness the event. **(Jn 20:16-18)**
 - 1. This was to be a very difficult thing for them to grasp.
 - 2. Just as His death and resurrection was hard to accept, the ascension of Christ would give great power to His disciples.
- C. Jesus taught the His ascension was essential to our salvation.
 - 1. Why do we have a hope of heaven? **(Jn 14:2-3; Rom 8:24-25)**
 - 2. What if we had no New Testament? **(Jn 16:5-12)**

II. Two viewpoints of the clouds of ascension: Earth and Heaven

- A. There is only a brief reference to this event in the gospel accounts. **(Mk 16:19-20; Lk 24:50-53)**
 - 1. Here we have numerous witnesses that give credibility to the event.
 - 2. What would it have been like to be there?
- B. The greatest detail of the viewpoint of earth is found in the book of Acts. **(Acts 1:4-11)**
 - 1. There had been others who ascended to heaven like Enoch and Elijah, but not like Jesus did!
 - 2. The disciples no doubt were filled with wonder and fear at what would come next. Jesus was gone!
 - 3. They could remember His promise to be “with them,” but how? **(Mt 28:20)**

4. They would soon have the “promise of the father” and know the answer.
 5. The angel had to remind them “there is work to do!”
- C. There is also a viewpoint of this event from heaven! (**Dan 7:13-14**)
1. Here we see a great scene of triumph. Jesus is like a victorious general similar to the Roman legions of old, returning home from victory with the spoils. (**Psa 68:18-19; Eph 4:8-13**)
 2. Imagine the scene as Jesus approached the gates of heaven! (**Psa 24:7-10**)
 3. Do we realize that Jesus gave these gifts to us so that we might work in His kingdom? (**Eph 4:16**)
 4. We serve a living, reigning Lord!

III. The significance of the ascension

- A. Jesus is Lord of all.
1. He is now at the right hand of God. (**Rom 8:34**)
 2. He is our absolute ruler. (**Phil 2:9-11; Col 3:1-3**)
 3. Do you believe that Jesus ascended to heaven? It is folly to reject His invitation.
- B. The Bible is inspired.
1. Some try to explain the writers as gullible but honest men.
 2. How do you explain Peter’s claim? (**2 Pt 1:16, 20-21**)
 3. Would a man live his life for a lie and then die for it? (**1 Cor 15:30-32**)
 4. Angels desire to look into this book. Do you? (**1 Pt 1:10-12**)
 5. You can trust this world delivered from our ascended Lord.
- C. Jesus is working on our behalf now.
1. Jesus understands what we are experiencing. (**Heb 4:15-16**)
 - a. Because of this He can represent us before the Father.
 - b. Have you ever needed someone to act on your behalf?
 2. Jesus is presently active in our forgiveness.
 - a. He presents His blood as our advocate. (**1 Jn 2:1**)
 - b. He acts as our mediator. (**1 Tim 2:5-6**)
 3. Jesus is now our active high priest. (**Heb 2:17-18; 4:14**)
- D. Jesus is coming again. (**Acts 1:11**)
1. Do you ever wonder what it was like to see what the apostles saw? You will know one day!
 2. Even the enemies of Christ will see this event. (**Rev 1:7**)
 3. If these things are so, then what should our attitude be? (**2 Pt 3:9-11**)

Conclusion: Is the ascension of Christ a foundation for your life or a curious fact?

- A. Have you ever wanted to know of an event before its time? What a blessing to know and prepare for Christ’s return!
- B. There are two groups here tonight. Where are you? (**2 Thess 1:7-10**)
1. Jesus is here with us tonight and watching.
 2. Will you begin to serve a living Lord?