

PROPERthoughts

Ascension

Lessons for Ascension

May 25, 2017

Psalm 47 (*Antiphon: v. 5*) ~ *Praises to the Lord, King of all the earth, who has chosen Israel as His people.*

Acts 1:1–11 ~ *When Jesus was taken into heaven, angels explained that He would return in the same way.*

Ephesians 1:15–23 ~ *Through the lordship of Jesus, God gives us His Spirit to enlighten us with His hope.*

Luke 24:44–53 ~ *Jesus explained the Scriptures to the disciples, blessed them, and was taken up into heaven.*

GATHERING THE TEXTS: Power From on High

Christ's ascension is all about power – God's power! As Jesus prepared to leave His followers, He told them to wait in Jerusalem for the power of the Holy Spirit to make them effective witnesses. This is the same power of God that raised Jesus from the dead. It would embolden the disciples to tell the message of God's redeeming action in Jesus all the way from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth. That same power is present with all believers today as we carry the message of repentance and forgiveness of sins in Jesus' name to all nations.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERVICE: Lord Jesus, as You rule now in the courts of heaven, so rule also in my heart, that I may always trust You to lead me in the right paths, pray for me in trouble, and protect me in danger. Amen.

STEWARDSHIP THOUGHT: By His ascension, Jesus has become head over all things. He has blessed us with the riches of a glorious inheritance with Him in heaven, and has brought even the material goods in our lives under His authority to be used to spread the good news of His redeeming work to all people.

OFFERING PRAYER: Lord, we bring our gifts to You this day;
Pray send them winging on their way
To witness to Your saving Word
To us and those who have not heard. Amen.

CONVICTION AND COMFORT: When we think the spread of God's Kingdom depends on our power and authority, we either despair, for the task overwhelms us, or we oppress other believers as we build our own kingdoms. Jesus' ascension means that we can trust the Holy Spirit to lead and empower the church. Just as we rejoice in the forgiveness for our sin of failure to depend on Christ our Lord in the mission of the Gospel, so we celebrate the power of God and wisdom of God to strengthen and lead us until our Lord returns.