

160. Christ's Ascension into Heaven.

He that descended is the same also that ascended far above all heavens that He might fill all things. *Eph.4,10.*

On the fortieth day after His resurrection Christ led His apostles and many other disciples to Mount Olivet, near Bethany, and spoke to them of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. The account of St. Mark reads: "So, then, after the Lord had spoken unto them, He was received up into heaven." St. Luke's account, too, is brief and simple: "And it came to pass, while He blessed them, He was parted from them and carried into heaven." The third account we find in Acts: "And when He had spoken these things, while they [the disciples] beheld, He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight." Such was the visible part of His ascension. He did not suddenly disappear, but slowly rose before the eyes of the astonished disciples, rose higher and higher, until a cloud enveloped Him. A glorious event, indeed!

The other part, however, invisible to human eyes, was far more glorious. He was received into heaven. He ascended far above all heavens. He ascended to where He had been in the splendor of His deity before He took upon Him our humanity. Thus saith the Lord: "The heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool." And as Christ descended to the footstool of His Father in His humiliation, so He ascended to the throne of His Father in His exaltation. The same Jesus who once humbled Himself for us now entered for us into the glory of His Father.

Yes, *for us!* He said: "I go to prepare a place for you." By His holy, precious blood He purchased a place for us in His Father's house of many mansions; He won heaven for us, and by His ascension He took possession of heaven for us that we might be with Him in everlasting glory. He says: "Where I am, there shall also My servant be." What a comfort! Christ's ascension is a pledge assuring us that all who believe in Jesus shall also reach the heavenly goal. Oh, may many hearts in faith be opened to Him!

Prayer.

Grant unto us, O Father of grace, for the sake of Thine only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, that we may constantly amend our walk, live in Thy fear, and prepare for the coming of Thy dear Son in order that we may meet Him in gladness, enter the new heaven, in which righteousness dwells, with joy and rejoicing, and eternally possess it with Thee. Amen.

No more the way is hidden,
Since Christ, our Head, arose;
No more to man forbidden
The road to heaven that goes.
Our Lord is gone before,
But here He will not leave us,
In heaven He'll soon receive us;
He opens wide the door.

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