

## Who Is Jesus

Part Nineteen / Wednesday, May 29, 2019

### The Ascension of Jesus Christ

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2  
3 *“In one sense ACTS is the most important book in the New Testament. It is the simple*  
4 *truth that if we did not possess Acts, we would have, apart from what we could deduce*  
5 *from the letters of Paul, no information whatever about the early Church.”*

6 BARCLAY / ACTS / INTRODUCTION PAGE 1 / WESTMINSTER PRESS  
7

8 It is in this wondrous book that we learn what happened to Jesus 40 days after His  
9 resurrection from the grave. It was written by a medical doctor from Macesonia named  
10 Luke. The Gospel of Luke was also written him and both books were actually lengthy  
11 letters written to a nobleman of Greek ancestry named Theophilus.  
12

13 The Book is titled The Acts of the Apostles. However, only three apostles are  
14 mentioned in it, James, John and Peter. And, in reality, the book concerns the Acts of  
15 the Holy Spirit in the life of the early Church.  
16

### LUKE

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18  
19 We don't know a great deal about Luke. He is mentioned but three times in the New  
20 Testament:  
21

22 Col. 4:14

23 Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas, greet you.

24 Philemon 1:24

25 Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, my fellowlabourers.

26 2 Tim. 4:11

27 Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me  
28 for the ministry.  
29

30 So we know that Luke was a doctor and he was very loyal to the Apostle Paul, even  
31 visiting him when he was on the Roman “death Row” Mamertinium Prison in Rome.  
32

### THE BOOK OF ACTS

33  
34  
35 This power and beloved fifth book in the New Testament can be readily divided into six  
36 section:  
37

- 38  1: Chapter 1 through Chapter 6, verse 7 which tells of the church at Jerusalem,  
and the pouring out of the power of the Holy Spirit on the early believers

- 1     2: Chapter 6:8 through 9:32 which describes the spread of Christianity through
- 2       Israel and the first martyr, Stephen
- 3     3: Chapter 9:32 through 12:24 which includes the marvelous conversion of Paul
- 4       on the road to Damascus, the extension of the Church to Antioch and the reception
- 5       of Cornelius, the Gentile
- 6     4: Chapter 12:25 through 16:5 which describes the extension of the burgeoning
- 7       Church through Asia Minor (Turkey) and the preaching tour in Galatia
- 8     5: Chapter 16:6 through 19:20 which relates the expansion of the Church to
- 9       Europe and the work of Paul in great cities such as Corinth and Ephesus
- 10    6: Chapter 19:21 through the end of the book, chapter 28 which tells of the arrival
- 11       of Paul in Rome and his imprisonment there.

12  
13 Strangely enough, Acts ends leaving us “hanging” in suspense for it finishes with Paul in  
14 prison in Rome awaiting judgment from Emperor Nero. But Luke’s mission was  
15 finished. He had shown how Christianity began and swept across the then-known  
16 world.

17  
18 But this blessed book begins with the splendid and true story of our Lord’s return to the  
19 Father.

## 20 21 THE ASCENSION OF JESUS

22  
23 Acts 1:1-12

24     **The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do**  
25 **and teach, [2] Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy**  
26 **Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen: [3] To**  
27 **whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being**  
28 **seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of**  
29 **God: [4] And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they**  
30 **should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which,**  
31 **saith he, ye have heard of me. [5] For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be**  
32 **baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. [6] When they therefore were**  
33 **come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again**  
34 **the kingdom to Israel? [7] And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times**  
35 **or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. [8] But ye shall receive**  
36 **power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto**  
37 **me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost**  
38 **part of the earth. [9] And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he**  
39 **was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. [10] And while they**  
40 **looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in**

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**white apparel; [11] Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven. [12] Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey.**

Jesus had been resurrected from the grave forty days prior to this momentous event. Luke carefully documented Jesus' nearly seven weeks post death:

Repeating: Acts 1:2-4

**Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen: [3] To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God: [4] And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me.**

Now, in this "grand finale" Jesus appeared one last time to His disciples on the Mount of

1 Olives in Jerusalem. Luke narrows the geographic field a bit for us in the last chapter of  
2 his Gospel: Luke 24:50-53 **And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted**  
3 **up his hands, and blessed them. [51] And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he**  
4 **was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. [52] And they worshipped him,**  
5 **and returned to Jerusalem with great joy: [53] And were continually in the temple,**  
6 **praising and blessing God. Amen.** By this we would conclude that the Ascension may  
7 have taken place a bit past the summit of The Mount of Olives.

8  
9 Now the question has to be addressed: Why did Jesus leave? Now He was no longer  
10 clothed in flesh and blood. Now He had a resurrected and glorified body. With one  
11 word from His lips He could have dispatched Rome from the face of the Earth. We want  
12 to cry out with the two men on the road to Emmaus, "Come and abide with us!"

13  
14 As we pursue the Scriptures we come to some hints, if not downright statements, as to  
15 why He lifted back to His Father in Heaven.

16  
17 **1. It was in our best interests that He leave - shocking as that may seem. But He**  
18 **even said so!**

19  
20 John 16:6-7

21 **But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart. [7]**  
22 **Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not**  
23 **away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto**  
24 **you.**

25  
26 Jesus actually said, in effect, "You will be better off if I go!" Why? Because He would  
27 send the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, to us. This happened to the original 120 believers in  
28 the Upper Room in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost. Jesus had promised His  
29 followers, Acts 1:8 **But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come**  
30 **upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea,**  
31 **and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.**

32  
33 Our Lord's redemptive purpose was not just Jerusalem or Judea, but THE UTTERMOST  
34 PART OF THE EARTH. Quite frankly most churches - and this statement includes  
35 Pentecostal churches - never give much heed to Jesus' command, considering their own  
36 community as the entire goal of their mission endeavor. But our plan must include the  
37 world. CHURCHES MUST HAVE A WORLD VIEW if they are going to please our  
38 Savior. We were not given the precious Holy Spirit only to sing joyous choruses and to  
39 tape our feel. We were given the unction of God's Spirit to successfully evangelist  
40 every part of mankind's domain.

1 **2. Yet another reason for Jesus being lifted back to the Father was to help center**  
2 **our thoughts and action on eternity - on those issues that are above, not just here.**

3  
4 Col. 3:2

5 **Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.**

6 Philip. 3:20

7 **For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the**  
8 **Lord Jesus Christ:**

9  
10 Perhaps you have heard the expression, “That person is so heavenly minded he is no  
11 earthly good.” I doubt if that’s our problem. More likely it’s that we are so earthly  
12 minded we are not much good for heaven and eternity. How many believers are content  
13 just to be on Earth. Their investments are here. Their life is here. Their interest is here.  
14 Their conversations are about things happening “here.” But should there not be a part of  
15 our minds and souls that based on eternal matters?

16  
17 **3. Our Lord is not physically on earth; therefore we live by FAITH and not by**  
18 **sight.**

19  
20 If Jesus were here, every plane, bus, car, camel and roller skate would be directed to  
21 where He was. We would want to look at Him, shake His hand, touch Him, etc. As Dr.  
22 W. A. Criswell noted, “The realities of God are always invisible and spiritual; they are  
23 eternal and never temporal.”

24  
25 How we “feel” is a poor measuring stick for our walk with God. We are justified by  
26 FAITH, noted Paul. Hebrews 11:27 **By faith he (Moses) forsook Egypt, not fearing**  
27 **the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.**

28  
29 It does not matter how spiritual a person my think he or she is, Hebrews 11:6 **But**  
30 **without faith it is impossible to please him:**

31  
32 **4. Jesus ascended back to the Father where He is our Mediator, our Intercessor,**  
33 **speaking to the Father on our behalf.**

34  
35 Hebrews 7:25

36 **Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by**  
37 **him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.**

38 Romans 5:10

39 **For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son,**  
40 **much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.**

1 Do I always FEEL saved? No. But am I still saved? YES! I am not saved because  
2 I have “happy feet” and just jump and dance around. I am saved because of an old  
3 rugged cross and the One Who died on it! I am saved because Jesus was raised from  
4 the dead on the third day and at this moment intercedes for me in glory. I am saved  
5 because of Jesus!

6  
7 So many times I have sung the following song by Carolyn Gillman:  
8

9 *Someone to go the extra mile, just like a mother caring for her child;*  
10 *A friend who'll stick through thick or thin no matter what you've done or where you've been*  
11 *Just like one great big family, a stronger older brother He will be;*  
12 *So quick and ready to defend the younger, weaker to the end.*

13  
14 *Just like sheep we've gone astray, struggling beneath the debt we could not pay;*  
15 *Not ever hoping to renew the love and fellowship that we once knew;*  
16 *But He began to intercede, crying “Father, please forgive I plead.”*  
17 *And as the nails pierced through His hands, God once again reached down to man.*

18  
19 *And He's ever interceding to the Father for His children;*  
20 *Yes, He's ever interceding to the Father for His own;*  
21 *Through Him you can reach the Father so bring Him all your heavy burdens;*  
22 *Yes, He's ever interceding; so come boldly to the throne.*

23  
24 If I were on trial for any thing, I would want the finest legal counsel I could find. That's  
25 what I have in Christ!

## 26 27 THE RETURN

28  
29 Those who believe the Bible to be true, understand there is coming a time when the Lord  
30 Jesus will “rapture” His followers to be with Him:

31  
32 1 Cor. 15:51-58

33 **Behold, I shew you a mystery (a previously unrevealed truth); We shall not all sleep**  
34 **(die), but we shall all be changed, [52] In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the**  
35 **last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and**  
36 **we shall be changed. [53] For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this**  
37 **mortal must put on immortality. [54] So when this corruptible shall have put on**  
38 **incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to**  
39 **pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. [55] O death, where is**  
40 **thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? [56] The sting of death is sin; and the**

1 **strength of sin is the law. [57] But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory**  
2 **through our Lord Jesus Christ. [58] Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast,**  
3 **unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that**  
4 **your labour is not in vain in the Lord.**

5  
6 Jesus ascended from the Mount of Olives. At the Rapture those who are saved, born again,  
7 redeemed by the Blood of Christ, will be caught up in the air just as Jesus was. Some time  
8 later, seven years, I believe, Jesus will return and once again His feet will touch the Mount  
9 of Olives:

10  
11 Zech. 14:3-4

12 **Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in**  
13 **the day of battle.**

14 **[4] And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before**  
15 **Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward**  
16 **the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the**  
17 **mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.**

18  
19 I will deal with this more fully in our next (and last) in this series. It is a very dramatic  
20 sequence given us in these scriptures. It is always enjoyable to read J. Vernon McGee's  
21 commentary on the scriptures. In this case, he wrote this:

22  
23 *"And there shall be a very great valley." Jerusalem today is surrounded by the roughest*  
24 *terrain that I know of anywhere. I frankly have been in no place that compare to it. It is*  
25 *rugged if you go north or if you go south or if you go west or if you go east -*  
26 *any direction you might go. If you go south to Bethlehem, you would think you were riding*  
27 *one of the toboggan rides at Disneyland. Up and down you go - mountain after mountain -*  
28 *and it is rugged. If you go north, it is rugged. If you go west it is rugged. Big boulders*  
29 *and rocks. You've ne ver seen such great big rocks. Going east down to Jericho - again it*  
30 *is a rugged trip. The only thing is that there is a good highway there. It makes it such an*  
31 *easy trip that the tourist does not realize that rough terrain it is.*

32 THRU THE BIBLE / VOLUME 3 / MCGEE / PAGE 986 / NELSON PUBL

33  
34 Our Lord's return to the Mount of Olives will not be accepted by the rank and file earthling.  
35 Zech. 14:13 **And it shall come to pass in that day, that a great tumult from the Lord**  
36 **shall be among them; and they shall lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbour,**  
37 **and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbour.**

38  
39 Jerusalem will become the center city of the world. Zech. 14:16 **And it shall come to**  
40 **pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall**



# THE RAPTURE

"We who are alive . . . will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. . ." (1 Thess. 4:17)

**even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.**

The name "Jerusalem" means city of peace. There has seldom been long-lasting peace in that fantastic metropolis, now boasting nearly 900,000 residents. War after war has been fought over it. But when Jesus returns to it, peace will most certainly come after some short skirmishes have been fought.

**Zech. 14:8-9 And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be. [9] And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one.**

**\*\* The "former sea" will be the great Mediterranean Sea and the "hinder sea" will be the Dead Sea - which will in that time become a living sea once again because of the great "Med-Dead" canal connecting. Ezekiel 47:8-9 Then said he unto me, These waters issue out toward the east country, and go down into the desert, and go into the sea: which being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed. [9] And it shall come to pass, that every thing that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live: and there shall be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters shall come thither: for they shall be healed; and every thing shall live whither the river cometh.**

There was rampant speculation about this major development about 20 years ago; but the uprisings (the Intifada) set the whole process back, I believe, til Jesus returns!



1 **THIS SAME JESUS!**

2  
3 When our Lord Jesus was crucified and buried, the world believed it was all over for this  
4 “Christ.” He was eliminated, they believed. This world and all its governments has not  
5 even begun its dealing with the Messiah! Acts 1:11 **Which also said, Ye men of**  
6 **Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from**  
7 **you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.**  
8

9 In our final study in this series we will take time solely with Christ’s return! I pray you are  
10 looking for it! And....that you plan to be a participant when the day comes:  
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12  
13 One more study on “Who Is Jesus” – next time.  
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