



Hail the Day That Sees Him Rise

Why sing a hymn about the ascension? Of all of Jesus' acts—healings, virgin birth, raising the dead, preaching, parables, miracles, resurrection—the ascension seems at first glance to be an historical event without a lot of spiritual importance.

Fortunately, we can take more than that one glance. On second thought, the day of ascension is the only perfect conclusion to Christ's earthly life.

The man who healed others needs no healing Himself. He has survived death and now is received by heaven intact, scarred by prints of nails borne in love, but unscathed by the physical attacks on Him.

The life that began as no other in virgin birth ends as no other, rising to a throne on which no other can ever sit.

The man who raised Lazarus and Jairus' daughter now completes His defeat of death by simply leaving this world without bothering to use death's door that we mere mortals must traverse. Oh, He had been through that door once, but now He does not need it for His glorious exit.

The one who preached the Sermon on the Mount and presided over the Passover Meal in the upper room now creates the ultimate homily illustration, rising above His own world that is filled with such problems for us, blessing His church from above.

This weaver of parables brilliant in their simplicity and piercing in their application now lives His own real-life story of rising to victory. You can almost hear Him tell it: "There was a certain man, the son of the master, who gave his life as a sacrificial lamb for the sins of others, only to rise and enter the highest heavens."

Of course, the worker of miracles must end His human time on earth with the miracle to end all miracles, leaving the mountaintop vertically while having his actions narrated by angels.

But perhaps no meaning of the ascension is more important than the explanation point it places on Christ's resurrection. For even Lazarus, having been raised from the dead, died again. Christ's resurrection was unique, for He did not simply cheat death; He conquered it and the sin that leads to it. That triumphant act of resurrection is completed by ascension of the King of glory through the eternal gates to the side of His father.

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia.

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