

Jesus Christ Has Gone Into Heaven And Is On The Right Hand Of God.

Text: 1 Pet 3:22

Suggested Hymns:

111, 108, 110, 842, 114

1) From There He Exercises Absolute Authority In Heaven And Earth.

2) We Will Adore And Praise Him And Put Our Trust In Him Because Of His Providential Care In Ruling Over The Kingdoms Of Power And Of Grace

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. Amen.

The text for our sermon today is 1 Peter 3:22, *Jesus Christ, ²² who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him.* (NKJV)

Lord God, heavenly Father, sanctify us through Your truth. Your Word is truth. Amen.

Dear friends in Christ,

In the Book of Psalms, Psalm 47 it is written ¹ *Oh, clap your hands, all you peoples! Shout to God with the voice of triumph!* ² *For the LORD Most High is awesome; He is a great King over all the earth.* ³ *He will subdue the peoples under us, And the nations under our feet.* ⁴ *He will choose our inheritance for us, The excellence of Jacob whom He loves.*

⁵ *God has gone up with a shout, The LORD with the sound of a trumpet.* ⁶ *Sing praises to God, sing praises! Sing praises to our King, sing praises!* ⁷ *For God is the King of all the earth; Sing praises with understanding.* ⁸ *God reigns over the nations; God sits on His holy throne.* ⁹ *The princes of the people have gathered together, The people of the God of Abraham. For the shields of the earth belong to God; He is greatly exalted.*

The holy prophecy of this exceedingly jubilant Psalm was fulfilled in the ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Ascension is a festival of the triumph and majesty of Jesus, the Son of God. For on that glorious day, forty days after His resurrection from the dead, He sat down on the throne of God the Father Almighty and assumed the absolute rule over all things, also according to His human nature, to the glory of the

Father and the salvation of His Church. May the Lord bless our meditation as we consider Christ's Ascension.

1. Jesus Christ Has Gone Into Heaven And Is On The Right Hand Of God From There He Exercises Absolute Authority In Heaven And Earth.

Our text begins, *Jesus Christ,* ²² *who has gone into heaven.* Heaven is the place and condition beyond the confines of this material universe where God shows Himself face to face to the holy angels and to the souls of the departed Christians and from where God rules over everything.

As the Psalmist says, *The LORD is in His holy temple, The LORD's throne is in heaven; His eyes behold, His eyelids test the sons of men.*¹ And in Psalm 103:19 we read, ¹⁹ *The LORD has established His throne in heaven, And His kingdom rules over all.*

For that purpose the crucified and risen Saviour went, ascended, in His human nature, with His glorified body, to the right hand of God, the eternal and almighty Majesty of the Father. And from there He exercises absolute authority over all things in heaven and in earth: everywhere, visible and invisible, temporal and eternal.

Oh, what an overwhelming Apostolic declaration and truth that we Christians believe and confess: Jesus Christ has ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, with angels, authorities, and powers being subject to Him!

Let us view the individual categories named in the text over which Jesus exercises absolute authority in heaven and in earth.

Firstly, the angels are subject to Him. The ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands of those mighty spirits are confirmed in eternal bliss. They excel in strength, do what Jesus commands, hearken to the voice of His Word, and perform His every pleasure.

We read in Psalm 103:20-21, ²⁰ *Bless the LORD, you His angels, Who excel in strength, who do His word, Heeding the voice of His word.* ²¹ *Bless the LORD, all you His hosts, You ministers of His, who do His pleasure.*

The Lord sends them throughout the earth to serve the heirs of salvation.² And what mighty hosts of God they are! The Prophet Isaiah tells us that one

angel of the Lord killed 185,000 Assyrian soldiers in one night.³ St. Paul writes to the Thessalonians that on the last day *the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.*⁴ All the angels of God are subject to our ascended Lord Jesus.

Secondly, the authorities are subject to the Lord. The word authorities, here, means all civil government on earth, whether it be in the form of a democracy, or of a dictatorship, or a monarchy, or any other form.

It also includes all leagues of nations, agreements between governments, the United Nations Organisation, or any other present or future combination of governments and nations, all of them, collectively and individually, are at Jesus' immediate and absolute disposal.

He enthrones and dethrones all governments and government personnel everywhere and at the time that He wills. We are told in Psalm 47:8 that ⁸ *God reigns over the nations; God sits on His holy throne.*

Whatever may be the human, moral, economic, political, or social causes for prosperity or adversity, peace or war (and how deeply civil governments are involved in all this!), Jesus, in the exercise of the absolute authority and rule of God, makes all things, persons, and events, serve the purpose of His good will and pleasure, for the purpose of gathering in the elect of God.

We read in Isaiah 53:10 that *the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand.* The evening before His death on the Cross Jesus prayed to the Father, *“Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You,* ² *“as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him.* ³ *“And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.”*⁵

And before Jesus ascended, He said to the Apostles in Matthew 28:18, ¹⁸ *“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.”*

And after the ascension, St. Paul wrote that the Father set Jesus *at His right hand in the heavenly places,* ²¹ *far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in*

that which is to come. ²² *And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church,* ²³ *which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.*⁶

Thirdly, all powers are subject to Christ at the right hand of God. The powers of heaven, the laws of nature, the decrees and ways of God by which the universe functions in all its vastness and minuteness, in general and in particular: gravity, cohesion, motion, life, etc., are operated by Christ.

We read in Colossians 1:16-17, ¹⁶ *For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.* ¹⁷ *And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.* All these incalculable powers lie in the hollow of His crucified hands.

The powers of darkness are also subject to Jesus, who is at the right hand of the Father. The powers of darkness includes the devil and his angels, the tempter and seducer, who was a liar and murderer from the beginning, the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience.⁷

The devil is also called the god of this world, who blinds the minds of those who do not believe, *lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them* Scripture says.⁸

The devil is the enemy who also sows the hypocrites on the field of this world. Satan, deceives the nations in all the earth to gather them against the camp of the saints and the beloved city. The devil and all his demons, and all his servants among mankind, and all their wicked works and ways are subject to Jesus, who is at the right hand of the Father.

But the powers of darkness can do absolutely nothing to prevent the final salvation of God's elect. Praise be to God!

Yes, Jesus Christ has gone into heaven and is on the right hand of God, with angels, authorities and powers being made subject to Him.

**2. Jesus Christ Has Gone Into Heaven And Is On The Right Hand Of God
We Will Adore And Praise Him And Put Our Trust In Him
Because Of His Providential Care
In Ruling Over The Kingdoms Of Power And Of Grace.**

Yes, we will adore and worship our ascended Lord, because the Father *has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name,* ¹⁰ *that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth,* ¹¹ *and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*⁹

Therefore we join our voices of praise with those of the multitude hosts in heaven, *“Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.”*¹⁰

We will also put our trust in Jesus because of His providential care in ruling over the Kingdom of Power. The rise and fall of nations, empires, and governments, health and sickness, peace and war, abundance and scarcity, life and death, all things everywhere, visible and invisible, are constantly and absolutely subject to His will and purpose.

When we talk about nuclear power and all its dangers, let us also remember that all nuclear power and energy was made by our Lord in the first place, and that in Him it exists, and that He will use it, whether for a blessing or a punishment, or both, as He wills, in His unchallengeable rule of the world.

All in all: Nothing happens except by God’s all-pervading directive or permissive providence. Therefore we know assuredly that now and always *all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.* ¹¹

We will also put our trust and confidence in Jesus Christ because of His providential care and mercy in ruling over the Kingdom of Grace. We know that the Kingdom of God comes to us when the Heavenly Father gives us His Holy Spirit, so that by His grace we believe His holy Word and lead a godly life, here in time and hereafter in eternity.

But it is Jesus at the right hand of the Father who sends the Holy Spirit from the Father,¹² with His gifts of calling, conversion, sanctification, and preservation through the blessed means of grace, the Word and the Sacraments, which He gives and establishes where, when, and for as long a time as He pleases.

In the all-encompassing providence of Almighty God Jesus Christ pursues the eternal purpose of God's will: the gathering in of the elect to the everlasting praise of the grace of the Father.¹³

Jesus will save us. He will help us in every need. And in due time, He will take us to Himself in heaven and let us see forever the glory which the Father has given Him.

In the meantime, let us go forth and spread the Gospel as the disciples did. Our ascended Lord will work with us and confirm His Word with conversion of sinners.¹⁴ Amen.

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep our hearts and minds, in Christ Jesus. Amen.

¹ Psalm 11:4

² Hebrews 1:14

³ Isaiah 37:36

⁴ 1 Thessalonians 4:16

⁵ John 17:1-3

⁶ Ephesians 1:20-23

⁷ Ephesians 2:2

⁸ 2 Corinthians 4:4

⁹ Phil. 2:9-11

¹⁰ Rev. 5:12

¹¹ Rom. 8:28

¹² John 15:16

¹³ Ephesians 1:6

¹⁴ Mark 16:20