



Prepare To Meet Thy God

"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" (Acts 1:11).

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"Therefore thus will I do unto thee,

O Israel: and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel" (Amos 4:12).

"And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. 10 And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in 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" (Acts 1:9-11).

Scriptures will always be fulfilled. Often, when it happens, it seems strange to the eyes of those who should have known better but were not prepared for the reality of its fulfilment. Jesus has spoken about His ascension to heaven. For example, in John 6:62, He asked "What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?" Similar allusions were made in other scriptures, including:

- 1) John 14:2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.
- 2) John 16:10 Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more
- 3) John 20:17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.

Despite the mind preparations, they were still very surprised, when it happened in reality. This episode teaches us:

- 1) Jesus meant His words, when He said that He would return to the father.
- 2) He could have returned in secret, but He choose to make it a public event, to leave indisputable evidence in the minds of His followers.
- 3) Jesus knew exactly what was going to happen, but He did not tell the disciples that that was the moment that the prophecy of ascension was going to be fulfilled. He just did it, and let them decipher the details. In the same way, when He is coming back again, there will be no advance warning of the event. That is why we must all

be ready all the time.

- 4) Just like the natural laws could not stop Him from resurrection, no natural law could stop Him from ascending into heaven in broad day light, and to the amazement of the onlookers.
- 5) The witnesses stood there gazing into the skies, probably wondering if this was another stun that Jesus was manifesting, and were probably wondering how it would end. They probably were expecting to see Him come back again at that very moment to the earth.
- 6) It is not clear how long these disciples waited to see the closure of this event, and how long they would have waited had the two angels not come down to speak to them.
- 7) The angel addressed them with a question "Why stand ye gazing up into heaven?", as if they did not know what had just happened. The angels' question revealed that the disciples did not understand the implications of what had just happened. In Luke 19:12-27, He depicted this event by using an illustration of a certain nobleman who went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, which underscored an important truth about a time gap between His going and the eventual return. Had they understood that time gap, they would have returned to their mission without waiting for angelic message.
- 8) The message of the angels not only confirmed what had just happened but also reminded them of the agelong prophecy of Jesus coming back again.

While the prophecy remains of His return, we also must be earnest in preparing to meet Him. "Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel: and because I will do this unto thee, **prepare to meet thy God**, O Israel" (Amos 4:12).