

MAY 30, 2019
ASCENSION OF
THE LORD



Jesus' ascension sends us out.

ASCENSION DAY BIBLE READINGS

Take time to read and reflect on these Bible passages as part of your Ascension Day celebrations.

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| Thursday | Luke 24:44-53 | The ascension of Jesus |
| | Acts 1:1-11 | Jesus is taken up to heaven |
| | Psalms 47 | God rules the nations |
| | Ephesians 1:15-23 | Paul's prayer for the people |

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR ASCENSION DAY

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” **Acts 1:8 (NRSV)**

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for Ascension Day:

Dear God of suffering and glory, help us to see in the cross our calling to witness to your saving work in our daily lives. In Jesus' name, amen.

Mealttime Prayer:

Lord Jesus, ascended above, thank you for your gifts of love. For food and home and all our days, we offer up our prayers of praise. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the ascended Lord Jesus give you power from on high. May God bless you and fill you with joy.



MAY 30, 2019

HYMN FOR ASCENSION DAY

Alleluia! Sing to Jesus



CARING CONVERSATIONS



Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- How do you make important decisions about your future?
- Who helps you make decisions about your future?
- In Acts 1, the apostles were to wait for the Holy Spirit to give them power and direction for the future of the church. How do you wait for the guidance of the Holy Spirit?

DEVOTIONS



Read: Acts 1:1-11.

Jesus' ascension is about his status and power as the one seated at the right hand of God (Ephesians 1:20). Jesus is no longer present on earth as before. He is now present through the Holy Spirit that strengthens the apostles. They are not to look up to heaven and wonder about Jesus' return. They now have their marching orders to go out into the world (v. 8), but not until they have been clothed with power from the Holy Spirit (vv. 4-5). Like the Jews of their day, the apostles thought that the role of the Messiah was to return power and glory to the kingdom of Israel (v. 6), but now the power and glory of God is to be seen in the work of the suffering Christ who sends them out into the world to be witnesses. Jesus' power and reign now resides in his followers, the body of Christ, the church. God is now active in the lives of believers who worship and wait for God's guidance. The role of the church is to be responsive to the leading of the Holy Spirit. God will direct the work of the church. How does your local community of faith wait for God's guidance? How do you wait for God's guidance?

Pray: **Come Holy Spirit, help us to see in Jesus' suffering the power of God at work that guides us and sends us out as witnesses to the ends of the earth. Amen.**

SERVICE



Psalms 47:2 tells us: “For the Lord, the Most High, is awesome, a great king over all the earth.” Caring for God's creation honors God's work and reign over all the earth. Show your care on Ascension Day by picking up litter and trash around your home, congregation, nearby road edges, or a park.

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS



Celebrate this day with a tradition of serving Ascension Day cookies. Make normal sugar cookies. After they have cooled, spread sky blue icing on them and place miniature marshmallows on top of each. As you serve them, explain that the cookies symbolize the sky and the clouds that Jesus ascended into. The point of Jesus' ascension is that he gives his disciples—including us—a mission to be his witnesses. He says, “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

