

+The ascension of Jesus Christ+



- ❖ ❖ There never was a prophet, nor an arch-prophet, that could die, and raise himself from the dead and ascend to heaven, except for Jesus Christ, our God. The ascension of Christ is proof of his Lordship and Divinity.
- When Jesus spoke to Nicodemus, He said: “No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven.” (John 3:13)
When Jesus Christ spoke to Nicodemus on earth, He was in heaven at the same time. He is the creator of heaven and earth, and is in no need to ascend, because He is on earth AND in heaven simultaneously.
- However, He ascended in our **BODILY FORM ONLY**. The body that He has received from the virgin St Mary, a body like yours and mine. This way, Jesus blessed our human body. This was the first time in history that a human body, self-risen from the dead and ascended to heaven. He opened for us the gates of heaven and raised us with Him: “and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus”. (Eph 2:6). For this reason, the disciples with great joy, so we must all rejoice in the same way.
- ❖ ❖ Jesus ascended to heaven so we may understand that our true home is Heaven. He taught us to occupy our minds and thoughts with heaven, and not let worldly matters fill our hearts. He taught us not to love the world, or the things in it. He taught us not to desire worldly matters like the nations of the world, and forget the heavens, uniting with Christ and the life of purity and holiness.
- ❖ ❖ We can prepare ourselves for ascension this way:
 - Every time we pray “Our Father...”, we remember that Christ wants us to stand in heaven when we pray.
 - The Holy Eucharist is a part of Heaven. Christ attends with us. Therefore we pray and say: “when we stand in your Holy Temple, we count ourselves as those who are in Heaven.” (Third hour prayer)
Every time we raise our eyes and hearts for prayer or supplications, we rise to heaven, as Nehemiah did before he replied to the King: “Then the king said to me, what do you request? So I prayed to the God of heaven. And I said to the king...” (Nehemiah 2:4-5)
 - ▪ Every time we disregard and scorn worldly cares and focus our attention on Christ, so we rise with our hearts to heaven.

- ▪ Every time we keep God's commandments and witness for His love for us, we are truly children of heaven. When the priest says in the mass: "lift up your hearts", we reply: "they are with the Lord".

Therefore my brethren, ascension is continuous through and with Christ, the Head of our church. He ascended and sat at the right hand of the Father with a human body like ours. Let us thank Him, glorify Him, and rejoice.

Father Bishoy Kamel- Alexandria, June 1975