

The Ascension

WITNESSES

Acts of the Apostles



The book of Acts contains the origin story of the church. It provides a foundation for the church's identity, purpose, and is an example for how to live out the mission Jesus gave us.

"The mysterious presence of Jesus haunts the whole story. He is announced as King and Lord, not as an increasingly distant memory but as a living and powerful reality, a person who can be known and loved, obeyed and followed, a person who continues to act within the real world." -N.T. Wright

"In my former book, *Theophilus*, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit." Then they gathered around him and asked him, "Lord, are you at this time to restore the kingdom to Israel?" He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven." Acts 1:1-11

V9 "HE WAS TAKEN UP BEFORE
THEIR VERY EYES, AND A CLOUD HID
JESUS FROM THEIR SIGHT."

THE CLOUD REPRESENTED GOD'S
CONCENTRATED SPECIAL PRESENCE.



VII "Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven"

"In the Bible, heaven is not a location within our own universe of space, time and matter. Heaven and earth are the two halves of God's created reality. Heaven is God's dimension, and earth is ours." -NT Wright

The Ascension reveals God's greatest gamble.

V6 "Then they gathered around him and asked him, 'Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?'"



V8 "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Acts 7:55-56

"55 But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. 56 "Look," he said, "I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God."



Acts 7:59-60

"59 While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." 60 Then he fell on his knees and cried out, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them."

