

Time Audit Chronicles: The Ascension of Jesus

(Acts 1:1-11)

Prologue: The Promise of the Holy Spirit

The Presswood family sat around the table, reading **Acts 1:1-11**, where the **Ascension of Jesus** is recorded. Ariel was thinking about how Jesus' final moments on earth were filled with instructions and promises—not only for the apostles, but for the church as a whole. Alice, still holding Mr. Fluffernutter, was imagining herself standing alongside the disciples, watching Jesus rise into the sky and listening to the angels' message.

“Daddy,” Ariel asked, “Why did Jesus ascend into heaven? What did He mean by saying the disciples should wait in Jerusalem for the Holy Spirit?”

Ryan smiled, glad Ariel was diving deep into the meaning of the ascension. “That’s a great question, Ariel. Jesus’ **ascension** was a powerful moment because it marked the end of His earthly ministry and the beginning of a new phase in God’s plan for the world. By ascending to heaven, Jesus was going back to the Father, where He would be **glorified**. But He didn’t leave His followers alone—He promised to send the **Holy Spirit** to empower them for the work ahead.”

Ariel’s eyes brightened. “So, Jesus didn’t leave them just to be far away—He left so that the **Holy Spirit** could come and help them do what He had called them to do?”

“That’s exactly right,” Ryan said. “Jesus’ ascension made way for the **Holy Spirit** to come, who would empower the apostles and all believers to be His witnesses in the world. The Holy Spirit is the one who gives the church the strength and guidance it needs to fulfill the **mission** of spreading the Gospel.”

Ariel smiled, eager to learn more. “Let’s use the **Time Audit Machine** to go back and experience the moment of the ascension, and see what Jesus taught His disciples before He went back to the Father.”

The Journey Begins: Jesus’ Final Instructions (Acts 1:1-5)

The **Time Audit Machine** powered up, and in a flash, the family found themselves standing with **Jesus and the apostles**. They were gathered on a hillside near **Bethany**, just outside of Jerusalem. The disciples were filled with questions, their hearts still unsure of what would happen next.

Ryan pointed to the scene. “Jesus had already been appearing to His disciples for forty days after His resurrection, teaching them about the Kingdom of God and preparing them for the work ahead. Now, He was giving His final instructions.”

Ariel watched intently as Jesus said, “**But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.**” (Acts 1:8).

“That’s the **Great Commission**, isn’t it?” Ariel asked. “Jesus is telling them to be His witnesses and spread the Gospel all over the world!”

Ryan nodded. “Yes, but this commission wasn’t just a **command**—it was a promise. Jesus was saying that they would **receive power** through the Holy Spirit to be able to do the work He called them to. They wouldn’t do it by their own strength; they would be **empowered** by the Spirit.”

The Ascension: Jesus Returns to the Father (Acts 1:6-11)

As the disciples stood looking at Jesus, they asked, “**Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?**” (Acts 1:6). Their hearts were still filled with questions about **God’s Kingdom** and whether Jesus was going to restore Israel to its former glory. But Jesus replied, “**It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.**” (Acts 1:7).

Ariel thought about this. “Jesus was reminding them that they couldn’t know God’s timing for everything. There are things that only God the Father knows.”

“Yes,” Ryan agreed. “Jesus was redirecting their focus from earthly concerns to the **mission** they were about to begin. He had a bigger plan than just restoring Israel’s kingdom—He was sending them out to bring the **Kingdom of God** to the whole world.”

As Jesus spoke these words, something extraordinary happened. **Jesus began to ascend**—rising into the sky right before their eyes. The disciples watched in awe, their gazes fixed on Him as He ascended. “**While they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.**” (Acts 1:9).

Ariel gasped, imagining the moment. “Jesus was **taken up into the sky**! He wasn’t just leaving in a normal way—He was **ascending** back to heaven.”

“Yes,” Ryan said, “Jesus’ ascension was a **visible sign** that He was returning to the Father. It showed that He had completed His work on earth, and now He was taking His rightful place at the **right hand of God** in heaven.”

The Promise of Jesus’ Return (Acts 1:10-11)

As the disciples stood there, still staring into the sky, two **angels** appeared beside them. The angels asked, “**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).

Ariel’s eyes lit up. “The angels told the disciples that Jesus would come back in the same way—He would return to earth just like He ascended into heaven!”

“That’s right,” Ryan said. “Jesus’ **return** is a promise that is still to come. Just as He left in the presence of His disciples, He will **return** in glory. And His return will be the fulfillment of everything He promised—the restoration of all things, the end of suffering, and the complete establishment of God’s Kingdom.”

Ariel felt a deep sense of hope. “So, even though Jesus left them physically, they weren’t left alone. And they had the promise that He would **come back** for them.”

“Yes,” Ryan said, “And that promise is **our hope** too. Jesus will return to make all things right. But in the meantime, we have the **Holy Spirit** empowering us to live out His mission.”

The Promise of the Holy Spirit and the Church’s Mission (Acts 1:12-14)

As the disciples returned to **Jerusalem** as instructed, they gathered together in prayer, waiting for the **Holy Spirit** to come. The early church was united in **prayer** and anticipation, trusting in Jesus’ promise.

Ryan looked at Ariel, who was deep in thought. “So, the disciples obeyed Jesus’ command to wait in Jerusalem. They didn’t know exactly what to expect, but they were ready to receive the Holy Spirit, who would empower them for the work ahead.”

Ariel nodded. “So, even though they didn’t know everything that was going to happen, they trusted Jesus. And the Holy Spirit would guide them in what to do next.”

“Yes,” Ryan said. “The church’s mission would be empowered by the Holy Spirit. **The Spirit would come to guide them, teach them, and give them the strength to spread the message of Jesus** to the world. This is the beginning of the church, the **body of Christ**, empowered to carry out God’s mission on earth.”

Reflection: Empowered by the Holy Spirit for the Mission

Back in the garage, the **Time Audit Machine** powered down, and the family sat quietly, reflecting on the powerful moment of Jesus’ ascension. Ariel turned to her father, feeling a deep sense of awe.

“Jesus really didn’t leave us alone, did He?” Ariel said softly. “Even though He ascended into heaven, He sent the Holy Spirit to be with us.”

“That’s right,” Ryan said. “Jesus’ ascension was a pivotal moment in history. It marked the end of His earthly ministry, but it also marked the beginning of the **church’s mission**. Jesus gave His disciples—and us—the responsibility to share the good news of His resurrection, and He empowered us to do so by sending the Holy Spirit.”

Ariel smiled. “So, the Holy Spirit is the one who gives us the **strength** to do God’s work in the world.”

“Yes,” Ryan said. “And He also teaches us, guides us, and empowers us to live the life Jesus called us to. The **church**—that’s **us**, all believers—is empowered by the Holy Spirit to continue the mission of Jesus on earth. And the best part? We are not doing it alone. Jesus is with us through His Spirit, and He will return one day to make all things right.”

Ariel felt encouraged. “So, even though the world can be tough, we don’t have to worry because we’re not alone. We have the Holy Spirit with us, and we know that Jesus will come back for us.”

“That’s exactly right,” Ryan said, smiling. “And until He returns, we are called to be His witnesses and to **spread the Gospel** with the power of the Holy Spirit guiding us.”

Takeaway: The Ascension and Empowerment of the Church

In **Acts 1:1-11**, Jesus' **ascension** marks the

end of His earthly ministry and the beginning of a new phase in God's plan for the world. Jesus instructed His disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the coming of the **Holy Spirit**, who would empower them for the mission of spreading the Gospel to the ends of the earth. Jesus' ascension was a visible sign that He had completed His work and was returning to the Father, but it also served as a promise of His future return in glory. In the meantime, the Holy Spirit would guide and empower believers to carry out the mission of sharing the good news and living out the Kingdom of God on earth. The church, empowered by the Holy Spirit, is called to be the living witness of Jesus, carrying His message of hope, love, and salvation to the world.