

GRACE BIBLE CHURCH
Robert R. McLaughlin Bible Ministries

The Tree of Life is a weekly teaching summary.
The Tree of Life for week ending 06/22/03.
The Ascension and Session of the Lord Jesus Christ
Part 2
Hebrews 1

We are continuing our study of dispensations and the doctrine of the Ascension and Session in **Rev 12:5**, “*And her child was caught up to God and to His throne.*” As we noted, the phrase “caught up to God” is a reference to the **ascension**, and the phrase “to His throne” is a reference to the **session**. It is important for Church-age believers understand the different dispensations and how they relate to the Resurrection, Ascension, and Session of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Col 1:24-27 *Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body [the Church] in filling up that which is lacking in Christ’s afflictions. Of this church I was made a minister according to the dispensation from God bestowed on me for your benefit that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God, that is the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations; but has now been manifested to his saints, to whom God willed to make known what is the glorious riches of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the confidence of the glory.*

The dispensation of the *Gentiles* began with the creation of mankind (**Gen 1:26**) and continued through the Fall (**Gen 3:24**) to the Exodus (after the Egyptian Bondage of **Exo 14**). The *era of positive volition* (in the Garden of Eden) lasted from the creation of man until the Fall. Here human volition and marriage both failed miserably under perfect environment. Both volition and marriage are divine institutions, but man chose to reject the divine provision. The era of negative volition took place from the fall of man to Abraham. This was followed by the era of the patriarchs from Abraham to Moses.

The Dispensations of Human History

Gentiles	Israel	Hypostatic Union	Church	Tribulation	Millennium
Theocentric		Christocentric		Eschatological	

The Gentiles began with the three sons of Noah—Shem, Ham, and Japheth. This era sees the creation of the new racial species, the Jewish race, which began with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. It includes the history of the Jews from Abraham to Moses. Abraham became the father of the new racial species, created by God, when he was circumcised at age 99; this was the demonstration of his use of the faith-rest drill. (We do not circumcise children today as a part of the spiritual life because we live in a different dispensation.) This dispensation included both Jews and Gentiles without a client nation. The dispensation of the Jews, or Israel, runs from the Exodus to the birth of Christ, 1441 – 4 B.C. The two *Christocentric* dispensations are taught in the New Testament:

1. The great power experiment of the Hypostatic Union runs from the birth of Christ to the resurrection and ascension of Christ, a period of 33 years. This is the time of the incarnation or First Advent of our Lord Jesus Christ.
2. The great power experiment of the Church-age runs from the day of Pentecost in A.D. 30 until the Rapture of the Church, the time of which is unknown by all but God.

There are two *Eschatological* dispensations:

1. The Tribulation (called the “Doomsday Dispensation”) is the great power struggle from the Rapture of the Church to the Second Advent, also called Daniel’s 70th week, and is a seven-year period marking the end of the Jewish Age. In the Book of *Revelation*, chapter 6, it is also classified as the time of Satan’s desperation. It is prophesied in the Old Testament as well as by our Lord in the *Olivet Discourse* of **Mat 24-25**, in most of His parables, and by John in the Book of *Revelation*, chapters 6–19.
2. The Millennial reign of Christ runs from the Second Advent of Christ to the end of human history and lasts 1,000 years. It is the time of the restoration of Israel and the fulfillment of Israel’s unconditional covenants. Israel will again be the client nation in history for the last 1,000 years. It is also a time of perfect environment on the earth. It is preceded by the judgment of the Baptism of Fire, so that only believers will enter the Millennium. At the end of the Millennium is the judgment of unbelievers and fallen angels.

This period includes:

1. The Second Advent of Christ.
2. The judgment of the human race coming out of the Tribulation, and the Baptism of the Fire, in which there are two separate judgments—that of the Gentiles and that of the Jews.
3. The restoration of Israel.
4. The Millennial rule of Jesus Christ.
5. The Gog Revolution.
6. The final judgments of history—the judgment of fallen angels, who are cast into the Lake of Fire, and the resurrection and judgment of all unbelievers at the Great White Throne, who are also cast into the Lake of Fire.
7. The eternal state, which includes (1) all believers in resurrection bodies forever, (2) the destruction of the present universe, and (3) the creation of a new universe.

The Resurrection, Ascension, and Session all deal with the **true humanity** of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is undiminished deity and true humanity in one person forever. Just as only the humanity of Christ could provide our so-great salvation by receiving the judgment for our sins in His own body, so only the humanity of Christ could be resurrected, ascended, and seated at the right hand of God the Father.

The humanity of Jesus Christ in hypostatic union is now exalted and glorified at the right hand of the Father where He is now seated, **Act 2:32-35**, “*This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses. Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear. For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says: ‘The Lord said to my Lord, ‘Sit at My right hand, until I*

make Thine enemies a footstool for Thy feet.”” We read in **Act 5:30-31**, “*The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you had put to death by hanging Him on a cross. He is the One Whom God has exalted at His right hand as Prince and Savior.*”

The Ascension and Session is not only related to the Hypostatic Union, but is also closely related to the angelic conflict, **Heb 1:1-3**, “*God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation [image] of His [God the Father’s] nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.*” Note that during the entire period of the Hypostatic Union on earth, from the baby in the cradle to the Resurrection, Ascension, and Session, our Lord was still holding the universe together by the word of His power. Notice the statement at the end of verse 3, “*When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high*”; verse 4 goes on, “*Having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent title than they.*” In His session, the humanity of Christ inherited a greater title than any angelic creature including any seraphim or cherubim angels, **Heb 1:5-6**, “*For to which of the angels did He [God the Father] ever say, ‘Thou art My Son, today I have begotten Thee’? And again, ‘I will be a Father to Him and He shall be a Son to Me’? And when He again brings the first-born into the world [the Second Coming], He says, ‘And let all the angels of God worship Him.’”*

This is the climax of the *triumphal procession*, our Lord’s victorious parade after His death, burial and resurrection, when He marched through light years of space in the second heaven (the stellar universe). The triumphal procession terminated with the Father’s command to “*Sit at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies a footstool for Thy feet.*” This procession included all the Old Testament saints being transferred from Paradise to the third heaven, **Eph 4:8**, “*There-fore, it [the Old Testament] says [Psa 68:18], ‘When He ascended into heaven [the third heaven], He led a host of captives in a triumphal procession from a state of captivity, and He gave spiritual gifts to men.’”*

Heb 1:7-8,13 *And [speaking] of the angels He says, “Who makes His angels winds, and His ministers a flame of fire.” But of the Son He says, “Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever, and the righteous scepter is the scepter of His kingdom...” But to which of the angels has He ever said, “Sit at my right hand, until I make thine enemies a footstool for thy feet”?*

God the Father never said this to any angelic creature; He only said it to *a member of the human race*, the Lord Jesus Christ. This is significant because it means that although we are now inferior to angels in our human bodies on earth, we will be superior to angels in our resurrection bodies in the future. This was established with our Lord’s session. The most beautiful creature who ever had a body is Satan himself, the devil, Lucifer, the Son of the morning, Heylel, and you will have a far greater body than he or any other angel.

Peter describes the session in **1Pe 3:22**, “*Jesus Christ is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him.*” With the resurrection of Jesus Christ, all angelic creatures, including fallen angels, are subordinated to Him *in His humanity!* In His deity, Jesus Christ is the Creator of

angels, **Psa 148:5**. In His humanity, He was made lower than angels, **Heb 2:7**, but now, in His resurrection, He is higher than angels *in His humanity*. One day, because of positional truth (“in Christ”), we will share that privilege experientially. Being in union with Christ, we are already *positionally* higher than angels; in resurrection bodies, we will be *experientially* and physically higher than angels.

In **Eph 1:22**, “*He [God the Father] has subordinated all [angelic creatures] under His feet. Furthermore, He appointed Him [Jesus Christ] ruler over all things to the church.*” This establishes the link between the two Christocentric dispensations. When our Lord received His third royal title, He did not have a royal family, therefore, the Church-age was inserted into history. The Church-age was a mystery age because we have so much more that has been given to us, more than any Old Testament, Tribulational, or Millennial saint. We have unique privileges that are fantastic and that have never existed before and will never exist again after the Rapture of the Church.

A second Christocentric dispensation had to be instituted to provide a royal family for our Lord’s third royal patent. Furthermore, Israel had rejected Jesus Christ as their Messiah and King. Consequently, the Messianic kingdom is postponed until the Second Advent of Christ. In the meantime, the great power demonstration of the Hypostatic union has been parlayed into the great power demonstration of the Church-age. During the Church-age, there are no Jewish client nations; the next Jewish client nation will not exist until the Second Advent of Christ. We live in the times of the Gentiles, which means only a Gentile nation can be a client nation to God. At the present time, the United States of America is a Gentile client nation to God.

Paul gives a great description of the session, beginning in **Heb 1:1-4**, “*God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, In these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation [image] of His [God the Father’s] nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high; **having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name [onoma, title] than they.**” The phrase “having become” is the Greek word *genomenos*, and it means to become something you were not before. In His **humanity** our Lord was originally made lower than angels (**Heb 2:7**), however, this verse states that in His humanity He became something that He never was before as a member of the human race; He became greater than the angels. In **Heb 1:4**, the humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ did not merely inherit a new name, but a new “*onoma*,” a new **title, authority, fame, and reputation**. And the proof, or “stamp of approval,” of this is the doctrine is found in the phrase “*Sit down at my right hand, until I make thine enemies a footstool for Thy feet.*” The verb for “has inherited” is “*kekleronomeken*” meaning to be an heir, to inherit, and to obtain; the noun form is “*kleronomeo*,” which means one who receives the property of one who died, or *one who inherits a rank, title, and office*. The Lord Jesus Christ has inherited:*

1. A new rank. In His humanity, He is now seated at the right hand of God, the highest place of authority in the universe, **Mat 28:18**, “*And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.’*”

2. A new title. He is now the King of kings and Lord of Lords, **1Ti 6:15; Rev 17:14, 19:16.**
3. A new office. Our Lord is appointed a high priest by God the Father, **Heb 5:4-10, 6:20.**

Rom 8:16-17 *The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit [our human spirit] that we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him.*

Because of our union with the Lord Jesus Christ, who is seated at the right hand of God and victorious in the angelic conflict, we also have inherited a new rank, title, and an office:

1. We have been made kings, **Rev 1:5, 5:10.**
2. We have a new title—we are children of God, His beloved sons, **Eph 1:6, Mat 3:17, 1Jo 3:1**, “*See how great a love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of God; and such we are.*”
3. We have a new office—we are royal priests, **1Pe 2:5,9.**

And what made all of this a reality? The doctrine of the Session.

We now see the following principles in this chapter of Hebrews:

1. When the Lord Jesus Christ sat down at the right hand of God, this revealed that He was greater than angels because He is the heir of all things and the Creator of the universe, **Heb 1:1-2.**
2. He is the expression of the nature of God, the sustainer of the universe He created, and the sacrifice that paid for sin, **Heb 1:3.**
3. He has a better name and nature than angels, **Heb 1:4.**
4. He is worshipped by angels, **Heb 1:6.**
5. He is the Creator and Master of angels, **Heb 1:7.**
6. He has an eternal throne and is anointed with the Holy Spirit, **Heb 1:8-9.**
7. He is unchangeable, **Heb 1:10.**
8. He is seated at God’s right hand, **Heb 1:13.**
9. Because of our union with Him, elect angels serve us, **Heb 1:14.**

This is all the direct result of the doctrine of the Ascension and Session.

For a more detailed study, order tapes IA11-280 to IA11-282.