

Ascension Service in Malang, May 09, 2024 (Thursday Evening)

Peace and grace in the love of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The usefulness of the ascension of Jesus to heaven is as follows:

1. Preparing a place for us in heaven.

John 14:1-2

14:1. *"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me.*

14:2. *"In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.*

2. Jesus will quickly come a second time to lift us up on the glorious clouds.

John 14:3

14:3. *"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.*

We enter the marriage supper of the Lamb of God, the One-Thousand-Year Kingdom of Peace (the upcoming Paradise), and the New Jerusalem.

Jesus makes effort to lift us up physically and spiritually from now on until we fulfill the measurement to be lifted up when Jesus comes a second time.

Revelation 21:15

21:15. *And he who talked with me had a gold reed to measure the city, its gates, and its wall.*

The angel refers to the shepherd. The measuring rod refers to the one of shepherd, namely the shepherding Word which is able to measure and increase the spirituality of the congregation up to fulfilling the measurement, so they are worthy to enter the New Jerusalem.

The measuring rod or the shepherding Word is the true teaching Word which is entrusted by God to a shepherd to be preached to the congregation faithfully, regularly, continually, and repetitively to become the following thing:

1. The spiritual food to grow the spirituality of the congregation up to perfection.

The shepherded shepherd feeds the congregation.

The shepherded sheep eats or enjoys the shepherding Word.

2. The command to lead the sheep is in the two things as follows:

- Leading into the sheepfold.

Ezekiel 20:37-38

20:37. *"I will make you pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant;*

20:38. *"I will purge the rebels from among you, and those who transgress against Me; I will bring them out of the country where they dwell, but they shall not enter the land of Israel. Then you will know that I am the LORD.*

The physical sheepfold is the church in the true organization.

The spiritual sheepfold refers to the Holy Place, namely the perseverance in committing the three kinds of main service to God.

As a result, we are counted. It means that we are remembered, taken care of, and owned by God.

We are separated from the false church that is not shepherded but lives in evil, uncleanness, and rebellion. It is like Jacob who is separated from Esau.

- Leading out of the sheepfold to have fellowship with other sheepfold.

John 10:3-4,16

10:3. *"To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.*

10:4. *"And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.*

10:16. *"And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd."*

We are active in the true fellowship which is based on the true teaching Word. We minister the building of the body of Christ, starting from marriage, shepherding, inter shepherding until the Israelites and the Gentiles become one perfect body of Christ. There is One flock with one Shepherd or one body with one Head.

Jesus ascends to heaven to prepare or build a place for us, namely the New Jerusalem or the heavenly kingdom. So, we must also be active in the building of the body of Christ in the world to prepare a place for Jesus as the Head who will quickly come a second time, so the body or the bride meets the Head or the Bridegroom on the glorious clouds. We enter the marriage supper of the Lamb of God, Paradise, and the New Jerusalem.

The steps of the activity of the measuring rod or the shepherding Word are as follows:

1. The measuring rod whose length is six cubits.

Ezekiel 40:5

40:5. *Now there was a wall all around the outside of the temple. In the man's hand was a measuring rod six cubits long, each being a cubit and a handbreadth; and he measured the width of the wall structure, one rod; and the height, one rod.*

The number six refers to the fleshly man--man was created at the sixth day.

The measuring rod whose length is six cubits means that the shepherding Word is able to purify the fleshly men from the lust of the flesh in the heart as follows:

- The unclean desire that aims at the sins of eating-drinking (smoking, getting drunk, and drugs abuse) and marrying-giving in marriage (fornication with all of its kinds and pornography).
We are purified, so our heart is holy.
- The bitterness, namely hatred up to hatred without a cause.
We are purified, so we have the peaceful heart.
- The wicked desire, namely the love of money, so one becomes greedy and stingy.
Stinginess means that one cannot give for the working of God and others who are in need.
Greediness means that one steals the possession of God and others.
We are purified until we feel more blessed to give than to receive.

2. Revelation 18:2

18:2. *And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird!"*

If the heart is controlled by the evil, uncleanness, and bitterness, one will be used by Satan to be active in the building of Babylon who will be destroyed in an hour.

If the heart is purified, we will be used by God to be active in the building of the perfect body of Christ.

3. A reed like a measuring rod.

Revelation 11:1

11:1. *Then I was given a reed like a measuring rod. And the angel stood, saying, "Rise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there."*

The usefulness is as follows:

- Stabilizing the faith as well as growing the spirituality to maturity, so we do not doubt. We are not driven and tossed by the winds as follows:
 - a. The false teaching, gossip, *et cetera*.
We do not doubt, so we keep holding fast the true teaching Word.
 - b. The impossible temptation. We do not doubt, so we keep trusting and hoping God.

- Increasing our prayer to fulfill the measurement, namely the flesh does not speak anymore.
The hardest flesh is disobedience and unbelief.

John 1:29

1:29. The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

The example is John the Baptist. He was the reed that stands upright. He really knew and trusted Jesus. And it was recognized by Jesus.

Matthew 11:7-9

11:7. As they departed, Jesus began to say to the multitudes concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind?"

11:8. "But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Indeed, those who wear soft clothing are in kings' houses.

11:9. "But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet.

But, John the Baptist became doubtful in temptation or jail. He was like the bruised reed and the smoking flax.

Matthew 11:2-6

11:2. And when John had heard in prison about the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples

11:3. and said to Him, "Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?"

11:4. Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and tell John the things which you hear and see:

11:5. "The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them.

11:6. "And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me."

But, God helped through the Word which was seen and heard or the powerful shepherding Word, so the bruised reed could stand upright again and the smoking flax could be burning again.

Luke 2:20

2:20. Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them.

The shepherding Word is not idle words but something that can be seen to become the real form when we practice it. The Word is able to take away the physical and spiritual impossibilities. The Word is able to change our life, so we become obedient until the flesh does not speak anymore.

John the Baptist was willingly beheaded to let Jesus work in the building of the body of Christ. And he was sure that he would be risen when Jesus came a second time.

4. A gold reed.

Revelation 21:15

21:15. And he who talked with me had a gold reed to measure the city, its gates, and its wall.

It means that the shepherding Word is able to renew the fleshly men to the spiritual ones who are perfect like Jesus. It is the biggest spiritual miracle.

1 Peter 5:2-3

5:2. Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly;

5:3. nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock;

The facts of the spiritual man are as follows:

- Willingly ministering. It means ministering with joy, not of necessity, and not being forced or forcing.
- Not looking for the physical advantage, but being in dedication even sacrificing every thing for God.
- Not commanding but becoming an example in the five things.

1 Timothy 4:12

4:12. *Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct⁽¹⁾, in love⁽²⁾, in spirit⁽³⁾, in faith⁽⁴⁾, in purity⁽⁵⁾.*

- Obeying God until the flesh does not speak anymore.

1 Peter 5:5-6

5:5. *Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble."*

5:6. *Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time,*

We confess all of our weakness and infirmity, so God pours out Holy Spirit.

The usefulness of Holy Spirit is as follows:

- Holy Spirit is able to make us obtain favor before God.

Genesis 1:2

1:2. *The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.*

We live in darkness. We are without form of righteousness. We are mix in the sin. Consequently, we are void, dry, and suffering.

We are changed to become honest. We become the house of prayer, so we experience the heavenly satisfaction, sweetness, and bliss.

- Holy Spirit is able to help us physically. He makes all thing become beautiful and successful in His time. The example is Esther. She was an orphan. It refers to one who is weak, powerless, and without any hope. But she could become obedient, so she received the gold reed.

Holy Spirit is able to finish all of impossible problems.

- Holy Spirit is able to make us minister to God faithfully and fervently until the finish line.

Romans 12:11

12:11. *not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord;*

- Holy Spirit changes us up to perfection.

Titus 3:5

3:5. *not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit,*

We fulfill the measurement to enter the marriage supper of the Lamb of God, Paradise, and the New Jerusalem.

God blesses us.