

Ascension Service in Malang, May 13, 2021 (Thursday Evening)

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

Revelation 13:3-4

13:3. *And I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marveled and followed the beast.*

13:4. *So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?"*

The sign of the Antichrist is that one of his heads was as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. It means being neither dead nor raised, so he cannot be glorified and lifted up to the Heaven. He cannot lift us up to the Heaven but destroying us with him.

The sign of Jesus Christ is that He dies on the cross, rises, and ascends to the Heaven to sit at the right hand of the Father God, so He can lift us up to the Heaven with Him forever.

We commemorate Jesus' ascension to the Heaven. It means as follows:

- We experience the power or usefulness of Jesus' ascension to the Heaven for now on.
- It continues until we are lifted up to the Heaven with Him when He comes a second time on the glorious clouds.

How can we receive the power or usefulness from now on until we are lifted up? We must receive the sign of Jesus, namely dying to sins and living with Jesus. We live for a new life, so we can be glorified with Jesus. It is the same as experiencing the renewal of life from fleshly men to spiritual ones like Jesus.

What must be renewed? It is linked with Jesus' ascension to the Heaven, namely the renewal of heart.

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.*

The old heart which is troubled, worried, and uneasy is changed to become the one which is holy and peaceful.

The heart which is holy and peaceful is the strong base to experience the power of Jesus' ascension to the Heaven, and lift us up to the Heaven when Jesus comes a second time.

The usefulness of Jesus' ascension to the Heaven is as follows:

1. [John 14:1-2] Jesus ascends to the Heaven **to prepare a place for us**.
Our duty in the world is preparing a place for Jesus.

Matthew 8:20

8:20. *And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head."*

It means that we must work in the ministry of the building of the body of Christ to place Jesus as the Head.

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."*

'where I am, there you may be also' means that the Head and body are not separated forever.

If we do not work in the ministry of the building of the body of Christ, we will become the place of foxes (evil spirit) and birds (unclean spirit), so we are built to become Babylon.

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!"*

The requirements of ministering in the building of the body of Christ are as follows:

- The pure heart, namely not being troubled.

We must be shepherded well and correctly to get the pure heart.

Acts 20:28,32-33

20:28. *"Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.*

20:32. *"So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.*

20:33. *"I have coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel.*

To be shepherded well and correctly, we must heed the true vine, namely the shepherding Word or the one of Jesus' grace, and the true sheepfold, namely the perseverance in committing the three kinds of main service to God.

We must eat the shepherding Word, namely hearing and obeying it, so we experience the purification and the renewal of heart from unclean desire, namely the sins of eating-drinking and marrying-giving in marriage, and evil desire, namely the will or the love of money that makes the son of God greedy and stingy.

Acts 20:35

20:35. *"I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"*

The fact of being purified from evil desire is feeling more blessed to give than to receive. It encourages us to return God's and others, and give to the work of God and to others who are in need until we can surrender all of our life to God. It means that we live in holiness. We become God's.

If we have been holy, we will be lifted up to become the priests and kings.

Exodus 29:1

29:1. *"And this is what you shall do to them to hallow them for ministering to Me as priests: Take one young bull and two rams without blemish,*

The priest and king are the same as the living stones who are used in the building of the body of Christ.

1 Peter 2:5

2:5. *you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.*

The living stones mean that we live from God's mercy, so we can live anywhere, anytime, and in any circumstances.

The priest is one who is holy and has equipment from God.

Ephesians 4:11-12

4:11. *And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,*

4:12. *for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,*

The priest is one who ministers to God according to the ministry that God gives to him, so he is used in the ministry of the building of the perfect body of Christ.

- Enduring in facing the fire of temptation and sins up to the peak.

1 Corinthians 3:11-15

3:11. *For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.*

3:12. *Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw,*

3:13. *each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is.*

3:14. *If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward.*

3:15. *If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.*

There are two bases of the building of the body of Christ as follows:

- a. The building of wood, hay, and straw.

It means being without purification and true ordination, but only showing, looking for, and prioritizing the physical or worldly thing.

Consequently, one will be burnt by the fire of temptation, namely being disappointed and desperate as well

as leaving the ministry, denying Jesus, and falling into sins up to the peak.

- b. The building of gold, silver, and precious stones.
It means the ministry that prioritizes the spiritual thing.
Silver refers to the redemption by the blood or living in righteousness.
Gold refers to the holiness of Holy Spirit or living in holiness.
Precious stones refer to the glory or perfection.

The result is that the living stones become the precious stones.

Revelation 21:19

21:19. The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with all kinds of precious stones: the first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald,

- 2. Jesus ascends to the Heaven to become the High Priest who sits at the right hand of the Father God **to do the ministry of reconciliation with His own blood.**

Hebrews 4:14

4:14. Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.

Hebrews 2:17

2:17. Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.

Why does Jesus have to do the ministry of reconciliation?

- The sin separates us with others and God, so we do not experience peace but being troubled. If it continues, we will be separated up to perdition forever.
- All things in the world such as intelligence and riches cannot finish the sin but triggering the sin, and all men have sinned.
That is why Jesus as the only innocent man must come to the world. He dies on the cross, rises, and ascends to the Heaven to become the High Priest to do the ministry of reconciliation for our sins.

1 John 1:7,9

1:7. But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

1:9. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

The facts found in experiencing the ministry of reconciliation by Jesus, the High Priest are as follows:

- We are honest o confess our sins to God and others. We are also willing to forgive others' sin.
As a result, the blood of Jesus forgives all of our sins up to there is no remnant of our sin as if we had never sinned.
- The blood of Jesus forgives all of our sins up to there is no remnant of our sin as if we had never sinned and others had never sinned to us.
Purifying us is the same as pulling out the roots of sin, so it does not grow anymore but dies, and we can live in righteousness.

The results are as follows:

- **1 Kings 6:7**

6:7. And the temple, when it was being built, was built with stone finished at the quarry, so that no hammer or chisel or any iron tool was heard in the temple while it was being built.

We experience peace, so we are used in the building of the perfect body of Christ.

- **Acts 9:31**

9:31. Then the churches throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and were edified. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, they were multiplied.

Our ministry is blessed by God, so the quantity and quality increase as well as the blessings.

○ **Hebrews 2:18**

2:18. For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.

Hebrews 4:16

4:16. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

We experience the infinite helping power of the High Priest. We receive God's help in time of need, so all problems are finished.

3. Jesus ascends to the Heaven **to come a second time and lift us up on the glorious clouds up to the Heaven, the place where He is.**

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.

Acts 1:9-11

1:9. Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.

1:10. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel,

1:11. who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven."

The church of the first rain saw Jesus who ascended to the Heaven.

The church of the last rain sees Jesus who comes a second time on the glorious clouds face to face. We enter the marriage supper of the Lamb of God and the One-Thousand-Year Kingdom of Peace (the upcoming Paradise). We are lifted up to the Heaven with Him up to the New Jerusalem.

Hebrews 12:14

12:14. Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord:

We must have pure and peaceful heart to see God.

Seeing God is the same as worshipping Him now until we see Him face to face on the glorious clouds.

If we worship God delightfully, we will not see other things that harm us and make us unable to be lifted to the Heaven.

The other things that make us go down instead of going up are as follows:

○ The root of bitterness.

Hebrews 12:15

12:15. looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled

If we have pure and peaceful heart, we will not see others' mistakes that make us bitter.

○ One morsel of food or the necessities of life.

Hebrews 12:16-17

12:16. lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright.

12:17 For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears.

If we have pure and peaceful heart, we will not see the worldly thing that often makes us sacrifice the birthright or the spiritual thing until we weep.

○ The waves.

Matthew 14:29-30

14:29. So He said, "Come." And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus.

14:30. *But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!"*

If we have pure and peaceful heart, we will not see the waves that doubt and drown us.

If we have peaceful heart, we will be able to see God. We become strong and of good courage. We do not feel anything that the flesh feels but only the love of God, so we just trust and hope God's mercy and kindness.

The results are as follows:

- David faced Goliath.

1 Samuel 17:11,36-37

17:11. *When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and greatly afraid.*

17:36. *"Your servant has killed both lion and bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, seeing he has defied the armies of the living God."*

17:37. *Moreover David said, "The LORD, who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine." And Saul said to David, "Go, and the LORD be with you!"*

David was strong and of good courage to face Goliath. He did not rely on anything in the world but just trusting and hoping God's mercy and kindness, so Goliath was defeated.

It means that God's merciful and kind hands are able to take care of us miraculously and abundantly although we are powerless in the middle of difficulties of the world until we are evacuated to the wilderness when the Antichrist reigns over the world for three and a half years. We are taken care by the Word and Holy Communion.

- David faced Saul.

1 Samuel 24:4-7

24:4. *So he came to the sheepfolds by the road, where there was a cave; and Saul went in to attend to his needs. (David and his men were staying in the recesses of the cave.)*

24:5. *Then the men of David said to him, "This is the day of which the LORD said to you, 'Behold, I will deliver your enemy into your hand, that you may do to him as it seems good to you.'" And David arose and secretly cut off a corner of Saul's robe.*

24:6. *Now it happened afterward that David's heart troubled him because he had cut Saul's robe.*

24:7. *And he said to his men, "The LORD forbid that I should do this thing to my master, the LORD'S anointed, to stretch out my hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the LORD."*

David was strong and of good courage to face Saul. David did not sin and return evil for evil but returning good for evil, so the anointing of Holy Spirit moved from Saul to him.

David became a worthy life before God. He was appointed to become the king.

God's merciful hand is able to give successful and beautiful future.

- David faced Nathan.

2 Samuel 12:12-13

12:12. *'For you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, before the sun.'*

12:13. *So David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." And Nathan said to David, "The LORD also has put away your sin; you shall not die.*

David was strong and of good courage when he faced Nathan who rebuked him with the true teaching Word that was sharper than any two-edged sword.

David realized, regretted, and confessed his sins, so he was forgiven by God.

As a result, God's merciful hands were able to restore and lift David from the falling with Bathsheba. God restored, justified, and blessed David until he could greet Jesus' first coming--David is in the genealogy of Jesus Christ.

Peter doubted to the true teaching Word.

God's merciful hands lifted him up from drowning. He was restored until he willingly died for Jesus.

Peter is used by God in the revival of the building of the body of Christ until his name is written in the New Jerusalem.

Revelation 21:14

21:14. *Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the*

Lamb.

Commemorating Jesus' ascension, we will be lifted up no matter our weakness, falling, failure, and drowning. We are not only lifted up in the world but also being lifted up to the Heaven like Peter when Jesus comes a second time.

God blesses us.