

Acts 1:6-26

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[0 : 00] I just want to take a moment. You can start turning to Acts chapter 1, by the way. We're going to meet there in a moment. I just want to say, you know, this is a weird time, if you haven't noticed, right?

And so for those who are here in this room and, you know, you've got children with you, we are so glad that you're here and we're so glad that your children are here.

Like learning the habits of faith and as much as they're able to participate in worship together and as much as they're able to understand the word. And so like if there's there's literally nowhere in the hotel for us to like, you know, normally we serve children with, you know, lessons that are accommodated to their age and in places that are a little they can be a little more free to express themselves.

But right now the hotel doesn't allow that for us. And so we just want to say welcome to you and your children. And like we're everybody here is extending grace to everybody here. And so we're all doing the best we can in that.

And and and also right now, because things are so weird in this world, as COVID is spiking around our country and just as the Thanksgiving holiday, lots of people around the nation were traveling and more and more spread.

[1 : 24] We we ask that, you know, we not grow weary in doing good in wearing masks, the simple thing, wearing masks right throughout this. And that's why I'm still in solidarity here. I'm going to take this off to preach a whole sermon.

But I like let's not grow weary in that, even though it's difficult, even though it's, you know, sweaty and and uncomfortable sometimes, especially in singing.

But friends, let's care for one another here in this room and everyone that these people around us, our church family interacts with. So let's let's keep up the good work. And with that, let's go to Acts chapter one.

Acts chapter one, beginning in verse six.

So when they had come together, they asked him, Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?

[2 : 28] He said to them, it is not for you to know the times or seasons that the father is fixed by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth.

And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up and a cloud took him out of their sight. And while they were gazing into heaven, as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes and said, men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven?

This Jesus who was taken up from you into heaven will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven. Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away.

And when they had entered, they went up to the upper room where they were staying, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James, the son of Alphaeus and Simon, the zealot and Judas, the son of James.

All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer together with the women and Mary, the mother of Jesus and his brothers. In those days, Peter stood up among the brothers.

[3 : 52] The company of persons was about 120 and said, brothers, the scripture has been fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke beforehand by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus.

For he was numbered among us and was allotted his share in this ministry. Now this man acquired a field with the reward of his wickedness and falling headlong, he burst open in the middle and all his bowels gushed out.

And it became known to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem so that the field was called in their own language, Al-Kaldemah, that is, field of blood. For it is written in the book of Psalms, may his camp become desolate and let there be no one to dwell in it and let another take his office.

So, one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us. One of these men must become with us a witness to his resurrection. And they put forward two, Joseph, called Barsabbas, who was also called Justice, and Matthias.

[5 : 07] And they prayed and said, you, Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which one of these two you have chosen to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place.

And they cast lots for them, and a lot fell on Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles. This is God's word. Let's pray. Lord, will you, as Peter said, by the power of your spirit through your word, cause us to see your son and rejoice in him and honor him and be transformed? By beholding him in your word. We pray this in Christ's name. Amen. Today's passage comes in roughly two sections, right?

First, the Lord commissions his apostles and ascends to heaven. And secondly, the apostles, waiting in Jerusalem, as they were commanded, replaced Judas, restoring their number to twelve. And in honor of 2020 being a topsy-turvy year, I think we'll start at the second scene and work our way back to the first. What's going on here with this replacement of Judas?

[6 : 43] It's not actually immediately apparent to us. Luke doesn't really tell us how Peter knew to do this or how he chose to cite those passages.

In fact, he doesn't even tell us if this was the right thing for them to do. There's no commentary about it. Like, he doesn't say, and that was great, or anything along those lines.

And some people actually read this as if, you know, when Paul is appointed an apostle, that that's actually a rejection of Matthias. That these were, you know, foolhardy in going forward in that. I don't think it was a mistake for the apostles to look for Judas' replacement.

I think what's going on here is this. There is an undercurrent. We didn't highlight it too, too much in the book of Matthew. But the Gospels show that there is a subtle theme where, in his earthly ministry, Jesus was restoring, almost reconstituting Israel.

Just as Israel became a nation through a journey and salvation, a tremendous escape in Egypt, so too did the Holy Family escape and find refuge in Egypt.

[7 : 54] Jesus aligns himself with repentant Israel as he is baptized along those who went to John, the final prophet of the Old Covenant, and received his baptism of repentance.

Jesus. And Jesus lives as the one true Israel. He is the one who fully and truly fulfills the law, the only one. He alone conquers the enemy's temptations.

And not only does he fully and perfectly follow the law, he perfectly teaches it, doesn't he? He clarifies the meaning of the scriptures and the commandments and explains their purpose, their very spirit.

He also confronts those who would add. The Pharisees were adding their own traditions to God's word. And he confronted them and stripped away what they had added on them.

A corrupt edifice. And then he calls to himself 12 representatives, mirroring the 12 tribes of Israel. And as we read in Matthew chapter 19, he has a future purpose for the 12.

[9 : 09] And in Matthew chapter 19, we read Peter said in reply, see, we have left everything and followed you. What then will we have? Jesus said to them, truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of Man will sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on 12 thrones, judging the 12 tribes of Israel.

And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands for my sake will receive a hundredfold and will inherit eternal life.

And so the apostles understood that the Lord was restoring, reconstituting Israel and that he had a particular office for them with respect to the nation. So when Paul is called to apostleship in Acts chapter 9, specifically to ministry to the Gentiles, to the other nations, beyond Israel's supporters, it's not a rejection or renunciation of Matthias or what the apostles are doing here, but an expansion

of their very gospel ministry to the ends of the earth.

So that likely what we're seeing here is that the restoration and fulfillment of their office as the reconstituted, renewed Israel.

The apostles know that the apostles know that the apostles have a plan for the 12 in service, well, to the 12 tribes of Israel, 12 tribes of Jacob. And they're remaining faithful to that by choosing a comparable replacement with someone with the same qualifications, so to speak, as Judas.

[10:48] Now, that's the what. That's what's going on. The question really is why? Why does Luke want us to know this? I think that that has everything to do with the first part of today's passage.

The apostles' commission on the Lord's ascension and especially the Lord's ascension. Right? That is the centerpiece of this passage, and in fact, it is the bedrock of the entire book of Acts.

Everything depends on this. And that, too, probably isn't immediately apparent to us. But let's consider it.

First of all, it's an amazing image, right? Jesus ascending to the heavens. Jesus, picture yourself standing on a hilltop just to the east of Jerusalem.

And as the man that you have followed for three years, who has bested the religious leaders, bested Rome, bested death, tells you that you will be clothed with power and then rises into the air, ascends into the sky, and is enveloped into the clouds.

[12:14] And then, too, we assume these are angels, right? Tell you, oh, he's coming back. So get busy.

Right? What an amazing moment. But is it only that? Is it only an impressive spectacle?

I think there's more to it than simply it looks cool. This should remind us of another spectacle, so to speak, in Christ's ministry.

In June of 2019, long before any of us had heard of COVID, right? Shoreline looked at Matthew chapter 14, the passage that we heard read earlier today.

Where Jesus walked out onto the Sea of Galilee to his disciples as the wind and the waves buffeted their little boat. And what did we say that day?

[13:19] Right? Because that was a spectacle, too. But Jesus' miracles are not simply spectacles. They're not just flashy demonstrations of raw power.

Right? They're always productive. By and large, almost all of his miracles came in the form of healings and feeding and resurrection.

Right? They're always productive. They're productive acts of love and redemption. They're not showmanship.

He didn't go around showing off his power like some magician. But walking on the water sure looks like that, right?

Ascending into the sky looks like that, right? Are they just cool displays? No. Jesus didn't do this simply to impress the disciples.

[14:26] Right? It's not boast and bravado. He's still doing something productive. But specifically, he is communicating. In the ancient world, just to remind ourselves of what we saw in that first sort of spectacle as he walked on the waves.

Right? In the ancient world where the sea was the place of danger. That was chaos. That was undefined. That was the unknown. That was the place of danger. In the midst of that, there is this line of reasoning in the scriptures where God is the one who treads the seas.

God himself makes this path on the waters. It's this rich biblical imagery. It begins at the outset of creation where in the second verse of the Bible, God the Holy Spirit was hovering over the face of the waters of the primordial ocean.

Job calls the Lord the one who alone stretched out the heavens and trampled the waves of the sea. Psalm 77 reads, Your way was through the sea.

Your path through the great waters. Isaiah called the Lord the one who makes a way in the sea. A path in the mighty waters.

[15:44] And so if the sea represents the untamable chaos, it's the almighty who subdues and makes a way for himself a path on the surface of the waters.

And that's something that the scriptures say of God and God alone. And so it was really significant then when Jesus does just that.

Right? Stormy waters are set against God's people, his disciples in the boat. And trampling the waves, he makes a way for himself in the sea, a path in the mighty waters.

And there comes Jesus to his disciples. Right? This isn't just a cool trick that he walked on the water. It's the realization of a hope.

The culmination of a biblical theme. God Almighty striding over the tumultuous waters isn't just figurative language anymore. Here he is. Trampling down the waves.

[16:49] Coming for his people. So when Jesus walks in the water, it's not just bravado. It's not just flash. It's a declaration.

God has come for you. God has come to you. His miracles weren't just tricks. Paraloos tricks.

Right? Most of them were productive. In the sense that they healed and helped. And a few of the miracles, the ones that look like displays of power, they're actually messages.

They're communication to us. And here, as he ascends into the sky, what looks like flash is actually another moment of a message where he communicates to his people.

Right? When he ascends to heaven, we're supposed to think about Jesus in heaven. And what's he doing there? The scriptures tell us quite a lot, actually.

[17:54] In John chapter 14, he told the disciples that he was going to prepare a place for them. Right?

Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God. Believe also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms. For not so would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?

And if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself that where I am, you may also be. That's one thing he's doing in heaven.

Another thing he's doing in heaven is standing before the throne as our high priest. Right? The book of Hebrews tells us that our ascended Lord presently, this moment, stands and intercedes before the Father as our great high priest.

Not that he makes repeated sacrifices for sins, but his once for all sacrifice testifies pardon to his people. Forever.

[18:58] If you are found in Christ, you are guiltless and free because your high priest stands this moment in heaven. Declaring the debt is paid.

Your sins are in them. Until the end of time. Right? That's another facet of his ascension, his entrance to heaven. And there are many others, right?

There are other aspects of his ascension that scriptures point to, like his continuing prophetic ministry. But Luke, I want to draw us to Luke's concerns as he writes the book of Acts to us.

There are two really big themes that we're going to dive into here. That he is really interested in communicating to us. The book of Acts.

The book of Acts and, friends, the life of the church to this day are built on still two further aspects of his ascension. First, this is the Son of Man ascending to his throne.

[20:04] Where he rules and reigns. Jesus is Lord today. That theme is going to saturate the book of Acts.

Because it will not matter what the rulers, the teachers, what the cultural forces, what the forces of nature bring against the church.

Jesus is Lord this day and every day. And so, his will will be done. Right? He doesn't question it.

He says, you will be my witnesses. And he says, I will build my church. And the second theme is the one that Jesus actually says here in this passage, verse 8, you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you.

So, he's going to heaven in order to send the Spirit to his people in a unique way. And I bet you can see how those are related.

[21:07] Right? His power and authority seated on the throne related to the power that he will bestow upon his people in the Spirit. We're going to focus more today on him being seated as Lord, which is one of the main themes of Acts.

Because next week, that second theme about the power of the Holy Spirit coming to his people, that's what Acts chapter 2 is all about. And so, today is just foreshadowing. But his ascension here isn't just this cool trick where he flies into the sky.

It is his coronation. His ascent to the throne. And it installs him as king of kings above all else.

Right? Here's how the Apostle Paul put it in Ephesians chapter 1. He said that the Father seated him, that is Christ, at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion and above every name that is named.

Not only in this age, but also in the one to come. And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church. Jesus ascended and seated on the throne is what ties this whole passage together.

[22 : 38] Right? It's the ground for the whole book of Acts. Right? It's the reason for the mission. Right? We don't preach Christ is Lord unless he actually is Lord. And here he is now seated on his throne.

Lord of law. And it's the reason to continue, like the second part of today's passage, it's the reason to even continue with the 12. Why replace Judas at all if he's not Lord?

You only replace his followers if he's still there to follow. And in fact, he is there to follow, seated on the throne. And it is the reason that the Spirit is coming.

He goes there to send the Spirit to his people. And it is the reason and the power that the mission will succeed. None of the book of Acts happens without Christ seated on the throne.

So let's linger on that just a moment and consider what it means for us that Jesus, this moment, is seated on the throne of heaven.

[23 : 49] But what that means for you and what that means for me. If Jesus is seated on the throne of heaven, it means that his story is the overarching theme, the overarching story of the whole world.

No matter what I think is the biggest issue, the biggest thing today is, no matter what I think, and no matter what everyone in the world thinks, is the biggest issue of the day, the story of his kingdom is the thing that matters most, today and forever.

Everything else is petty squabbles. Children building sandcastles on the beach.

He sets the priorities. The church rallies to his kingdom, his cause, and to no other. And it is also the source of our strength.

Right? He has promised what? Verse 8, to empower his mission. Not by our strength that the kingdom of Christ advances. I have no strength, no power to make that happen.

[25 : 18] And neither do you. No one does. Except Christ himself. Right? And so Christianity, it never grows by the sword, or by manipulation, or by political forces.

only by the clear proclamation of the good news of Jesus, and then by the power of God to change people's hearts. That's how Christianity explodes into the world.

But more than that, friends, the fact that Jesus Christ is seated on the throne this moment, it is so wonderful, especially, like, this has been so wonderful for me this week to be preparing this passage, because I need Jesus seated on the throne right now.

I need that. Because it is for our comfort and our joy. When my world feels out of control, it is really good to know that it is not out of his control.

In the book of Acts, when suffering comes to the church, and it does, it's not because he's not powerful, but because he sovereignly chooses to form his people and to spread his gospel and to extend his grace and his mercy-filled kingdom through struggle and difficulty.

[26 : 54] it's his choice. I don't need to tell you about how difficult this year has been. Right? And frankly, I am worn out.

I don't say that to garner your pity, but to commiserate. I don't know anybody who's not weary. and everyone is experiencing it in very different ways.

Today, because of COVID, the Denver Broncos are going to play a football game without a quarterback. I'm not kidding you. I don't want to see any of you looking it up on your phones right now.

But also, we are separated and that hurts one from the other.

We're all experiencing that separation differently. Right? Some are experiencing cabin fever at the same moment that others are facing aching isolation.

[28 : 01] parents are bone tired. Still others feel the weight of the concern of major health issues.

Others are disrupted in their careers and in a million other ways. And this year has brought circumstances into many of our lives that are causing us to make difficult decisions, often without complete information, and the weight of those deliberations and the consequences to come from them is heavy.

It's heavy on us all. 2020, for many of us, has broken the illusion of self-sufficiency.

And here's what this passage says to that as Jesus rises to heaven's throne. it doesn't depend on me and my strength or yours.

It doesn't fall on my shoulders or yours. Friends, I need Christ seated on the throne so that I can endure, so that I can have hope, so that I don't go mad with worry.

[29 : 31] But it goes even further than that. It's not just, don't worry, he's in charge. It's pretty flippant. In the midst of that message, his ascension fuels our joy because we have seen who he is. his victory and his ascension to the throne is a victory unlike any other. So you're a fan of football, right?

Your team wins the championship. You cheer alongside them. You feel great, right, about that.

You've been on a journey with them. It's your victory, too. But it's pretty temporary, right?

In free agency, all the stars leave for better contracts. The records go back to 0-0 next fall. Same thing with your political candidates, too, right?

Your candidate wins. Excellent. You feel great. You're like, this is, the world, we're moving forward in the right way. But, you know, the midterm election rolls around and gridlock sets in as incumbents.

[30 : 47] It's never permanent. And it was never really my victory anyway, right? The football team that I follow, I don't normally make sports metaphor, I don't know.

Sorry, guys. The football team that I follow, we're just going down this road. The football team that I follow, they've won a bunch of championships in the last 20 years here.

And I've watched all of them. But not a single member of the team knows that I exist. Right? I don't have a championship rank. And the politician, no matter how much you support them and, you know, whatever, like, the only place that you feature, that I feature, in their daily life, is on a bar graph for their re-election campaign.

right? But, every day, every single day, on a pedestal higher than Super Bowl champion, than 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, my king sits on a throne.

The absolute victory. glory. Jesus is Lord today. And he knows my name.

[32 : 08] And he knows your name. Not as a fan, not as a constituent. What do we sing? I love that hymn. My name is graven on his hands.

My name is written on his heart. The king of the universe knows you.

Personally. And, friends, his victory, that victory that's greater than any earthly victory, he shares it, invites us in, involves his people.

Ephesians chapter 2. God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ.

By grace, you have been saved. And get this. And raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

[33 : 27] So that in the coming ages, he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness towards us in Christ Jesus. We share, verse 6 there, we share in his victory.

Unlike any other victory this world knows, right? The Father granted to the Son to have life in himself, and he grants everlasting life to all his people.

And he welcomes us into his home. Ephesians 2 says that we will one day reign with Christ. We don't even understand what that means yet.

It's so great. And he even rejoices to adopt us. To make us his very family.

Right? The president you voted for, they adopt you? make it part of their family? No. And the victory that he wins, it's cosmic.

[34 : 33] Each day that we can say, Jesus is Lord today, which is every day, that's a bigger day than Super Bowl Sunday, than the election, than your company going public, than your wedding, or anything else we would call a win in this life.

Every day that we can say, the Lord Jesus reigns, that's a good day. And friends, that is every day. And I hope that you are seeing that he is a good king.

Right? Having someone in absolute authority reigning over the world could actually be a terrible thing. right? If he's a tyrant, or if he's disinterested, or if he is self-interested, right?

For him to be seated in ultimate power in those scenarios would be a tragedy. It would be better to have no one on the throne than to have a tyrant on the throne.

The king who sits on heaven's throne, who we see in Acts chapter 1 ascend to the throne, what has he just done? The king who sits on heaven's throne was first crowned with thorns for you.

[36 : 01] Before he ascended to heaven, he was raised up on a cross for you. Before he took his seat at the father's right hand, he was laid to rest in a tomb.

for you. All for justice, all for mercy, all for love.

He has shown, he has proven that he is good, that he is gracious, that his rule and reign are right and righteous.

This is the bedrock of our peace. Not only is he there in the seat of all authority, but he is so, he has proved himself so, so good.

So yes, friends, it is good that Jesus sits in glory over all. And so to the only wise king, the defender of the weak, the conqueror of death, we sing glory.

[37 : 21] And it is because Christ is ascended, because he's seated on heaven's throne, ruling and reigning, that we become missionaries, witnesses, as he says here.

And we pray. Those are the two things that we see for the apostles, right? Mission and prayer. In this moment of pandemic and quarantine, I think our natural mindset is just hunker down and let it blow over, right?

Weather the storm. Hang on until it passes. Hunker down, wait for a vaccine. Put everything we can on pause.

Wait for a return to normalcy. That's when we'll get back to ministry. No. No. Certainly we've changed the way that things look, but the book of Acts, as we're going to see, is a testimony to the advance of the gospel through incredible hardship.

And so similarly, if Christ reigns, if he truly reigns, it's not our abilities that sustain the church. It's not our abilities that extend the borders of his kingdom.

[38 : 39] It's not my eloquence that makes the word of God powerful or the gospel effective. Jesus said that he would make his throne and send forth, or go to his throne and send forth the power, the power of his Holy Spirit.

And so, friends, are we in a difficult spot? Yeah. Yeah, we really are. This is a really difficult year for so many. But the mission doesn't stop. The book of Acts is a chronicle of the gospel advancing in difficult spaces because Jesus is Lord.

He has ascended to his throne. So, if you're imprisoned, chapter 5, that's a great place to pray and sing hymns and share the gospel. And if Jesus is Lord and the city riots and casts you out, right, that's a great time to go preach the gospel in the next town.

And if Jesus is Lord and you're stoned and left for dead, as Paul is, yeah, get back up and preach the gospel some more. We, today, in the middle of a pandemic, can add to that list.

Right? Is there a pandemic? You can still be a witness because Jesus is Lord today. And it's not my strength, but he is. And that's why, you know, here at Shoreline, throughout the pandemic, we've been, you know, equipping you with evangelistic messages you can share on social media.

[40 : 09] We've given you guys a COVID-specific conversation guide to bring up spiritual conversations. I asked you to invite non-Christian friends that you know to a virtual Christianity Explored course, which you'll hear more about in the next couple weeks as we recount how the Lord worked through that.

And we will continue as a church to encourage you to be a witness because Jesus is Lord today and tomorrow and every day. And we don't need to be intimidated by the mission or by the circumstance in which we are carrying it out today, masked as we are.

Right? We don't need to be impressive because Jesus is. We're not offering people ourselves.

We're offering them the king of the universe. We don't need to be strong because he is.

We don't need to have it all together. We just need to have Christ, which we do this day and every day, which is why, verse 14, what do the 120 followers of Christ do?

They pray. Verse 14, all these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer.

[41 : 42] Friends, prayer is what happens when you believe Jesus is seated on the throne. First, just because you believe he's there.

And secondly, you believe that it's the Jesus who said, I am gentle and lowly. We'll hear your prayers. And prayer is what happens when you believe that Jesus is seated on the throne because you believe it's worthwhile praying to him that he is actually on heaven's throne and has the ability to do and to act and to work in this world.

First, what happens when you believe Jesus is seated on the throne because it's the same Jesus who wore a crown of thorns and allowed Roman soldiers to nail him to a cross for you?

To die in your place and take your sins. If you believe that that Jesus, the Jesus who is that much for you, sits on heaven's throne, you know he loves you.

And so you'll pray. And guess what, friends? The ascension tells us Jesus is Lord today.
[43 : 14] So let's pray. Our great God and Father, we thank you that you sent your son for us and that he ascended for us so that seated on heaven's throne.

He might be our joy and our peace and our strength. Lord, will you make his mission the burning passion of our hearts?

And will the knowledge, Lord, the knowledge that someone who loves us so much to the point of death, rules and reigns, excite us to mission, excite us to prayer, Lord, will you make us a prayer for people simply because we know who sits on the throne?

Will you do that in us? And Father, may we find our joy in him. That is, Lord, our worship.

May we exalt the name of Jesus because we see how good he is and how great he is. We pray these things all in the name of our ascended Lord Jesus.

[45 : 02] Amen. We're going to share in a time of communion today. This is a remembrance of what the Lord has done for his people.

It's the testimony that the one who sits on the throne, who has ascended there today in today's passage, gave his body and his blood. And so he is a good king. For all who have trusted in Christ and repented of their sins and received the mercy that he bought for them on the cross.

This is a remembrance for you to bolster your faith that the king who sits on the throne loves you, is for you. And the thing that I want to point out in as we consider these elements today, wrapped up as they are for COVID, is one of the things that I didn't have time to really draw out in the passage today, Acts 1.11.

The angels say, men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus who was taken up from you into heaven will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.

He will come. Which is exactly what Jesus had been talking about when he instituted the Lord's Supper.

[46 : 49] Matthew chapter 26, I tell you, I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

He's coming for us. He didn't go there to stay there forever. There is coming a day when the king will return to his people.

And that's why the Apostle Paul said as he considered the elements in 1 Corinthians chapter 11, said, for as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

This great king of ours is coming again. And this is the testimony that he has left with us that he will do it. And so friends, I'm just going to give us a moment to reflect on what he has done and the fact that he is ascended, but that he is coming again for his people.

And then we'll celebrate this meal together. So just take one moment to consider that your king, this king, this great and wonderful king is coming again for you.

[48 : 14] Amen. Amen. Amen.

Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread and after blessing it, broke it, gave it to the disciples and said, take, eat, this is my body.

And he took a cup and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them saying, drink of it, all of you. For this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. Let's remember him to God. And he concluded, I will not drink again of the fruit of this vine until that day when I drink it new with you.

in my father's kingdom. Friends, let's pray. Our good father in heaven, we thank you so much for this testimony of our faith.

[51 : 12] That he who has done all these things for us has said that he will come again. Take us to himself. that where he is, we may be also.

Lord, will you reassure us in that? Will you build our confidence in that? Will you strengthen us into prayer and mission?

Because we know that our king, this king, is coming for us. we pray that in the name of our ascended king. Amen.

Stand and worship with us.