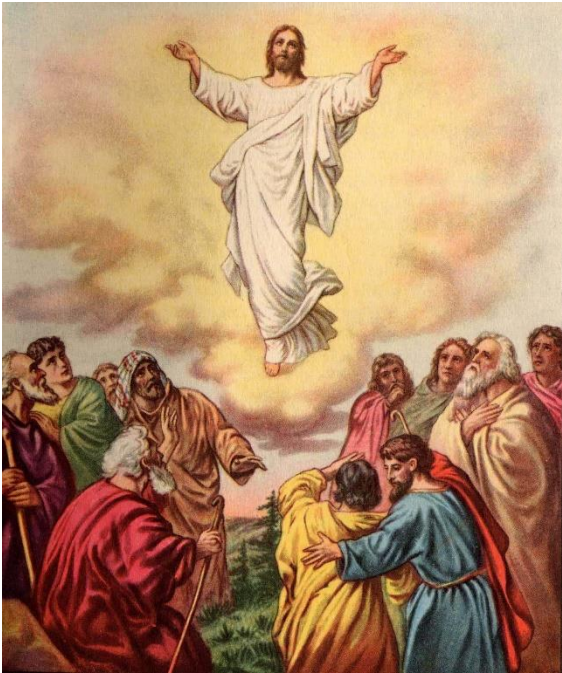


Easter Seven

So when they had come together, they asked him, 'Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?' He replied, 'It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set 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, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.' When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. While he was going and they were gazing up towards heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They said, 'Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up towards heaven? This Jesus, who has been 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. When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying, Peter, and John, and James, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.

Acts 1. 6 - 14

*O God the King of glory, you have exalted your only Son Jesus Christ with great triumph to your kingdom in heaven:
we beseech you, leave us not comfortless,
but send your Holy Spirit to strengthen us
and exalt us to the place where our Saviour Christ is gone before,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen*

After Jesus had spoken these words, he looked up to heaven and said, 'Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do.

So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed.

'I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one. John 17. 1 - 11

Jesus' prayer and the Lord's Prayer

John gives us an example of Jesus' practice of prayer, one we could follow. The prose style of Jesus prayer is very different from the poetic style of prayer in the Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6 or Luke 11 but the content is the same and the structure is very similar: Father, glory, God's will being done on earth, help in need, assurance of belonging, safe in time of trial and from the Evil One... It is a long prayer, so full of the context that in which it was prayed, it is full of loving concern but still progresses through the same structure as the Lord's Prayer

In the echo of resurrection
a time arrives
when it dawns on the soul,
it can keep travelling
without Jesus by our side.
Such is the power of resurrection
that charges the soul
with life full enough to set it free from holding holy hands
on the journey.
This is resurrection power,
life lived in faith,
that takes our longing
away from what has gone
towards the horizon of what is yet to be.
Jesus is ascended
and now in spirit he moves within us,
resurrected within each of us,
to lead us anew.