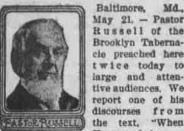
# **ASCENDED UP ON HIGH** WHERE HE WAS BEFORE

Led a Multitude of How He Captives.

What the Ascension of Jesus Implied For Himself and For the World.

Md.



twice today to large and attentive audiences. We report one of his discourses from the text, "When He ascended up on

high He led a multitude of captives" (Ephesians iv, 8-10).

In this week occurs the anniversary of Jesus' ascension. In one sense of the word our Lord ascended (that is, from human.nature and the tomb, to the divine nature and immortality) at the time of His resurrection from the dead. He tarried, however, for forty days, with the Apostles for their establishment and instruction-He on the spirit plane, invisible to them, except when he manifested Himself by appearing miraculously in various forms to convince them that He was no longer deceased, and also that He was no longer confined to human conditions-that His resurrection had made Him again a spirit being on the higher plane, where He was before He took human nature for the suffering of death, for the redemption of humanity.

Not alone by His words, but also by His conduct, our Lord taught His followers. They had not as yet been begotten of the Holy Spirit, and hence could not understand or appreciate spiritual things. They could therefore receive instruction only along natural lines. Jesus was raised from the dead a spirit being, far above angels, principalities and powers. Had He then gone directly to the Father with-out manifesting Himself to His disciples, they would never have been able to understand the truth of the matter.

Hence their lessons were given them largely in pantomime, corroborated by the Master's words, explaining that it was necessary that Messiah should die in order that He might redeem the world, and that it was also necessary that He ascend up on high and reenter upon the spiritual plane of existence, which He had before He came into the world-in order that from that higher plane of being He might be the more capable of filling the great Office of Prophet, Priest, Mediator and King of the world.

#### "Flesh and Blood Cannot Inherit the Kingdom of God."

Not only, therefore, did Jesus manifest Himself during the forty days, some seven times, for a few moments each time, in various forms, but finally, at the conclusion of the forty days, He ascended in full view of His discipies. This was one way of telling them of His ascension, that He had gone to the Father, that they need not expect to see Him again as formerly. We are not, however, to suppose for

a moment that Jesus ascended a fleshly like Him by the power of the First or human being; we remember, on the Resurrection. contrary, that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God," and that "He was put to death in the flesh but quickened in the spirit," and that thenceforth, as the Apostle declares, "The Lord is that Spirit" (II Corinthians ili, 17)

He came into the world-with added | vine nature, and entirely disassoci glory. It should not surprise us there-fore, that the Apostle declares that He ated from human nature Thinking of the Lord at His second ascended, in digality and station, far advent as a glorified man, they associate Him with a material throne and above augels, principalities and powan earthly court. This, in turn, leads ers, and every name that is named! other Christian people in an oppo-site direction. Realizing that such (Ephesians I. 21.) On the contrary, it would be both equitable and God-like an earthly kingdom would be a step that the great Jebovah should highly backward rather than a step forward, honor His faithful, Only Begotten Son. they deny the second coming of Mesthe First and the Last, the Beginning sinh to establish the Kingdom so long and the Ending of the creation of God (Revelation axil, 13). Could we for promised. The proper throught is that Jesus, in one moment suppose that our great

highly exsited" (Philippians II, 9).

The Ascended One Descended.

us that we must not identify the glori-

fled One with the One Who, in obedi-

ence to the Father's will, humbled

Himself to come down from the heav-

enly nature and glory to the earthly

station where He, as a man, humbled

Himself unto death, even unto the ig-

The Apostle calls our attention to

these two extremes-the extreme of

humiliation and the extreme of exal-

tation, both accomplished in the Son

If some of us at one time misunder-

stood the Scriptures and supposed that

our Lord Jesus ascended to heaven in

physical condition, as a man, we en-

irely misunderstood the Scriptures-

He Who was rich, as the Logos in

glory, preserved His identity when He

was made poor for our sins, made flesh,

that He might be our Redeemer. Simi-

called to be partakers of the divine

nature and heavenly Kingdom with

their Redeemer and Lord must be made

and that of his race from condemna-

Pastor Russell went into considera-

which the Logos was transferred from

heavenly conditions to earthly condi-

tions, and how His purity, His perfec-

tion of Organism, His freedom from

served immaculate.

nominious death of the cross.

of God, the Logos, The Christ.

ture

flesh, accomplished the work the Creator would allow His faithful Son. which the Father had given Him to or any servant, to lay down life in Dido, when He ra. rificed His earthly vine service, and to suffer loss as a life. The Father gioriously rewarded consequence of His obedience? Is it Him on the spirit pints. Now He is not much more rational to believe, as waiting for the gathering of His the Scriptures declare, "Him hath God Church, His Bride, His Elect, These are to share in His resurrection to the divine nature and to sit with Him in Pastor Russell called attention to the His throne. Then the Kingdom of Apostle's phraseology in the context-Messiah, so long promised, will begin to bless the world, using as its earththat the Ascended One had previously ly representatives, visible to men. Abradescended, and that the ascending and ham, Isaac and Jacob and all the descending were related as cause and Ancient Worthies, mentioned in Heeffect. The One who ascended up on brews xl. 38-40; through whom the high completely filled the highest poblessing will extend to Natural Israel sition in the great, Divine Government and to all the families of the earth of the Universe-as Head of principali-(Acts III, 19-21). ties and powers, angels and men-next to the Father. Yet, the Apostle warns

A Multitude of Captives.

Our text, in a figurative way, represents the ascension of Jesus from the earthly plane to the heavenly as the triumph of a great Conqueror. Sin had gained ascendency over Adam and his race, and had brought mankind low to the dust, mentally, morally and physically. Moreover, this victory over man had been gained in a legal manner-through one man's disobedience (Romans v, 12). The Logos divested Himself of His glory on the spirit plane, was made flesh, fulfilled the demands of the Law, proved Himself competent to pay the sinner's Ransomprice, and gave Himself a Ransom for all. "to be testified in due time" (1 Timothy II, 6). Having finished His sacrificial work He was received again to the spirit nature with exceeding glory and to the right hand of the Majesty on high.

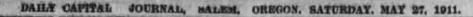
Thus the great Conqueror is seen reiarly, that Redeemer preserves His turning to the heavenly state, acclaimidentity now that He has been made rich again-now that He has been reed by the Heavenly Host; and followceived up to the Spirit Plane of glory, ing Him far down the centuries, the honor and immortality, the divine naprophetic view saw, first the Church. the "Royal Priesthood," "His brethren," "His Bride," delivered from the To suppose that Jesus went to heavpower of sin and death, through the en a man is to mistake the significance merit of His blood. And these were of His title. The Son of Man, which but the first corps of a following host; He maintains, as identifying Him with

His great redemptive work-as one of they were "a kind of first-fruits to His many titles. To suppose that Jesus God of His creatures," rescued from is a human being in heaven would be sin and from death (James i, 18; Revto suppose that He is still as when elation xiv, 4). in the flesh, "a little lower than the Later on, stretching down for a thouangels," whereas the Scriptures desand years beyond the Church's delivclure that He has ascended far higher, erance, the prophetic pen foretells so that all the angels of God, as well countless hosts of every nation, peoas men are commanded to worship ple, kindred and tongue, to be deliv ered from the power of sin and death Him. To suppose Jesus in beaven a through the merit of Him Who died, human being would be to suppose Him out of all harmony with heavenly, "the Just for the unjust." Now the spiritual conditions and surroundings. Savior of the Church, His Bride, He Moreover, are we not told that the will shortly be the Savior of the world, Church of Christ will be changed from its Great King, Great Teacher, Great the human to the spirit condition in the

Priest, Great Mediator. resurrection, and that this change will Then will come the glorious consummake the "elect of God" like their Remation, when all who will have redeemer, so that they may see Him as fused Divine grace shall have been de-He is, not as He was-that they may stroyed in the Second Death-then shall see Him in glory, honor and immorbe heard every creature in heaven and tallty, exaltation, and not as the huon earth and under the earth saying, millated One. Who was made flesh that "Glory to God in the Highest." Thence-He might sacrifice His flesh on man's forth there shall be no more crying nor behalf? When we so thought we fordying, for all the former things of sin got the Scriptural declaration that and death shall have passed away. "flesh and blood cannot inherit the Times of Restitution, Which God Hath Kingdom of God," hence that all those

Spoken." At our Lord's First Advent the "ac-

ceptable time" began-the time when God, having accepted the sacrifice of Christ Jesus, became willing through Im to accent the sacrifices of all wh



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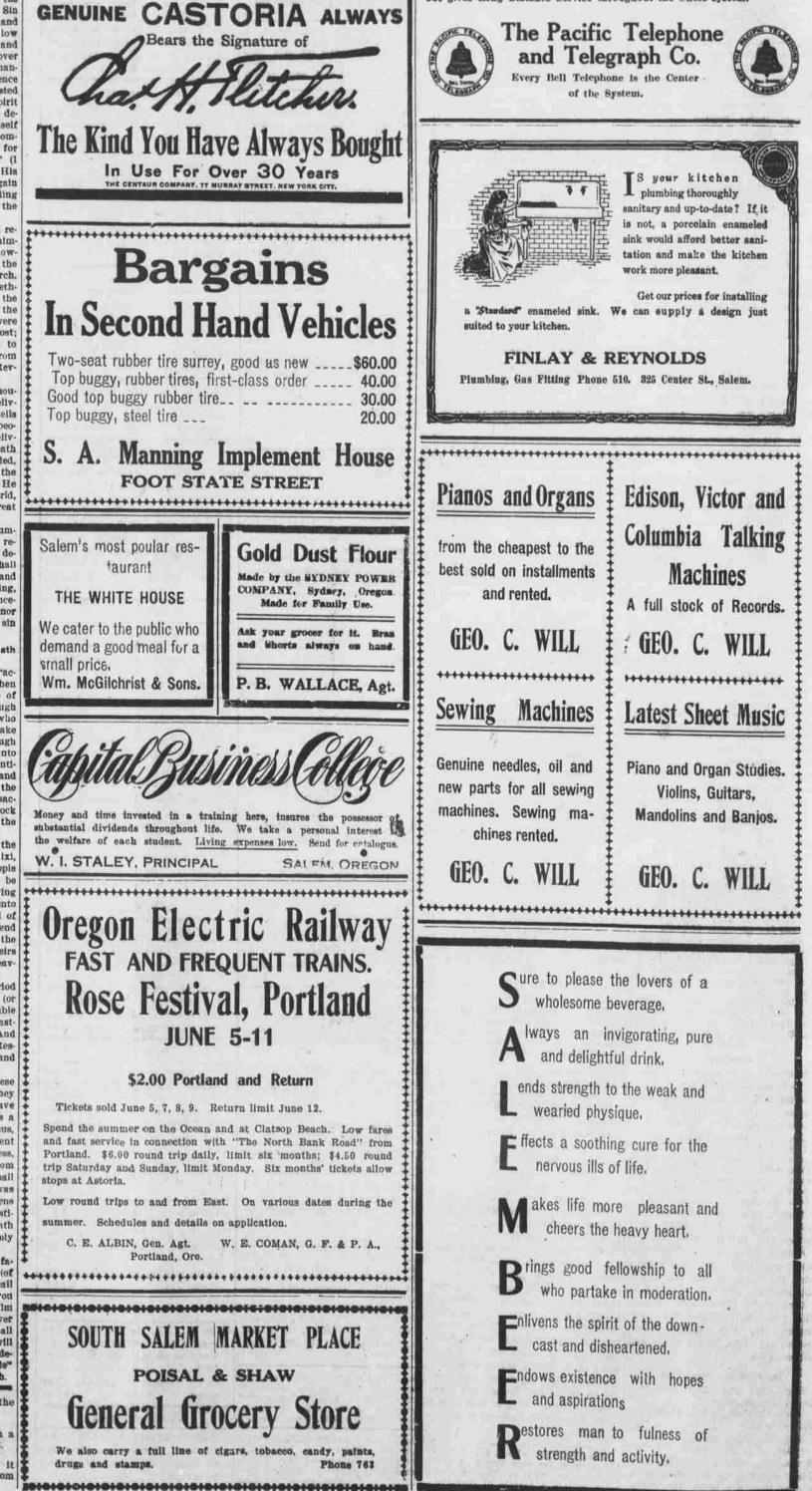


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#### Seen by Saul of Tarsus.

The Apostles were to bear witness to the resurrection of Jesus; but Judas having lost his place, and it having been given to St. Paul, it was proper that the latter, as well as the rest of is unable to see that the Logos, the the Apostles, should be able to bear witness to Jesus' resurrection. Recounting those who had seen the Lord after His resurrection, in some of the various manifestations, St. Paul says, "Last of all He was seen of me also, as one born before the time."

Jesus appeared to St. Paul in the giorious brightness of His Spirit Being, "shining above the brightness of the sun at noonday." The sight caused injury to the eyes of the beholder. Such a manifestation would have been inappropriate and unsatisfactory had the Redeemer so appeared to the eleven during the forty days. How could they have identified the glorious Personage, who shone above the brightness of the sun at noonday, as the Lord Jesus, whom they had known for years. How could they have been enabled to fully identify Him, in His many different appearances, with His former self-their Friend, their Teacher? But to Saul of Tarsus, the revealing in fiery light, above the noonday glare, was very appropriate. It convinced him, in a manner that no human appearance in the flesh could have higher to the human nature, yet preequalled, that Jesus was no longer a han and that He was no impostor. St. Paul's conversion was instantaneous. "Who art thou Lord?" he asked. "I word, that He would ascend up where am Jesus Whom thou persecutest"-- He was before, and the denial of the still represented in My followers, of Apostle's teaching that He has been whom St. Stephen was one, whom you highly exalted to glory and distincmurdered, and others of whom you have been builing to prison.

It should not cause us to marvel that declared, had led to other errors, one where He was before" (John vi, 62). It | made by many Christian people of ex-

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tion.

Difficulties of Unbelievers. desire to become His disciples-to take The Pastor declared that he had up their cross and follow Him through found worldly-wise people very skepevil report and good report even unto tical respecting the descent of the death. The entire Gospel Age anti-Logos, the Son of God, to earthly contypes Israel's Day of Atonement, and the sacrifices of our Lord and the ditions; but that Christians seem to have more difficulty than the world in Church, His Body, are the "better sacrifices," foreshadowed by the bullock comprehending the return, the ascenand the goat offered typically by the sion of Jesus to the spirit plane and its

Jews (Hebrews ix, 19-23). excellent glory. Both points, however, This is the acceptable year of the are important, necessary, as the Apostle declares in the context. Whoever Lord which Jesus declared (Isalah ixi, 2; Luke iv, 19). God's faithful people of this acceptable day are glad to be glorious Son of the Highest, humbled invited to "present their bodies living Himself, divested Himself of the Spirsacrifices, holy and acceptable unto it Nature and took instead human na-God" (Romans xii, 1). In the end of ture, cannot see that Jesus was slpthis acceptable day will come the end less. And those who cannot recognize of all opportunity to thus sacrifice the that He was holy, harmless, undefiled human nature and become joint,heirs and separate from the sinner race (Hewith Christ and partakers of the heavbrews vil, 26), cannot believe in the enly nature. sacrifice of Jesus as being a Ransom-Then will be introduced a new period price for Adam, to effect his release

styled, in the Scriptures, "Times (or years) of Restitution." The acceptable day for the Church's sacrifice has lastble detail respecting the manner by ed for nearly nineteen centuries. And we know how long the "Times of Restitution" will last-nearly a thousand years. St. Peter tells us just when these

"Restitution Times" will begin. They sin was preserved, notwithstanding the did not begin in his day They have fact that he was born of an earthly not begun yet. They will begin as a mother who was not free from the blemishes of Adam's race. He profresult of the Second Advent of Jesus, the Messiah, and the establishment fered bls hearers, free upon applicaof His Kingdom and righteousness, tion, a treatise entitled "The Undefiled "Times of refreshing shall come from One," which he believed showed scienthe presence of the Lord and He shall tifically the process used of God by which the Logos was changed from the send Jesus Christ, as before was preached unto you, whom the heavens must retain until the Thees of Restitution of all things which ct.d hath The error of supposing that Jesus is still a man signifies the denial of His spoken by the mouth of all the holy

prophets since the world began. "For Moses verily said unto the fathers, A Prophet like unto me (of whom I am but a type or figure) shall tion, the divine nature, as instead of the Lord your God raise up unto you human nature. This error, the Pastor from amongst your brethren. Him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever Jesus ascended as He declared, "up of which he cited, namely, the error He shall speak unto you. And it shall come to pass that the soul that will should not surprise us that the Heav- pecting the second coming of Jesus in not obey that Prophet shall be deenly Father gave Him back all the the fleah-as a glorious man and not as stroyed from amongst the people" plory and honor which He had before a glorious Spirit. Partaker of the di- (Acts iii, 19-23)-in the Second Death.

> There's many a slip between the cup and your lip. If a new baby won't get a man a raise in salary his case is hopeless. Watch Wizard Burbank make it possible for us to pick figs from thistles,