**A Meditation for Ascension-tide**

1. The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

*Thank you Lord that you are seated in heaven because your work on earth is completed, once and for all. Teach us to know the security that comes from trusting that your work for our salvation is complete. Forgive us for all the mad activity we're often engaged in that seems to suggest - despite what we say - that perhaps your work does depend on us after all. Teach us to rest in you, the one who has done everything for us. Thank you Lord that you are seated in heaven.*

2. I looked, and there before me was a white cloud, and seated on the cloud was one "like a son of man" with a crown of gold on his head and a sharp sickle in his hand. Then another angel came out of the temple and called in a loud voice to him who was sitting on the cloud, "Take your sickle and reap, because the time to reap has come, for the harvest of the earth is ripe." So he who was seated on the cloud swung his sickle over the earth, and the earth was harvested.

*Thank you Lord that you ascended to take your place on your throne, to reign. Thank you that you exercise authority over all. Lord there are times when we seem to see evil flourish, and there seems to be no justice, no order, no authority, but we know that this only means that you are holding back your judgement. Because you reign Lord, help us to rest secure under your sovereign power, until that time comes when your reign is acknowledged by all. Thank you Lord that you ascended to reign.*

3. "Now I am going to him who sent me, yet none of you asks me, 'Where are you going?' Because I have said these things, you are filled with grief. But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counsellor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.

*Thank you Lord that you left us in body, so that you could come to us in Spirit. Thank you Lord that you haven't left us without comfort or help, but that you have given us your Spirit. Thank you Lord for the wonder of the fact that even though you reign in heaven, yet you are with us here on earth. Thank you Lord that you left us in body, so you could come to us in Spirit.*

4. God raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus.

*Lord even while we thank you that by your Spirit you are still with us here on earth; we praise you that by your grace we reign with you in heaven. Lord it is good to know that you reign over us: we happily acknowledge your Lordship. It is wonderful to know that you reign for us: we thank you for your love for us. But we praise you that you even reign with us; not only have you taken your throne, but you have prepared thrones for us too. Lord we praise you that by your grace we reign with you in heaven*

5. Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

*Lord help us to be what we are. Not to act as people who belong to this world only, not to value the things of this world only, not to behave as if there was no world to come, as if you did not reign. Lord help us to know that we are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God - and to act as such a people, with such a calling, should. Lord help us to be what we are.*

6. Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathise with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are -- yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

*Thank you Lord that you are our friend in high places. Thank you that you have taken our humanity up into heaven. Thank you that there is someone in heaven for us, and like us. Thank you that there is a place for humans like us in heaven. Thank you that you know our weaknesses and understand us. Thank you that your listen to us, and speak for us. Thank you that you meet our needs. Thank you that you are our friend in high places*

7. They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."

*Lord thank you that just as you went so you will return. Thank you that history is not open ended, but has a finishing point, and that you are at that finishing point. Lord sometimes our lives seem pointless and hopeless, and sometimes when we look at the world, we see no hope for it, and history and the future just seem a mess. But we praise you that there is purpose in it, that there is direction in it, and that you will one day return. Lord thank you that just as you went so you will return.*

8. He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." He said to me: "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End.

*And Lord we praise you that you are in the business of renewal. That one day there will be a new heaven and new earth, and every tear will be wiped from every eye - and we praise you that you can do this, because you are our risen, ascended and reigning Lord. Lord we praise you that you are in the business of renewal - and as we wait for the end of all things, help us to be about your business here on earth, help us to be doing your work, working in us by your Spirit, until such time as we reign with you, our reigning Lord. Amen.*