

Intro Ascension May 21, 24

Here's that number 40 again. A "long time", or "long enough time"!

The first reading if the first chapter of ACTS. It could be called BOOK TWO of the Gospel of LUKE because Luke wrote them both. ACTS takes off where Luke's Gospel ends.

The first line: "In the first book, Theophilus, . . ." says that. And my guess is that Theophilus is NOT the name of a real person. The name means "God", Theo + "LOVER", philus. So I think Luke is addressing it to anyone and everyone who is a 'God-lover'. You? Me?

If you compare this scene, by LUKE in ACTS with Matthew's Gospel account you notice that ACTS has Jesus ascending into Heaven in Jerusalem. But Matthew has the Ascension taking place on "a mountain" in Galilee where it all started. Why the difference? People wonder. Can we trust the Bible. Actually this is PROOF of its reliability, because nobody tried to make all the accounts agree!

The point is **NO ONE KNOWS the time or the place!** (idea from: Mark 13; Matt 24) This refers to the END TIME, when XT will return in Glory. "Fundamentalists" focus on this IN EXCESS. They forget that NO ONE KNOWS!!! Matthew's focus is to show continuity with the OT, where great events take place "on the mountain". So he puts it ON a MOUNTAIN. [with Moses & Elijah; the Commandments and Transfiguration]

On the other hand Luke centers Worship of Yahweh in JERUSALEM, where his Temple was, where 'redemption' took place. So YOU need to remember:

Neither is writing a "newspaper account" or a "police report".

This is "story telling" theology to help people remember—what is important.

The Gospels are Story-telling theology; Paul, the rabbi, in his Epistles (letters) is applying the Theology of XT to this particular situation, as a Jewish Rabbi would for his people. Peter does the same in his Epistles.

ACTS makes two points: 1) XT rose from the dead and was witnessed as "RISEN" by many; 2) Matthew pretty much follows the Resurrection "picture account" as painted—with *angels in white* and the Transfiguration— with his **Cloud on the mountain**. Both teach that XT is AGAIN WITH GOD THE FATHER IN HEAVEN. Waiting for US where HE belongs, in Trinity. My Pics show both ideas.

1st He WAS risen—or as the Greek says—**IS Risen**, [Aorist verb] and not just as a spirit or in a dream; and 2nd) he ISN'T HERE now, not exactly 'here' that is. He is Here (on Earth in his Eucharistic Presence) and at the same time he is THERE, in Heaven. How? He is **RISEN** and **GLORIFIED**.

Douglas Farrow, theologian from McGill University in Montreal, says: God has placed him, "once and for all, within the open horizons of the Trinity". The Risen Christ dwells both in the **presence of God** and with the **gathered community, the Body of Christ, the Church**. He remains In-carnat-ed (IN-our-FLESH).

As mentioned earlier Matthew has the Ascension from the MOUNTAIN. Luke's story of Jesus being "taken up" as some of the pictures show it—with disappearing feet! Farrow says: Luke does not mean XT is the first astronaut, looking for God in a long inter-galactic voyage toward heaven. Maybe heaven and earth are not so far apart. The *Ascension*, Farrow says: is the "natural outcome of the story of Jesus." The Church and XT united in the Trinity HERE, THERE, and everyWHERE. The final ACT of the DRAMA of EASTER.

The cloud, a metaphor for the Presence of God, [I hope you've noticed that over these months!] is actively moving Jesus from His earthly life to a resurrected life. It moves US too. Ascension completes the Resurrection. Recall that John's Gospel combines resurrection and exaltation, also a dimension of ascension.

Farrow says: The Resurrection steals all the glory from the Ascension, in the minds of people. But it should be the other way around. In the Resurrection, God conquers death, but in the Ascension, Jesus Christ transforms the cosmos. Cosmos is Greek for World. [The IKONS show this.] We are part of His New World, His New Creation.

Farrow quotes John of Damascus saying, “We do not hold that the right hand of the Father is an actual place,” Remember John of Damascus? Last Father of the Church, bishop of GAZA?

Properly understood, the Ascension unites 1st) the time before Xt was born and 2nd) the time he was living as a MAN with us and 3rd) the End Time, which is NOW, waiting for us ALL TO BE JOINED, both those of us now **ON EARTH** and those waiting **in HEAVEN**.

Pretty fancy stuff to think about.

Notice PSALM 47: God mounts his throne to shouts of joy: a blare of trumpets for the Lord. Does this make it clearer? About **HEAVEN?**

{I hope some of these resonate with you}

Scott Brunell w guitar version byOwen Alstott

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NCxvQ_bGb6Y 2:30

same version by Pax Christi Catholic Church choir, Rochester, MN.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B6M7ltW6dz4> 2:30

Anglican chant, Detroit

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pcn4SjZPE2I> 2:30

A “Praise Song” style version of PS 47 by Dennis Chapdelaine Easy to sing, bright rhythm, with words

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kaT4F3uihs4> 2:30

O Clap Your Hands Karl Kohlhase was baptized and confirmed in the Lutheran Church. Later he drifted from his faith but found it again when he read the Scripture passage, "Come follow Me" Matt. 4:19. He became a Catholic in 2000. [I discovered this about him AFTER I copied the link.]

Here Karl plays his song himself.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MEgRDUTEHjg> 10:15

Audio version of Group singing with WORDS

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E9lluagfp9c> 3:15

From **Cebu in the Philippines!** An original composition by Nick Mansueto
3 versions

practicing w the **composer**, Nick Mansueto, **on keyboard**. I like the modern spirit.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BS38SMLcyUo> 3:30

same song (audio) but done with **choir**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=55z6rxM0Jd8>

same song performed by a **woman on the Guitar**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3SMSVLUPp1w>

Paul writes to the people of Ephesus in one of his EARLY epistles! Note the TRINITY already expressed; and DOUBLED in Spades when we get to the GOSPEL!

Paul begins: May the **God** of our **Lord Jesus Christ**, the **Father of glory**,
give you a **Spirit of wisdom** and revelation. . .

God is seating **XT at his right hand. so**

Xt has the POWER now in this age

and **also in the one to come.**

. . . **in the one to come—WHICH IS HERE ALREADY!**

Here in an early Ivory carving, CHRIST is *climbing* up to Heaven not "rising"! Xt is 'Climbing the Golden Stairs' as in the Square Dance and Bible Song, and "Swing Low" as in the Negro Spiritual. Similar to Jacob climbing the ladder and Elijah being taken up in a chariot.
From about 400 AD

notice the
TREE of Paradise
with the
Fruit of Everlasting LIFE
{lost by Adam, regained by XT}

XT ascending
welcomed back HOME
by the Father's Hand
out of that CLOUD again!

His BLINDING Glory

Baptismal Font/TOMB
Paul: We are BURIED
with XT
in Baptism.

and Xt rising from the
grave
and
the three Women
coming to check

SO:
RESURRECTION
and
ASCENSION
are ONE event in 2 acts.



Swing Low w words: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v8frEt6w4G8>

notice the Leader/ Response form of the song; Typical of African Music.

White Evangelicals sing "Walk them Golden Stairs": <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X4dC5-Stxic>

[I dedicate this Square Dance to my brother Ray and his wife Lois]

a square dance: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ieFhVJIOO08> when religion permeated life

https://library.timelesstruths.org/music/Climbing_Up_the_Golden_Stair/

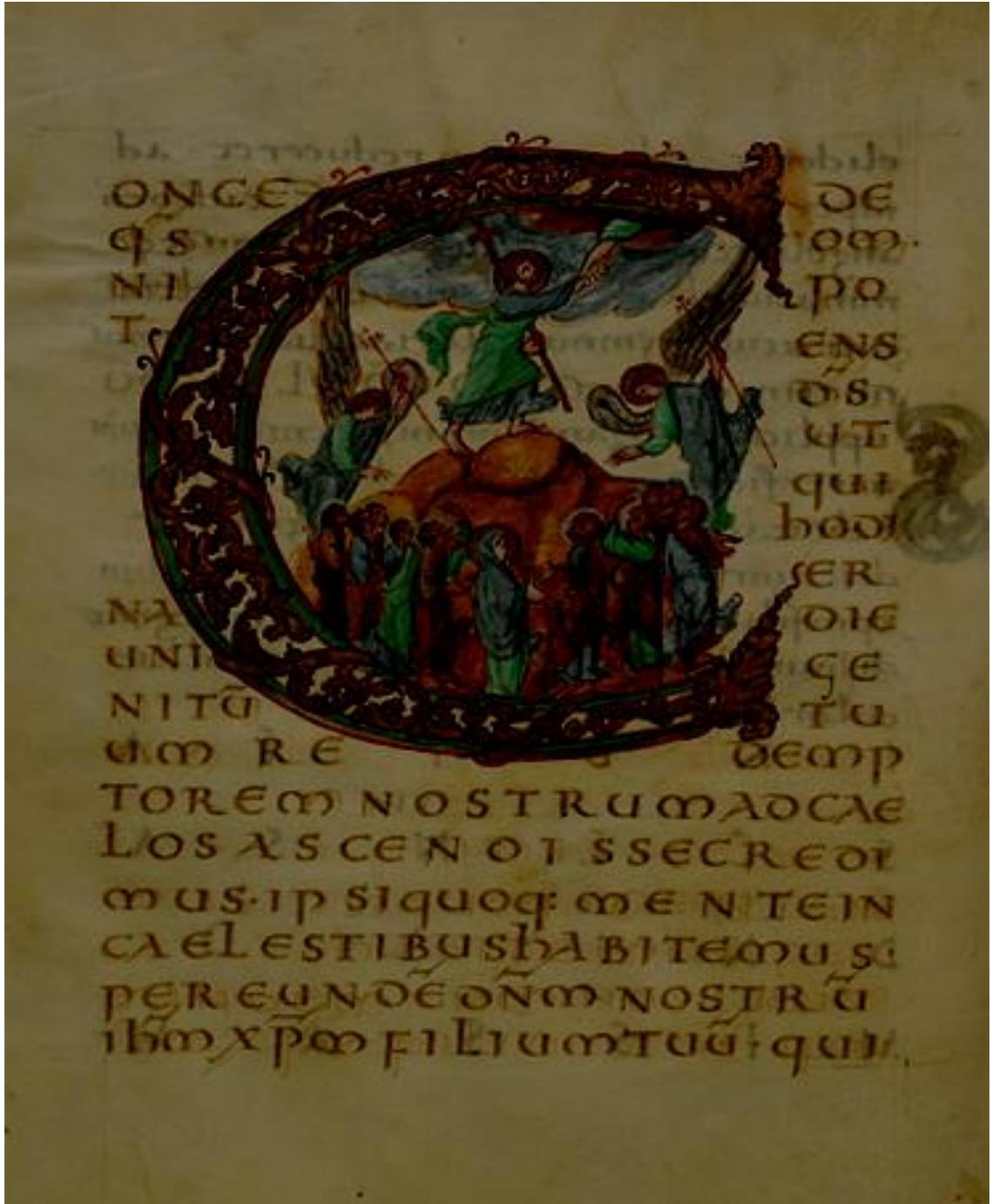
words to "Climbing the Golden Stairs" express the religious application of the Bible to LIFE.

This is an *illuminated manuscript from 850. XT on top of a mountain not on "STAIRS".

XT from the
TOP
of the
MOUNTAIN
carrying
His Cross
welcomed
by the Father

Mary
in
the middle
of the
Apostles
[under pic]
read:
-- RE
DEMP-
TOREM
NOSTRUM
AD CAE-
LOS ASCEN ---

[the lettering
is called UNCIAL,
only CAPITALS
this helps date
it.]



redeemer our to the Heavens ascends)
RE DEMP TOREM NOSTRUM AD CAELOS ASCEN??.

- - - - - DÑM means abbrev. =DomiNuM / abbrev to save space nostrUM = "OUR"
last line: DÑM NOSTRŪ [= uM]
Jesum XristuM SON YOUR abbrev

IHM XPM FILIUM TUŪ = TUUM

(abbrev/ abbrev)

{Adjectives in Latin come AFTER the noun}

“ . . . through the same **LORD OUR JESUS CHRIST SON YOUR.**

This fresco in Assisi was done by Giotto in 1230. He is the **LAST of the OLD Medieval** Ikonographic **painters:** “stiff, stylized, and static, [no movement]

BUT ALSO! the **FIRST** of the more HUMAN and Realistic **Renaissance Painters.**

Faces resemble real people; figures move, clothing flows *NATURALLY.*



two
angel

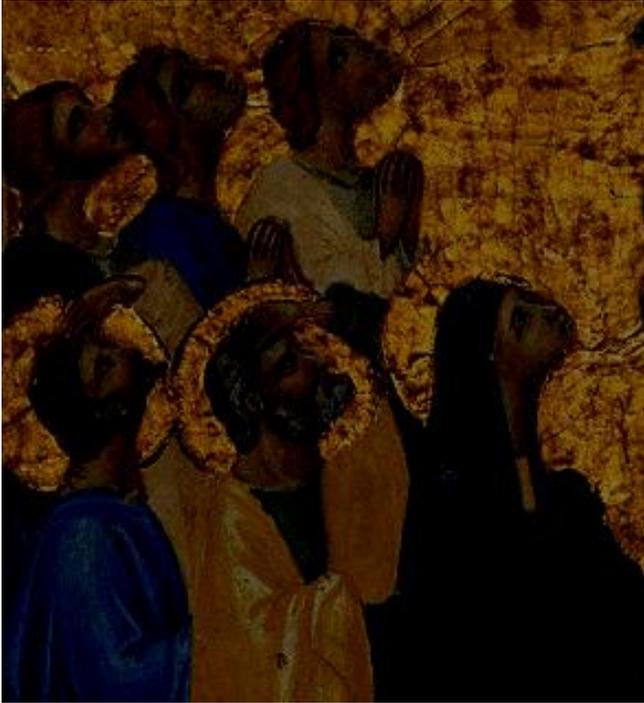
Mary
with
Apostles

guides

illuminated hymnal done in FLORENCE, Italy

close-up

Only 100 years later in 1340, Pacino shows even more realism and emotion; ALL are dazzled by the GLORY of the Risen XT



NATURAL
FACES

WONDER

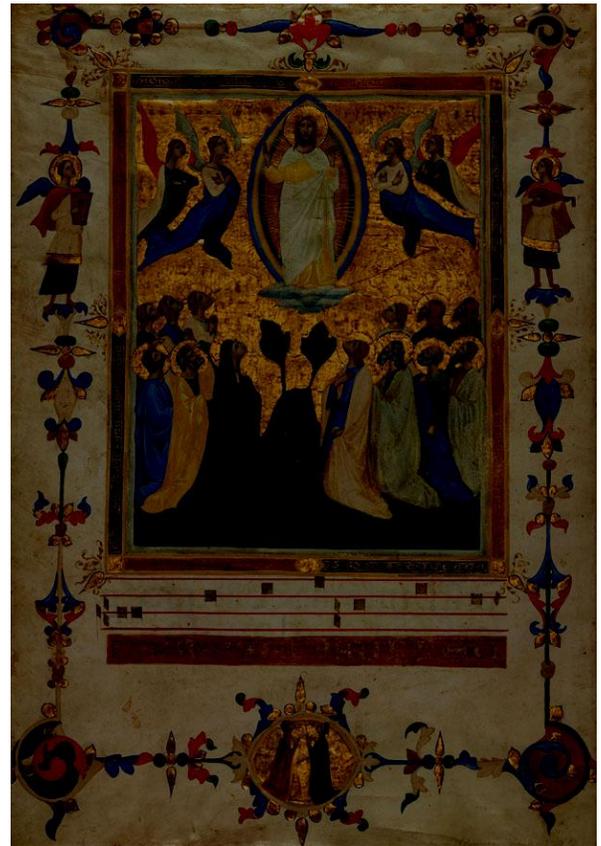
MARY
SOFT
GENTLE

Apostles

Do you see
confusion?

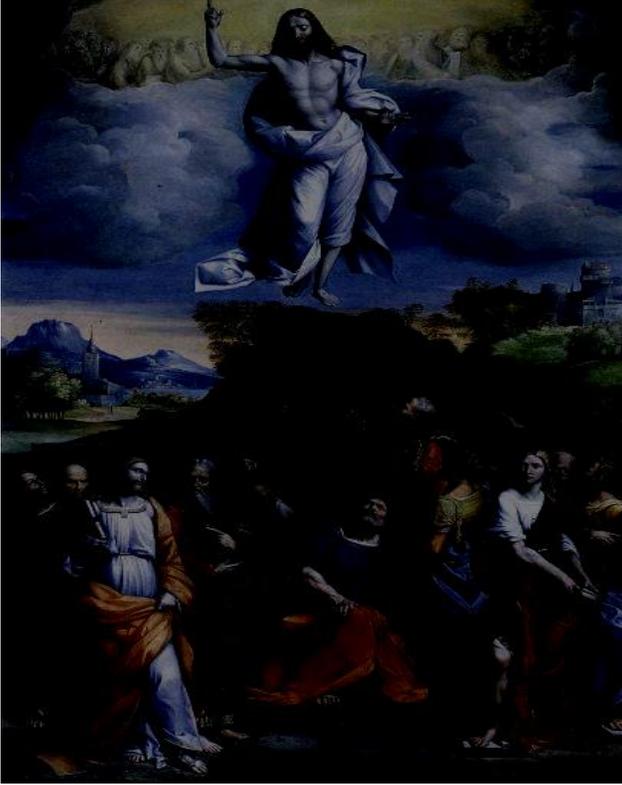
What's
going on?

Garofolo 1515 early Renaissance
Christ's human physique, elevated in cloud;



Huguet Spanish 1450 **"Disappearing Feet"**
{old way of showing}

background fuzzy, clear focus on Xt;
Bold colors, flowing; movement, emotion



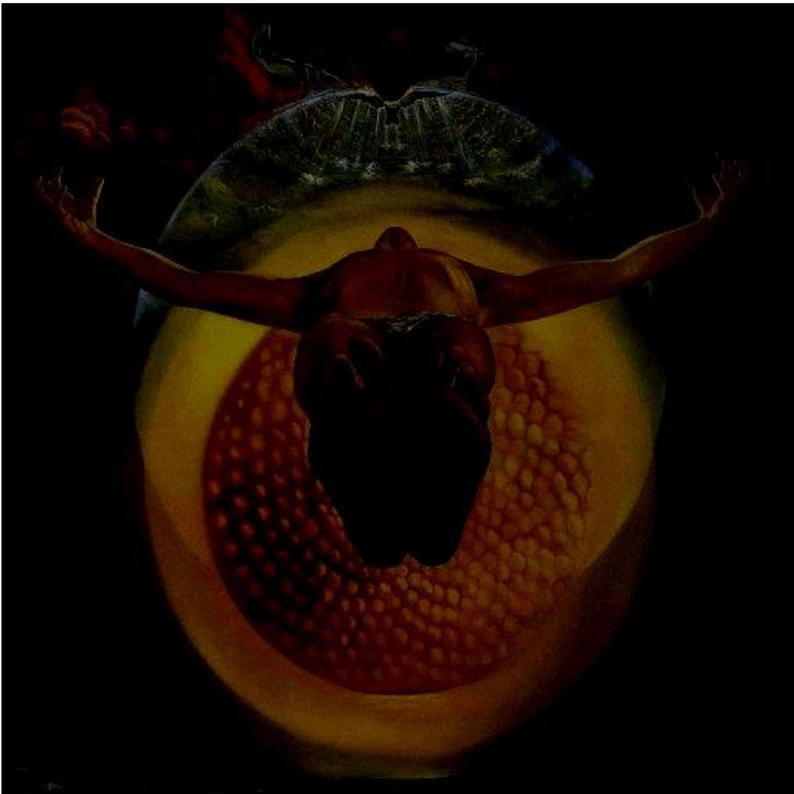
disappearing feet

Dürer German

1511

woodcut

Salvador Dali Spanish 1957 {still feet!}



Link to explanation of symbolism

<https://www.dalipaintings.com/the-ascension-of-christ.jsp>

one of the most difficult angles to paint a figure

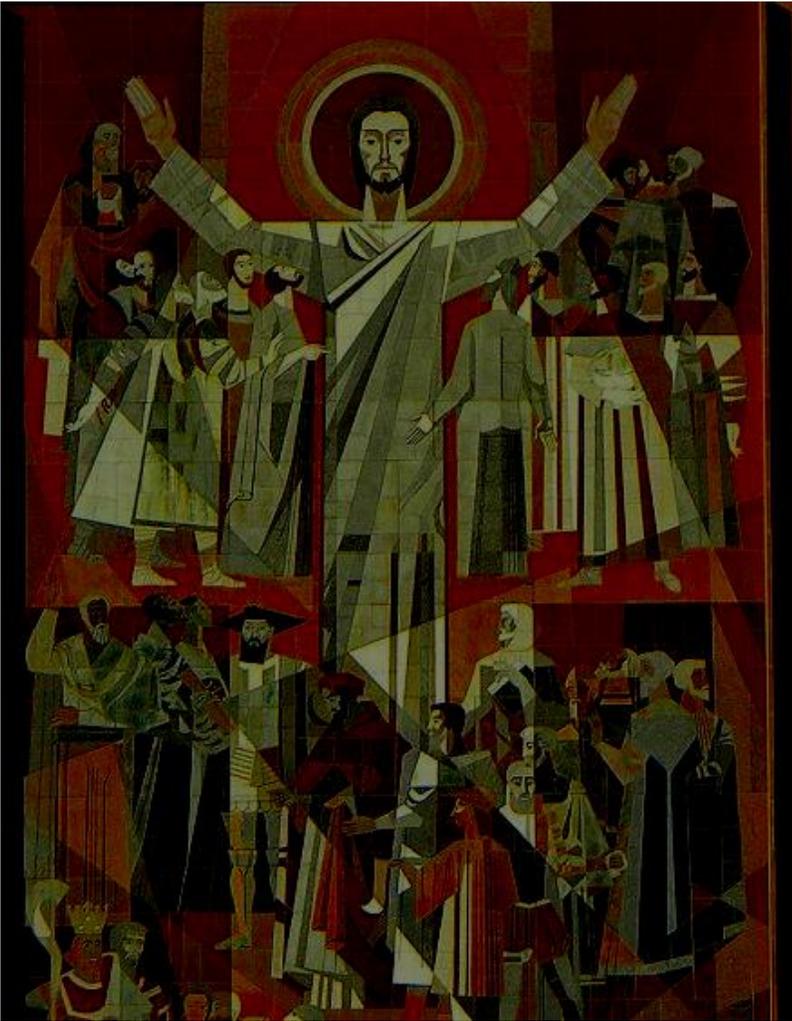
Some modern versions

Get the idea?

Mosaic in Library of Notre Dame {or Pentecost?}

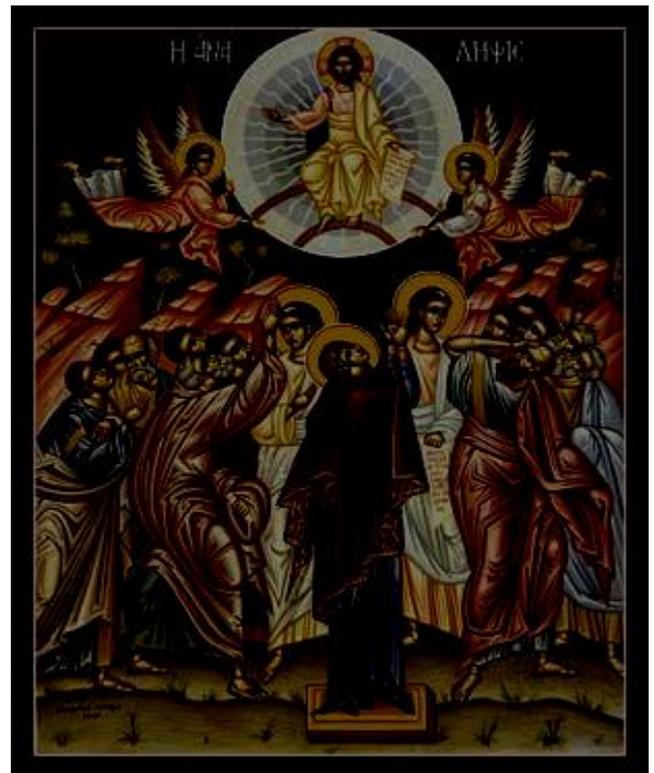
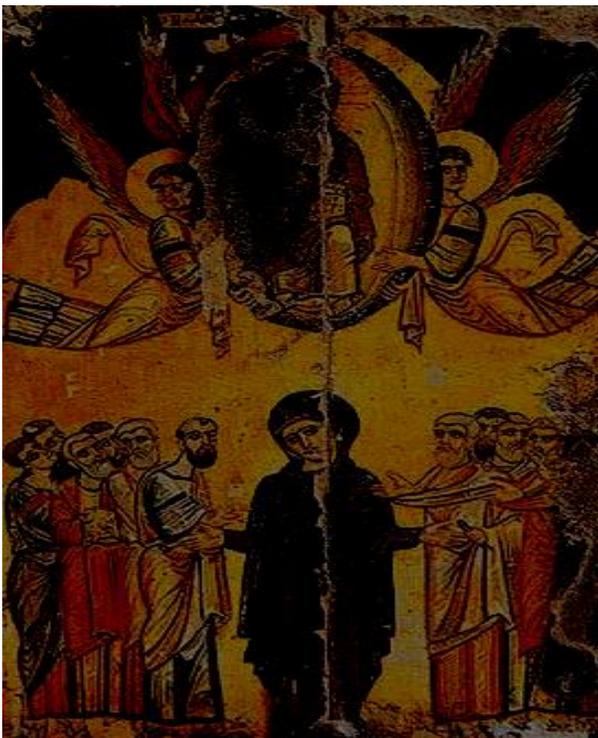


Notice: Blood? Heart? Spirit-Wind? Flame?



The icon is divided into two parts, top and bottom, **heaven** and **earth**. The top is in **order**, the bottom, **except for Mary the Theotókos!** is in **confusion**. The figures are set against the hilly landscape of the Mount of Olives, scattered with olive trees. Painted with bright colors, a joyous icon. MARY (Theotókos: God + Bearer=Mother of God) represents the CHURCH. Why? She believed the Angel Gabriel.

St Catherine's Orthodox Monastery, Mt. Sinai 350



same
layout

This manuscript Ikon from 550 AD follows the same pattern as the St. Catherine Ikon. [last page] XT sits in a Rainbow Circle from the Book of Revelation regarding the Last Judgment and Second Coming of Jesus Christ: *Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne. And He who sat there was like a jasper and a **RUBY RED** stone in appearance; and a **rainbow** around the throne, like an emerald.* (Rev 4:2-3)

RUBY RED was the center stone of the HIGH PRIEST!

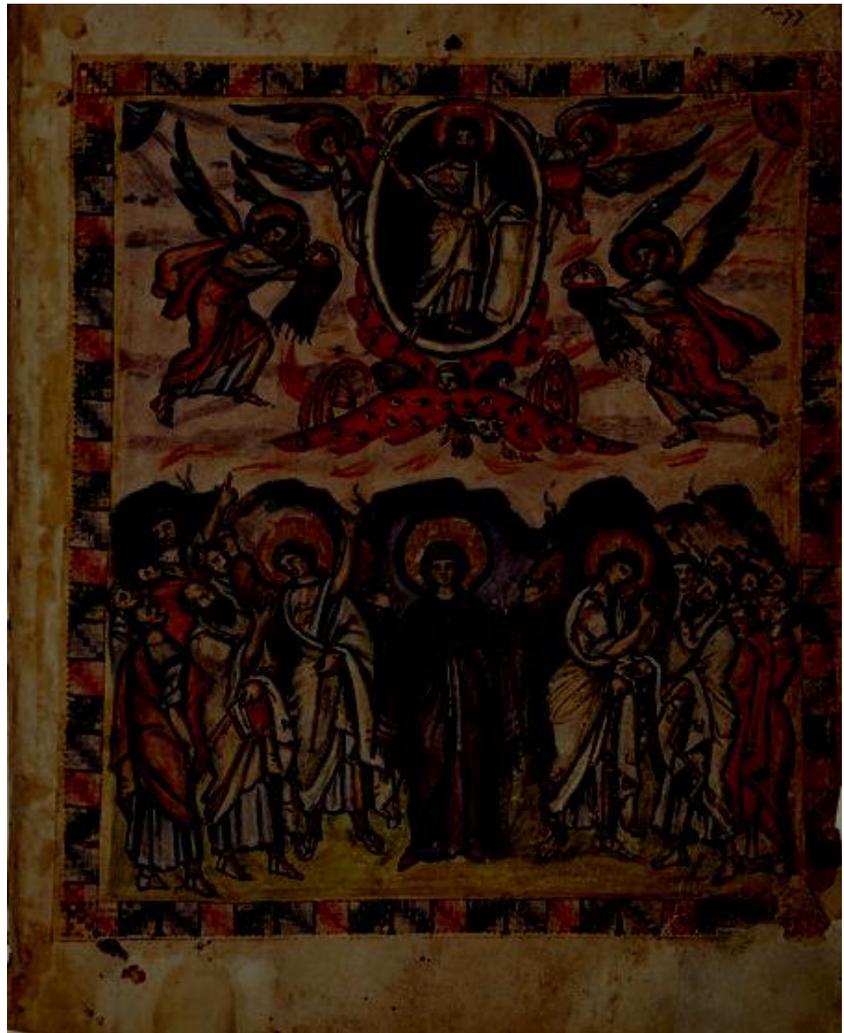
Who is XT

The Cherubim and Seraphim are bringing the dead to Xt.

MARY in the CENTER
2 angels explaining it to the others.
So like in the next picture:
the Ascension and the Last Judgment
are seen as ONE CONTINUUM.

The 2 scenes from the Last Act of Salvation History.

[below]



These two Ikons show the Ascension (Lt) and the Last Judgment (Rt)
Essentially the SAME IKON, surrounded by the “rainbow” of Revelation. Why? Because of what is called Realized Eschatology, The *Eschatos*/Last Times are HERE already! This IS the time of our Final Judgment.

