

Ascension Day

On Easter Sunday, Christians remember that Jesus rose from the dead, the resurrection. It is a joyous occasion after the despair felt by Jesus' crucifixion on Good Friday.

After the resurrection, it is written in the Bible that Jesus appeared many times to his disciples and followers. At first, some of them had difficulty believing it was really him. After all, they had witnessed him being crucified and buried in a tomb a few days before.

Jesus returned

However, they gradually realised that Jesus had returned to them and they were overjoyed. Despite having followed Jesus for three years and spending many hours listening to his teaching, prophesying his own death and resurrection, they had not truly understood what he meant.

Jesus returned after his resurrection, to show that what he had said was true.

For the next forty days, Jesus lived amongst his disciples. He appeared to them at different times, talked with them, walked with them on familiar journeys and shared meals with them. They were delighted to have him with them once again.



On the mountain

On the fortieth day, Jesus and his disciples walked up a mountain. Jesus asked his disciples not to leave Jerusalem until they had received the gift of the Holy Spirit.

A great cloud descended upon the mountain, and as the disciples watched in disbelief, the cloud enveloped Jesus and he was taken up before their very eyes.

They continued to look earnestly at the sky when two men dressed in white stood beside them and asked,

“Men of Galilee, why do you stand here looking into the sky? This is the same Jesus who has been taken into heaven”.

The disciples returned to Jerusalem and went upstairs to the room where they were staying, and joined together in prayer.

Questions

1. Compare the feelings people would have felt on Good Friday and Easter Sunday, and give reasons.
2. What problem did some of the disciples experience on seeing Jesus after the resurrection?
Explain your answer.
3. Summarise the main points of the paragraphs in italics.
4. What did Jesus do with the disciples during the forty days?
5. What instructions did Jesus give the disciples?

6. Choose two words other than 'disbelief' to describe how the disciples would have felt on the mountain.

7. Where had Jesus gone? How do you know?

8. How might the two men who spoke to the disciples, be described?

9. Explain why it is called Ascension Day.

10. Describe and explain the different feelings the disciples might have been feeling.