

On Easter Day we rejoiced in the Lord's Resurrection from death and the grave; to-day we meet to praise Him for His Ascension. He died for our sins and rose again for our justification, but even these great acts would not have been of complete use if His Ascension had not consummated His triumph over death and hell.

Ascension Day is, alas, too often a neglected festival. This might be because it comes on a week day, a working day. Perhaps if we could do in our city churches what you rightly do here in your school chapel, that is, prepare some special music for the services, bringing the best of the talent and culture we possess to honor the Lord Jesus Christ on His day of triumph, some people might be tempted away from the busy mart, the "daily round," to come to church. The reason for such common neglect is not far to seek. For many years the observance of this great festival has been more or less in shadow; its importance, the tremendous meaning it bears for us has not been brought forward with sufficient force.

Dear children, you, at least, will never have this excuse to offer. Year after year the great day has been made for you at All Hallows a day of deep spiritual joy. The words of the anthem I have heard you sing are taken from the xxiv. Psalm: a Psalm that was sung when the Ark of the Covenant was borne into the City of Jerusalem. The priests bearing the Ark and the people accompanying it sang as they approached the gates of the city, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in." Then the watchman on the wall questioned, "Who is the King of Glory?" and the chorus took up the answer with one glad shout of victory, "It is the Lord strong and mighty, even the Lord mighty in battle." "The Lord of Hosts He is the King of Glory."

This Psalm was primarily composed and sung before the entry of the Ark of the Covenant into the Holy City, but it was a forecast of the Lord's wonderful ascension, when He led His people out as far as Bethany, out of sight and sound of the busy city, up the slopes of Olivet, where He was parted from them and a cloud received Him out of their sight.

Do you suppose when He ascended into the Highest Heavens there would have been no welcome for Him there? Do you think that the angels who sang at His incarnation would not sing to celebrate His return to His Father, after the work that Father had given Him to do was finished? True, no sound reached earth of the angelic chorus, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in," but something akin to the swinging aside of those gates surely took place in the Heavenly Jerusalem when our Lord entered there as man.