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*"And Yeshua said to them, To you has been given the **secret** of the Kingdom of YHVH, but for those **outside** everything is in parables, so that 'they may indeed see but not perceive, and may indeed hear but not understand, lest **they should turn and be forgiven**'." Mark 4:11-12 (quoting Isaiah 6:9-10)*

*"And when He had said these things, as they were looking on, He was **lifted up** and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they were gazing into heaven as He **went up** behold, two men stood by them in white robes, and said, 'Men of Galilee, why do you stand **gazing up** into heaven? This Yeshua, who was **taken up** from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven'." Acts 1:9-11*

Kingdom Mysteries

A Cloud of Witnesses

by haRold Smith

a citizen of the Commonwealth (Ephesians 2:19)

Too often (and more often than not), we have a tendency to read the only words we are given in the eye-witness accounts of the Life of Yeshua through a filter of the culture we live in instead of from the Hebraic perspective they were originally written in almost 2,000 years ago. Since then, they have gone through several layers of translations, each carrying their own cultural interpretation with them and, subsequently, enveloped into the next translation. As a result, the popular image that pops into the mind when "the Ascension" is mentioned is that of the Son floating off into the heavenlies somewhere above the clouds. But, since words mean things, if we just look at what these words say in the original language they were written in - a different picture emerges. In this passage from Acts 1:9-11 above, the English versions do not say He "ascended" into heaven, they say He went "up" - but, what does "up" really mean? In **verse 9** ([click on highlighted words to view content](#)) the two words translated to English as "lifted or taken up" come from the single Greek word **epairo** meaning "to raise on high - as in **to exalt**". In **verse 10**, the two English words "went up" come from the single Greek word **poreuo**, meaning "to lead over, carry over, transfer a) to pursue the journey on which one has entered, to continue on one's journey b) **to depart**". In **verse 11**, the two English words "gazing up" come from the single Greek word **emblepo**, and means "to turn one's eyes on, **to look at**". Also in verse 11 the two English words "taken up" come from the single Greek word **analambano** meaning "**to take** (a thing in order to carry or use it)". If we are to get a clear understanding of what is actually being conveyed through these words, it is important to notice that **not any** of these definitions have any association with **a physical direction**.

So, then - **where did He go?**

This type of non-directional use of the word "up" in the Greek language is similar to usage found in [2Corinthians 12:2](#) where the Hebrew apostle *Sha'ul* (Paul) says he was caught "up" into the third heaven. The two English words "caught up" in this verse come from the single Greek word *harpazo* meaning "to seize, carry off by force 2) to seize on, claim for one's self eagerly 3) **to snatch out or away**" - again, **non-directional**. This is the same Greek word used in the description of how Philip was "caught up or away" in [Acts 8:39](#). They were both "**caught away**" into another dimension. They "stepped" into a dimension of Spirit which is in keeping with the description used in [John 20:26](#) of Yeshua when He appeared and "stood in the midst" of where the disciples were inside a room where the doors and windows were locked shut. It doesn't say He wafted in through the wall, He simply **appeared** - He stepped out of one dimension into another.

While the English word translated "cloud" in [Exodus 13:21](#) comes from the Hebrew word *'anan* and is used of the cloud which led the Israelites in the wilderness (more like a fog than a cloud of shape and form in the sky), it is also used of a vast contingent of people as a "covering for the Land" in [Ezekiel 38:9](#). The Hebrew author of the book of Hebrews carries forward this Hebrew simile with his usage of the Greek *nephos* in reference to a "cloud of witnesses" in [Hebrews 12:1](#) - meaning "**a large dense multitude, a throng**". When Yeshua left that day, there was an assemblage of the faithful in observance of the event. But His leaving was merely an extension of the way He appeared in the room mentioned above - out of one dimension into another witnessed by those present. This is the same type of occurrence as what is recorded having happened on *Shavu'ot* (renamed as the English Pentecost) - although with more fanfare. Also, scripture does not say His return would be "exactly as He went", it says "in like manner", meaning in the same way, in similar fashion - as we saw in a previous article, **Just As-Even So**. What does that mean - in like manner? Is it such a stretch of the imagination to think that the "cloud" that took Yeshua out of their sight could possibly be, in accordance with all these definitions - a cloud of witnesses, those who have embraced His Life to become His Body?

"Thus says YHVH: **Heaven is My throne**, and the earth is my footstool..." [Isaiah 66:1](#)



Is there a real "heaven"? There is, but it must be seen from the Hebraic perspective these Hebrew texts describe it in order to understand that heaven is not a "place" - but, rather, **a state of being** ([Luke 17:20-21](#)). The usual Hebrew word for "heaven" is *shamayim* which means "height or elevation" and comes from an unused root meaning "to be lofty or elevated". The Hebrew word *marom* is also used as an equivalent to *shamayim*, meaning "high places, heights"; while the phrase "heaven and earth" is used to indicate the whole universe ([Genesis 1:1](#), [Jeremiah 23:24](#), [Acts 17:24](#)). According to Hebrew scripture there are three heavens: the firmament, as "fowls of the heaven" ([Genesis 2:19](#), [Psalm 8:8](#), [Lamentations 4:19](#), etc.); the starry heavens - that which can be seen ([Deuteronomy 17:3](#), [Jeremiah 8:2](#)); and, while

the religion of Christianity has laid exclusive claim to it, the "heaven of heavens," or "the third heaven" referred to by *Sha'ul* in [2Corinthians 12:2](#) actually originates in the Original Writings of [Deuteronomy 10:14](#), [1Kings 8:27](#), and [Psalm 148:4](#). Therefore, with the Hebraic definition of heaven considered to be that which is "**lifted up or exalted, lofty**" - it is to this "**exalted place**" this discussion is focused for that is where the "throne of YHVH" is located. One of the definitions of the Hebrew word *shamayim* (heaven) is "abode of YHVH." There is a difference between the "heavenlies" and the Kingdom of Heaven where YHVH abides. Yeshua declared heaven to be YHVH's throne in [Matthew 5:34](#); therefore, when YHVH changed His place of abode, His dwelling place, into the hearts of men who would embrace His Nature on *Yom Shavuot* (Day of Pentecost) - heaven moved with Him. This is the day when the Covenant YHVH made with Himself was fulfilled, for it was on this day that the same words originally given in stone and accompanied with fire were now able to be written on the hearts of men. The manner of delivery had changed - **BUT THEY ARE STILL THE SAME WORDS WITH THE SAME ACCOMPANIMENT OF FIRE** ([Exodus 20:18-21](#), [Jeremiah 31:31-34](#), [John 14:23-24](#), [Romans 8:9](#), [2Corinthians 6:16](#)). On the day of *Shavu'ot*, YHVH did a new thing by placing His abode in the hearts of men - thus **fulfilling His Covenant**.

Yeshua has returned just as He had left - ***in a cloud of witnesses***.

YHVH's throne is set where His Kingdom is. The Kingdom of YHVH tells us "who" it belongs to, the Kingdom of Heaven tells us "where" it is located - but there is only one Kingdom Yeshua was sent to restore to His Family ([Matthew 15:24](#)). Since heaven is YHVH's Throne, when His Throne moved, heaven moved with Him and the Essence of His Nature and Character could now be etched on the beings of men willing to fashion and conform their lives after His Nature; thus, fulfilling His Promise to Israel, His Hebrew family, to restore what had originally **been purposed in the Garden of Eden** - a people who would manifest His Name, His Image, and present the Light of His Being by their behavior to the world ([Isaiah 49:6](#), [Luke 2:32](#)).

So, when [Ephesians 2:4-6](#) speaks of us HAVING BEEN (past tense) quickened together with Yeshua (now present tense - and most don't have a problem considering that to have already taken place) - why should it be such a leap to consider that when we embrace His example of Life, we are currently sitting IN HEAVENLY places IN HIM right now? And, "If you then **BE RISEN WITH YESHUA** (present tense) ...WHERE YESHUA NOW SITS ON THE RIGHT HAND OF YHVH, set your affection on things ABOVE (i.e., the more excellent things connected with an elevated state of being), not on things on the earth (i.e., the common affections found in men on the earth). For you are dead, and your life **IS HID WITH YESHUA IN YHVH** (again, present tense) Who has delivered us from the power of darkness, and HAS TRANSLATED US INTO THE KINGDOM OF HIS DEAR SON (which exists within us and is accessible to us right now, ([Colossians 3:1-3](#) and [1:13](#))). Therefore, in the light of what these words of scripture say and mean, can we not conclude, since we are IN YESHUA who IS IN YHVH and DWELLS IN HEAVEN, that when our affections are on those heavenly things, those things above (of a higher state of being), we **LIKEWISE ARE DWELLING IN HEAVEN** with Him and not the earth - right now, today? ([Matthew 6:21](#)). Those **manifesting the Nature** of YHVH as exemplified in the Life of Yeshua have become the cloud of witnesses validating who He is to the world.

"Your kingdom come, Your will be done, **on earth**, as it is in heaven." [Matthew 6:10](#)

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???Questions???

Please feel free to email me at harold@hethathasaneer.com. While not claiming to have all the answers, it would be an honor to partake with you of what Spirit is uncovering.

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