

AFTER THE RESURRECTION WHAT?

by

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CHAPTER FIVE

THE BODY OF HIS GLORY

PHILIPPIANS 3:10,21 says: **“Our citizenship is in heaven whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself.”** In I John 3:1, 2 the disciple **“whom Jesus loved”** says: **“Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.”**

These are very heartening words from two of God’s noblest, inspired sons. When we come to talk about the body of our Saviour, either while He was in the flesh or in His resurrection garments, we must tread softly and reverently, because we are on holy ground and in the presence of mystery. How could there be a human body without a human father, and how could divine fatherhood give to the human body a body without sin? And yet all this happened in Christ.

Even when death performed its major operation on His precious body, what was left, if anything, of His other body, and what is the form and substance of the new body with which He came triumphantly out of the tomb? We cannot describe the substance of His body. We do not know its form and quality. We can only talk about what the Scripture says about it. So, softly, tenderly and reverently we write about the body of His glory.

THE BIBLE ACCOUNT

Let us enumerate some of the things said about Him and His body in these immortal forty days between resurrection and ascension.

- Human eyes saw Him, human ears heard His voice, human hands touched Him, even touched crucifixion’s wounds.
- He walked and talked and ate with His disciples in enjoyable comradeship and fellowship.

- He passed through closed doors, as is indicated when He met the disciples in a Jerusalem conference. How could the substance of His body find no resistance in the shutters of doors?
- He ate with His disciples and they recognized Him and loved Him and worshiped Him.
- His hands, His feet, His side bore the marks of cruel crucifixion.
- The nail holes were in His hands and in His feet and the spear point marked His blessed side.

Will we see in heaven the nail-riven hands? Will we be constantly in sight of the wounds that our sins perpetrated in His blessed earthly body? It is said at least that at the Judgment probably some will see Him whom they pierced, and I judge they will recognize Him by the afflictions that their sins put on Him.

- He suddenly appeared and disappeared in “**another form.**”

The Emmaus travelers did not recognize Him part of the way and yet a little later they did recognize Him. The sleepy, misty eyes of the seven fishermen on the Lake Tiberias in the early morn of the morning did not recognize Him, and yet a little later they did recognize Him. Was the fault in their eyes or did He appear in another form?

- He breathed on His disciples. There was evidence of lungs and breath.

He said to them with the power of His redeeming breath, “**Receive ye the Holy Ghost.**” Are the lungs of our risen Saviour filled with the power of the Holy Ghost, and can He not still breathe on us and endue us with power?

Unsaved eyes will never behold Him. Did He evade the sight of the lost or did He blind their eyes not to behold Him? He says in Luke 24:16, “**But their eyes were holden that they should not know him.**” This applied to His disciples, but what does He do to evade the sight of the unsaved?

- He disappeared into heaven without human or seemingly divine conveyance.

The law of gravitation seems not to have had any basis of hold upon His body, and yet they saw Him as He ascended.

- Their eyes could behold Him but the ordinary laws of life could not withhold him.

Saul and John years after His ascension saw Him, talked with Him, recognized Him, and worshiped Him. There was something in the human eyes that was appealed to in visual construction in His glorified body.

- There is no evidence that He was an hungered or tired or ever slept or ever drank. It does say that He and the disciples ate together.

- He left nothing in the tomb but the grave clothes. What change death made in His body is yet unanswered. That is left for the illuminating explanation of heaven’s light.

- His body did not suffer corruption (Psalm 16:10).

It is probable that the same thing which happened to Christ's body in death will happen to our bodies, or the bodies of those who are living at the time of His return. They will be changed by some heavenly alchemy to conform to the image and body of our Saviour.

- He had a real, spiritual body that could be seen and felt and yet was not subject to the natural laws.

It seems that death caused no change in His appearance except when he purposed to change it, nor to His voice. Mary recognized His voice when He said lovingly, "Mary." It made no change in His plans (He went right on with His missionary conquest), nor His love (He loved as deeply as ever) nor His power (He was in His resurrection body when He said, "**All power in heaven and earth is given unto me**").

Was He like Enoch or Elijah, who were translated? Was there any relationship between Christ's body and that of Lazarus, whom He raised from the dead, or that of the widow's son. There is no way to tell.

Science in none of its branches seems to have been able to help us. No one but Christ has returned from that land of the spirit with a body like His, and therefore no bodies of the dead and raised have been subject to laboratory tests.

The tubes of science cannot measure eternal life nor weigh its substances in any of the balances of scientific investigation. There is no room for dark speculation here, only complacent, patient waiting. Pious imagination and expert speculation are left to run riot if they desire, but we will wait with confident certainty that some day we shall be like Him.

COMFORTING FACTS

There are certain comforting facts left us as we complacently wait for further light upon the body of His glory. Some of these comforts are as follows:

- We shall know Him and He shall know us.
- We shall be like Him. Just in what respects we will have to wait to see.
- We shall be raised from the dead and our spirits and incorruptible bodies shall be reunited when
- He comes with His angels, filling the heavens with their triumphant hallelujahs.
- We shall be with Him forever and forever where He is in the mansions which He has gone to prepare for us.
- We shall live forever in heavenly mansions prepared by Him.
- We shall be sinless, sorrowless, deathless.
- We shall be forever under His Lordship and possess His eternal life.

Our occupation will be eternal, joyous service in His love, doing His bidding, following the lines of His holy will.

So I judge that is enough to know. **“It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we shall see him and be like him.”**

~ end of chapter 5 ~

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