

Bodily Resurrection

What was the nature of Jesus' resurrection body? Some who believe Jesus rose from the grave don't believe in His bodily resurrection. According to them, the body that rose from the grave was not the same body that was crucified. Well, there is truth in this statement. However, the truth that I speak of, is not the same truth that those who hold to a nonphysical position speak of. They believe that Jesus had a body – a body much like a ghost.

This has the idea of resurrecting one part of the person (the spirit) and not the other part (the body). But the teachings of Scripture give strong evidence that Jesus' post-resurrection body was physical. Yes, it is true, that with the resurrection of Jesus Christ there appeared for the first time in history a new kind of resurrection body. He rose with an eternal body, a body that would never die again.

Before the event of Jesus' resurrection, all resurrections were restorations to the former earthly bodies. But that does not mean that Jesus' eternal body had no unidentifiable links to His earthly body as those who hold to a spiritual resurrection teach.

After the resurrection of Jesus there were two disciples on their way to a village called Emmaus. And as they walked they communed together about all that had taken place. Jesus drew near to them and walked with them, however, their eyes were blinded to the identity of Jesus. He talked with them and asked them questions and they answered. He expounded unto them the scriptures, and according to them, their heart burned within. Then their eyes were opened, and they knew Him. After this, Jesus vanished out of their sight (Lit., He became invisible).

Immediately they arose and returned to Jerusalem to bring word to the eleven of all that had taken place. And as they were speaking Jesus Himself appeared in the midst, and said unto them, "Peace be unto you."

Upon hearing these words and seeing Jesus appear out of nowhere, they became terrified and supposed that they had seen a ghost. Yet Jesus explains unto them that He was no ghost, and that it was He who had risen from the grave.

He said, "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I [the same one that died on the cross and was buried] myself; handle me, and see; for a spirit [ghost] hath no flesh and bones [a physical body], as ye see me have" (Luke 24:39).

John records that the disciples were assembled behind closed doors for fear of the Jewish authorities. And as they were assembled, Jesus appeared in the midst and said, "Peace be unto you." Once again Jesus demonstrated a physical resurrection: "he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord" (John 20:20).

People recognized Him, the wounds inflicted by crucifixion were visible. He could eat. And His body had flesh and bones proving that He was not merely a spirit showing itself. But His resurrection body was different. He could enter closed rooms without opening doors, He could

appear and disappear at will, and apparently He was never limited by physical needs such as sleep or food.

If someone rejects the bodily resurrection, how do they explain the plainly physical nature of Christ's post-resurrection appearances? How do they explain the empty tomb?

In summary, the basic question still stands: If the Resurrection were only spiritual, what happened to the physical body? It was never found. Furthermore, all the Gospel accounts of the Resurrection refer to it as physical. Not one even hints of a nonphysical appearance. Nothing explains the evidence other than a bodily resurrection.

Scripture: King James Version: Luke 24:30-33, 36, 39-43; John 20:19, 20, 25-29.

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