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"THE BODY OF GOD"

Hebrews 10:5

"When He came into the world, He said: Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, But a body You have prepared for Me."

Jesus said, in John 4:24, *"God is Spirit."* Nevertheless, God took a body! Jesus Christ is God – God in flesh – God in a body! So that we are absolutely clear about that, I list below some of the many passages of Scripture that make it very clear that God visited this earth in a body:

Scripture #1

John 1:1- *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."* *"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us...."* (John 1:14)

Scripture #2 –

I John 1:1,2 - *"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us."* (We are told that John *"..... leaned on his breast at supper....."* John 21:20)

Scripture #3

Philippians 2:5-8 – *"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross."*

Scripture #4

I Peter 2:24 – *"Who Himself bare our sins in His own body on the tree....."*

Scripture #5

I Tim, 2:5 – *"For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus."*

IS JESUS' BODY REAL?

There are those who say that Jesus was a figment of the imaginations of visionaries, a phantom, an illusion, a myth. These heresies have a long history. It seemed to pick up more proponents beginning with the French Enlightenment thinkers Volney and Dupuis in the 1790s.

Other proponents through the years include Bruno Bauer, Arthur Drews, G.A. Wells, Alvar Ellegård, and Robert M. Price. More recently through the work of writers such as Richard Dawkins, Christopher Hitchens, and the French philosopher Michel Onfray.

The religious skeptic John Remsburg stated in his book *The Christ*, that the Christ of the New Testament was a myth with the debate being whether there was an actual man behind that myth and how much of the myth was actual history.

Philosopher George Walsh argues that Christianity can be seen as originating in a myth dressed up as history, or with a historical being mythologized into a supernatural one: he calls the former the Christ myth theory, and the latter the historical Jesus theory.

Walsh also states "My *present* opinion is that, in the case of Jesus, we simply do not know for certain anything about his biography, not even that he existed."

These and other infidels notwithstanding, you can be absolutely certain that Jesus wasn't a myth or the product of the imaginations of religious zealots while He was on earth, but a real person with a human body. In fact, the details of His life and ministry are well documented in biblical and extra-biblical history as well.

Peter declared in his sermon of the Day of Pentecost: "*Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know - Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; whom God raised up....*" (Acts 2:22-24)

In John's Gospel alone it is stated that Jesus was:

- weary, John 4:6;
- thirsty John 4:7;
- groaned John 11:33;
- wept John 11:35;
- thirsted John 19:28;
- bled John 19:34;
- died John 19:30;
- after his resurrection proved to Thomas and the other disciples that He still had a real body. (John 20:24-29)

Yes, Jesus' body is real! Notice that I said, "is real." here is God in bodily form right this moment seated at the Throne in heaven. "*But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God.*" (Hebrews 10:12)

Illustration

Pastor John Rippon, was a predecessor to Charles H. Spurgeon at the famous Metropolitan Tabernacle in London, England. In 1787 Dr. Rippon added the following hymn to the Metropolitan Tabernacle Hymn Book:

There's A Man In the Glory

*There's a Man in the glory
Whose Life is for me.
He's pure and He's holy,
Triumphant and free.
He's wise and He's loving
How tender is He!
His Life in the glory,
My life must be.*

*There's a Man in the glory
Whose Life is for me.
In Him is no sickness;
No weakness has He.
He's strong and in vigor,
How buoyant is He!
His Life in the glory
My life may be.*

*There's a Man in the glory
Whose Life is for me.
His peace is abiding;
How patient is He!
He's joyful and radiant,
Expecting to see
His Life in the glory
Lived out in me.*

JESUS TESTIMONY RE: HIS BODY

“For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? For the worshipers, once purified, would have had no more consciousness of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins. Therefore, when He came into the world, He said: “Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, But a body You have prepared for Me. In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You had no pleasure. Then I said, ‘Behold, I have come—In the volume of the book it is written of Me—To do Your will, O God.’”

Previously saying, “Sacrifice and offering, burnt offerings, and offerings for sin You did not desire, nor had pleasure in them ” (which are offered according to the law), then He said, “Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God.” He takes away the first that He may establish the second. By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.” (Hebrews 10:1-11)

This is Christ's incarnation, His enfleshment. *“And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.”* (Luke 2:7)

The incarnation was the process by which that body came into existence. *“A body hast thou prepared me”* that He might in it do the will of God performing the work of mankind's redemption. A body was prepared, in which He accomplished the will of God.

The reason for God to take a body was to do what the Law, and the blood of bulls and goats, could not do. That means that God would not have these sacrifices continue any longer, but he willed that his Son should offer Himself an offering, and a sacrifice.

ACTIONS PERFORMED UPON THE BODY OF JESUS

Consider some of the many actions taken in relation to the body of the Lord Jesus:

It was an anointed body.

Matthew 26:12 – *“For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial.”*

It was a crucified body.

1Peter 2:24 – *“Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.”*

It was a lifeless body.

John 19:40 – *“Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury.”*

Matthew 27:59 – *“And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth....”*

It was a buried body.

John 19:38-42 – *“After this, Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; and Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took the body of Jesus. And Nicodemus, who at first came to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds. Then they took the body of Jesus, and bound it in strips of linen with the spices, as the custom of the Jews is to bury. Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid. So there they laid Jesus.....”*

THE POST-RESURRECTION BODY OF JESUS

It is a resurrected body.

John 2:18-21 – *“The Jews answered and said to Him, “What sign do You show to us, since You do these things?” Jesus answered and said to them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” Then the Jews said, “It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?” But He was speaking of the temple of His body.”*

John 20:27,28 - *"Then He said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing." And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!"*

Luke 24:39 - *"Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have."*

It is a recognized body.

I Corinthians 15:3-8 - *"For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles. Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time."*

It is a glorified body.

Philippians 3:20,21 - *"For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself."*

It is an ascended & returning body.

Acts 1:9-11 - *"... while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven."*

It is a visible body.

I John 3:2 - *"We know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."*

WHERE IS JESUS' BODY NOW?

Romans 8:34 - *"Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us."*

I Tim, 2:5 - *"For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus."*

Colossians 2:9 - *"For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form." (nasb)*

Acts 7:55,56 - *"Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. "Look," he said, "I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God."*

Many do not know that right now, in heaven, Jesus is a man, though in a glorified body. Jesus is still both divine and human in nature. This is one of the lesser known biblical doctrines concerning Jesus. It is biblically correct to say that Jesus is a man right now in heaven - though a glorified man .

It would wrong be to say that He was only a man while on earth and it is equally wrong to say that Jesus is only God in heaven now. He is both divine and human in nature at the same time; He is both God and man, right now. Colossians 2:9 verifies that statement: *“For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form.” (nasb)*

WHY DOES JESUS HAVE A BODY NOW?

Jesus' present humanity is important for several reasons:

First, this is what the Bible teaches. He arose in a body and ascended that same body as we have seen from Scripture.

Second, as a man, Jesus is a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. As a priest He forever intercedes for us.

1. Hebrews 6:20 tells us that *“Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.”*
2. Hebrews 7:25 adds: *“Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.”*

Third, In order to be a priest, Jesus has to be a man. A spirit cannot be a priest after the order of Melchizedek and if Jesus is not a man now, He would not qualify to be a priest and He could not be forever interceding for us. Therefore, to deny Jesus' present humanity is to deny His priesthood and His intercession on our behalf.

1. I Timothy 2:5 – *“For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus.”*

The Bible teaches us that Jesus arose from the dead in the same body in which He died, though it was a glorified body. A "spirit" resurrection is not a resurrection of the body and without the resurrection of the body of Christ, death has not been conquered and our faith would be in vain.

WHAT KIND OF BODY DOES JESUS HAVE?

Jesus rose from the dead physically but, what kind of a body was this physical body in which He rose? Was it subject to death again? Would it grow tired or grow old? The Bible tells us about the resurrection body, which all Christians will receive in the future, in I Corinthians 15 as follows:

“But someone will say, “How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come?” (v.35) Paul, the writer, goes on to explain: “The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in

power. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.” (vs. 42-44)

And he concludes saying, “... we shall all be changed - in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory.” (vs.51-54)

“we shall all be changed”

These verses tell us that something happens to the body that is raised from the dead. Notice that verse 44 says that *“it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.”* The natural body is the body with which we are born. The natural body dies and is raised from the dead. But, when it is raised, it is changed into a spiritual body.

The resurrected body is different than the natural body in its abilities and qualities as Jesus demonstrated; however, and this is vitally important, it is the same body as before – only “improved,” “glorified,” “spiritualized,” etc.

We see this in the fact that Jesus retained the wounds of His crucifixion as evidenced by the holes in His hands and side (John 20:27), yet He was able to simply appear in a room with the disciples without entering through the door (John 20:19-20). He was raised in the same body He died in, though it had been glorified.

WILL WE HAVE NEW BODIES?

1. YES – because our bodies will be redeemed!

“For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now.²³ Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.” (Romans 8:22-23)

2. YES – because I Corinthians 15:42-44 says so!

“The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.”

3. YES – because our bodies belong to Jesus!

When we receive Him as our sin-sacrifice and Savior, He comes in to live in these bodies which He purchased and these bodies ever after belong to Him.

“Do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.” (I Corinthians 6:19,20)

Jesus will come bodily to get what belongs to Him. He makes these bodies to be like His

glorified body, fit to live in that new environment. He will then take us to be with Him in the Father's House. You and I will have a new body some day, praise the Lord!

Revelation 21:4-5 says, *"And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."* Then He who sat on the throne said, *"Behold, I make all things new."*

Amen! And that includes new bodies!