



**The Rapture, 1 Cor 15:51-52; Resurrection Body of Christ, 1 Jn 3:2; Lk 24:37-39; of the Believer, 1 Cor 15:49; Characteristics, Phil 3:20; Rev 21:4; 2 Sam 12:21-23**

- 4) The rapture of the church is a doctrine that was not known to the Old Testament writers but is revealed by Paul in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 and in:

**1 Corinthians 15:51-** Listen, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

**v. 52 -** in a moment in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.

The bodies of the husband and wife will be transformed into resurrection bodies at the rapture of the church at which time the body of Christ will become the bride of Christ.

Although there is no marriage in heaven (Matthew 22:30) the husband and wife will be reunited and they will be able to recognize each other since their resurrection bodies are said to be just like that of Jesus Christ's.

**1 John 3:2 -** Fellow believers, we are now children of God, and what we will be has not yet been revealed. We know, however, that if He should appear [ <sup>TM</sup>Ln, ean plus the subjective mood of fanerōw, phaneroō indicates a 3CC: maybe He will and maybe He won't appear in our lifetime (denotes John understood the imminency of the Rapture) ], we shall be like Him [ a resurrection body of the same eternal species ] because we shall see Him as He is.

The Lord's resurrection body is the prototype. When the Rapture occurs those who are alive will be instantly transformed from physical body to a resurrection body that is of the same structure as the Lord's.

With regard to the resurrection body it must be remembered that Jesus Christ is referred to as the last Adam in 1 Corinthians 15:45. As Adam was before the fall so was the Lord in the Incarnation.

However, the Lord's human body was incorruptible and undefiled. The perfection of the sacrificial lamb in the Levitical sacrifices portrayed not only the impeccability of our Lord's soul and spirit it also spoke of the perfection of his physical person as well.

When the disciples arrived at the tomb on that first Easter morning they found no human corpse inside. It was discovered empty. The Lord's soul and human spirit had been reunited with the body and He was raised from the dead but in a resurrection body.

The difference is that this body was capable of functioning outside the environs of Planet Earth including outer space and heaven itself. Nevertheless, the same body that went into the tomb is the one that came out of the tomb.

When the Lord met with the assembled disciples in Jerusalem on the day of the resurrection they thought that they had encountered a "spirit":

**Luke 24:37 -** They were startled and frightened and thought that they were seeing a spirit [ pneûma, **pneuma: an apparition of a disembodied spirit made visible, i.e., a "ghost" ]**.



But the Lord was able to convince them otherwise by his illustrations and rationale in:

**Luke 24:38 -** And He said to them, “Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts?

**v. 39 -** “See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; touch Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.”

Schep, J. A. *The Nature of the Resurrection Body: A Study of the Biblical Data.* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1964), 131-34:

The strongest evidence that Jesus' resurrection-body was a body of flesh is provided by Luke's account of the appearance to the disciples on the evening of that great Easter Day. When Jesus suddenly stood in their midst they were terrified, thinking they saw a spirit, i.e., the incorporeal spirit of a dead person. It is not clear whether they recognized Jesus; either they did recognize him but could not believe that he was *physically* present.

Jesus removed all uncertainty by identifying himself to the disciples; moreover, he showed that he was *physically* present in the *same* body that he had previously possessed. He invited them to look at his hands and feet, implying that the scars left there from the nailing on the Cross were visible—for otherwise Jesus would have drawn their attention to his face. The scars made it clear, more than anything else could do, that the crucified and buried Master was standing before them in the very same body in which they had seen him suffer. Then, to give them proof that the body they saw was not something immaterial, but real and solid, Jesus invited them not only to see but also to handle, to touch his body: “for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye behold me having” (v.39). (p. 131)

... verse 40 states “he *showed* them his hands and his feet.”

An important question is, Why did Jesus use the expression “flesh and bones” and not “flesh and blood”?

... “flesh and blood” was a common formula, but it did not denote the substance of man's body but man himself in the totality of his existence. In Luke 24:39 it is very particularly the *substance* of Jesus' body which is in dispute. Therefore the most natural explanation seems to be that Jesus referred to his flesh and bones because they are the most solid parts; they give shape to the body, can be seen, touched, and handled, whereas the blood cannot. (p. 132)

Jesus' statement (v. 39) that he “has” (Greek *echō*, to [continually] possess) a body of flesh and bones is significant. It implies that such a body is an *essential* part of the risen Lord.

When the disciples still doubted and wondered, Jesus asked them for something to eat. After they gave him a piece of a broiled fish he ate it before their eyes (vv. 41-43).

The text shows abundantly that Jesus' body was *capable* of receiving food and, indeed, *took* food. (p. 133)

Jesus' resurrection-body was (*sic*) a body of flesh, essentially identical with that in which Jesus was buried, bearing the scars of the wounds inflicted upon it at the crucifixion and capable of taking food. Luke's minute study and precise description of its characteristics are appropriate for a medical man, from whom one may expect “something like the fullness of a medical diagnosis.” (p. 134)

The resurrection body is flesh and bones. At the Rapture of the church you will have your original body reinstated but with significant changes. How this is done and what kind of body it will be are questions answered by Paul in:

**1 Corinthians 15:35 -** But someone will say, “How are the dead raised? And with what kind of body do they come?”



Paul answers this question with an agricultural analogy. All plants produce seeds, technically called diaspores, none of which *immediately* germinate and start to grow into yet another plant of the same species.

Seeds are described as being “dormant.” This word is defined by Merriam-Webster’s eleventh edition as “temporarily in abeyance yet capable of being activated; having faculties suspended; having biological activity suspended. Asleep, inactive.”

This perfectly describes the death of the believer in Jesus Christ as Paul demonstrates in the following verses:

**1 Corinthians 15:36 -** You fool! That which you sow does not come to life unless it dies [ **dormancy precedes germination** ].

**v. 37 -** and that which you sow, you do not sow the body which is to be, but a bare grain, perhaps of wheat or of something else.

**v. 38 -** But God gives it a body just as He wished, and to each of the seeds a body of its own.

**1 Corinthians 15:42 -** So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown a perishable body, it is raised an imperishable body [ **the body of corruption must die physically before it may be raised in perfection** ];

**v. 43 -** it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory [ **the resurrection body will be glorified by light (see transfiguration in Matthew 17:2)** ]; it is sown in weakness [ **physical death is inevitable** ], it is raised in power [ **the resurrection body cannot die** ];

**v. 44 -** it is sown in a natural body [ **“flesh and blood,” an idiom for temporal human body (see 1 Corinthians 15:50)** ] it is raised a spiritual body [ **“flesh and bones,” an idiom for a permanent eternal body (see Luke 24:39)** ].

**v. 45 -** So also it is written, (Genesis 2:7) “The first man, Adam, became a living soul.” The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.

**v. 46 -** However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural; then the spiritual.

**v. 47 -** The first man is from the earth, earthly; the second man is from heaven.

**v. 48 -** As is the earthly, so also are those who are earthly; and as is the heavenly, so also are those who are heavenly.

**v. 49 -** And just as we have borne the image of the earthly [ **temporal earthly body** ], we shall also bear the image of the heavenly [ **eternal heavenly body** ].

Consequently, we see a system designed by God that guarantees an eternal future for those who believe in Christ. Just as the Lord’s resurrection body is flesh and bones so also shall the resurrection bodies of all believers be of flesh and bones.

It is indicated in Luke’s account of the resurrection of the Lord that certain characteristics of the former human body will be retained, e.g., the Lord ate with His disciples, he conversed with them and they recognized Him. The physical scars He sustained during His Passion were still evident in His hands, feet, and chest.

However, the physical body produced by the bloodline from Adam to Mary was subject to death. No one had the power to kill Christ. However, when He dismissed His soul and spirit while on the cross, His body died.

It was this “natural body” that died; it was the “spiritual body” that was resurrected. The former was subject to death, the latter is not.



Thus the true humanity of Christ that went to the cross has been transformed by the power of God into a human body of flesh and bones that possesses the attributes associated with eternal life: it is imperishable, glorified, and eternal.

Our heavenly bodies will be just like His:

**Philippians 3:20 -** For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ;

**v. 21 -** who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity of the body of His glory, by the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.

This resurrection body will be free of the sinful nature with its lust patterns, trends, strengths, and weaknesses. It will not be subject to death and the soul will not know mourning, crying or pain:

**Revelation 21:4 -** And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes [ **no recall of personal suffering or regret** ]; and there shall be no more death; there shall no longer be any mourning [ **no recall of any earthly sorrows, sadness, grief** ], or crying [ **no physical expression of these things since they will not be recalled** ]; the first things [ **life in the body of corruption** ] have passed away.

However, there will be recall of those believers whom we love and therefore there is a promised reunion with these loved ones. For example, when the child born of David's rape of Bath-sheba was taken ill and died, rather than going into mourning and fasting, David dressed and ordered the chefs to prepare him a feast:

**2 Samuel 12: 21 -** Then the servants said to David, "What is this thing you have done? While the child was alive, you fasted and wept; but when the child died, you arose and ate food."

**v. 22 -** And David said, "While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept; for I said, 'Who knows, the Lord may be gracious to me, that the child may live.'

**v. 23 -** "But now he has died; why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he will not return to me."