

Jesus -- Now?

The question mark placed after "now" is not intended to imply there is a question about the present existence of Jesus. He is the *"first and the last, and the living one; and I was dead and behold, I am alive for evermore ..."* (Rev. 1:17f). The question mark is placed there to investigate whether Jesus presently has a body. The Hebrew passages speak of the *"days of his flesh"* emphatically telling us Jesus once had a body of flesh (Heb. 5:7). Still, Bible students know that His taking on the body of flesh came when He humbled Himself to become human but that prior to His earthly sojourn He existed in the form of God (Phil. 1:5-11). This earthly advent was spoken of further in Hebrews when the writer said, *"a body didst thou prepare for me"* and John writes of the fulfillment of it when he said, *"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us ..."* (Heb. 10:5; Jn. 1:14). But, Jesus no longer dwells on this earth. His disciples saw Him ascend into heaven where He is now by the right hand of God. Does He have a body now?

This subject must be approached with extreme reverence and caution for it is of God and His nature we seek to learn. And, whatever we write must be tempered with the sober knowledge that we have not seen Him. Whatever conclusion is reached must be reached according to what the scriptures reveal to us about Him.

First, Jesus had a body after His resurrection. It was a body that might be touched (Jn. 20:26). He was able to eat in that body (Lk. 24:41f). It was a body which allowed Him to pass through a wall into a room where all doors were shut (Jn. 20:19). Still, does that mean He now possesses such a body, or a body at all? We know that angels are spirit beings, but they sometimes took on the appearance of human form and even ate with humans (Gen. 18:4-8). The fact that Jesus had a body after His resurrection does not necessarily argue that He has a body now. The apostles were to be witnesses of His resurrection and they could only witness according to their five senses.

Let us consider two passages which touch upon the question at hand. *"For our citizenship is in heaven, whence also we wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation that it may be conformed to the body of his glory"* (Phil. 3:20f). Paul says essentially the same thing as John who wrote, *"Beloved, now are we children of God, and it is not yet manifest what we shall be. We know that if he shall be manifested, we shall be like him, for we shall see him, even as he is"* (1 Jn. 3:2f). These two verses tell us: 1) we do not know what we shall be like; 2) we shall be like Him; and 3) the body of our humiliation shall be conformed to the body of His glory. These passages SEEM to imply that Jesus now has a glorious

body. But, we dare not be dogmatic. Our confidence is that we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him, even as He is!

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