

Will We Have Bodies in Heaven?

Written by K B Napier
Thursday, 05 May 2011 10:00

Theologically, I do not believe in giving interpretations to scriptures that appease people, or give them false hope, or that deny truth. If God's word says something, I will not cover it up, nor will I refuse to talk about it. If it is there, it is there.

When it comes to Heaven, we can only say what God says in His word. Also, good theology arises from the texts, giving opportunity to deduce from given facts. So, using proper means, can we say we will have bodies in Heaven? The answer affects a number of other things.

One person I know argues that we will not have bodies, and therefore we will not recognise loved ones in Heaven, nor will we do anything at all. To him, we will just be disembodied 'whatever' floating about aimlessly. What a horrible existence! Who wants to be in Heaven if it means we will just be spiritual bits hanging about for no reason in a place we do not know or experience? Interestingly the same man's faith is torn to tatters, and his idea of 'love' is a lot to be desired.

I see no real difference between his idea of 'Heaven', and the notion of annihilation! There is no joy in it, no hope, and certainly nothing to desire. Yet, having said that, we must not give Heaven a meaning it is not given in scripture. Even if the texts do not support the idea of us having bodies, we must face the facts, and not spiritualise just to make people feel happy. What, then, can we glean from God's word?

Matthew 27:52

In this little known account we see that many people arose from the dead after Jesus was resurrected. There were "*many bodies of the saints*" who appeared to many others in Jerusalem. Now, if we have no bodies after death – what of this account?

Romans 12:1

"But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you"

Because Christ rose again in a physical body, so will we! It cannot be much more plain. Christ

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said we would likewise follow Him to be with God.

1 Corinthians 15:35-38

“But some [man] will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?

[Thou] fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die:

And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other [grain]:

But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.”

So, Jesus Himself refers to our ‘body’ when we are raised up. The ‘body’, *soma*, literally refers to the body we can see.

Verses 42-45

“So also [is] the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption:

It is sown in dishonour; 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.

And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam [was made] a quickening spirit.”

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Do not be confused by these words. Our old bodies, the ones we die in, are corrupt so cannot enter Heaven. So, when we are resurrected by Christ, we will have new bodies, pure and undefiled. In both cases, mortal and spiritual, the 'body' is the same thing and has the same meaning. That is, an actual presence. A body has position, mass and image. So it will be in Heaven! Bodies that cannot be seen are rather useless and is a misnomer! The word *pneuma* (spirit) is not used for 'body', so we know that the body we will have in Heaven will be actual and visible.

Christ arose physically, and for this reason so will we. Our new bodies will be like Jesus' new body (Philippians 3:21). Christ will know us individually in Heaven, and so we will know others we love. There would be an absurdity in being in a glorious place and yet see or know nothing! And Matthew 5:30 tells us those who are cast into hell will have bodies. And body and soul will go to hell, not just soul (Matthew 10:28). Romans 8:23 tells us our bodies will be "redeemed".

The whole tenor of scripture speaks of an actual body in Heaven. Jesus had a physical body like all men's. When He arose, his body looked just like an human body, but was different in type. Our bodies will be the same, otherwise how could we enjoy the amazing glory of God's abode if we do not see it, hear, smell, touch, etc.?

How miserable must be those who think we will not have bodies or know each other in Heaven!

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