

A VISITOR FROM OUTER SPACE

SPACE TRAVEL

How far away is heaven?

At least 2,932,848,000,000,000,000 miles



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In our day, with the increase of space travel, and landing on the moon, and man's anticipation of life on other planets, and U.F.O's, and visitors from outer space with great intelligence, it is almost as though within each member of the human race there is an inherent knowledge of being here on this Earth, but not actually being alone in this world. There is almost an anticipation of a visitor from outerspace. The movies are depicting Star Wars, and space travel, and Star Trek, and even our military exploits have been labeled "Star Wars."

It is not strange that there is something written which is reliable about space and space travel and a visit from space in the near future. Have we been visited from outer space? **Will we be visited from outer space? The answer is definitely "yes."** Will we make the trip? Will the visit from outer space be peaceful or warlike?

Well, the next thing on the prophetic calendar in the Bible is the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ to gather out those who are alive at His coming to take them through space to be with Him. The event is imminent. There are no prophecies unfulfilled which would withhold His coming.

His purpose in coming is to raise the believers who have died between Pentecost and the time of His coming, and to translate believers who are alive on this Earth at that time. This will include the bringing of those who have died in the Church Age before His coming with Him. He will bring them from heaven. He will transform their dead bodies, which have been molded into the dust of the ground, into perfect glorified bodies. And there will be the transforming of the bodies of the believers still alive on the Earth into like perfect, glorified bodies, and the transportation of both classes to heaven.

This event is called in theological circles "the rapture of the Church," the departure of the Church, the body of Christ which becomes the bride of Christ. The body of Christ consists of believers from the Church Age. It

will be joined forever to her Bridegroom, the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Lord Jesus Christ speaks of His coming for His own in John 14:1-3. **Here He tells His disciples that He is going to His Father's house to prepare a place for them, AND THAT HE WILL COME AGAIN AND RECEIVE THEM TO HIMSELF.**

John 14:1-3, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I GO TO PREPARE A PLACE FOR YOU. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I WILL COME AGAIN, AND RECEIVE YOU UNTO MYSELF: THAT WHERE I AM THERE YE MAY BE ALSO."

In other words, He is coming from heaven into the atmosphere of this Earth to take the believers in the Church Age with Him back to heaven. This event may take place at ANY MOMENT. There is NOTHING left to be fulfilled. Believers will be taken to heaven, and unbelievers will be left on this Earth to under go the most terrible time on this Earth, called the Great Tribulation and "Jacob's Trouble."

We will now examine this great event, this visit from outerspace, and all that is involved in it. First of all, WHERE IS HEAVEN? How far is heaven from the Earth? How long will it take the Lord Jesus Christ to travel all that distance? And just how close to the Earth will He come? WILL HE COME TO HOUSTON? To Philadelphia? To Miami, Florida?

As to the locality of heaven, Isaiah gives us some hints. Isaiah reports the words of "Lucifer," the mightiest angel Christ ever created, who was Christ's regent on the perfect Earth of Genesis 1:1. In Isaiah 14:12-14 Lucifer said, "I will ascend into heaven." This means that he was not in heaven when he rebelled against the Lord. "I will exalt my throne above the stars of God." This tells us that Lucifer had a throne below the stars of God, on this Earth. And having a throne on

this Earth, he reigned over a pre-adamic race of beings, directing their worship to the God of heaven.

This last utterance also teaches us that God's throne is beyond the stars of the universe. God's throne, the place of His centralized authority, is in heaven. Heaven is outside of the universe.

Lucifer speaks again, "I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the side of the north." **Now THIS LOCALIZES HEAVEN AS ABOVE THE EARTH IN A LINE WITH THE AXIS OF THE EARTH, ABOVE THE NORTH POLE, AND IN A PLACE BEYOND THE FARTHEST STAR. Heaven is not above the Earth in all directions.** The inhabitants of the equator area look up and see blue sky. But heaven is not above them as they look directly up from where they stand. The explorers of Antarctica looked up and saw the blue sky, but heaven was not above them. **Heaven has a fixed location above the North Pole, in a line with the axis of the Earth.**

BUT HOW FAR IS HEAVEN FROM THE EARTH? By new and more powerful telescopes astronomers have discovered stars that are 5,000,000,000 (5 billion) light years from the Earth. That means that it has taken light from these stars, travelling at the speed of light of 186,000 miles per second, 5,000,000,000 years to reach this Earth. But how far are these stars from the Earth? Multiply 5,000,000,000 by 60 seconds, and that number by 60 minutes, and that number by 24 hours, and that number by 365 days, and that number by 186,000 miles per second and you will have the number of miles which these stars are from Earth. **The number is 2,932,848,000,000,000,000 (2.9 sextillion).**

Heaven is at least that many miles from the Earth!! Astronomers say that beyond these stars there is a thinning out of stars, indicating either that the material universe ends here, or that there may be a relatively empty space, after which stars may again appear.

Such figures stagger one's imagination. **Think of the Lord Jesus Christ who could SPEAK such a universe into existence. He spoke a word, and the universe sprang**

into existence. Job says in Job 38:7 that the "sons of God," angels, "shouted for joy when they saw the universe come into existence." We should be careful to note that **they did not exclaim joy over a chaos, a ruin, but over a PERFECT created order. THE CHAOS CAME AS THE RESULT OF LUCIFER'S FALL.** The Earth became void, desolate and a ruin.

The Lord Jesus Christ, when coming to take the believers home with Him, will travel a distance of 2,932,848,000,000,000,000 miles for you. **If He travelled at the speed of light, 186,000 miles per second, it would take Him 5,000,000,000 (5 billion) years to reach the Earth and us. Jesus Christ, who is very God of very God, will COME WITH THE SPEED OF THOUGHT FROM HEAVEN. One moment in heaven, the next moment in the atmosphere of this Earth.**

BUT JUST HOW CLOSE TO THE EARTH WILL JESUS CHRIST COME? Paul, in his classic account of the rapture in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 says, "We will meet the Lord in the air." The Greek language of the New Testament has two Greek words for air, referring to the lower, denser atmosphere, which is the word AER, and the other word is AITHER, speaking of the rarefied, thinner atmosphere.

A Greek would stand on the summit of Mt. Olympus, which is 10,000 feet high, and pointing downward would say "AER," and pointing upward, would say "AITHER." Now, which word did God the Holy Spirit use through the apostle Paul? The text says AER, all of which means that the **Lord Jesus Christ, when He comes for us, His bride, His Church, will descend to a DISTANCE WITHIN 10,000 FEET OF THE EARTH.**

Paul was writing to the Thessalonian church, whose members were sorrowing over the loss of a loved one who had died. Paul tells them "to sorrow not as others which have no hope." The tombstones in the cemeteries of Thessalonica were inscribed with the word "no hope." These pagan Greeks, striving to pierce the future through their philosophies, could never arrive at any positive assurance of a reunion with loved ones in the after life. They had no hope. Now, to these

Christian Greeks, Paul holds out the assured hope of reunion with loved ones who were believers, a reunion in the air, when the Lord Jesus Christ comes for His bride.

Verse 14. "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him." The word "sleep" is an euphemism for Christian death, with the connotation of awakening.

He also states in verse 15 that, "For this we say unto you by the Word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep." The ones who are alive will not go before them. After receiving our new resurrection bodies, we who are alive when Jesus Christ comes shall join those who have gone on before.

Verses 17, 18, "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." "Caught up together with them in the clouds." There is no definite article in the Greek text before the word "clouds." There should not be one in the translation. We shall be caught up in clouds, clouds of believers. **This is the great mass of glorified believers going up to heaven, and THEY OR WE WILL HAVE THE APPEARANCE OF CLOUDS.** The Greek word used here for "clouds" is used also in Hebrews 12:1, in the clause "wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses." The Holy Spirit, in the book of Hebrews, visualizes a Greek stadium with its thousands of onlookers occupying the tiers upon tiers of seats.

Paul says in Thessalonians that "we will be caught up." This word has a number of meanings which give us some important information regarding the rapture of space travel. The word is HARPAZO. It means to "carry off by force." This gives us the reason why the Lord Jesus Christ will descend to 10,000 feet above the Earth.

Satan and his kingdom of demons occupy this lower atmosphere. Paul speaks of Satan as the "prince of the power of the air." Ephesians 2:2. He used the word AER,

which speaks of the lower, denser atmosphere in which we live. **The demons inhabit this portion of the atmosphere around the Earth in order that they may prey upon the believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. They attempt to disrupt the working of Christianity. They try to spoil the testimony and the service of Christianity. And they, along with Satan, attempt to prevent the unbeliever from accepting Jesus Christ as personal Saviour and having eternal life.**

"Satan blinds the minds of them that believe not, lest they believe the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ." **Satan and his fallen angels try to insulate the body of Christ from heaven.** At the time of the rapture, they will attempt to keep the Church from going up to heaven with the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Lord Jesus Christ will exert His omnipotent power in taking the believers in the Lord Jesus Christ with Him to heaven THROUGH THE KINGDOMS OF SATAN, and against all of his supernatural power and that of his demons.

The word "HARPAZO" also means to rescue from danger of destruction. That means that the body of Christ, the believer, the Church, will be caught up to heaven before the seven year period of Great Tribulation which the world has never known.

As to the pre-tribulation rapture of the Church, more might be said. The Divine analysis of the book of Revelation says: "The things seen." The Patmos vision of the Lord Jesus Christ. Revelation 1. "The things that are." The Church Age. Revelation 2 and 3. "The things which shall be after these things." Events happening after the Church Age. Revelation 4 and 5. Also found in Revelation 1:19, **which indicates that the Church will be caught up before the Tribulation begins.** The promise given the missionary church which is in existence today, and which blends with the last age of Church history, the Laodicean, to the effect that **God will keep that church from the hour of "testing."** Revelation 3:10, namely, the Tribulation period, also indicates a pre-tribulation rapture, or departure. Revelation 3:10, "Because thou hast kept the word of My patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of

testing, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the Earth."

Again, THERE IS NOTHING IN SCRIPTURE WHICH INDICATES THAT THE CHURCH WILL EITHER ENTER OR PASS THROUGH THE GREAT TRIBULATION, which is designated as "Jacob's Trouble." Israel is given many signs which will warn her of the near approach of that period, Matthew 24. But the Gospels and the epistles are entirely devoid of any sign given to the Church.

The epistles speak of the Day of Christ, Philippians 1:6, "Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." This is an expression not found in the Old Testament or the Gospels. This is a day which the Church is to look forward to with joy. It is the end of the pathway of the Christian Church. If this day does not occur before the Tribulation then there is no place for it in the prophetic calendar of events which will take place during or after that period.

The Great Tribulation period is the time when the Divine wrath is to be visited upon Earth dwellers, particularly upon Israel. But the promise to the Church is that it has been delivered from the wrath to come.

1 Thessalonians 1:9, 10, 5:8, "For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God: And to wait for His Son from heaven, Whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come." Romans 5:9, "Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him."

The Bible expressly states who will be the objects of the Divine wrath during the Tribulation, namely, Israel and the ungodly of the Gentile nations. If the Church were destined to suffer, surely the Bible would make note of that fact along with the mention of the above two companies of individuals. **But the world is divided into three groups by the Lord: Jew, Gentile and Church.**

The Biblical attitude of the believer is one of waiting for the glorification of his body.

Romans 8:23, "And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, THE REDEMPTION OF OUR BODY." Philippians 3:20, 21, "For our manner of life is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself."

1 Thessalonians 1:9, 10, "For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God: And to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come." **The language is clear that the believer is to expect the Lord Jesus Christ at any moment, not to look for Him in connection with some predicted event, for which signs have been given to Israel and not to the Church. The Jews seek for signs. The believer in the Lord Jesus Christ does not seek for a sign, but for the Son.**

To teach that the Church will go through the Tribulation period is to nullify the Biblical teaching of the imminent coming of the Lord Jesus Christ for His bride. **Events on Earth are not yet in readiness for the Great Tribulation.** Even at this time in 1987/1988, the period cannot come before we are removed from this Earth. **The Lord may return for His Church at any moment.** Paul, Peter and John all make the Lord's return as imminent. Philippians 4:5, "Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand." 1 Peter 1:13-15, "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the GRACE that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ: As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation."

1 John 3:2, 3, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him: for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that hath this hope in Him purified himself, even as He is

pure.” The imminent coming of the Lord for the Church is the ground of appeal for living the Christian way of life. Finally Paul, in 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12, states that **the Great Tribulation cannot come unless the rapture of the Church from the Earth comes first.**

There are four days in Scripture:

THE DAY OF MAN, which is man’s judgment. 1 Corinthians 4:3, “But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man’s judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self.” This is man’s volition, where God allows man his own free will, negative.

THE DAY OF CHRIST. Philippians 1:6, “Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.” This is when Christ has His day. **This is the rapture, when He comes for His bride.**

THE DAY OF THE LORD. 2 Thessalonians 2:2, “That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.” The best Greek texts say not “the day of Christ,” but “the day of the Lord.” **This is when the Lord has His day in judgment, the Tribulation period.**

And THE DAY OF GOD. 2 Peter 3:12, “Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?” This is the Millennium, the Millennium merging into eternity.

In the 2 Thessalonians passage Paul is speaking of the Great Tribulation. Someone had written a letter to the Thessalonian church stating that the period of the Great Tribulation was then present, and had forged Paul’s name to the document. The apostle Paul calms their fears by saying that that day cannot come until a “falling away” comes first.

The Greek word “falling away” means departure. The definite article appears before it in the original text. The word is used in other places in the New Testament, and in these places the context indicates that from which the departure is made. But here there is no such information. It follows that this particular

departure must have been in the teaching of Paul to the Thessalonian believers, and was known by them and by him.

Paul had taught about the rapture, the departure, in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, “But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. For this we say unto you by the Word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”

Now in 2 Thessalonians 2 the context speaks of the Holy Spirit as the One who restrains iniquity on Earth through the Church Age and then leaving the Earth for heaven. 2 Thessalonians 2:7, “For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only He who now letteth will let, until He be taken out of the way.”

The word “letteth” is Old English for restrain. **When the Holy Spirit takes His departure, the Church goes with Him, for He in dwells every believer in the Church Age.**

The words “falling away” are an interpretation of the Greek word, not a translation. Furthermore, the word “apostasy,” which is departure, is the Church departing. There is no apostasy which would withhold the coming of the Antichrist and the Great Tribulation, but on the other hand, **the departure of the Church precedes the Great Tribulation. By the Lord’s return from heaven for us, He will rescue us from the danger of destruction.**

The word HARPAZO is used also of Divine power transferring a person marvelously and swiftly from one place to another. It refers here to the act of the Lord Jesus Christ taking with Him to heaven all believers in the

Church Age. HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE THE CHURCH TO TRAVERSE THAT IMMENSE DISTANCE BETWEEN EARTH AND HEAVEN?

If the Church travelled 186,000 miles per second, it would take at least 5,000,000,000 years to reach heaven. The only solution to this supposed problem is that WE WILL GO TO HEAVEN WITH THE SPEED OF THOUGHT. If it went any slower, the time consumed would be enormous. BELIEVERS WILL HAVE NEW POWERS OF LOCOMOTION IN ETERNITY, a supernatural flying carpet, as it were, and IT WILL WHISK THEM TO ANY PART OF THE UNIVERSE IN AN INSTANT OF TIME.

Again, the word HARPAZO means to claim for ones self eagerly. Here the Great Bridegroom of the Church, the Lord Jesus Christ, comes from heaven, to claim His bride, and take her to Himself. Finally, the word HARPAZO means to snatch out and away. **This tells us that the rapture will occur so suddenly that it will take the Church by surprise.**

Some day soon that great event will take place. How soon? **Well, it cannot be far off!!** If you glance down Bible history for a moment, it is significant that the Lord has been in the habit of **doing some great things with reference to salvation, at the turn of a millennium, or of two millenniums.**

The date of Adam is approximately 4000 B.C. This was the plan of salvation, in which God was to step down from His judgment throne to take upon Himself the guilt and penalty of human sin, in order that He might satisfy His justice, maintain His government, and at the same time open the flood gates of GRACE to lost sinners. This was pre-figured in sacrifices, which He instituted when He made coats of skins and clothed Adam and Eve.

The initial step in the fulfillment of this plan He took in 2000 B.C., when He called Abraham to be the progenitor of the Jewish nation, from which would come the Saviour who would die and pay for our sins. The next step He took in 1000 B.C., when He started the dynasty of David, from which line of kings the Messiah and Saviour would come.

The next step was taken in A.D. 1, when God, in the Person of His Son, came to Earth, became incarnate in the human race by virgin birth, and died on the cross for the sins of the whole world, the substitutionary atonement for sin. That was His First Advent to Earth. The Second Advent of Christ is predicted in Scripture. **All indications point to the fact that the Second Advent is near at hand.**

The Church has been in existence almost 2000 years. **It would seem logical that the Lord would repeat His custom of doing some thing of great importance at or near the turn of these two millenniums.** That is, within the next few years, that would be His coming to Earth a second time.

But the rapture must take place seven years before the Second Advent of Christ. So, if you are using a two millennium figure, the rapture must occur in the next six-seven years. Which means we are fast approaching the wind up of things. **The rapture could occur with in the next few years. It could again occur at any moment. Nothing more has to be fulfilled prophetically before it can happen. It is the next great event in God's Plan for the human race, our space voyage to heaven.**

Look at this from the standpoint of Church history, in the second and third chapters of Revelation. This contains the history of the Church. It is divided into seven periods of time, or ages. They are as follows:

- The apostolic church. A.D. 33-96.
- The martyrs church. A.D. 96-316.
- The state church. A.D. 316-500.
- The papal church. A.D. 500.
- The reformation church. A.D. 1500.
- The missionary church. A.D. 1793.
- The apostate church. Now.

We are living in the seventh and last age of Church history. The rapture will close out the Church Age. **The way to prepare yourself for the Lord's return to take you up with Him is as simple as, "BELIEVE ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, AND THOU SHALT BE SAVED." And you will end up being a space traveller.**

1 Corinthians 15:51-58, THE GUARANTEE. "Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For the corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

There is a generation that will be alive, when the Lord returns from heaven to the air, that will NOT EXPERIENCE DEATH, but will be changed in a twinkling of an eye. Death will take a holiday when the Lord returns for His bride.

THE BODY FOR SPACE TRAVEL

Since our bodies wear out and since they are depicted in Scripture as a "tent," which is a temporary dwelling for our soul and our spirit, what happens when this body, this tent, collapses? We know that in space travel there has to be some kind of a space capsule that will be able to go through space and not burn up and not disintegrate. Well, what kind of a body will we receive when the Lord returns, that will be able to make that trip and remain in space indefinitely and not wear out and make periodic trips back and forth from the third heaven to this Earth at our own will? Does the Bible tell us what kind of a body that will be?

Well, we have a vivid description of that resurrection body from the body that the Lord Jesus Christ had as He ascended up into the third heaven and He will descend to the air, and then later to the Earth, in that selfsame resurrection body.

He ate in a resurrection body. He spoke in a resurrection body. He could be touched in a resurrection body. He went up in a moment of time. Gravity and space were not a problem for Him. Time was no problem for Him. He was even able to go right through a stone tomb and a stone wall in His resurrection body. **And the Scripture says that we will have a body just like that of the Lord Jesus Christ.** This is what is called in Scripture "ultimate sanctification," where the soul and the spirit leave this temporal physical body and join a permanent spiritual body.

Acts 1:9-11, "And when He had spoken these things, WHILE THEY BEHELD, 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; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, WHY STAND YE GAZING UP INTO HEAVEN? THIS SAME JESUS, WHICH IS TAKEN UP FROM YOU INTO HEAVEN, SHALL SO COME IN LIKE MANNER AS YE HAVE SEEN HIM GO INTO HEAVEN."

THE ETERNAL BODY

Salvation in Christ has not only in it the provision for the standing of every person before God, and a provision for His life upon this Earth in relation to sin and righteousness, but it also provides for His physical body at the coming of Christ for His bride.

The first provision we know and call "justification." This is the act whereby God in His GRACE removes the guilt and penalty of sin from the believer in the Lord Jesus Christ and bestows upon that believer a positive righteousness in which the believer stands uncondemned in Christ, guiltless and righteous before God in time and in eternity. "He made Him to be sin for us, Who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him," 2 Corinthians 5:21. This is a judicial matter.

The second provision is known as "sanctification," or separation. This is the act of **God breaking the power of the indwelling nature and implanting the new Divine na-**

ture, also giving the believer, **God the Holy Spirit as a permanent Indweller, which is followed by a continuous process where the believer produces the fruit of the Spirit, being controlled by God the Holy Spirit.** The command in Scripture is to “be filled with the Spirit,” “walk in the Spirit,” “walk in Truth,” etc.

The third provision is “glorification,” which is the act of God transforming the physical body of the believer for eternity. This comes to the believer when the Lord returns for His bride.

Now, there are four changes which will take place in the body the believer. The first one of these changes that takes place in the body of the believer is in 1 Corinthians 15:44, where Paul informs us that our present body as constituted, is a “natural body,” and the future body is a “spiritual body.” “It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.” The Greek word translated “natural” is PSUCHIKOS. This is the principle of life and the basis of its emotional aspect, animating the present body of flesh, in contrast to higher life. This has been used in Greek secular documents as “my human natural powers.”

The noun PSUCHE is “soul,” and is defined as the seat of the feelings and desires. There are examples of this in the following: “He also persisted in vexing my soul about his slave Antilla.” “While my soul is tempest-tossed.” “I exhort you, my lord, not to put grief into your soul and ruin your fortunes.”

It is used in a letter of a Christian in a phrase which reflects the trichotomy of 1 Thessalonians 5:23. In the words “to our God and gracious Saviour, and to His beloved Son, that they all may succour our body, soul and spirit.” Also it is found in the clause, “Who changed her mind, left the mill, and departed, persuaded by her father.”

So, from the usage we can determine the definition of the word “soul,” PSUCHE. **It is that part of man that knows, reasons, wills, desires, and feels.** It refers to the will, the emotion and the reason. Thus, a physical body is a natural, PSUCHIKOS,

soulful body, which is adapted to a life in which the activities of the will, the emotions, and the reason predominate in the sense that these occupy the larger part of the person’s world. The things of time and place, the things of human life as it is lived on this Earth; awareness, mentality, emotions, free will, conscience, understanding only human phenomena.

But the body the believer will have when Christ returns for him is a spiritual body. The Greek word is PNEUMATIKOS, which is that part of man that is akin to God and serves as His instrument or organ. In this sense the animal creation does not have a PNEUMA, or a spirit. With the physical body, the man has world-consciousness. With the soul he has self-consciousness. And with the spirit he has God-consciousness.

With the spirit man has to do with the things of God. He worships God by means of his human spirit, that is, when the spirit is energized by God the Holy Spirit. “The natural man,” soulful man, “receives not the things of the Spirit, because they are spiritually discerned.” The spiritual body understands spiritual phenomena. Our present body is so constituted that it is the efficient organ of the soul. The future physical body will be so adjusted that it will be the efficient organ of the spirit.

In this present life, most of our time and activity has to do with the things of time and space, like making a living, with the creative arts, with recreation, with the material world. THE HUMAN SPIRIT, HOWEVER, SHOULD BE THE DETERMINING FACTOR AS TO THE CHARACTER OF THE SOUL LIFE. Yet, it is in active use but a SMALL part of the time: when we worship God, study the Bible, pray, serve God in some distinctive service in which we are giving out the Word of God to those who do not know Him.

But in the future, conditions will be changed. Then the soul life, as we know it now, will be a thing of the past. **We will be occupied entirely with the Lord, and His worship and His service.** Our bodies then will be adjusted to this new life. **They will be changed so that they will be efficient instruments of the human spirit.** Just what the nature of change is, this we do not know.

The second change which takes place in the physical body, is that it will be an incorruptible one, and thus, an immortal one. Paul says "This corruptible must put on incorruption and this mortal must put on immortality," 1 Corinthians 15:53. This present body has death in it, disease, decay. It becomes tired and exhausted. It may even have deformities. Parts of it may have become taken away through accident or through an operation.

The future body will have no death in it, no weaknesses, no deformity, no disease. The parts that have been removed will be restored. What a condition that will be! To have a body which can never die, in which there will be no indwelling old sin nature, which will never become weary or exhausted, in which there will never be any pain. No sorrow, no tears, no pain, no death.

The third change will have to do with the composition of the body. Our present body is made up of flesh, blood and bones. Its life principle is in the blood. In our future physical body there will be a different life principle. **The body will be devoid of blood, a body of flesh and bones.** Paul, in Philippians 3:21, speaks of the Lord Jesus Christ, "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself." An expanded translation would give us the following: "Who shall change our humiliated body, that is humiliated by the presence of sin and death, conforming it as to its outward expression to the body of His glory, according to the energy whereby He is able to marshall all things under Himself."

Our future body, then, will be like the one the Lord Jesus Christ possesses now. 1 John 3:2, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be like: BUT WE KNOW THAT, WHEN HE SHALL APPEAR, WE SHALL BE LIKE HIM, FOR WE SHALL SEE HIM AS HE IS."

The Lord Jesus Christ told us something about His present physical body in His Words in Luke 24:39, "Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I myself: handle Me with a view to investigation, and see: because a spirit does not have flesh and bones, as you, with critical understanding and sight, see that

I have." Those words tell us something about the Lord's body. There were the marks of the nails of the crucifixion still in His hands, and in His feet. They were left there even though His resurrection body was perfect. **The marks are there for the purpose of identification.**

The body our Lord had after His resurrection was the same body that He had before the cross, and in which He died. **We will possess the same body which we have now, in the future life, except it will be changed.** Since that is true, we will have the same facial expressions, however, with all the wrinkles and blemishes ironed out. Since that is true, they knew Christ in His resurrection body, they will know us, each other, in the future life.

Secondly, our Lord's body was a solid, physical body. The disciples handled His body with their hands, depending upon what their sense of touch would tell them as to its reality and composition. John says in his first epistle, "that which we handled with a view to investigation." In 1 John 1:1 he uses the same Greek word Luke uses to report our Lord's words. It was therefore a body that would respond to the sense of touch, a body made of solid material. Our bodies will be like that.

Thirdly, it was a body made up of flesh and bones, but changed in composition. **Our future bodies will be made of flesh and bones, the same flesh and bones we have now, but changed as to composition.**

Fourthly, it was a body without blood. If our Lord's resurrection body had blood, He would have mentioned the fact when He spoke of flesh and bones. **Since our Lord's resurrection body did not have any blood in it, it must have had a new life principle animating it.** Our future bodies will have a new life principle in them.

Fifthly, our Lord, in His physical body of flesh and bones, went through a stone wall of the building in which the disciples were meeting. The doors of the room were closed. We will be capable of the same thing also. He had NEW POWERS OF LOCOMOTION. He could make Himself visible or invisible at will. He was here one minute and in another place in the next moment. **So, we will be**

with our resurrection body in this future life.

Finally, our Lord's resurrection body needed no clothing for a covering, but had a covering which was PRODUCED FROM WITHIN. Our Lord's body after the resurrection was not covered with clothing. The only clothes that He had at the time of His death were taken away from Him. His grave clothes He left in the sepulcher of Joseph. **He emerged through the stone walls of the resurrection tomb clad in a new covering for His body that was produced from within.**

All this is given in the Greek word Paul used in the above Scripture, where it is translated "fashioned." It is the word MORPHE, which refers to an outward expression which is not put on from without, but one that comes from within and which is a true representative of one's inner nature. This, in the case of our Lord, was a glory covering, an enswathment of glory which covered His resurrection body. On the Mount of Transfiguration, our Lord's face and clothing shone with a radiance that came from within. **A radiance similar to this was the covering of His body after the resurrection.**

It has always been God's Plan for His creatures to cover themselves with a covering produced from within. Adam and Eve covered their bodies with an enswathment

of glory which was produced from within their beings. When they sinned, they lost the power to produce such a covering from within. To cover their bodies, naked bodies which now had sin and death in them, they made clothing for themselves, fig leaves.

Birds cover themselves with beautiful plumage, which is produced from within. Animals cover themselves with fur which is produced from within. **Thus, in the life to come, the believer in the Lord Jesus Christ will cover their bodies with an enswathment of glory, a light covering, which will be produced from within.**

Now, to gather together the information regarding the future body of the believer. **We have the fact that it will be a body adapted to a spiritual life in which all one's time and activity have to do with the Lord, His worship and His service. It will be a body which will be incorruptible and immortal. It will be a body of flesh and bones, but no blood. This body will have a new life principle animating it. It will be a body, the covering of which, will be from within, produced from within.**

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