

## A Body You Have Prepared For Me

11/15/2024

You may recognize the title of today's lesson as something the Hebrew writer recorded concerning Jesus. That He came into this world via a human body. We will be looking into this a little later in this lesson. But first - Have you ever done the following -

Looked at a picture of yourself taken when we were younger and made a comment something like this - 'I sure look different now than I did back then, but you know I still feel like the same person. There is a part of me that doesn't seem to see itself as being any or older!'

Ever wonder why? This morning we will be looking into some of the things Scripture has to say about what and who we are. Or perhaps more properly - what constitutes 'me'!

In last week's lesson I included this quote from the now late Lutheran Pastor H. C. Leupold —

*'We are not human beings having a spiritual experience. We are spiritual beings having a human experience.'*

I also included this passage in which Jesus is informing a Samaritan woman about God as recorded in John 4:24 - *"God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."*

We will begin this morning by reviewing a few passages that tell us some things about who Jesus is and then move on to passages about who and what we are.

John records this in John 1:1-14 about Jesus -

*"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light. The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth."*

Here we are told Jesus was there in the beginning with God. Jesus is also referred to as being The Word, The one through whom everything was created, and The light. Then we are told the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. So we could say that here we have a spiritual being having a human experience. In fact one could make a long list of human experiences that Jesus went through while he was here. To name a few He wept, He suffered and He learned obedience. The Hebrew writer states this about Jesus - *“For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.”* (Hebrews 4:15)

The Hebrew writer also tells this about Jesus -

*“In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. So he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs.”*

Here are told that we have the spiritual and physical representation of God before us in Jesus.

We also know from Scripture that after Jesus arose from the grave he had a body as the account below indicates - *“Now Thomas (also known as Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord!” But he said to them, “Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.” A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!” Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.” Thomas said to him, “My Lord and my God!”*

In the above passage we see Thomas, a man who knew the physical man Jesus, come to recognize personally what the Hebrew writer would later disclose to the world through his writings about Jesus. That Jesus is more than a Physical human being. He is in fact the long awaited Messiah.

Paul says this about Jesus taking on the form of a human - *“But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.”*

(Galatians 4:4-5)

The Hebrew writer also provides the following information to us about Jesus -  
“For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near. Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, since the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have any consciousness of sins? But in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said,  
“Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired,

**but a body have you prepared for me;**

in burnt offerings and sin offerings

you have taken no pleasure.

Then I said, ‘Behold, I have come to do your will, O God,

**as it is written of me in the scroll of the book.’”**

When he said above, “You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings” (these are offered according to the law), then he added, “Behold, I have come to do your will.” He does away with the first in order to establish the second. And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.” (Hebrews 10:1-10)

Considering the statements in bold print above we read this in Psalm 40:6-8 of David -  
“In sacrifice and offering you have not delighted,

**but you have given me an open ear.** (But a body hast thou prepared for me - )

Burnt offering and sin offering

(\*Septuagint)

you have not required.

Then I said, “Behold, I have come;

in the scroll of the book it is written of me:

I delight to do your will, O my God;

your law is within my heart.”

While there are many passages about the Messiah found in The Old Testament which describe various aspects of his coming perhaps this one from Psalm 40 is the one that the Hebrew writer had in mind when referring to Jesus in Hebrews 10 above.

\*Note the Septuagint translation included above.

But what about us the people God has created. Let’s look at a few passages of Scripture which may help us better understand just who and what we are.

Genesis 2:7 “then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and **breathed** into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.”

**Breathed** = Napah - to puff, breath into

God breathed into man the breath of life! Keep this 'breath of life' in mind as we continue.

Ecclesiastes 3:19-21 *"For what happens to the children of man and what happens to the beasts is the same; as one dies, so dies the other. They all have the same **breath**, and man has no advantage over the beasts, for all is vanity. All go to one place. All are from the dust, and to dust all return. Who knows whether the spirit of man goes upward and the spirit of the beast goes down into the earth?"*

**Breath** = Ruah - wind, breath

In the above passage we see Solomon expressing that he does not know about the fate of the spirit in beings after death. He appears to be confident that the body returns to dust. Remembering that Solomon asked for wisdom from God we read the following a little later in this same book of Ecclesiastes -

Ecclesiastes 12:6-7 *"before the silver cord is snapped, or the golden bowl is broken, or the pitcher is shattered at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern, and the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit returns to God who gave it."*

Somewhere along the line in his life it appears Solomon got the answer to his question about where the spirit goes. Solomon asked for wisdom and God gave it to him!

James the half brother of Jesus states this in his letter -

*"For as the **body** apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead."*  
(James 2:26)

The Greek word James uses for **Body** in his statement above is Soma. To be defined as - The body, used in a very wide application, literal or figurative: - bodily, body, slave. \*Note Soma is the only Greek word used for the word body in the New Testament. Thus every time we read about 'the' or 'a' body in The New Testament it is referring to some aspect of a Soma literally or figuratively.

Thus when the Hebrew writer speaking of Jesus says - 'a body you have prepared for me' it is to be recognized as a physical body not unlike your's and mine, or a Soma.

Notice how the Psalmist describes this connection of body and breath from God - Psalm 104:29 *"When you hide your face, they are dismayed; when you take away their breath, they die and return to their dust."*

Here again we see a combination of what James and Solomon both said about our spirit and flesh.

The Hebrew writer further provides us some insight when he writes - *“For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.”* (Hebrews 4:12-13)

Again we are told that we consist of more than just these fleshly bodies we live in.

In Mark's account of the gospel we see in chapter 12 Jesus talking to the Sadducees. Here Jesus provides us this information - *“And as for the dead being raised, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the passage about the bush, how God spoke to him, saying, ‘I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’? He is not God of the dead, but of the living. You are quite wrong.”*

I think we can all agree that the Abraham, Isaac and Jacob spoken of here in this account all died physically a long time ago. But Jesus says they are alive! In what form we may ask?

And we find this in Luke 12:4-5 where Jesus says - *“And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him.”* (KJV)

The Greek word Humin translated as ‘you’ appears several times in this account. But this word is absent in the phrase ‘cast into hell’. Some translations insert the word ‘you’. As in ‘cast you into hell’. But the Greek does not contain the word Humin (you) in this instance. God is the sole arbiter over life be it physical or spiritual. Both while we are present in the body and after when the body returns to dust and our spirit remains. Or as Solomon stated - the spirit returns to God who gave it.

I think most people have some sense that we are more than just mere physical beings. Scripture contains many more passages about what we actually are than the few details presented here in this lesson. And Scripture can help us understand ourselves much better than we may otherwise think possible.

Scripture tells us Jesus came into the world to save mankind from it's sin. Upon leaving He spoke of the necessity for Himself to go so that the comforter (Holy Spirit) may come - John 16:7.

We are also told in Scripture that when we repent and are Baptized we will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Notice it says **gift**, not **gifts** there in Acts 2:38. The Holy Spirit is referred to in Scripture as being a ‘He’ (John 16:8), not a what!

In the physical world two things cannot occupy the same physical space we are told. But apparently not so in the Spiritual world. With God all things are possible - (Matthew 19:26). Thus we read several times in Scripture about becoming one with Jesus and The Father. Remembering God is Spirit, - The Spirit of God or Holy Spirit can enter us

and reside in us we are told in Scripture. So the gift (not gifts) of the Holy Spirit is given to us when we repent and are Baptized. You may be saying at this point wait a minute doesn't Scripture talk about the gifts of the Spirit. Yes it does. And it very clearly tells us what they are. Consider the following -

The Gifts of the Holy Spirit are listed for us in places such as 1 Corinthians 12:8-10. They include wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, speaking in tongues, and interpretation of tongues. Other gifts are discussed in Ephesians 4:7-13 - giving some to be Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. Also see Romans 12:3-8 and Isaiah 11:2-3

The gift of the Holy Spirit is that God's Spirit can come and reside in us so that we may become one with The Heavenly Father and His Son. This is what Jesus prayed for on the night he was betrayed - John 17:21.

Then there is The Fruit of The Spirit.

Galatians 5:22 - Love, Joy, Peace, Long-suffering, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Meekness, Self-control.

The goal of God's Salvation for mankind is that we as God's created beings may return to what God created us to be, and the relationship God created us to have with Him. Scripture tells us Jesus The Christ has made that possible for mankind by becoming a sacrifice for our sin. The sin that has separated us from God.

I think H. C. Leupold understood something about who we really are when he said -

*'We are not human beings having a spiritual experience. We are spiritual beings having a human experience.'*

To become what God wants us to be!

It all begins by hearing God's message The Word, and then responding to it as God has commanded.