

## Death Is a Return

Commentary for July 15, 2017 — Differences between Christ's Death, and Ours

A while back I was reading a commentary by A.E. Knoch on Acts 2:27,<sup>1</sup> the verse where Peter talks about Jesus' resurrection: **"Because you will not leave my soul in hell, neither will you suffer [allow] your Holy One to see corruption."** Knoch begins by writing, "death is a return." I want to expand on his analysis. The key verse he used was from Ecclesiastes:

**"Then shall the dust [soil] return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."**

• *Ecclesiastes 12:7*

The **"dust"** of the ground or **"soil"** (of which the body is composed) combined with the spirit forms the soul (soil + spirit = soul). Another way of explaining this fact is that the **"spirit of man"** energizes the **"soil"** to form the **"living soul"** each of which is unique. This is true for every human being, including the first man Adam. This is true for you.<sup>2</sup> Man has a unique type of soul (Genesis 2:7) composed of **"soil"** and a **"spirit of man"** (Job 34:14; Ecclesiastes 3:21; 1 Corinthians 2:11). The fact that the body returns to the dust, soil, or earth, is confirmed often in Scripture (Job 4:19, 34:14; Psalm 146:4). Note what Ecclesiastes 3:20 says: **"All go unto one place; all are of the dust [soil], and all turn to dust [soil] again."**

Death will be a common experience of all human beings (except for a few "exceptions to the rule" Paul wrote of 1 Thessalonians 4:16–18). For the rest, all have died or will die, and the body returns to the dust and the spirit of man returns to God. Christ's situation was different.

### *Differences Between Christ's Experience and Our Future Experience*

Recall what God said to Adam and Eve in Genesis 3:19:

**"In the sweat of your face shall you eat bread, till you return unto the ground<sup>3</sup>; for out of it were you taken: for dust [soil] you are, and unto dust [soil] shall you return."**

<sup>1</sup> A.E. Knoch, *Concordant Commentary on the New Testament* (Santa Clarita, CA: Concordant Publishing Concern, 1968), Acts 2:27.

<sup>2</sup> Animals have souls similar in some respects to human beings (Numbers 16:22, 27:16; Acts 17:25, 28). Animal souls are also very different. Animal souls (Genesis 1:20–21, 24, 30, "soul" is *nephesh* in Hebrew ["living creature" in the King James Version]) are made up of "soil" and an animal spirit which is different for each animal "kind."

Animals do not have human souls because they do not have a human spirit (Job 12:10). However, each body of each creature, human or animal, is specially formulated — "designed" if you will — to receive the spirit unique to its animal kind, or the spirit unique for the children of Adam.

<sup>3</sup> The Hebrew word "ground" is the origin of the name Adam. See my Commentaries "Death and Life," "Epicurus on Death" and my Addendum "Congratulations, You Are Walking Dirt" toward the end of Dr. Martin's article "Figures of Speech and Holy Scripture."

When Jesus died, He ceased to exist, without consciousness. His spirit returned to His Father:

**“And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, ‘Father, into your hands I commend my spirit’: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost [spirit].”**

• *Luke 23:46*

**One difference.** Jesus’ body did not return to the soil. His body did not begin the corruption process. The reality of His body’s lack of decay was confirmed by Peter on Pentecost day as recorded in Acts 2:27 (cited above), quoting King David’s prediction in Psalm 16:10. His body during the three days and nights in the tomb, did not begin to decay “unto the ground” (Genesis 3:19), unlike the dead bodies of Adam, Eve, and every one of their children.

**Another difference.** Jesus was raised with His same crucified body. His Spirit returned to Him from God when resurrected, but He probably (and yes, I am guessing) had not yet received His spiritual body and put His blood before God in heaven (Hebrews 9:11–14). Was that why He did not want Mary Magdalene to touch Him?

**“Jesus said to her, ‘Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but [you] go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.’”**

• *John 20:17*

His disciples later did touch Him (Luke 24:39–40). We will be resurrected with different mortal bodies (ours having long turned to dirt) and we will be almost instantly given our spirit bodies (1 Corinthians 15:52–54). Our individual consciousness will return.

### ***In Resurrection, Each Body Is Unique***

**“But God gives it a body as it has pleased him, and to every seed his own body”** (1 Corinthians 15:38). Paul explains how Christ’s spiritual body, and ours, will differ from Adam’s body of “dust” or soil. All Adam’s children will experience this change, and all will become God’s children:

**“So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: It is sown a natural [soulish] body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural [soulish] body, and there is a spiritual body.**

**And so it is written, ‘The first man Adam was made a living soul’ [Genesis 2:7]; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. ...**

**The first man is of the earth [soil], earthy [soilish]: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy [soilish], such are they also that are earthy [soilish]: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy [soilish], we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither does corruption inherit incorruption.”**

• *1 Corinthians 15:42–45, 47–50*

Yes, after our resurrection we will have the same kind of body Christ has now (1 John 3:1–3).

David Sielaff  
[david@askelm.com](mailto:david@askelm.com)