

What Happened to Jesus' Body in His Resurrection?

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Abstract

According to the Gospels in the New Testament, Jesus' burial tomb was found to be empty by his followers on Sunday morning after his crucifixion. This was claimed to be due to Jesus' resurrection from the dead, thus proving that he was the Son of God, i.e. God in the flesh. One question that arises with this claim is the issue of what happened to Jesus' body in his resurrection. In this paper, three sources of information are considered to answer this question: 1) the account in the Gospels of Jesus' resurrection, 2) the theology of resurrection throughout the Bible, and 3) the Shroud of Turin. The Shroud is included because the 1988 carbon dating of the Shroud to 1260-1390 AD is best explained by a burst of radiation from the body that included neutrons that produced new C-14 on the cloth that shifted the carbon date forward from the true date. This radiation burst probably also included charged particles such as protons that formed the full size front and dorsal images on the Shroud of a man who was crucified exactly as Jesus was crucified. In all of human history, no other dead body has released such a burst of radiation that formed an image of itself on cloth. But Jesus' body, in his resurrection, could have gone through a nuclear process in which this extremely short burst of radiation was emitted. Thus, the Shroud of Turin provides scientific evidence for Jesus' resurrection.

Jesus' Resurrection in the Gospels

The central passage about Jesus' resurrection is John 20:3-9 (NASB):

³ So Peter and the other disciple went forth, and they were going to the tomb. ⁴ The two were running together; and the other disciple ran ahead faster than Peter and came to the tomb first; ⁵ and stooping and looking in, he saw the linen wrappings lying *there*; but he did not go in. ⁶ And so Simon Peter also came, following him, and entered the tomb; and he saw the linen wrappings lying *there*, ⁷ and the face-cloth which had been on His head, not lying with the linen wrappings, but rolled up in a place by itself. ⁸ So the other disciple who had first come to the tomb then also entered, and he saw and believed. ⁹ For as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead.

By a process of elimination, the "other disciple" can be determined to be the apostle John. As Peter and John ran to the tomb on that Sunday morning after Jesus' crucifixion, John arrived at the tomb first but he stooped down to look in. This allowed Peter to go in first. Peter saw the "linen wrappings lying there", which evidently included the large linen cloth that wrapped the body. Other narrower strips of cloth could have also been there that would have been used to tie the body cloth onto the body for example at the feet, at the knees, to hold the arms down, and to hold the jaw up. Peter also saw the face or head cloth "rolled up in a place by itself". This evidently means that it was in a different place in the tomb than the "linen wrappings".

Then John entered the tomb. When he did so, the apostle John says he “saw and believed”. This important phrase must be understood. What did he believe? The next verse (John 20:9) gives us the answer. John believed that Jesus had risen “from the dead”, but this phrase is preceded by “For as yet they did not understand the Scripture”. Why would John along with the other disciples “not understand the Scripture that He must rise again from the dead”? The New Testament records that Jesus told them many times that he would be resurrected from the dead, but they never understood what he meant by this.

Mark 9:9-10 (NIV)

⁹ As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus gave them orders not to tell anyone what they had seen until the Son of Man had risen from the dead. ¹⁰ They kept the matter to themselves, discussing what “rising from the dead” meant.

Mark 9:31-32 (NIV)

³¹ He said to them, “The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men. They will kill him, and after three days he will rise.” ³² But they did not understand what he meant and were afraid to ask him about it.

Luke 9:44-45 (NIV)

⁴⁴ “Listen carefully to what I am about to tell you: The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men.” ⁴⁵ But they did not understand what this meant. It was hidden from them, so that they did not grasp it, and they were afraid to ask him about it.

Luke 18:31-34 (NIV)

³¹ Jesus took the Twelve aside and told them, “We are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written by the prophets about the Son of Man will be fulfilled. ³² He will be delivered over to the Gentiles. They will mock him, insult him and spit on him; ³³ they will flog him and kill him. On the third day he will rise again.” ³⁴ The disciples did not understand any of this. Its meaning was hidden from them, and they did not know what he was talking about.

John 16:16-18 (NIV)

¹⁶ Jesus went on to say, “In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me.” ¹⁷ At this, some of his disciples said to one another, “What does he mean by saying, ‘In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me,’ and ‘Because I am going to the Father?’” ¹⁸ They kept asking, “What does he mean by ‘a little while’? We don’t understand what he is saying.”

These disciples had become convinced that Jesus was the long awaited Messiah. Based on many passages in the Old Testament (2 Sam. 7:16, Is. 9:6-7, Dan. 2:44, 7:14, 18, 27), they believed that Jesus, as the Messiah, would destroy their enemies, i.e. the Romans, and set up his Messianic kingdom ruling from David’s throne in Jerusalem forever as foretold to Mary (Luke 1:32-33). Their concept of the Messiah did not include the death of Jesus, so his resurrection made no sense to them. Whenever Jesus talked about these subjects, they must have interpreted his statements figuratively, since Jesus often talked in figurative language. But John saw something in the tomb that convinced him that Jesus’ statements of his future death, burial, and resurrection had to be understood literally.

When John wrote in John 20:8 that he “saw and believed”, what did he see that convinced him to believe in Jesus’ literal resurrection? In the tomb, John would have seen the limestone ceiling, walls, and floor in the tomb, and he would have seen Peter, but none of these things are remarkable. The only adequate answer for what John saw is that he saw Jesus’ burial cloth. He would have seen that it was collapsed in place as if it had covered Jesus in the tomb. He might have recognized this because of his involvement with the burial of Jesus in the tomb since John was the only apostle that remained at the foot of the cross (John 19:26-27, Luke 23:49). In fact, he might have been the primary person doing the burial, and thus standing at the front of the pit area in the tomb since as an apostle, he would have had priority over Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea in Jesus’ burial. He might have also seen the tie strips still in their appropriate places. He probably recognized that the burial cloth was not in disarray, as if someone had stolen the body from within the cloth or Jesus had awakened and thrown the burial cloth off. It was simply collapsed in place, as if the body had disappeared from within the burial cloth. The evidence of Jesus’ burial cloth was strong enough to convince John that his previous figurative understanding of Jesus’ predictions of his death, burial, and resurrection had to be taken literally, i.e. that Jesus “must rise again from the dead”. The point of this consideration is that Jesus’ body, and thus the atoms in Jesus’ body, had probably disappeared from within his burial cloth. This is a common interpretation of John 20:8.

“John perceived that the missing body and the position of the grave clothes was not due to a robbery. He realized that Jesus had risen from the dead and had gone through the grave clothes”. Bible Knowledge Commentary, Edwin A. Blum, professor at Dallas Theological Seminary.

“Jesus had risen from the dead. He had risen right through the grave clothes. Of course! All the clues pointed to that conclusion. Then and there he believed. It was incredibly, gloriously true. Jesus was alive!”. Exploring the Gospel of John by John Phillips, radio Bible teacher for the Moody Bible Institute.

“If someone had removed Jesus’ body, if tomb-robbers had been at work, why should they leave the grave-clothes? Then something else struck him – the grave-clothes were not disheveled and disarranged. They were lying there still in their folds – that is what the Greek means – the clothes for the body where the body had been; the napkin where the head had lain. The whole point of the description is that the grave-clothes did not look as if they had been put off or taken off; they were lying there in their regular folds as if the body of Jesus had simply evaporated out of them. The sight suddenly penetrated to John’s mind; he realized what had happened – and he believed. It was not what he had read in scripture which convinced him that Jesus had risen; it was what he saw with his own eyes.” Page 267 in *The Gospel of John, Volume 2* by William Barclay.

Theology of the Resurrection in the Bible

Jesus promised that believers in him had eternal life in that they would receive a glorified or resurrection body that was suitable for heaven. This resurrection body that each believer would receive was going to be like Jesus’ resurrection body.

Philippians 3:20-21

²⁰ But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.

1 Cor. 15:20

But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

Romans 8:29

For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.

This means that we can better understand the nature of Jesus' resurrection body by studying the resurrection body that each believer will receive. The central passage on this is the following.

1 Corinthians 15:35-54

³⁵ But someone will ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body will they come?" ³⁶ How foolish! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. ³⁷ When you sow, you do not plant the body that will be, but just a seed, perhaps of wheat or of something else. ³⁸ But God gives it a body as he has determined, and to each kind of seed he gives its own body. ³⁹ Not all flesh is the same: People have one kind of flesh, animals have another, birds another and fish another. ⁴⁰ There are also heavenly bodies and there are earthly bodies; but the splendor of the heavenly bodies is one kind, and the splendor of the earthly bodies is another. ⁴¹ The sun has one kind of splendor, the moon another and the stars another; and star differs from star in splendor. ⁴² So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; ⁴³ it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; ⁴⁴ it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. ⁴⁵ So it is written: "The first man Adam became a living being"; the last Adam, a life-giving spirit. ⁴⁶ The spiritual did not come first, but the natural, and after that the spiritual. ⁴⁷ The first man was of the dust of the earth; the second man is of heaven. ⁴⁸ As was the earthly man, so are those who are of the earth; and as is the heavenly man, so also are those who are of heaven. ⁴⁹ And just as we have borne the image of the earthly man, so shall we bear the image of the heavenly man. ⁵⁰ I declare to you, brothers and sisters, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. ⁵¹ Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed— ⁵² in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. ⁵³ For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. ⁵⁴ When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: "Death has been swallowed up in victory."

Based on this passage (1 Cor. 15:35-54), Table 1 compares the nature of the body as it is buried to the nature of the body that is resurrected. The body that is buried is called a "natural body"

whereas the body that is resurrected is called a “spiritual body”. The spiritual body can also be called a glorified body or a resurrected body. It is not a ghost but is composed of flesh and bones (Luke 24:39). In both phrases, the word “body” is a noun whereas the words “natural” and “spiritual” are adjectives. In both cases the word “body” includes the concepts of a physical object so that it has weight, volume, location, and the ability to interact with its surroundings. But the change from the adjective “natural” to “spiritual” indicates there is a basic difference that is related to the phrase “for the earthly” compared to “for the heavenly”. Thus, the natural body is in the realm of the earthly so is consistent with operation of the earthly, whereas the spiritual body is in the realm of the heavenly so is consistent with the operation of the heavenly. For simplicity, it might be said that the natural body is under the control of the natural laws of physics of this universe whereas the spiritual body is under the control of the spirit and the spiritual laws of heaven. This is what allows Jesus in his spiritual/glorified/resurrected body to instantaneously appear or disappear in his post-resurrection appearances (Luke 24:31, John 20:19, 26) apparently as an act of his will, as well as to interact with his surroundings while he is in our four-dimensional reality (Luke 24:39-43, John 20:27).

Table 1. The Natural Body vs. the Resurrection Body (1 Cor. 15:35-54)

<u>Body as buried</u>	<u>Body as resurrected</u>
In weakness	In power
In mortality	In immortality
Perishable	Imperishable
In dishonor	In glory
Natural body	Spiritual body
For the earthly	For the heavenly

A more detailed discussion^[1] regarding Jesus’ resurrection and the theology of resurrection in the Bible is also available by the author.

Alternate Dimensions

Seven concepts for how Jesus’ body might have physically disappeared from within his burial cloth have been examined^[2]. Of these seven concepts, the option that is most consistent with current concepts in modern physics and a normal interpretation of scripture is that Jesus’ body most likely disappeared from within his burial cloth by a transition into an alternate dimension or dimensionality. If more than one alternate dimension is involved, then it could be referred to as an alternate dimensionality. Many would refer to this alternate dimensionality as heaven.

Humans use their senses (we can see, hear, smell, taste, and touch) to develop their concept of reality in four dimensions - three dimensions in space and one dimension in time. But starting in the 1960s, physicists tried to develop a “theory of everything” that could explain all forces and all sub-atomic particles known to exist. This led them to develop what they called string theories based on the proposal that all of reality is composed of extremely short lengths of pure energy they called “strings”. These lengths of energy had to vibrate in various ways to explain all the forces and sub-atomic particles, but these vibrations had to occur in more than four dimensions. Over a few decades, multiple string theories were proposed that required from ten to 26

dimensions. According to these theories, our perception of four dimensions is only a small subset of the 10 to 26 dimensions that exist. If Jesus as he lay wrapped in his burial cloth, by an act of his will, made a transition into an alternate dimensionality, he would simply disappear from our four-dimensional reality so that the burial cloth would collapse due to having nothing inside it to hold it up. This is consistent with the explanation above for what John “saw” in John 20:8. This explanation of Jesus disappearing from our reality by a transition into an alternate dimensionality also leads to explanations for the two of the main mysteries of the Shroud of Turin – the carbon dating and the formation of the images that are on the Shroud.

The Shroud of Turin

Jesus was buried in a linen cloth called a shroud, but what happened to it? Since it would have had Jesus’ blood on it, it is unlikely it would have been reused, thrown out, burnt, or left in the tomb for the authorities to confiscate. During one of the multiple severe persecutions against the early Christians, an early tradition indicates it was hidden above a gate in a city wall perhaps in the late second century. It was rediscovered perhaps in the early 6th century based on early paintings (550-600 AD) and images on coins starting about 692 AD that copied the image of the face that was on this burial shroud. Historical sources indicate it was evidently in Constantinople for several centuries till at least 1204 AD. It was evidently then taken to Lirey, France where it was displayed as the burial cloth of Jesus in about 1356. It was then transported across France till it came into Turin, Italy in 1578 where it is to this day. The unique thing about this burial cloth, now called the Shroud of Turin, is that it contains full size front and dorsal images of a man that was crucified exactly as Jesus was crucified according to the Gospels in the New Testament.

In 1978, about 26 US scientists were invited to go to Turin, Italy to perform non-destructive experiments on the Shroud for five days, 24 hours a day. Their main goal was to determine how the images were formed. They concluded that the images were not due to pigment such as paint, dye, or stain, and not due to a scorch from a hot object, or from any liquid or photography. This evidence made it difficult to understand how the images could have been made by a painter or a forger. But in 1988, samples from the corner of the Shroud were carbon dated to 1260-1390 AD, which implied that the Shroud of Turin could not be the authentic burial cloth of Jesus since he died about 30-33 AD. There are two possibilities: 1) If the Shroud of Turin is the authentic burial cloth of Jesus, then how is the carbon date of 1260-1390 to be explained? 2) If the Shroud was produced in 1260-1390 AD, then how are the images and the other evidence of authenticity to be explained?

The author of this paper (Bob Rucker) began his research on the Shroud in 2013 based on his MS in nuclear engineering and his 38 years in the nuclear industry running nuclear analysis computer calculations. His goal was to explain how the images were formed consistent with the corner of the Shroud being carbon dated to 1260-1390 AD. His hypothesis regarding the carbon dating^[3] explains how the Shroud could be carbon dated to 1260-1390 AD even though it is the authentic burial cloth of Jesus from about 30-33 AD. Three samples were cut next to each other from the corner of the Shroud and sent to three laboratories for carbon dating. Each of these laboratories cut their sample into smaller pieces so that 12 subsamples were carbon dated. Carbon dating

involves measuring the ratio of C-14 to C-12 in a sample and then calculating a date using equations that assume the C^{14}/C^{12} ratio has only changed due to decay of the C-14. While the mean or average of these 12 measurements produced a date of 1260-1390 AD, the mean carbon dates from the three laboratories were not consistent with each other. The three laboratory's mean dates indicate that the carbon date probably depends on the distance from the bottom of the cloth with a linear gradient (rate of change) of about 36 years per cm, which is about 91 years per inch. This is not explained by assuming the Shroud dates to 1260-1390 AD. Instead, it indicates the likely presence of a systematic error in the 12 subsample C^{14}/C^{12} ratio measurements due to this ratio being changed. This linear gradient of the carbon dates and thus the systematic measurement error can be explained by new C-14 produced on the 12 subsamples by neutron absorption, i.e. $N^{14} + \text{neutron}$ produces $C^{14} + \text{proton}$. This proposal that neutron absorption explains the carbon dating is based on neutron distributions in the tomb calculated by the MCNP nuclear analysis computer software, assuming about 2×10^{18} neutrons were emitted uniformly in the body that was wrapped in the Shroud. This number of neutrons is about one neutron for every ten billion neutrons in the body. This new C-14 produced on the Shroud would invalidate the assumption that the C^{14}/C^{12} ratio had only changed due to decay of the C-14, so that it was no longer valid to use the normal equations to calculate a date from the measured C^{14}/C^{12} ratios. Thus, while it is believed that the resulting C^{14}/C^{12} ratios for the 12 subsamples were accurately measured, the calculation of the dates from those ratios was not valid.

A correct understanding of Jesus' resurrection requires a correct understanding of not only how the C^{14}/C^{12} ratio on the Shroud was shifted to the future relative to the true date but also how the body formed images of itself on the cloth. The author's hypothesis^[4] for how the images were formed is based on 27 evidences related to the images. Each evidence was considered individually in a logical sequence to build a solution to how the images were formed. At each step in this process, the question was asked "What would have caused this?" This was done to follow the evidence where it led. It was concluded that an extremely short burst of vertically collimated low energy charged particles, probably protons, were emitted from the body that rapidly oscillated between vertically up and vertically down directions. This simultaneously formed the front and dorsal images on the Shroud without forming side images. When the protons were absorbed on the cloth, their electrical charge was deposited on the cloth that caused corona or static discharges between the cloth and the body. This caused a high frequency alternating current in the fibers. This high frequency alternating current caused heat to be deposited in an extremely thin region around the circumference of the fibers by a mechanism called the "skin effect of an alternating current" (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Skin_effect). This heat scorched the outer region of the fibers resulting in the extremely thin discoloration on the fibers that forms the front and dorsal images of a crucified man on the Shroud. This is a good hypothesis for image formation because it is consistent with all 27 evidences related the images and makes predictions that are testable and falsifiable. This hypothesis proposes that the protons were emitted from the body by the splitting of 0.0004% of the deuterium (H-2, heavy hydrogen) nuclei in the body due to an extremely high frequency powerful vertical oscillation of the nuclei in the body. This would have also emitted a sufficient number of neutrons that would have produced enough new C-14 at the corner of the Shroud to explain the carbon dating of the Shroud. Thus, in this radiation burst from the body, the protons formed the front and dorsal images of the crucified man and the neutrons shifted the carbon date from the true value (about 30-33 AD) to the range of 1260-1390 AD by increasing the C-14 concentration at the sample

location by about 16.9%. Two of the main mysteries of the Shroud, carbon dating and image formation, are thus explained by this hypothesis.

The above concepts can be connected as follows. According to the hypotheses in Ref. 3 and 4, the carbon dating and the image formation can both be explained by a vertical oscillation of the nuclei that were in the body that was wrapped in the Shroud. This vertical oscillation caused 0.0004% of the deuterium nuclei to split releasing an equal number of protons and neutrons. The protons caused the images and the neutrons produced new C-14 on the cloth that would have shifted the carbon dates in the forward direction. The splitting or fission of these deuterium nuclei would not have released energy. Instead, energy must be put into the nuclei to cause them to split, though it is not a large amount of energy.

According to the above considerations, it should be concluded that a vertical oscillation of the nuclei in the body probably caused the images and shifted the carbon date. There is no known mechanism in our current understanding of physics that would have caused such a vertical oscillation of the nuclei to encode an image of the body onto the cloth and to shift the carbon date. As far as known, this has never happened in all human history with billions of people living and dying while wearing or being covered with cloth, so it is a totally unique event. The only possible exception is Jesus in his resurrection. If, as discussed above, Jesus disappeared from within his burial cloth by a transition into an alternate dimensionality, then this is also a totally unique event. It is reasonable to assume that these two totally unique events are associated with each other. Thus, it is proposed that Jesus' resurrection involved a very high frequency powerful oscillation of the nuclei in his body which in some way led to his transition from our reality into an alternate dimensionality.

Conclusions

The conclusions of the above analysis are as follows.

1. In Jesus' resurrection, he probably disappeared from within his burial cloth.
2. Jesus' disappearance from within his burial cloth was probably brought about by a transition into an alternate dimensionality. This alternate dimensionality could be referred to as heaven.
3. This transition into an alternate dimensionality could have produced effects on his burial cloth, such as encoding the images onto the cloth and shifting of the carbon date.
4. The root cause of the images and carbon dating of the Shroud is best explained by an extremely high frequency powerful vertical oscillation of nuclei in Jesus' body.
5. Jesus' resurrection by a transition into an alternate dimensionality evidently involved an extremely high frequency powerful vertical oscillation of the nuclei in his body. This is what probably caused the many evidences related to the front and dorsal images of the crucified man that can be seen on the Shroud of Turin.

References

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These papers are available on the research page of the author’s website www.shroudresearch.net.