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“What is the spiritual body Paul talks about in 1 Cor 15?”

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With

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What is the spiritual body Paul talks about in 1 Cor 15?

This episode focuses on Paul's language, in 1 Cor 15 and elsewhere, about the "spiritual body" of the resurrected Jesus—a body that believers will also share. In Paul's day, Gentiles (Greco-Roman culture) and Jews (OT) both believed that gods had bodies — not made of flesh and blood, but of something that was superior to flesh and blood. In other words, gods weren't simply formless, substance-less "energy" or spirit. Paul taught that Christians would one day share Christ's body—that they would have the same sort of body.

TS: Welcome to the Naked Bible Podcast, Episode 88, What is the spiritual body Paul talks about 1 Corinthians 15. I'm your layman, Trey Stricklin, and he's the scholar, Dr. Michael Heiser. Hey Mike, how are you doing this week?

MSH: Very good, very good, did you have a good week?

TS: I did, and you?

MSH: Busy but a good week. Lots to do as usual but that's a good thing so I can't complain about it. I'm never bored.

TS: Well what's the spiritual body Paul's talking about?

MSH: This is kind of an odd sort of topic. I think people will find it interesting because of its connections back into the Old Testament. When we think of spiritual body, we probably think of something like a disembodied spirit form, even though I use the word disembodied there. But when we see the word spirit or spirit body or spiritual body, we don't think of something corporeal like you could touch but that's actually what Paul is getting at. We're going to go through a lot of source references for this topic because there are roots to this in both the Old Testament to create that the Jewish context, that Israelite Hebrew Bible context for this and then also in Paul's own day on the Gentile side, the Greco-Roman side. There is actually a considerable amount of literature in terms of ancient texts where writers talk about, for lack of a better way of putting it, what the gods are made of, because they appear in bodily form and really cool hair, really big muscles or whatever it is but they're made of something. And a lot of their terminology overlaps with what Paul is using.

But within the biblical context, what Paul is saying is very consistent with something specific in the Old Testament that's kind of cool, I think has some real theological significance to it. So let's just jump into it. To sort of set up the topic, in Paul's day, Gentiles, Greco-Roman culture there and Jews both believe that gods had bodies. We've talked about this a lot before. Unseen Realm talked a little bit about it. I've given other lectures, alluded to things in the podcast episodes about the fact that even the God of the Old Testament is embodied in certain passages. That wasn't a new concept. It's not strange at all to their ear. But when ancient people are thinking that, they're not thinking of bodies made of flesh and blood. They're also not thinking that the gods were just only spirits. They were certainly spirit beings but when they interacted with people on earth they took form. They took physical form. It wasn't in flesh and blood, it was something else. They were made of something superior to flesh and blood, had different properties to it.

Both Gentiles and Jews had these conceptual categories for embodied deities, divine beings that were also corporeal in some sense or could do that at will. That was just one of their attributes, one of their properties. Paul's teaching in 1 Corinthians 15 and in a few other places points to his belief, it draws on his belief about embodied deity, let's just put it that way. But it does more than that. It also points to his belief that Christians would one day share that stuff that gods are made of. They would share that corporeal form that Yahweh took upon himself back in Genesis 18 or Ezekiel 1 where God is depicted as a man. We're going to be looking at Ezekiel 1 more closely. Christians would have that and that stuff is also the stuff that Christ's

resurrection body was made of. So at some point, Christians are going to put on that stuff. But that is what we're going to be, going to have the same sort of body. So in other words, in the resurrection, the resurrection, the final day, the final form of the kingdom. It's not just going to be a bunch of spirits floating around or anything like that.

There's going to be glorified believers who are going to have bodies that share the same stuff as the resurrected Christ body and even as God himself when God chose to be embodied in the Old Testament. It would be incorruptible but it would be corporeal in some sense as well. At times during the episode, and I'll try to remember to telegraph this specifically, I'm going to be quoting from what I think is probably the best book on this subject. It's a recent scholarly work. The dissertation is not available or else I would've included it in the bibliography, the Divine Counsel bibliography. That is not available in PDF so we really only have the book and the book's expensive. The book is called, it's by a guy named M. David Litwa, and the book is called 'We Are Being Transformed,' subtitle is, 'Deification in Paul's Soteriology'. And for those not familiar with the term soteriology, that's Paul's doctrine of salvation. So the doctrine of salvation goes from conversion all the way up to glorification in traditional theology classes.

So Litwa's book is about the whole, not the whole scope but specifically, the deification element, the glorification element. And he has a full chapter on the bodies of gods in both Jewish texts, Greco-Roman texts, and he has a few other chapters that sort of build off that one. So he probably devotes 50, 60, 70 pages to this spiritual body concept, which is more than I've seen anyone else do. And this was published in 2012 so it's very current with the literature as well. So I would recommend it. It's pricey and I don't really have a way to get you the dissertation that this was based on. Let me just take a look here because I think it is actually the published version of a dissertation. Well, it's actually not. It's just a monograph so something he's been working on for a while so that would explain why it's not in the dissertation database. But if you want to book, you're going to have to get the book. It's the best thing on the topic but it's pricey. I'll be honest with you. So let's talk little bit about Paul in context and we'll begin with the Greco-Roman idea that's sort of the Gentile context. I'll start there and then go to the Old Testament Israelite thinking on this. In antiquity in the Greco-Roman religions, Greco-Roman thinking, that their gods would have bodies would not have been an unusual thought. It's something they would've been accustomed to.

There are a number of passages that really, almost any deity figure you could pluck out a Greco-Roman classical material is going to have some sort of physical description. Aphrodite, for instance, is said to have been born from the immortal flesh or skin of Uranus. Uranus is the Greek word from the heavens, heavenly one. It's a deity name in Hesiod, in his Theogony and other Greek literature. Aphrodite's born from this "immortal flesh". Gods could get wounded. They could and did bleed if they were in battle or wounded but their blood wasn't blood, it wasn't human blood. It was something called ichor, which is described as immortal blood. So it's something different. Gods just have this sort of physical properties. They could be depicted in physical form, often were, and that was because they were thought to actually have some sort of embodiment, some sort of corporeality, particularly and especially when they were interacting in human affairs with humans, with people. Now on the Israelite side, and we've talked about this at length, the idea of divine embodiment. I've referenced Benjamin Summers book called 'The Bodies of God'. This is the book that I think is especially important because he shows that in Israelite thinking and in wider Ancient Near Eastern thinking, the gods could exist in more than one form simultaneously.

This is Benjamin Summer. He teaches at the Jewish Theological Seminary. He's a Jew, and he'll say things directly, explicitly in his book like that Christian idea of the trinity, yeah, the Hebrew Bible can certainly accommodate that, and frankly, the wider Ancient Near Eastern world knows of this concept as well. Now the words Summer will use to describe it is what we would call in Christian theology modalism, which isn't really what, it's not fully what Trinitarianism is about. But we can excuse Summer for that because he's a Jew and these are the words he prefers to use, but the idea that the gods could be embodied, Summer's big on that. He has lots of evidence for it, both in the Hebrew Bible and outside the Ancient Near East and other Ancient Near Eastern religions. And the gods who are embodied can be simultaneously embodied somewhere else as someone else or something else simultaneous to this other thing over here. That's more awkward to put it that way but that's more in keeping with what we think about as Christians as orthodox Trinitarianism. But Summer's book is very useful for that. Now Summer and Litwa, the book that we're referencing mostly today, sort of zero in at certain points on Ezekiel 1 so that's where we're going to go. If you're following along, you go to Ezekiel 1 and specifically let's start in verse 22. This is the famous weird cherubim throne vision that Ezekiel has at the beginning of the book. And part of it reads like this, this is beginning in verse 22,

²² Over the heads of the living creatures there was the likeness of an expanse, shining like awe-inspiring crystal, spread out above their heads.

²³ And under the expanse their wings were stretched out straight, one toward another. And each creature had two wings covering its body.

²⁴ And when they went, I heard the sound of their wings like the sound of many waters, like the sound of the Almighty, a sound of tumult like the sound of an army. When they stood still, they let down their wings. ²⁵ And there came a voice from above the expanse over their heads. When they stood still, they let down their wings.

²⁶ And above the expanse over their heads there was the likeness of a throne, in appearance like sapphire; and seated above the likeness of a throne was a likeness with a human appearance. ²⁷ And upward from what had the appearance of his waist I saw as it were gleaming metal, like the appearance of fire enclosed all around. And downward from what had the appearance of his waist I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and there was brightness around him. ²⁸ Like the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud on the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness all around.

Such was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD.

MSH: That's from Ezekiel 1. Now this glory idea is important because if you followed what I just read there, Ezekiel calls the figure, the human figure seated on the throne, he calls him the glory of the Lord. And Ezekiel actually uses that phrase, glory of the Lord, and also uses glory of the God of Israel in Ezekiel 9:3. So the glory is not just a cloud in the Old Testament. That's how we think of it. We think of the glory cloud, the Shekinah glory cloud. That is not always the way the glory of the Lord is described. Sometimes the glory of the Lord is a man, is a human figure,

human form right here in Ezekiel 1 and there's other places, too. So the glory is a human figure seated on the throne. The glory has form. It's not just a light and it's not just a formless spirit. It has form. Ezekiel can tell looking at it that it's a man. It has human bodily features. Now to make the point in a different way, if you go to Ezekiel 10:20 and compare that with Ezekiel 1:22-28. In Ezekiel 1, the passage we just read, the cherubim are under the "glory" of the Lord. If you Ezekiel 10:20, cherubim are said to be under the God of Israel. So the glory and the God of Israel are the same and they have bodily form.

They're embodied. So the glory isn't just light, it's not just a cloud in the Old Testament. The glory of the Lord can speak of a bodily form. Now that's going to be backdrop to what Paul talks about because Paul is not going to just use the phrase spiritual body. He's also going to use phrases like heavenly man and he's also going to use of the word glory to describe this body in his own writings. So there's going to be a lot of Old Testament precedent for what we talk about in terms of what Paul was thinking here. There's also broader Greco-Roman Gentile precedent for this as well, that gods can indeed have corporeal form. They can have bodily form and actually be bodily. They are made of stuff when they interact with people. That's the setup. Now I want to go to Litwa's book here specifically on page 126 and read an excerpt here about some of the passages where Paul actually references the glory. Now in light of what I just talked about, in light of what we just explained, I think you're going to find some familiar passages from Paul that sort of take on new meaning. If you pardon the pun, they take on a different shape. Just listen to what Litwa says here. He says,

“Turning to Paul, we note the close relationships between Yahweh's glory, his glory body, and the kind of body Paul attributes to Christ. According to Paul, Christ has “a body of glory”, *sōmati tēs doxēs* in Philippians 3:21. [**MSH: So he actually says Christ has a body of glory.**] The glory here is probably a genitive of content or definition, in other words, the body constituted by glory. This is the body which Christ gained in his resurrection when he was raised by the “glory” of the Father. [**MSH: Paul actually says that in Romans 6:4. We have this phrase that he was raised from the dead by the glory of the father.**] Accordingly in 1 Corinthians, Christ is called the Lord of glory when believers “behold the glory of the Lord” in 2 Corinthians 3:18. They appear to be beholding Christ himself who is the image of God, 2 Corinthians 4:4, Colossians 1:15.

MSH: We talked about divine imaging a lot being functional but we've also talked about both in Unseen Realm and in other podcasts and whatnot, lectures I've given, that humans not only were created as the image to be the representation of God but humans actually are sort of the stand-in. They are the idol of Yahweh. They are the physical representation as well of the God of Israel. This is why in Old Testament theology idolatry was forbidden. God says don't make an image of anything that you see in heaven and earth and all that because I'm different from everything else. I'm unlike everything else. Well, that was part of the issue. And we brought this up in a few places in Leviticus, too.

Part of the rationale to not allowing an image be created to worship is that only Yahweh himself deserves worship but part of the rationale is that we already have an image of God. We already have something physical that represents God and that's humans, that's humanity, it's us.

So this idea harkens back to Christ. Not only was Christ the perfect representative of God, he also is the representation of God in the most literal sense possible in New Testament theology. Why, because of the incarnation. So when Paul, returning back to Litwa,

“When believers behold the glory of the Lord, 2 Corinthians 3:18, they appear to be beholding Christ himself who is the image of God. If Moses could not see the face of God, Christians can see the glory of God in the face of Christ.

MSH: And Paul actually uses that phrase, too. In 2 Corinthians 4, we have here the reference to the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ who is the image of God, that's verse 4. Then in verse 6, for God said let light shine out of darkness, the God who said let light shine out of darkness has shown in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Now in Hebrew, the face is *panim*. It refers to being in the presence of someone else, not necessarily the thing supported by your neck and all that kind of stuff. It's not necessarily be over literalized and anatomically. The idea is the Word was made flesh. God was made flesh. He lived and walked here on the earth and it was Jesus Christ. So you have beheld the glory of God when you looked at this person. It's not in terms of sort of visible attractiveness or anything like that. The idea is that God was embodied, and in this case, it was even more than the embodiment that we know from the Old Testament. In this case, we have incarnation and after the resurrection, we still have God embodied. But the nature of the body is different. It's this corporeal stuff that transcends human flesh and blood. It's something but it's different. It's corporeal but it has different properties. So what Litwa's saying here, I'll just finish with this one sentence he has.

“This sort of language indicates that Paul understood the glory language of Exodus and Ezekiel to refer to a visible luminous divine corporeality and attributed this corporeality to Christ who exists, now he's going to quote Philippians 2:6, in the form of God.”

MSH: So, very familiar passages there using glory and form and even face and presence, but we tend to abstract these things only. It's not that they don't have a higher more abstract meaning conceptually because they do, but what Litwa is arguing for based upon the Old Testament where the glory has bodily form, anthropomorphic bodily form, he saying his argument is look, when we read these passages in New Testament, we need to be thinking not only of the abstract concepts they convey but that God came to man corporeally. And whatever that was, whatever that stuff was, it was different from and transcended from and superior to the form we have now. It is this post-resurrection stuff, post-resurrection corporeality embodiment and that is what we are going to inherit. Litwa's argument is in 1 Corinthians 15, Paul is saying that stuff, we are going to inherit that. That is the kind of body that we are going to have. Now there's more to this as you can well imagine. If I go over to another section here in Litwa, page 127, he writes,

“If glory is a way of referring to Christ's divine corporeality, how is it related to Christ as “the life giving pneuma” or the life-giving Spirit?”

MSH: That's also a reference to Jesus. And by the way, there are New Testament scholars that love to take this verse and deny the bodily resurrection. That would be totally contrary to the ancient mind. What we have here is we have the embodied Jesus post-resurrection. It's not just a spirit. It's not like the Gnostics were saying, the spirit of the logos is floating around up there and this guy is still on the cross. That isn't it. It's not just spirit. It's not formless spirit. It's flesh transcendent. Its flesh made into something superior to normal flesh. Litwa writes,

“If glory is a way of referring to Christ’s divine corporeality, how is it related to Christ as the life making *pneuma*? *Pneuma* is the word for life-giving Spirit. Should we also conceive of the pneumatic in corporeal terms? There’s some reason to think that this life making Spirit is a reference to Christ's physical constitution. This is because those conformed to the *pneumatic* Christ, [**MSH: and he's quoting here 1 Cor 15:49. I want to pick up that verse. Let's go back up to 47.**]

⁴⁷ The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. ⁴⁸ As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. ⁴⁹ Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven.

MSH: So what Litwa is saying is this whole thing about Jesus having become a life-giving spirit, a life-giving *pneuma*, elsewhere the same person at the same time in post-resurrection is referred to as something that has human bodily form. So his argument is there some reason to think that the life-giving *pneuma* is a reference to Christ's physical constitution this is because those conformed to the pneumatic Christ are said to inherit a pneumatic body, and he quotes references there, 1 Corinthians 15:44 which says talking about the body we have now being sown in dishonor, it's going to be raised in glory. It's sown in weakness. It's going to be raised in power, verse 44, our bodies are now sown in natural body but it is raised as a spiritual body. So it's not a spiritual spirit, it's a spiritual body. This is the focus point of our whole episode. Litwa says,

“It appears then that Christians become like Christ by conforming to his heavenly body,”

MSH: Becoming like Christ in the eschatological sense is not just some day when we're in heaven, we won't sin anymore. We won't react negatively. We won't have an impulsive rebellion. By the way, this is the answer for all these angels, they had free will and they were embodied and they came to earth. They were angels but yet they sinned. We're going to inherit all that. So like in heaven, are we going to sin and all that. The answer is no because we are going to be conformed, we are going to be imprints; we're going to be clones. We're going to be made of that stuff that Jesus is made of, and not only made of that but also this idea of being conformed to the image, we're going to become so like him that we behave and react like him. We are Christians in the truest sense.

We are little Christ's. It's not like we have the same nature, it's not that we're eternal beings, we're not. We were created. It's not that we are fully what God is or even fully what

Christ is. The idea is that we will be so like him, we will be so conformed to the image that not only does it refer to inner impulses and these abstract ideas we won't sin but what Litwa's argument and what Paul is saying is all this language about being conformed to Christ, you have to include in it that we are conformed to his heavenly body as well. And he goes on, he says,

“This is explicitly stated in Philippians 3:21, “he will transform the body of our humiliation that it may be conformed to his body of glory.”

MSH: Look at the words. The glory in the Old Testament in certain texts has bodily human form. So I'm going to read that again. Philippians 3:21, 'He will transform the body of our humiliation that it may be conformed to his body of glory.' Litwa says,

“What we learn in 1 Corinthians 15:45 is that Christ's body is not only a body of glory but also a body of *pneuma*.”

MSH: So this idea of a spirit body is not a spirit spirit. It's not formless. It's not energy. It's not light. It actually is some corporeal stuff like Jesus had post-resurrection. It is a hard concept for us to wrap our minds around but what the argument is here is don't be misled by the terminology spirit body as though it lacks definite form and shape and constitution. What Paul is getting at based upon the embodiment language for the glory of God back in the Old Testament is that we're going to have bodies but our bodies are going to be like the way God was embodied, whatever that stuff was, and the way Christ was embodied after the resurrection, whatever that stuff was. It's corporeal but it's not what we have now. It's different. It's superior. It's transcendent. It has a whole set of different properties as opposed to what we have now. We're going to put off what we have now, the body of the dust that returns to dust, that's corruptible.

We're going to put on this new body, this different kind of flesh. So to kind of summarize where we are at to this point, think about the chain of thought here. Paul talks about the resurrected Christ being a life-giving spirit but he also talks about Christ having a heavenly body. And he also talks about being the glory, having a body of glory like the glory of the Lord. All of these of these terms are complementary. They are synonymous in that respect. Paul is using different terms not to describe different bodies like a change of clothes. Jesus, he wears this one one day and another one another day, no. All of these phrases are describing essentially the same thing. It is a post-resurrection corporeality. That's what it is. So the believer's conformity to the image of the heavenly man to use Paul's terminology who is *pneuma*, who also is glory, that our conformity to that involves receiving and becoming the same kind of body.

That's made explicit in Philippians 3:21. So if we take Philippians 3:21 at face value, what it says is that Christ's resurrection body is this glorious body that we saw back in the Old Testament, that's what this stuff is, and that's what we're going to inherit. So we can't think of *pneuma* just as formless spirit. Now the Corinthians and other people asked can we talk about what sort of nature of stuff that that is. And we get that obviously in 1 Corinthians 15 throughout the whole passage beginning in 35. Paul writes,

³⁵ But someone will ask, “How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?” ³⁶ You foolish person! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. ³⁷ And what you sow is not the body that is to be, but

a bare kernel, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain.³⁸ But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body.³⁹ For not all flesh is the same, but there is one kind for humans, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish.⁴⁰ There are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is of one kind, and the glory of the earthly is of another.⁴¹ There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for star differs from star in glory.

⁴² So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is 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.

MSH: It's just a different kind of embodiment is what he's saying. You don't go from a body to a non-body when you're in heaven. You go from one kind of the embodiment to another kind of embodiment is what Paul is saying. So even spirit beings who are dead now have some kind of embodiment. And this is the way that dead believers or even dead unbelievers are described. They're described in embodiment terms, transfiguration, the three inner circle disciples see Moses and Elijah. Well, how do they know who they are? They're not just spirits. They're not just wisps of smoke or something. They have embodiment. There are different kinds of embodiment is Paul's point here in 1 Corinthians 15. Keep going,

⁴⁵ Thus it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being"; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit.⁴⁶ But it is not the spiritual that is first but the natural, and then the spiritual.⁴⁷ The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven.⁴⁸ As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven.⁴⁹ Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven.

MSH: We're going to trade in one form of embodiment for another form of embodiment. It's tough for us to wrap our minds around that but this actually what Paul's saying. So I want to look at another thing. I think what Litwa has here is helpful. Just to summarize things, he says,

"Paul characterizes the pneumatic bodies (page 129) by incorruptibility, glory, and power. (1 Cor 15:42-43) All of these are divine qualities. It is also conformed to Christ who is both a life making spirit and he's also from heaven. The nature of the spirit body is heavenly. (verse 48) It is not, Paul adds, made up of flesh and blood, the constituents of the present bodily life (verses 48-50). This remark is especially striking. It has troubled many a church father. Most ancients admitted that all bodily life on earth is constituted by flesh by which it was meant not only skin, but bones, arteries, muscle, nerves, and all the various tissues and organs that make life possible on this planet. Flesh is the stuff of terrestrial life.

Mortals are those that have blood in their veins and this blood is conceived of as being produced by their eating of grain. [MSH: That was a quote here from another scholar summarizing this. Back to Litwa, he says] To exist in a body without flesh is not to be human in the way the ancients normally conceived of.

MSH: In other words, the ancients were so tied into this thinking that if you had a discussion with them about disembodiment, there's no embodiment at all, you're just a wisp of something, or light rays or something like that, they would say you are no longer human then. You can't be human. You have to have some kind of embodiment whether it's the embodiment of this terrestrial life or some other embodiment. Humans have to have bodies no matter where they are, what stage of life or death, you just have to have embodiment. It's something we often don't really think about those things, at least consciously, but if you think about the way you think about departed loved ones if they're with the Lord, you think about them as they look. You think about them doing things.

You think about them interacting with with the Lord or with other people who've gone before them. All of that takes a body. So we're still part of this thinking even though we don't really sit down and sort of mull it over. But when we think about these things, we actually still do think of them in embodiment terms. That's Litwa's point. That's Paul's point. This is the way it is. This is the way we think. It's the way it is. It's the way all the ancients thought. Paul's just borrowing this language and sort of upping the ante when he links it back to the embodied glory that God had in that corporeal form. So these are hard things to wrap our minds around but they are actually kind of important for understanding or kind of process what Paul is thinking. Litwa adds,

“To continue, if the pneumatic body is a body made up of *pneuma*, a question arises. What in the physics of Paul's day was that? What was *pneuma*?”

MSH: He goes back into the Stoic philosophers. There were long discussions of what this stuff was made of, in other words, how do we describe this stuff? How is it different from the flesh that normal humans have? And so he goes through a whole listing of references and whatnot to people like Cicero talking about what this was. So there was a lot of speculation naturally about it. But the larger point is that Paul is going to be familiar with a lot of this vocabulary, a lot of this sort of thinking. Now to take it back to a Jewish direction, another little excerpt here from Litwa, he writes,

“Stoic beliefs seem to have found their way into first century Judaism. According to Essene belief as it was reported by Josephus, souls emanate from the finest ether. When released from the flesh, these ether souls are thus naturally born upward. When counseling his comrades, Josephus apparently reports his own view about souls. They are immortal and they can be called a portion of God [MSH: In other words, they share in this corporeality] In a speech of Titus which likely presents Josephus's own views, the historian asked for what brave men knows not souls released

from the flesh by the sword on the battlefield are hospitably welcome by that purist developments, the ether, and placed among the stars?"

MSH: This star language, I don't want to rabbit trail too much, but this is thing about, and we even read it in Paul when he talks about the glory of the sun, glory of the stars, being different than other glories and other bodies. If you remember back to the interview with David Burnett, this is part of glorification thinking more broadly in the Jewish world, that the descendants of Abraham, that's believers in New Testament language according Galatians 3, if you're Christ's, you're Abraham's seed. Believers will become like the stars. That doesn't mean we turn into a rock and the float around and twinkle. What that actually means if you tie that to Paul's language here in 1 Corinthians, and Paul brings it up again, he actually references the glory of the stars in verse 41, what it means is we become divine. It's deification language. It's divinization language.

It's glorification language, whatever term you like. Scholars use them all. It's becoming divine. And what that means in turn is that we get new embodiment and that embodiment is the stuff of which the gods are made or the stuff God was made of when he interacts with humans. This glory body that we see referenced in Ezekiel 1 and in Exodus 2, the angel of the Lord, that was Yahweh embodied. That guy was made of something. That's the idea. Whatever he was made of, that's what the guy sitting on the throne, that's what he was made of and that's what Jesus resurrection body was made of and that's what we will be made of. You have to follow the sort of logic chain connecting all these ideas and all these passages to get this flavor of divinization when it comes to Paul's "spirit body" talk. Our propensity here, because we're moderns as well, I'd like a DNA sample. I want to know how many chromosomes that has. I want to know what the genetic material looks like, what the gene sequences are and all this kind of stuff. These are modern scientific concepts that nobody is aware of and nobody's thinking about when they write this stuff. What they're able to communicate is the notion that after death, especially as believers, after death, we don't just sort of become electricity. We don't just sort of become formless substance-less entities.

We are embodied in a new way and the people living in Jesus day who actually saw and touched his resurrected body know that our future embodiment is going to be physical and corporeal. And whatever that body was, that's the one we're going to get. That much they could communicate and that was not a revolutionary idea in principle. Paul ups the ante like biblical writers do so often. They'll take something that is conceptually familiar to the readers, both Jew and Gentile in this case, and if they're Jews, the startling part is that he links it back to the glory, the embodied glory. And he links that to Jesus. It's another one of these backdoor references, backdoor reminders of who Jesus was Yahweh here in human form, incarnation, and in fact, he still is because now he has the same kind of embodiment. There's still this connection so that it hasn't been lost. So they're able to communicate these sorts of ideas. But it's really apples and oranges thinking for us to want a genetic sequencing. And I bring that up because I get these questions about the sons of God and embodiment in Genesis 6 and all this sort of stuff. How does this work?

The answer is I don't know how it works and nobody else does either. And the sub answer to that is we're never told. What we are told is that the Nephilim and their descendants, the Anakim and Rephaim, they're described as men. Why, because what they look like. They're embodied. What else would you call them? You wouldn't call them plants. You wouldn't call

them trees. You wouldn't call them fill in the blank with an animal. They are human in form. They're embodied. They're corporeal, and in their case, they could die. SO they're actually closer to that kind of embodiment that is totally human than something like the post-resurrection appearance or what awaits the destiny of the believer. So yeah, I don't know how it all works. All I can do is take the language that they describe and use and say here's why they would have used that term. Don't forget in Genesis 19, angels (Genesis 19:1) the two visitors at Sodom and Gomorra specifically called angels, they're also described as men in the same chapter. Why, that's what they look like. Does that mean they're just human? Are they more than human? Are they like a different kind? I don't know. They're angels, they're embodied. So you have the sons of God, divine beings, but they're also embodied. They're offspring are human but they seem to be a little bit more, little bit different than human. Well, I want the genetic sequence for that so we can trace the genetic.

Scripture knows nothing of this language, nothing of these concepts, nothing of this talk. And when it comes to the whole Nephilim bloodline thing look, the point of having the Nephilim stories end with the line of Goliath, the messaging there is that this line is dead. It's gone. It's died out. It's not here anymore because the cities of the Philistines was where the remnants of the Anakim fled after the conquest. We're told that and the story picks up with Goliath and his brothers and they all die. They are all wiped out, mission accomplished finally during the time of David. So to take 21st-century technology and try to analyze things there, that is not the message given to us in the text. The text does not inform us that there is one "genetic material" floating around in our genes that are from the Nephilim. There's nothing of that at all. So that can't be intentionally telegraphed in the Bible. All that we're given is the language of embodiment, pure and simple, both in terms of the dark side, in terms of the resurrection body, in terms of the bodies we'll get, that's where the scriptural road ends. We will be embodied. It'll be different than we have now. In fact, we'll be the body, a body like Jesus had. So the short answer is what is the spiritual body? What is celestial flesh? What is this?

It's the body Jesus had. What that means is being made of the same stuff as that body. I can't even genetic sequence. I can't talk in DNA terms about it because the Scripture doesn't as well. Just know that it speaks of embodiment and being conformed to the image of Christ for Paul. I think this is another big take away here. It's not just our character. It's not just our internal disposition being what Jesus' was so we don't rebel. We don't sin. All of that's true, but it's more than that. Being conformed to the image of Christ is language designed to inform us that you're going to get that body, a body just like he had after the resurrection. So in every way, you will be conformed to what he is. You will have his inner-disposition. You will have his body. You will be so like him that you will be fit for this kind of existence in the presence of God and the afterlife. And we don't have to worry about all of these problems both in terms of spiritual problems and in terms of the problems associated with the body of dust. We don't have to worry about either side of this in the afterlife, in glory.