

Flesh and Bones

Let us look at Luke 24:39 where the resurrected Jesus first appeared to the eleven apostles. He sought to calm their fears and prove that He was not a spirit but a physical being. Notice that He spoke of Himself as being of “flesh and bones.” Why not “flesh and blood”? Throughout Scripture, blood is identified as the most significant aspect of life. In Scripture the shedding of blood is the principal expression for killing, or causing death. In Leviticus 17:11 and 17:14, we learn that “the life of the flesh is in the blood.” Deuteronomy 12:23 tells us that “the blood” is “life.” The Hebrew word for life is “nephesh” meaning “breathing creature.” It is interesting that the Hebrew word for blood is “dam”, defined as “that which when shed causes death of man or an animal.” Of course we know that as the blood circulates through every cell of the body the purpose for breathing is to bring oxygen into the body to oxidize the blood, and to remove from it, the accumulated carbon waste, or “spent fuel.”

In Genesis we have Adam as being the perfect man during the time that there was no sin and no death. His life had been made perfect and eternal. However in Genesis 1:29, 30 we read that God created vegetation as “meat” for both man and animals. The Hebrew word used here for meat is “okalh” which can be translated as “food, consume, devour, eat, meat.” One would logically conclude that all of these “foods” were there to be consumed in order to sustain life, and after sin came, that would be the purpose. However, if all life was eternal, that is incorruptible until sin came into being, there was no need for such a sustaining provision. Any such dependency would preclude the body from being absolutely incorruptible.

As long as the world remained free of sin, there was no pain or suffering or death. In that state, eating and drinking and breathing were optional and existed only to provide pleasure, and not in order to sustain life. It makes sense that God originally made life eternal and therefore absent of the need for any external life continuing substances. It was God’s eternal spiritually received sustenance that would and will provide. Man was

the sacred and spiritual embodiment of the fabled “perpetual motion machine”, one that he would operate forever, never break down and never need fuel or oil. Animal life was similarly equipped for eternal life. Had there never been sin, all life would have received its never-ending sustenance directly through God’s love.

Sin, of course, brought that condition to an abrupt conclusion. The “perpetualness” of life ended, and the physical aspects of life were changed from incorruptible to corruptible, meaning that all physical life eventually wore out and ended in death. The Holy Spirit/human spirit connection with man was broken, and he no longer had a spiritually fed and energized body. Thus God activated a circulatory system complete with a heart to pump blood, and the various organs necessary for life to go on in slow decay and eventual death. This complex system which God, in His foreknowledge knew He would have to activate, was made comparatively fragile. It was made to eventually wear out, unto death, and also to be capable of being killed, that is to die prematurely in any number of ways in which this complex system could be damaged. From then on, just as Scripture tells us “life was in the blood.” Prior to that, there was no blood.

We speak of God’s first creation as being the “first Adam” and Jesus as being the “last Adam”. Just how much commonality is implied in this comparison? Might this idea that they both were of “flesh and bones” be part of that commonality which allowed them to live and function without that circulatory system that was essential for sustaining mortal life? That likeness, would apply to Adam, only before his fall, and to Jesus only after His resurrection. It follows that all saved souls on the new earth will also be of flesh and bones, “for we will be like Him” (1John 3:2)

Having examined the Genesis references, let us now see what 1Corinthians reveals about the subject. 1Corinthians 15:50 says, “*Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.*” Here, is where this claim is well confirmed! What this clearly says is that the flesh and blood body, as likened to the corruptible, can not inherit, that is reside, in the kingdom of God. Taking that literally, as we must, our flesh and blood bodies are not qualified for residing

in God's eternal kingdom. We find however, that all saved souls will at the appropriate time enter the Godly realm in their promised incorruptible bodies!

Can the conclusion be any clearer? The incorruptible body is not blood dependent! That life is in the blood applies to the corruptible body that each of us have because of the fall. Death was programmed into sinful man through the introduction of the blood dependant system so as to place a limit on man's life span. While this verse does not speak of a flesh and bones body, it most strongly implies that the incorruptible body cannot be and is not blood dependent! Without the blood encumbrance that requires constant death delaying sustenance from earthly sources, death has been conquered.

Every time Jesus is mentioned during His 40 days on earth after the resurrection, even though His flesh and bones had become incorruptible, and in no need of earthly food, He is described as eating. The Theophony, that is the pre-incarnate Son of God, and two angles stopped at Abram's tent on the way to destroy Sodom. While they tarried with Abram they were treated to a sumptuous meal, which each apparently ate. I don't believe that this or any other earthly food was necessary in order to sustain them. Breathing eating and drinking will be among the many privileges and pleasures of eternal life. It stands to reason that they ate purely for pleasure. Their incorruptible bodies provided no digestion or assimilated. It was only mangled in the mouth so as to provide the pleasures of fragrance and of taste. It was then returned to the earth having been enjoyed but not depleted.

Paul tells us in Philippians 3:20, 21 *"20 For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: 21 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."* This doesn't tell us how "vile will become glorious" as Jesus is, but it's obvious that something profound will take place that will forever make us incorruptible. To be incorruptible, is to be invulnerable to all manner of decay or diminishment of life. If food water and air were to remain essential for the eternal continuance of the body, this would be in conflict with the meaning of

incorruptible. Of course God can do anything in anyway He chooses. However, being the epitome of power & knowledge, and the Author of practicality and common sense, why would He retain such a complex, inefficient, burdensome and high maintenance characteristic in eternal man? The circulating system, with the constant flow of blood, is the means by which life is maintained, and given its limitation. This is of course, ideal where mortality is intended, but it is wholly incompatible where immortality is the goal.

Let's now examine in more detail how we obtain our nourishment. Eating for us is a mechanical, chemical and biological process. We chew, breaking down the structure of the food. Digestive enzymes are added as we chew. After chewing, the mechanical process ends and a chemical process begins. The stomach acid further liquefies the food, and stomach bacteria continue the digestive process. Then, just before the food enters the upper intestines, the pancreas injects copious amounts of sodium carbonate to neutralize the acid, allowing the trillions of intestinal bacteria to continue the digestive process and augment the metabolizing and assimilation of nutrients. Part of the work of the bacteria is to manufacture certain essential vitamins and amino acids not normally found in the original food. The bacteria eventually die, their death indirectly contributing essential components to the nutrient absorption process. The final step in this process is most relevant. The nutrient transfer from the colon to the circulatory system is where the blood carries these life continuing compounds to each and every cell of the body. Thus the "life is in the blood." What about the "death" of the bacteria, given that there was no death before the fall?

What I have described above is far from complete and may also contain technical errors. It is not the result of any current research. Instead it is what I remembered having studied 22 years ago as I sought to learn how to cure the terminal cancer that was supposed to end my life in but a few months. It's also the result of many months of study from which I earned a certificate of qualification as a Nutritional consultant.

My point here relevant to eternal physical man not having blood, but only "flesh and bones" is that the "blood system" necessitates a continuous cell death and replacement, as

well as massive bacterial death. However until Adam sinned, there was no death. The perfect, eternal, “in-the-image-of-God” Adam had to have been “fed” by means other than a blood centered systems that had death built into it as an on-going process. The second Adam, Jesus came to earth as Man with the blood-centered “life giving” system, which made it possible for Him to die through the shedding of His blood. After His resurrection, He was no longer flesh and blood, but instead flesh and bones, being fed spiritually, as will all who will participate in the “second” birth, after they have received their eternal flesh and bones body.

Some might challenge the idea that bacteria death constitutes animal death, because intestinal bacteria are often referred to as “flora”. Are bacteria animal or vegetable? Most must be considered animal. There are what are called aerobic and anaerobic bacteria in the intestinal track. By definition then, some are organisms whose lives are sustained by oxygen rather than by carbon dioxides as is the case with vegetable life. The aerobic must “breathe” air while the anaerobic receive their oxygen through chemical reactions. Genesis Chapter 7 identifies the life forms that would die in the flood. Verse 22 says “*all in whose nostrils was the breathe of life, of all that was in the dry land died.*” This puts at least the aerobic bacteria in that category. We might find it difficult to find “nostrils” as such on a bacterium, but nevertheless, it does live by means of the “breath of life”, and dies when deprived of breath. Thus Adam could not have had the “normal” intestinal and blood systems before the fall, or there would have been death prior to his having sinned. If all aerobic bacteria died in the flood, how can we now have such bacteria? We can see that not only was Noah’s family and the selected animals preserved, but so also were the necessary bacteria!

Scripture subtly confirms for us, in several places, that there is no blood in the flesh of the incorruptible body, Consider these:

- Matthew 16:17 “*And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.*” Here Jesus is saying that no man, living at that time in his blood nourished corruptible flesh could have told him this.

- As already described, 1Corinthians 15:50 tells us “*Now I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.*” Again, this is a most powerful statement in support for the belief that the incorruptible body doesn’t have blood! Let’s again read this with our subject issue in mind. Paul is saying that flesh and blood man cannot go to heaven. Yet we know that physical man will enter heaven where he will receive his “incorruptible” body. Paul’s next utterance, in the same sentence, reiterates that corruption can not inherit incorruption, which is pointing directly to the fact that incorruption, must be something other than a flesh and blood body! This is of its profound relevance to this subject.
- Ephesians 5:30 “*for we are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones.*” As members of His body, blood is no longer a component for our eternal bodies. Yes, while we live in this corruptible flesh it is nourished by blood, but that it is only temporary, until we receive that bloodless incorruptible flesh.
- Hebrews 2:14 “*Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;*” Here we see that it was the Son of Man who had to die! Jesus came into a flesh and blood body, so that He could die. Through the shedding of that blood, He did die the physical death appointed to all men. Returning to life after the physical death of His flesh and blood body, He then was in His eternal incorruptible “flesh and bones” body, a body no longer dependent on blood for its life.

In presenting this study of the “flesh and bones” issue I believe that the conclusion as presented is very credible, logical and consistent with the literal Word of God. I pray that those who find this too preposterous to believe will set aside their judgment until they pray, study and fully absorb the evidence as here presented.