

25. David Peterson takes the opposite opinion and favors “decay” to describe the word.
26. It turns out that all three of the words used are fine but with a caveat regarding the Lord’s body in contradistinction to those of mortal man.
27. Jesus’ body was perfect. It was minus a sin nature therefore absent the imputation of Adam’s original sin.
28. In addition, the Lord’s volitional decisions never consented to the temptations He encountered during the Incarnation. Therefore, His body was incorruptible; ours is not.
29. If His body was incorruptible, then it was capable of sustaining perfect life as was Adam and Isaiah’s bodies prior to the fall.
30. Although brutally accosted prior to the crucifixion and damaged physically by the nails on the cross, He did not die from these injuries. Rather He dismissed His human spirit into the care of the Father and His soul into the care of the Holy Spirit:

Luke 23:46 - And Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said, “Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit.” Having said this, He breathed His last. (NASB)

Acts 2:27 - You will not abandon My soul in Hades, nor allow Your Holy One to undergo decay. (NASB)

31. At this point, the Lord’s body became lifeless while hanging on the cross. We know that the soul never dies and likewise the human spirit.
32. What then about the body of Jesus whose life-sustaining energy has been withdrawn? While alive the Lord possessed in His human perfection perfect life which status required the possession of a soul and spirit.
33. This brings us to the development of a doctrine which we will call:

The Doctrine of the *Corpus Christi*: The Corpse of Christ

1. For our purposes, the phrase *corpus Christi* does not refer to the city in Texas or the Roman Catholic feast commemorating the false doctrine of transubstantiation. Our application is its literal translation from the Latin, “the Body of Christ” or, better, “the Corpse of Christ.”
2. The human body of Homo sapiens is described by Paul as a “body of corruption” in this passage:

1 Corinthians 15:50 - Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood [**body of corruption**] cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable [φθορά (*phthorá*): corruptible: wasting away] inherit the imperishable [ἀφθαρσία (*aphtharsía*): incorruptible & eternal].

v. 51 - Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep [οὐ + κοιμάω (*ou + koimáō*): not all will die physically], but we will all be changed,

v. 52 - in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet, for the trumpet will sound, and the dead [those who are dead at the time of the Rapture] will be raised imperishable, [ἀφθαρσία (*aphtharsía*): incorruptible] and we will be changed.

v. 53 - For the perishable [φθορά (*phthorá*): corruptible: dead at the Rapture] must put on the imperishable [ἀφθαρσία (*aphtharsía*): incorruptible resurrection body], and the mortal [θνητός (*thnétos*): subject to death] must put on immortality [ἀθανασία (*athanasía*): the immortal body].

v. 54 - But when the perishable [corruptible] will have put on the imperishable [incorruptible], and this mortal [subject to death] will have put on immortality [the resurrection body], then will come about the saying that is written [in Isaiah 25:8;], “Death is swallowed up in victory.

v. 55 - [Hosea 13:14b] “O Death, where is your victory? O Death, where is your sting?”

v. 56 - The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. (NASB)

3. The human body is described as a “body of corruption” meaning that it is contaminated by the congenitally formed sin nature and the status of mortality.
4. Fallen at birth, a person is condemned to the lake of fire unless, during life, he or she responds to the gospel of salvation by volitionally expressing personal faith in Jesus Christ.
5. Exceptions to this doctrine occur should a child die before reaching volitional accountability or if mental deficiencies prevent acquisition of rational thought.
6. David understood this principle as indicated by his response to the death of his infant son recorded in:

2 Samuel 12:22 - David said, “While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept; for I said, ‘Who knows, the Lord may be gracious to me, that the child may live.’

v. 23 - “But now he has died; why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I will go to him, but he will not return to me.” (NASB)

7. This passage is messianic in its application. David had just recently received the proclamation of the Davidic Covenant from the prophet Nathan.
8. His bloodline will continue the chart pedigree of Messiah down to Jesus followed by His spiritual death, physical death, resurrection, ascension, and session understood by David in Psalm 110:1.
9. At one point in David’s regency, he committed so many grievous sins that the Lord decided against imposing the sin unto death and instead imposed discipline upon him in several installments.
10. The first installment was related to David’s rape of Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah the Hittite. Uriah was a member of David’s Thirty Mighty Men and an officer in the Israeli army serving under General Joab.

11. Upon learning from Bathsheba that she was pregnant, David discovered that Uriah was assigned duties with the army fighting the Ammonites at Rabbah, the capital city of Ammon.
12. Whereas God the Father sacrificed His “uniquely-born and only Son” for the sins of the world, David’s firstborn died in infancy, installment-one discipline for conspiring to murder Bathsheba’s husband.
13. David ordered Joab to send Uriah back to Jerusalem and when the officer arrived, David attempted to influence the man to spend the night with Bathsheba before returning to battle.
14. Uriah refused to do so since his fellow soldiers were encamped outside Rammah and in harm’s way. When David could not convince him to cooperate, he handed a sealed communique to Uriah with orders to deliver it to Joab.
15. The communique contained an order for Joab to assign Uriah to a group that would make a sortie against the best-defended area of the city.
16. Our system of jurisprudence classifies certain types of murder as a “Contract Killing” or a “Proxy Murder,” the former referred to as “murder for hire” while the latter as “accessory to murder.”
17. This is not a strict comparison between the two events, yet David would come to realize that the innocent demise of both Jesus and the adulterine portrayed the substitutionary sacrifice performed by each.
18. The Lord’s innocent sacrifice on the cross provided eternal life to any who believe in Him. The innocent adulterine’s death was Phase One of David’s Installment Discipline as an alternative of suffering the sin unto death.

19. Both will be united in the future resurrection, but in the meantime both will suffer decay and decomposition in the grave.
20. Resurrection is the return of the soul and human spirit to a body of incorruption which is also accompanied by the eternal life of the individual.
21. Corruption refers to the human body which is subject to physical death. Incorruption refers to resurrection body which can never experience physical death.
22. On the other hand, Jesus Christ possessed a human body of incorruption because His perfect body was not susceptible to death.
23. When Jesus died it was not as a result of excessive bodily abuse or injury. When His responsibilities on the cross were fulfilled, He immediately released his human spirit to the Father and his soul to the Holy Spirit.
24. When this tripartite separation occurred, the corpse of Christ hung on the cross. By a request made by Joseph of Arimathea to Pontus Pilate, the corpse of Christ was turned over to him and Nicodemus for burial.
25. Although the body of Christ was not susceptible to physical death, once he dismissed His spirit and soul, his human life expired.
26. Without having the life force of the soul, a question arises: Did the perfect corpse of Christ become susceptible to the normal processes of decay and decomposition.
27. The English definition of the word “decay” is “to undergo decomposition” and, under its listing in *Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary* (11th edition), several definitions of the postmortem process follow:

DECAY implies a slow change from a state of soundness or perfection.

DECOMPOSE stresses a breaking down by chemical change when applied to organic matter.

ROT is a close synonym of decompose and often connotes foulness.

PUTREFY implies the rotting of animal matter and offensiveness to sight and smell.

28. The two definitions that apply to our discussion are decay and decompose. With regard to our Lord's body, its makeup from conception to physical death was perfect as it was empowered by the soul.
29. Since Jesus' spirit and soul were withdrawn at the moment of His physical death, did His perfect body begin the process of decay? Note the definition again for decay: "A slow change from a state of soundness or perfection."
30. The English word "decay" is used in descriptions of the Lord's corpse in the following verses: Psalm 16:10; Acts 2:27, 31; 13:34-35, 37 (NASB) and appear as follows:

Psalm 16:10 - Four you will not abandon my soul in Sheol [לְאֵוֶל (She'ol): Hades]; nor [לֹא (lo')] will You allow Your Holy One to undergo [רָאָה (ra'ah): to experience] decay [שָׁחַת (shachath): "grave"].

Acts 2:27 - Because You will not abandon my soul in Hades, nor [οὐδέ (oudé)] allow Your holy One to undergo [ὁράω (horáō); to experience] decay [διαφθορά (diaphthorá): (decay)].

Acts 2:31 - He [David] looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of Christ, that He was neither abandoned to Hades, nor [οὐδέ (oudé)] did His flesh suffer [ὁράω (horáō); to experience] decay [διαφθορά (diaphthorá)].

Acts 13:34a - "As for the fact that He [God] raised Him up from the dead, no longer [μηκέτι (mēkēti)] to return to decay [διαφθορά (diaphthorá)]

Acts 13:35 - “Therefore He also says in another Psalm, ‘You will not allow [οὐ (*ou*)] Your Holy One to undergo [ὀράω (*horáō*); to experience] decay [διαφθορά (*diaphthorá*)].

v. 36 - “For David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, fell asleep [physical death], and was laid among his fathers and underwent [ὀράω (*horáō*); experienced] decay [διαφθορά (*diaphthorá*): the process of decomposition].

v. 37 - But He whom God raised did not [οὐκ (*ouk*)] undergo decay [διαφθορά (*diaphthorá*)].
(NASB)

31. The perfect body of Jesus Christ never experienced the decay that would normally occur for a natural man.
32. In the status of physical death, the corpse of Christ, during its three days in the tomb, did not even begin the process of decay.
33. Scripture is clear in the several verses just noted that the Lord’s corpse did not “change from a state of soundness or perfection.”
34. The terms revealing that the corpse of Christ never endured the otherwise normal process of “decay” include: **(1)** “nor ... undergo decay” (David, Psalm 16:10) and (Peter, Acts 2:27, **(2)** “nor ... suffer decay” (Peter, Acts 2:31), **(3)** “no longer to decay” (Paul, Acts 13:34a), **(4)** “not allow ... to undergo decay” (Paul Acts 13:35), and **(5)** “did not undergo decay” (Paul 13:37).
35. Although believers will receive resurrection bodies at the Rapture, Jesus received His at the First Resurrection.
36. We have bodies of corruption and at physical death they will begin the postmortem process of decay. At the Rapture they will be replaced by bodies that are imperishable (1 Corinthians 15:51-54).

37. Based on biblical passages that describe the resurrection body of Jesus, our resurrection bodies may be described under the principle stated by John in:

1 John 3:2b - We know that when He appears, we will be like Him. [cf., **Philippians 3:21**]

- (1) The resurrection body does not appear unusual, Luke 24:13-32; John 20:11-16.
 - (2) It can vanish from sight, Luke 24:31.
 - (3) It can move through barriers, Matthew 27:65-66 cf., 28:5-6; John 20:19, 26.
 - (4) It retains stigmata, Luke 24:39-40; John 20:20, 27.
 - (5) It is made of flesh and bones, Luke 24:39.
 - (6) It is capable of consuming food, Luke 24:41-43; John 21:15.
 - (7) It can move through interstellar space at warp speed, Luke 24:51; Acts 1:9.
 - (8) It is imperishable and immortal (1 Corinthians 15:54)
38. Returning now to Peter's Argument where he has advanced to:

Acts 2:27 - You will not abandon My soul in Hades, nor allow Your Holy One to undergo decay.

1. We have established that the "souls" of Old Testament saints are retained in the Paradise compartment of Hades until the resurrection.
2. Peter goes on to confirm David's claim that the Messiah's corpse would not undergo decay, a prophecy that both Peter and Paul address in Acts.
3. Based on what we've studied we can now easily expand the translation of:

Acts 2:27 - God will not abandon my [**David's**] soul in Paradise [**interim body vacates at the resurrection of Christ**], nor allow the corpse of Christ to undergo decay [**διαφθορά (diaphthorá)**]. (EXT)

(End CR14-70. See CR14-71 for continuation of study at p. 701.)