

Where is the Risen Messiah?



HIS RESURRECTION

Many claim that nearly 2000 years ago, the one commonly known as Jesus, after being killed, came back to life, and was last seen ascending from a hill near Jerusalem. This is a most unusual claim considering that when people die, they usually stay dead. Some dismiss the story as impossible. Others profess to believe it, although in their heart, many do not really believe it. Such disbelief is understandable, but yet, if life in the first place, is the product of an intelligent designer who has power to perform physical miracles, then perhaps it is not too absurd to believe that a resurrection could occur. But did it occur?

A PHYSICAL BODY

Our only evidence of Messiah's resurrection, are the witnesses who saw his risen body. The point is: If he did resurrect, it was in a *physical* body. Luke 24:39 says: "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have". Now if he is still alive, then he still has a physical body. But where is it?

WHERE DID HE GO?

Pilots have been flying the skies for years, but never reported seeing a man stuck in the clouds. Christians say he went out into space at Yahweh's right hand. Let's examine this. What is our source of information? Were there any witnesses? How far could they see? Has Yahweh ever revealed anything about it? If the Messiah is our source of divine communication, and he is absent, then how could we ever receive any message from Yahweh about it?

WHERE IS YAHWEH'S RIGHT HAND?

Do you know *where* Yahweh is? What makes you think His right hand is way out in space somewhere? The phrase Yahweh's right hand is merely a figure of speech.¹ The Messiah made a statement² meaning that His resurrection would overrule the court's death decree. His apostles later repeated it³ but they were not referring to his whereabouts. We have no reason to think he sits beside Yahweh way out in space somewhere. Yahweh's dwelling has been on this earth in the midst of Israel, and the Bible gives us no reason to suppose He has left the earth and now taken up residence out in space or on some other planet.

WHERE IS HE NOW?

So our original question remains: *Where is his resurrected body?* If you think he was last seen disappearing into the clouds; then consider: If we had a twelve inch diameter globe of the earth, with a dime on its surface; the thickness of the dime would represent a height of 36 miles. Now, you might assume that he continued to go up and away out into space; but it would be just as valid to assume that he came back down to earth at some other place. Either one would be merely an assumption in the absence of additional information!

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

We have a history telling that he came back down to earth, here in America, shortly after he had gone up. Here is that history:

And it came to pass as they understood, they cast their eyes up again towards Heaven, and behold, they saw a man descending out of Heaven: and he was clothed in a white robe, and he came down and stood in the midst of them, and the eyes of the whole multitude was turned upon him, and they durst not open their mouths, even one to another, and wist not what it meant: for they thought it was an angel that had appeared unto them.

¹ See this Hebrew idiom in: Ex 15:6; Deut 33:2; Ps 17:7; 18:35; 44:3; 45:4; 48:10; 60:5; 63:8; 98:1; 108:6; 118:15,16; & 138:7.

² See: Mat 26:64; Mark 14:62; & Luke 22:69.

³ See: Acts 2:33; 5:31; & 7:55-56; Rom 8:34; Eph 1:20; Col 3:1; Heb 1:3; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2; & 1 Pet 3:22.

And it came to pass that he stretched forth his hand, and spake unto the people, saying: Behold I am Jesus Christ, of which the prophets testified that should come into the world.

This history is in the Book of Mormon⁴ written by "other sheep" in America who also were to hear his voice.⁵ It shows the Messiah came from the east, even unto the west, as said in **Mat 24:27**, and it agrees with verse **34** which says: This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled.

TRADITIONAL BELIEFS EXAMINED

If you object because you did not see it; and if you insist that every eye will see him come in the future, then I ask you: Will all of the wicked be resurrected first, so that even the ones who pierced him will be alive and ready to watch him come down? If he descends to earth in the near future as most teach, then what about later generations who were not born in time to see him come? Would not their objections in the future be just as valid as yours are today? In **(Rev 1:7)** it does not say that every eye will see him coming down, but rather, at some future time every eye will see him.

If you are in America and his feet touch down at Jerusalem, you will not see it. To make his coming visible to everyone, some have said he will circle the earth before landing so that everyone can see him! Suppose your phone rings and it is your neighbor who excitedly announces: "Jesus is coming! Run outside and look!" You throw down the phone, dash out the door and visually scan the sky. If you saw him whizz by about a mile away, would you really be convinced that indeed his "second coming" was about to occur? If he traveled at the speed of light over the oceans, and slowed down to 1000 miles per hour over earth's land areas, and if he covered a four mile swath with each pass, so as to be visible to everyone, his "second coming" would take over 1½ years! Other theories have also been suggested, but they contradict **Acts 1:11** which says; "....in like manner as you have seen him go...."

⁴ **3 Nephi 11:8-10** (5:9-11). Verse numbers of RLDS editions are in parenthesis.

⁵ See **John 10:16** & **3 Ne 15:16-21** (7:16-20).

Now back to the Book of Mormon: After he came down in like manner as he went up, he continued going and coming.⁶ His agenda included visiting other tribes of Israelites at various places besides those in America. This is in perfect agreement with many bible statements that Yahweh would be in the midst of Israel.⁷ If the Messiah is at Yahweh's right hand, then he is in the midst of Israel, on this earth!

ON EARTH TODAY?

It was after his ascension described in **Acts 1:9** that he was seen by Paul (**1 Cor 15:8**); and by John (**Rev 1:12-18**). A careful reading of **Rev 1:20** & **2:1** shows that the resurrected Messiah walked among the seven churches. **Ether 12:39 (5:40)** tells that He was seen in America as late as 400 A.D.. And referring to a time after European immigrants came to America, he said: "...Yea, even I will be in the midst of you..."⁸

2 Ne 3:5 (2:9) prophesied that he would manifest himself to American Indians in the latter days, not after they are converted, as some have supposed, but: "...unto the bringing of them out of darkness..."

And we have reason to believe that he in fact has manifested himself to them! It was reported in 1890, that near Walker Lake, Nevada, representatives of sixteen tribes of Native Americans, were visited in person and instructed by the resurrected Messiah!

It is far more likely that he is on earth today, rather than out in space somewhere!

6 See **3 Ne 16:1-3; 3 Ne 17:4; 18:39; 19:15; 26:15; 27:2 & 28:12** (**7:24-26; 8:4; 8:75; 9:16; 12:8; 12:15 & 13:24**)

7 See: **Ex 25:8; 29:45-46; Nu 35:34; 1 Ki 6:13; Isa 12:6; Ezek 37:28 & 43:7; Joel 2:27; Zeph 3:15, 17; Zech 2:10-11.**

These verses show that Yahweh dwells in the midst of Israel, on the earth. This is a most important concept, especially for those who understand the doctrine of Oneness.

8 See: **3 Ne 20:22 & 21:25 (9:59 & 10:4).**