

Jesus Was To Return in "*Like Manner*"

Another troublesome scripture to some in understanding the parousia (presence) of Christ's return is the following verse in the books of Acts.

1. Acts 1:11 who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This *same* Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven."

The verse above describes the ascension of Jesus after His resurrection from the dead. The particular parts of this verse which are difficult for some to understand are the phrases "*this same Jesus*," and "*shall so come (back) in like manner*."

The problem that arises from the phrase "*this same Jesus*" is that some Christians use the phrase to require Jesus to someday come back in the flesh, physically as Jesus of Nazareth. This would require a physical visible return to earth. Specifically, these Christians believe that the Galileans who observed the ascension of Jesus offer proof that when He returns this same sort of observation is in order otherwise it would not be the "*same*" Jesus. The Greek word "same" is #3778, "*houtos*."

2. John 1:2 He was in the beginning with God.

In the verse above the Greek word #3778, "*houtos*" is also used for the word translated "*same*." Let's look at the implications of requiring Jesus to be in a visible form at His parousia (presence).

The verse in #2 above tells us (by referring to verse one of that chapter) that Jesus (who is the Word) was with God in the beginning. At that time Jesus was not in His incarnate body that was provided by God through Mary. He was, rather, in His spirit form which is what God is, spirit.

3. John 4:24 God *is* Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

4. What was the pre-incarnation (before coming to earth as Jesus of Nazareth) form of Jesus? Jesus was spirit.

5. Was the pre-incarnate Jesus the same (*houtos*) Jesus that walked the face of the earth as Jesus of Nazareth? Yes. He was in a different FORM but the same Jesus.

It is understood that one does not have to retain the same FORM in order to be the SAME (*houtos*) person. In the beginning Jesus existed in spirit form with God as the Word. When Jesus came to earth in His incarnate fleshly form He was still the same (*houtos*) Jesus.

6. John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

7. Who is being referred to as the "*Word*" in the verse above? (HINT: Read verse one). The "*Word*" is Jesus.

CONCLUSION: To require Jesus to come back in physical form in order to satisfy what some Christians believe to be the case because of the Acts 1:11 phrase "*this same Jesus*" is an unwarranted requirement. We have shown through the preceding that Jesus does not have to be in the physical flesh at His parousia (presence) because Jesus is the same Jesus whether He is in His fleshly body OR He is in His pre-incarnate spirit state of being.

8. 2 Corinthians 5:16 Therefore, from now on, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know *Him thus* no longer.

9. What does the verse above tell us about how it is we are to know Jesus? We are no longer to know Jesus in the flesh.

The second phrase in the Acts 1:11 verse that we began this Learning Activity with causes some Christians concern is the phrase "*shall so come in like manner.*" This phrase is known in grammar as an adverbial phrase and modifies the manner in which Christ will again appear. It has nothing to do with the noun Jesus. In the context in which this phrase is used, and using the correct grammatical understanding, the phrase "*shall so come in like manner*" refers to the ascension of Christ in a cloud. This manner of return is exactly what He did when He returned to bring judgment on Jerusalem in AD 70 (see the content of Learning Activity #49).

When the reader combines the information we have discussed concerning the two phrases "*this same Jesus*" and "*shall so come in like manner,*" we can see that Acts 1:11 does not mandate a physical, fleshly return of Christ!