The Ascension: An Attempt at Breaking the Silence

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Ascension Day used to be one of the high days of the Christian year; there are still countries where it is a public holiday. But it has had a poor time of it here in recent years, and so has the event it commemorates. Karl Rahner remarked that Roman Catholic manuals of Christology hardly mentioned it; Pannenberg's *Systematic Theology* only mentions it three times, and then in passing. The Presbyterian Church in the USA has dropped all reference to it from its statement of faith. The Church of England, while not abolishing the festival (it falls on a Thursday anyway, so most people will miss it) has abolished its 'octave' and renamed the Sunday after it 'the Seventh Sunday of Easter'. People seem to be a little embarrassed by it

There have indeed been treatments of the meaning of the Ascension, and of the history of the doctrine, notably Farrow[1] and Dawson.[2] Perhaps the real wasteland was the first part of the twentieth century, during which (as J. G. Davies noted) only one book in English on the Ascension had been published, and that dealt more with the Lord's heavenly priesthood. But in general it is true that the subject has been avoided, despite its prominence in the Bible, in Creeds and in older liturgical calendars.

Why has this come about? In the first place, there are problems over the New Testament texts. In Acts, Luke explicitly says that the Lord ascended forty days after his Resurrection. But (it has been argued) Luke's Gospel, and John's too, seem to suggest it took place on Easter Day itself. Maybe have thought this was because there was in reality no one specific event which had to be pinned down to a particular date, so that the New Testament writers could use their own judgments. All that was certain was that Jesus was 'at the right hand of God'. Hence the Ascension itself could be played down.

Secondly, the description in Acts looks strangely crude. The 'descent' of the Son of God from heaven in the Incarnation has always been a metaphor. Mary was told 'the Holy Ghost will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you'; no visible descent from above. But in Acts we find that Luke

describes Christ as taken up into a cloud, and the disciples are left 'gazing up into heaven': shades of the 'three-decker universe'! Was this, perhaps, a case of accommodation to the habits of thought of the disciples? So, certainly, many have taken it. Though, as N. T. Wright remarks—

> two-decker language about a 'heaven' in the sky above the earth almost certainly did not betoken a two-decker, let alone a three-decker, cosmology... Some may have done so; there is no telling what things people will believe; but we should not imagine that the early Christians thought like that.[3]

But there is a third group of objections of special interest to philosophers. 'A tangible or palpable body,' said David Strauss, 'is not adapted to a supernatural abode'.[4] We are apparently faced with two possibilities. (1) Christ ascended with his physic al human body to a (presumably) physical heaven, or (2) he ascended without his physical human body to a non-physical heaven. And both seem to have difficulties.

The first has been the belief of many in the Reformed tradition. Calvin himself is not completely committed to this position, but points that way. In his commentary on the Synoptic Gospels he is silent about it; in the relevant section of the *Institutes* (II, 16, 14ff.), he celebrates the significance of the Ascension, but not its nature. Some other remarks do not all point in the same direction. He certainly took 'at the right hand of God' to be a metaphor, and Torrance remarks that 'Calvin was' right when he said that the biblical writers never thought of the presence of God or of the ascension simply in terms of our space and time. What else is the right hand of God [he asked] but the power of God, and 'where is that but everywhere where God is'.

'When we speak of [heaven] as another place outside the universe, we do so because we must speak of the Kingdom of God using the only language which we have.'[5] Yet one can admit that 'the right hand of God' is metaphorical without saying the same of the Ascension. 'How weak and fragile [our] hope would be,' Calvin wrote, 'if this very flesh of ours had not been raised in Christ, and had not entered into the Kingdom of Heaven?', and a little earlier, 'Does not the very name of ascension...intimate removal from one place to another?' though he does add, 'Some will ask, Are we then to assign a certain

region of heaven to Christ? I answer with Augustine, that this is a curious and superfluous question, provided we believe he is in heaven.'

Later writers in the Reformed tradition were much more explicit. The *Thirty-Nine Articles* of the Church of England, for example, say firmly that Christ rose from the dead 'with flesh, bones and all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature, and with them ascended into heaven'. Several of the divines cited in Heppe's anthology of *Reformed Dogmatics* go, if possible, even further. The Ascension, according to one,[6] was 'not the change or metabole of one condition to another, nor a disappearance, but strictly a *phora*, that is, a movement from place to place...Is this usage strict or figurative? Strict, of course.'[7] And another (Turretin, 1688) asks, 'Was Christ's Ascension made strictly by local movement from lower places to the highest heave n of the blessed, or metaphorically by disappearance? The former is affirmed, the latter denied, against the Lutherans.'[8] This was not universal. Martin Bucer apparently thought of spatial categories as symbolic, and 'sought to prevent the idea of Christ's local presence in heaven from becoming a 'necessary doctrine.'[9]

This enabled him to find agreement with the Lutherans, whose traditional teaching about the ubiquity of Christ's body (associated with belief in a 'real presence' by way of 'consubstantiation' in the Eucharist) obviously ruled out a literal ascension to a heavenly place.

I do not know whether anyone today would care to defend the position of Bucan and Turretin. It might just have been possible in a pre-Copernican universe, where physical space was finite and bounded. It is certainly very much harder to make sense of it in a modern view of the universe, which is usually thought to be either infinite or finite but bounded. Yet it does seem to fit in with what is said about the Ascension in Scripture. I propose, therefore, to look at various ways out of the difficulty which have been suggested.

One is taken up by Gerrit Dawson, in an excellent treatment of the meaning and importance of the Ascension; he thinks highly of an idea put forward by Thomas Torrance, that the space to which Christ was translated is not to be regarded as a *receptacle*. It is a matter of *relation*. 'In a relational sense, God in Christ crosses the divide to enter our existence, our way of being. Then...

Jesus returns, still bearing his humanity, to the place of relation described as the Father's right hand, the "place" of honour, glory, power and dominion.' The trouble is, firstly, that it is not altogether clear what this means. Is this relation (or, are these relations) spatial? It doesn't sound like it. But if not, then we are back with a metaphorical movement. Yet this seems not to be what Dawson is getting at. He goes on to say, in the Reformed tradition, 'because a body necessarily occupies space, the spatial distinction is not merely metaphor, but reality. There is a heaven in which spiritual beings occupy space.'

The distinction between receptacle and relation is important, and we will come back to it later on, but it certainly will not resolve our difficulties by itself.

A second possibility is to understand 'body' in a wider sense than the normal. Perhaps something like this can be found in the Lutheran tradition. Robert Jenson, writing from a generally Lutheran standpoint, quotes Aquinas with approval, 'Wherever something is at work, there it is', and goes on, 'For God, there are only two places, the place that he is, and the place that he makes for creatures, immediately and inwardly adjacent to him'.[10] Apply this to the presence of Christ's body, and we have something like the Lutheran doctrine of Ubiquity.

Jenson himself borrows here some of the language of the sixteenth-century Lutheran theologians of Swabia headed by Johannes Brenz of Wurttemberg (1499-1570): 'since deity and humanity are inseparably joined...in one person in Christ, it is necessary that wherever the deity of Christ is, there also is his humanity.' Christ has risen to be in the place of God; but God is his own place, and all creation is just one other place; his presence (and therefore that of Christ) to all creation is therefore simultaneous. The only differences there are in this simultaneous presence are those of the (ways) in which he is present. (e.g. as creator, in the Word, in the Eucharist, in the hearts of believers, and so on). The catch is, as Jenson admits, that 'it is hard to see by what right they call the entity they describe a body at all'.[11]

Jenson's own solution is to identify the body of the risen Lord with the Eucharist's loaf and cup and the Church gathered round them, and 'whatever object it is that is Christ's availability to us as subjects'. This was, as he notes, the position advocated back in 1952, in John Robinson's *The Body*[12] and I

think philosophers will be as unhappy with it now as then. Certainly it does not resolve any problems over the Ascension; for Christ's body in this sense is not in heaven at all, but on earth.

Another possibility is quite simply to deny that the *body* of Christ ascended at all. 'It is safe to say' (Jenson again) 'that most modern believers, whatever doctrine they may formally espouse, actually envision the risen Christ as not embodied, as a pure spirit'[13] (Actually, he adds 'or perhaps as embodied in a very thinned-out fashion...as a spook'; but I doubt if this last is often really the case.) This may not be really true of most believers' attitude to the (risen) Lord between Easter and the Ascension, but it may very well be true where the *ascended* Lord is concerned thereafter. Lutheran orthodoxy, I believe, insisted that there was a physical ascension into the cloud, because this was after all what the Bible says happened, but denied that there was a physical movement from the clouds to the heavenly realm; rather, Christ returned 'to the ineffable glory and majesty of the spiritual world.'[14]

This view is not perhaps confined to modern believers, or to Lutherans. Something like it may be found in Gnostic writings. It may be found in Origen: 'we are not to understand him' (Christ) 'as existing in the circumscribed body which he occupied on earth'.[15] But the main point is, can we understand the Ascension without taking it as an ascension of the Lord's literal physical body?

The classical objection to trying this line is that Christ must be as fully human in glory as he was on earth. And a human being consists of body and soul. If Christ retained his humanity after the ascension, it must be his body that ascended; or rather, unless we are physicalists, he must have ascended with both body and soul. Some, indeed, have insisted that Christianity is quite consistent with physicalism, and that (to put things crudely) there is no such thing as the soul. I do not myself agree with this, but if it were true it would make the point even more strongly. If Christ had no human soul (not because Apollinarianism was right, but because no human being has one) then it cannot have been his soul which ascended to the Father; if anything ascended at all, it must have been his body. And therefore, if his body did not ascend, only his deity is at the right hand of God, and he is no longer human.

If, however, dualism is true, then even if a complete human being consists of body and soul, a disembodied soul could still be a human being. (Someone who has had the misfortune to lose a leg is clearly an incomplete human being, but is still definitely human.) It would therefore be perfectly possible for the Lord to have retained his humanity in glory even if he did not ascend with his body. This is, as I said, what Jenson supposes most modern believers to think, and perhaps they are right.

However, before agreeing with them, there are some other approaches to the whole question that are worth exploring.

To begin with, there is the question of the Resurrection itself, or rather of the Resurrection appearances. Whereas before Good Friday and Easter Christ's life could be described as the natural life of a human being with occasional miraculous episodes, afterwards it was the miraculous life of a human being with occasional natural episodes. This may be what Richard Swinburne had in mind when he wrote, 'There is quite a tradition of Jesus being embodied in the normal way for a little of the time, although in that embodied state possessing extraordinary powers.'[16] He was not always recognizable; and this was presumably (at least in the case of the two disciples on their way to Emmaus) because he chose not to be. There were evidently periods during which the human body of the Lord did not exist in this world at all. (This might cast doubt on the Reformed tradition. Clearly a change had come over our Lord's body even before he ascended—a *metabole*, such as Bucan denied.) This does not of course mean that the physical body did not exist at all during these gaps, or after the Ascension. But some have treated this existence in a way that makes it very close to a metaphor—not just a metaphorical movement, but a metaphorical existence. Bicknell's once standard textbook on the Thirty-Nine Articles suggested 'We may picture to ourselves our Lord's body as a faculty that he possesses and through which he can still act in our world of space and time whenever and wherever he wills so to do.'[17]

There are resemblances here to the Swabian theologians mentioned by Jenson. But this is not what one would normally mean by 'having a physical body' (as indeed Jenson noted with regard to the Swabians); and God could and did appear in any form he chose even before the Incarnation. One might add that the examples Bicknell cites (such as St. Stephen's vision when on trial before

the Sanhedrin, and the conversion of St. Paul) may not quite fit his thesis. Stephen saw Christ standing at the right hand of God, and therefore not presumably in our world of space and time (though I suppose he could still be said to be acting in it). Saul on the Damascus road experienced only a great light and a voice, not a body; Acts 23:11, when the Lord stood beside him in prison, would perhaps have been a better example. While when St. John on Patmos had his vision of the ascended and glorified Lord, in many ways he did not look as he had before the Ascension: his hair was white as snow, his eyes like a flame of fire, and his feet like fine brass. And at another time he appeared as a Lamb with the marks of slaughter upon him. In any case, the visions in Revelation (like those of Stephen) were, precisely, visions, visions of another world, and the body or bodies John saw were in heaven. In them the Lord was certainly acting in our world of space and time, by way of the mind of St. John, but his body was not in it.

Another possible line of approach would be by way of what Jesus himself, and St. Paul, say about those who are 'accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection of the dead'. They neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like the angels in heaven; their bodies are sown as natural bodies, they are raised as spiritual bodies. Will this not also apply to the ascended body of Christ himself? Does he too have a 'spiritual body', whatever that is, rather than a natural one.

Perhaps what we are looking for is an ascended body which is what one might call quasi-material; we want something that can affect others as a physical body would, but be much more plastic to the soul or mind than our present bodies are, or than the Lord' s body was before Easter. We may get help from some writings, dating from more than fifty years ago, by the late Professor H. H. Price.[18] He was not dealing with the Ascension; indeed, he first put forward his ideas as something that should interest the Society for Psychical Research, and I do not know whether at that time he would even have professed to being a Christian, though later he did.

To summarize what I think was Price's last statement of his position, in chapter six of his *Essays in the Philosophy of Religion*, he considers two possible views of the 'next world'. One is an 'embodied' view. Here those who have passed to the next world have some sort of physical body. It might be in many ways

different from the bodies we have now, but it would still have shape, size, location and motion, and also secondary qualities and causal powers. It would presumably be located in a universe or space other than our own. And the laws of nature which governed that universe might be very different from those we experience here. Price thought that they might allow matter to be what he called 'ideoplastic', 'responsive to the thoughts, memories and desires' of that universe's inhabitants.

The other is, naturally, the 'disembodied' view. The trouble with this is that presumably the deceased have no sense-experiences, having no sense-organs to experience with. But they might have mental images, and the after-life could be like a dream which went on indefinitely. Normally we think of dream experiences as 'unreal'. But, Price points out, 'if we no longer had any waking perceptions to contrast them with, we should no longer regard them as "unreal"'. Such a Next World might have its own causal laws. And these dreams might even be 'shared', as in Kipling's story *The Brushwood Boy* (my example, not Price's).

In either case we should need to have some sort of body. It would not be identical with our present bodies, but would have to resemble them outwardly if we were to recognize one another. This body would be 'as the artist conceives of it...and not the body as the anatomist or physiologist conceives of it.' Hence an image-body (as implied in the 'disembodied' view) would do just as well as a physical body (as implied in the 'embodied' view).

Now, Price argued, these two views can be seen to, as it were, 'converge'. In each case we are starting with an analogy and stretching it as far as we can. The first theory starts with a physical analogy, an analogy with the material world with which we are familiar; the second starts with a mental or psychological analogy, the experience of dreams with which we are also familiar. And each stretches the analogy in the direction of the other. It would be impossible, really, to say simply either that the Next World was a world of physical objects or that it was one of mental images. 'I suspect', wrote Price, 'that we are trying to describe something which neither of our two analogies fits perfectly, though both fit it in some degree: we are trying to describe something which is intermediate between the physical and the mental as we ordinarily conceive of them.'[19]

Price was thinking simply of how people might continue to exist after the death of the body. He did not bring the presence of God into the description of his 'Next World'; indeed, that world could, he thought, contain for some people very unpleasant regions which would correspond to Christian and other notions of hell. But Christians might well think of other regions as corresponding to our notions of Heaven, and of their inhabitants as living in the presence of God. It would of course be possible that, as has been supposed by a variety of Christian writers, the redeemed change and make progress in this 'Next World'; possible, but not required by the theory.

If this is so, can we look to it as a possible resolution of some of our problems over the Ascension? Could our Lord have moved on the first Ascension Day into a world such as Price suggested, and be now presiding over it 'at the right hand of God'? How would this suit the conditions which ought to be fitted into an understanding of the Ascension?

These might be:

(1) It will allow the space of the ascended Lord to be understood in terms of relation rather than receptacle.
(2) It will allow us to think of the ascended Lord as ascended as a spirit.
(3) It will allow him to be fully human.
(4) It will allow him to appear as and when he chooses.
(5) It will provide a reasonable answer to the point the Lutherans and Calvinists argued over whether to treat the Ascension as a movement or a dissolution.
(6) It will allow us to speak of our resurrection bodies, and presumably of Christ's ascended body, as a 'spiritual body' and comparable to the angels.

As to (1), it is clear that in so far as a Pricean Next World resembles his 'disembodied' model, its space will have to be relational. Its space will grow out of the shared images of its inhabitants. In so far as it resembles his 'embodied' model, well, it partly depends on our philosophy of this space, the one we live in. Many would suppose that to be relational too. But even if it is not, the space of a Pricean 'Next World', even starting with the 'embodied' model, could probably not be thought of as a 'receptacle' in the way that our present space might be. It would have to be too 'fluid' to be an orderly

spacetime like ours, and if it was shaped to a great extent by the thoughts, wills and desires of its inhabitants, it would depend heavily on their relationships one to another.

As far as (2) is concerned: Most people, Jenson suggested, think of the risen Christ—and though this seems contrary to what the Gospels imply, it could well be true of the ascended Christ—not as embodied, but as 'a pure spirit'. Now this is not true in the first Pricean model. In this he definitely has a body, like others in the 'Next World', even if it is very different from the body he had in Nazareth. With the second, it depends really on what is meant by 'a pure spirit'. It could suggest an isolated spirit eternally engaged in eternal contemplation (Price mischievously suggested 'contemplating the a priori) truths of logic and mathematics which are independent of the data of the senses', which, he thought, might be satisfactory to Descartes but to many people would seem 'exceedingly dreary and unsatisfying'; but of course in the case of the redeemed it might be the contemplation of God.) Christ in Price's second model is certainly not an isolated spirit; he has an 'image-body', and spatial and causal relations with other spirits.

But what of the position between Easter and the Ascension? Christ's risen but unascended body seems to have been what Price called 'ideoplastic', responsive to his thoughts, will, and desires, appearing and disappearing, recognizable or nor recognizable a s he chose. Origen spoke of the risen Lord as having a 'body of the soul', as 'in a kind of intermediate state between the solidarity of the bosy as it was before his passion, and the condition of the soul uncovered by any body.'[20]

This is, so to speak, understandable after the Ascension, with (if the preceding suggestions have been correct) a very different body. He did indeed appear to St. John on Patmos in very different forms, as a glorified human and as a Lamb. But it does seem strange that he did much the same with his original body after the Resurrection. Perhaps it is not really as strange as all that. He told the dying thief that they would be together in Paradise *i.e.* in our terms the 'next world') that day. There were, as we have seen, times after the Resurrection when it would seem his original body did not exist in this world, and any picture of the resurrection body of the Lord must take this into account. If he did indeed rise from the dead 'with flesh, bones and all things

appertaining to the perfection of man's nature', he also discarded them, or set them aside, from time to time; it looks as if he had the body of the Next World—was, in fact, in Paradise—even while he was at times present and active in this one.

Another problem arises here. Could a body belonging to the 'Next World' move into this one, and act in and upon it? The closer such a body was to the 'embodied' model, the more likely this would be. It might possibly be that the changes I suggested might take place in the Next World might include movement away from a state close to the 'embodied' model towards one closer to the 'disembodied'. Hence during the Forty Days Christ ate, broke bread, cooked a meal, and invited St. Thomas to feel his wounds, as if he were partly in our world, embodied, and partly in the next. His appearances after the Ascension seem not to have involved anything like this. Of course, we don't even know whether a 'next world' such as has been described exists, much less what powers any bodies in it might have.

Condition (3) was that any theory of the Ascension should allow the ascended Christ to be fully human. I do not think that there is any difficulty here.

On the suggested theory, Christ retains his human mind and soul, and, what is more, he has the same kind of body as other human beings who are admitted into the 'next world'.

The fourth condition was that he must be able to appear as and when he chooses. This is interesting. Obviously Christ, being divine, can always appear as and when he chooses. But on a Price-derived view of the Ascension, perhaps we should say that he can do so, not only in virtue of his divinity, but also in virtue of his glorified humanity.

In so far as in our supposed 'Next World' communication depends on 'ideoplasticity', it might be that all its inhabitants could to some extent shape their bodies as needed. (We can after all do that to a very limited extent even here!) And in so far as it depends on something that might be called telepathy, again it might be that its inhabitants could control what 'messages' they 'transmitted'. In both cases it could be that the difference between the Lord and his elect would be one of degree rather than kind. But the redeemed in the

'Next World', however they may appear to one another, do not as a rule enter or affect this world, least of all in the form of physical objects that can break bread or eat fish. In that respect the risen Christ was surely unique.

We also wanted any model of the Ascension to provide a reasonable answer to the point the Lutherans and Calvinists argued over whether to treat the Ascension as a movement or a dissolution. And perhaps we are in the pleasant position of being able to say 'Both!' In so far as (let us say) the disappearance at Emmaus could be called a dissolution, then so was the Ascension (differing of course from what happened at Emmaus in that it was not followed by a rematerialization); in so far as the body of Christ ceased to be in one place (the Mount of Olives) and began to be in another (the 'next world') the Ascension could be called a 'movement'. It would differ of course from ordinary movements in at least two respects: that his body changed in the process, and that there was no spatial continuity. (Of course, these both apply to the Resurrection appearances.)

Will these suggestions allow us to speak of our resurrection body, and presumably of Christ's ascended body, as a 'spiritual body' and comparable to the angels? The first, certainly; indeed, it could be claimed as a major advantage that it makes sense of St. Paul's otherwise rather puzzling remarks in 1 Corinthians 15. The second Adam was 'of the heavens'. His body after the Resurrection was as it were made of heavenly matter—'next-worldly matter', dare one say?[21] Dr. Wright strongly denies that Paul is talking about what things—here, bodies—are made of, but about the power which animates them but verse 39 seems to point the other way. As far as being like the angels is concerned, it could be that it depended on one's ideas about the angels themselves, and we do not want to start off on that subject now. It could also be, of course, that what Christ meant in his reply to the Sadducees was simply that angels do not marry, and nor do those who rise again.

I can see three main problems in all this. (No doubt there are others.) The first, which has already been mentioned, is how to fit in the Resurrection Appearances. The second is how to fit in the doctrine of the General Resurrection. Bishop Wright has reminded us recently[22] that New Testament teaching normally implies two stages beyond death, which may be called 'life after death' and 'life after life after death'. The former can be thought of as

disembodied existence; the latter is very definitely resurrection, and not disembodied at all. And this latter he thinks (surely correctly) the Church, while she has always officially recognized it, has in practice often tended to overlook. Now I have been writing as if there were only one stage, a 'Next World' whose life could be thought of as either embodied or disembodied, or as a kind of blend of the two. This may be a justified criticism, though it is worth noting that if a stage has been omitted, it is the first, the 'disembodied' one. A Pricean 'Next World', on either model, is one of embodied life; the only question is the nature of the bodies involved.

Ironically, Price too at one time toyed with the idea that this might be possible—but with the later stage possibly less embodied than the earlier![23]

There is a certain ambivalence in Dr. Wright's book—reflecting the New Testament's own evidence. On the one hand, it is this world that awaits its deliverance from the bondage of corruption (Rom. 8:21). On the other, the former heaven and earth are to pass away and be replaced by new heavens and a new earth. (Rev. 21:1; 2 Peter 3:13; Isaiah 65:17).

Clearly the picture of the 'Next World' described here fits well enough with the second of these, but not with the first. And many may find the first very hard to understand except as a version of the second—the world is to be delivered by replacement. It seems very odd to suppose that distant galactic clusters are to be transformed, in situ so to speak, by the manifestation of the children of God, but less odd, though still wonderful, if they are to have elements corresponding to them in the new heavens of the regeneration.

Those in the 'Next World' no doubt enjoy new heavens and a new earth, but in what sense if any have they had their General Resurrection? That has normally been supposed to involve all those not actually alive on the Last Day rising together. One possible approach might be to argue that people dying in this world at different times might nevertheless enter the 'Next World' at the same time, as the two worlds would not be in the same time series. But this might conflict with Revelation 6:9-11 (the 'souls beneath the altar'), and other passages which seem to depict an intermediate state before the final resurrection.

A third difficulty is that all this is the purest speculation. It may well not have a grain of truth in it. Yet perhaps such speculation is called for if we are not to leave the Ascension as a stumbling-block to believers and folly to unbelievers. As Douglas Farrow says, 'an evasive answer' [to the question 'Where is Jesus?'] 'cannot be taken seriously, nor can one which disdains any interest in cosmology.'[24]

Still, even so, it might possibly show that there is at least one way of making sense of the Ascension. And if there is one, perhaps there are other and truer ones; there is room for discussion, maybe even controversy. However that may be, without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: He was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of messengers, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.[25]

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ENDNOTES

1. Douglas Farrow, *Ascension and Ecclesia* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1999).
2. Gerrit Dawson, *Jesus Ascended* (London & New York: T&T Clark, 2004).
3. *The Resurrection of the Son of God* (London: SPCK, 2003), p. 655,
4. Quoted by W. Milligan, *The Ascension of our Lord* (London, 1898,) pp. 15-16.
5. T. F. Torrance, *Space, Time and Resurrection* (Edinburgh; Handsel, 1976), p. 128.
6. W. Bucan, 1593.
7. *Institutiones theologicae* (Basel, 1593) ap. H. Heppe, Reformed Dogmatics (ET London: Allen & Unwin, 1950), p. 500.
8. *Institutiones theologicae elencticae* (Geneva, 1688), ap. H. Heppe, *Reformed Dogmatics* (ET London: Allen & Unwin, 1950), p. 501.
9. Quoted by J. C. McLelland, *The Visible Words of God* (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1957), pp. 219-20.
10. R. W. Jenson, *Systematic Theology* (Oxford: OUP, 1997-9), vol. 2, p. 254. The Aquinas quotation is from *Quaestiones de veritate*, 1.8.1).
11. R. W. Jenson, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 1, pp. 203-4, citing Brenz, *De*

personaliunione (Tubingen, 1561) and *Von der Majest unsers lieben Herren* (Tubingen, 1562).

12. John Robinson, *The Body* (London: SCM Press, 1952).
13. Jenson, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 1, p. 202.
14. Dawson quoting J. B. Wagner, *Ascendit Caelos* (Winterthur, Keller, 1964), p. 45.
15. *Principiis*, 2. 11. 6. I owe this reference to Dawson, p. 32.
16. R. Swinburne, *The Resurrection of God Incarnate* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2003), p. 159.
17. E. J. Bicknell, *A Theological Introduction to the Thirty-Nine Articles* ed., (London: Longman's, 1955), p. 111.
18. See the paper, "Survival and the Idea of 'Another World'," in J. R. Smythies (ed.) *Brain and Mind* (London: Routledge, 1965) originally delivered in 1952) and ch. 6 of his Sarum lectures, *Essays in the Philosophy of Religion (EPR)* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972). In an appendix to the latter, he discusses the Resurrection appearances, though without coming to any firm conclusion.
19. Price, p. 114.
20. Contra *Celsum* 2.56ff., cited by Farrow, p. 98.
21. N. T. Wright, *Surprised by Hope* (London: SPCK, 2007), p. 167. Dr. Wright strongly denies that Paul is talking about what things—here, bodies—are made of, but about the power which animates them but v 39 seems to point the other way.
22. Wright, *Surprised by Hope*, cf. also *The Resurrection of the Son of God* (London: SPCK, 2003).
23. See Smythies (ed.) *Brain and Mind,* p. 23.
24. Farrow, p. 165. I should perhaps add that Farrow himself is chiefly concerned with where Jesus is in relation to the Church and to the Eucharist.
25. 1 Tim. 3:16. 'Messengers' here is usually rendered 'angels', but Professor Alan Padgett has pointed out to me that 'messengers' goes a lot better with the preaching to Gentiles.