

1 Corinthians 15:37

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain:

Analysis

And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be (καὶ ὁ σπείρεις, οὐ τὸ σῶμα τὸ γενησόμενον σπείρεις)—Paul emphasizes radical transformation. The seed you plant (speireis, σπείρεις) is not the plant that will emerge (to sōma to genesomenon, τὸ σῶμα τὸ γενησόμενον, "the body that will come into being"). An acorn looks nothing like an oak; a grain of wheat nothing like a wheat stalk. Yet there's identity—the oak is the acorn transformed, not a different entity.

But bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain (ἀλλὰ γυμνὸν κόκκον, εἰ τύχοι σίτου ἡ τινος τῶν λοιπῶν)—The word gymnon (γυμνόν, "bare, naked") indicates the seed's simple, unimpressive form. The resurrection body will be as different from the earthly body as a wheat plant from a grain—yet continuous in identity. Paul answers the 'how' question: God transforms radically while preserving identity.

Historical Context

Ancient understanding of botany was observational, not cellular/genetic. Paul's argument doesn't require modern science—it uses visible natural processes to analogize invisible spiritual realities. The seed-plant transformation, observable to all, demonstrates God's power to radically transform while maintaining continuity.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does the dramatic difference between seed and plant answer concerns about resurrection body's form?
2. What does 'bare grain' suggest about our current bodies compared to resurrection bodies?
3. How does maintaining identity through transformation help us understand personal continuity in resurrection?

Interlinear Text

καὶ ὁ σπείρεις οὐ τὸ σῶμα τὸ γενησόμενον

And that which thou sowest not that body that shall be

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σπείρεις ἀλλὰ γυμνὸν κόκκον εἰ τύχοι σύτου ἥ

thou sowest but bare grain it may chance of wheat or

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τινος τῶν λοιπῶν·

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