

1 Corinthians 15:44

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

Analysis

It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body (σπείρεται σῶμα ψυχικόν, ἐγείρεται σῶμα πνευματικόν)—This is the crucial contrast. The word psychikon (ψυχικόν, "natural, soulish") derives from psychē (ψυχή, "soul, life, natural life"). Sōma psychikon describes the body animated by psychē, natural life suitable for earthly existence—requiring food, water, air, sleep, subject to natural laws.

Soma pneumatikon (σῶμα πνευματικόν, "spiritual body") does not mean immaterial or ethereal. Pneumatikon means "Spirit-animated, Spirit-characterized, suited to the Spirit's realm." The resurrection body is physical/material but empowered and sustained by the Holy Spirit rather than natural life—no longer requiring food/sleep, transcending present physical limitations, yet truly embodied. **There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body** (εἰ ἔστιν σῶμα ψυχικόν, ἔστιν καὶ πνευματικόν)—Paul asserts both exist as certainty.

Historical Context

Greek philosophy's body-soul dualism created confusion. Paul uses pneumatikon (spiritual) not to mean non-physical but Spirit-empowered physicality. Christ's resurrection body (Luke 24:39: 'flesh and bones', John 20:27: Thomas touches wounds) is the prototype—physical yet transcendent, embodied yet glorified. This was revolutionary: a body neither purely natural nor purely immaterial, but Spirit-transformed matter.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does 'spiritual body' differ from both 'resuscitated corpse' and 'disembodied soul'?
2. What does it mean for the body to be animated by the Spirit rather than natural life?
3. How does Christ's resurrection body (eating fish, yet passing through walls) help us understand 'spiritual body'?

Interlinear Text

σπείρεται	σῶμα	ψυχικόν	ἐγείρεται	σῶμα	πνευματικόν
It is sown	body	a natural	it is raised	body	a spiritual
G4687	G4983	G5591	G1453	G4983	G4152

ἔστιν	σῶμα	ψυχικόν	καὶ	ἔστιν	σῶμα	πνευματικόν
There is	body	a natural	and	There is	body	a spiritual
G2076	G4983	G5591	G2532	G2076	G4983	G4152

Additional Cross-References

1 Corinthians 15:50 (Parallel theme): Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.