

John 6:62

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?

Analysis

What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before? This rhetorical question intensifies rather than resolves the offense. If eating His flesh offends them, witnessing His ascension to heaven will offend even more. The phrase 'where he was before' (hopou ēn to proteron) clearly asserts Christ's pre-existence—He existed before His incarnation. The 'Son of man' title, drawn from Daniel 7:13-14, identifies Jesus as the divine-human figure who approaches the Ancient of Days to receive everlasting dominion. The ascension will vindicate Jesus's claims, prove His heavenly origin, and confirm that His death (the flesh to be eaten) was substitutionary sacrifice, not tragic defeat. Yet the ascension will also deepen the scandal—how can disciples eat His flesh if He's ascended to heaven? The answer: spiritual feeding through faith, not physical eating. Reformed theology sees here Christ's session at God's right hand, from which He rules and through His Spirit applies redemption's benefits.

Historical Context

Jesus prophetically refers to His future ascension, fulfilling Daniel 7:13's prophecy of the Son of man coming with clouds to the Ancient of Days. The disciples wouldn't witness this immediately—only after resurrection and 40 days of post-resurrection appearances would Jesus ascend (Acts 1:9-11). The ascension became crucial to early Christian theology: Christ's glorification proved His claims, His session at God's right hand demonstrates His authority, and His heavenly ministry as High Priest and Mediator continues (Hebrews 7:25). For John's audience

decades later, Christ's ascension was historical fact, confirming His divine origin and current reign. The ascension also resolved the scandal of eating His flesh—believers don't physically consume Christ but spiritually participate in Him through faith and the Spirit.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How does Christ's ascension vindicate His claims about being from heaven?
2. What is the relationship between Christ's physical ascension and spiritual feeding on Him?
3. How does Christ's present session at God's right hand affect believers' daily lives?

Interlinear Text

ἐὰν	οὖν	θεωρήτε	τὸν	υἱὸν	τοῦ	ἀνθρώπου
if	What and	ye shall see	G3588	the Son	G3588	of man
G1437	G3767	G2334		G5207		G444
ἀναβαίνοντα	ὅπου	ἥν	τὸ	πρότερον		
ascend up	where	he was	G3588	before		
G305	G3699	G2258		G4386		

Additional Cross-References

Mark 16:19 (Parallel theme): So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.

John 3:13 (Parallel theme): And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.

Luke 24:51 (Parallel theme): And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.

Acts 1:9 (Parallel theme): And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.

John 16:28 (Parallel theme): I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.

1 Peter 3:22 (Parallel theme): Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.