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What is Meant by the Perpetuity of the Incarnation?

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What is meant by the perpetuity of the incarnation?

In essence it says a divine theological gear, as it were, shifted some 2000 years ago in Bethlehem when God became man and that this new nature arrangement would be permanent from that time on. In other words, Jesus will never cease to be known as the God-Man and will always be known by the scars He received on Calvary's cross!

- He was recognized by these scars following the resurrection:

A. By ten of His apostles

On the first Easter Sunday night ten of the apostles—one was dead (Judas) and one was missing (Thomas)—had taken refuge in the Upper Room, and were terrified, not knowing what the Roman soldiers might do to them.

“Now as they said these things, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, ‘Peace to you.’ But they were terrified and frightened, and supposed they had seen a spirit. And He said to them, ‘Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts? Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have.’ When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet. But while they still did not believe for joy, and marveled, He said to them, ‘Have you any food here?’ So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb. And He took it and ate in their presence” (Lk. 24:36-43, NKJV).

B. By one of His apostles

This event occurred on the second Sunday night following the Resurrection.

“Now Thomas, called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said to him, ‘We have seen the Lord.’ So he said to them, ‘Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.’ And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, ‘Peace to you!’ Then He said to Thomas, ‘Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing’” (Jn. 20:24-27).

C. By two of His disciples

These two (Cleopas and his unnamed companion) were en route to Emmaus, heart-broken over the crucifixion of Jesus, when the Savior suddenly appeared, unrecognized, and began reminding them concerning the Old Testament predictions that the Messiah would be put to death—but rise again!

Still not aware of who He was, they invited Him to join them for supper. Note now what happened:

“Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight” (Lk. 24:30, 31).

I've often wondered just how the simple act of breaking a section of bread could have revealed His identity. And suddenly it dawned on me — they must have seen the nail prints in His hands!

- Jesus is now recognized by these scars in heaven:
 - A. In the book of Revelation John the apostle had been exiled to the isle of Patmos for his testimony. Suddenly he sees a vision of the ascended Savior:

“And in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band. His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters; He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength” (Rev. 1:13-16).
 - B. Later he describes the glorious return of Jesus to planet Earth:

“Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS” (Rev. 19:11-16).
 - C. But the event which caused a despondent John to rejoice was not the sight of a great high priest, or that of a mighty warrior, but rather that of a crucified Lamb, causing all heaven to sing the song of redemption:

“And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne. And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth” (Rev. 5:6-10).
- On April 12, 1961, Russian Premier Nikita Khrushchev held a special press conference to announce that a Russian astronaut, 27-year-old Yuri Gagarin, had just successfully

orbited the earth three times in a spacecraft (*Vostok 1*), thus becoming the first human in outer space. Khrushchev then gloated over this, stating the event had proved two things:

- A. The superiority of Russian technology over American technology, and—
- B. The absence of any god, for Yuri had said he could find absolutely no trace of a divine being up there!

Really? Perhaps Yuri should have looked a little higher!

On a more serious note, somewhere in God's heaven there is today a glorified, physical body belonging to the resurrected Christ. Furthermore, if the Father willed it, this body could be seen by both friends and foes!

- C. The beloved hymn writer, Fanny Crosby, in her song, *My Savior First of All*, assures us how we will immediately recognize Jesus upon entering heaven:

*When my lifework is ended, and I cross the swelling tide,
When the bright and glorious morning I shall see;
I shall know my Redeemer when I reach the other side,
And His smile will be the first to welcome me.*

Refrain:

*I shall know Him, I shall know Him,
And redeemed by His side I shall stand,
I shall know Him, I shall know Him,
By the print of the nails in His hand.*

- He will be recognized by these scars at His second coming:

- A. By the nation Israel

“And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn” (Zech. 12:10).

- B. By His foes

During one of His unlawful trials Jesus warned Caiaphas, the wicked high priest who led the plot to kill Him, that someday this evil Pharisee would see His coming in the clouds!

“Jesus said to him, ‘It is as you said. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven’” (Matt. 26:64).

“And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, ‘Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on

the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?" (Rev. 6:15-17).

C. By all on earth

"Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him" (Rev. 1:7).

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (Matt. 24:29-30).