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Citation of this paper:
LUKE 24:36-43 narrates a recognition scene, an appearance of the risen Jesus to the Eleven and others.  
1 Jesus appears suddenly and greets his startled followers (vv. 36-37), addresses their doubts/disputations (διαλογισμοὶ [v. 38]), describes the composition of his body (v. 39), shows them his hands and feet (v. 40), and eats some fish in their presence (vv. 41-43). Numerous commentators note the "apologetic" interest of the author in this passage, emphasizing a "materialistic" or "bodily" view of the resurrection appearances. 2 Rhetorically, the subject of this passage is Jesus' postresurrection bodily existence, concerning which πνεῦμα ("spirit") and σαρξ καὶ ὄστεα ("flesh and bones") are juxtaposed (v. 39). The narrator connects the fear of the disciples with their perception that they were seeing a "spirit" (v. 37), and Jesus identifies their internal dialogue as the source of their


disturbed state of mind (v. 38). Resolution comes when Jesus corrects the misperception of the Eleven, the authentic resurrection witnesses in Luke-Acts (Luke 24:46-48; Acts 1:22; 2:32; 5:32; 10:39-41), who here think they have seen a πνεύμα (v. 37). Jesus puts the Eleven’s (and the readers’) disputing hearts to rest by displaying his risen body, saying, “See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me and see that a spirit [πνεύμα] does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have” (v. 39). Luke thus identifies the disciples’ disputations/doubts as resulting from a “pneumatic” view of Jesus’ postresurrection body and offers a response to such a view.

Although commentators generally agree that Luke 24:36-43 is apologetically motivated, there is considerable disagreement as to the precise view or views Luke may have been opposing. In this essay, I evaluate proposals that Luke 24:36-43 provides a narrative answer to (1) ghostly interpretations of the appearances, (2) magical-daimonic interpretations, (3) docetism, (4) Marcionism, and (5) Pauline views of the nature of the resurrection. Luke’s apologetic interest here need not revolve around one such option to the exclusion of others. Any viable proposal, however, should be consistent with the plausible linguistic, cultural, and theological setting of the author, and with the narrative and theological interests displayed in Luke 24 and the rest of Luke-Acts. The fact that Luke locates these “doubts” narratively within the Eleven’s circle suggests that insider (even “apostolic”) views of the resurrection are the subject here, rather than outsider views (contrast Matt 27:62-66; 28:11-15). Although later readers deployed this narrative apologetically against the alternative interpretations of the resurrection appearances noted above, I will argue that there are good grounds for considering Paul’s (or Pauline) views of the resurrection body as the object of Luke’s apologetic.

I. Luke 24:36-43 and Postmortem Apparitions

The physicality of Jesus’ resurrected body in this story and the negation of the term πνεύμα are often taken as evidence that Luke was attempting to dispel the notion that the disciples had seen only Jesus’ ghost. This view, ubiquitous in

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3 διάλογοιμος, which commonly denotes “thought” or “deliberation,” signifies in Luke interior dialogue or debate that is always known to Jesus and always answered by him (Luke 2:35; 5:22; 9:46-47; 24:38). Only here can the word mean “doubts”: see BDAG, s.v. διαλογισμός; G. Schrenk, “διαλέγομαι κτλ,” TDNT 2:93-98, here 97.

the secondary literature, also informs current translations of 24:37, 39. Post-mortem apparitions were well known in ancient times, and today such experiences are well documented in the social sciences. In ancient descriptions of such apparitions, the individual is often clearly recognizable, for ghosts normally were thought to retain the physical characteristics (including wounds and clothing) of the person who had died. Neither in antiquity nor today, however, would anyone conclude from such an apparition that the person seen was “alive” (as claimed of Jesus in Luke 24:5, 23; Acts 1:3; etc.) or “risen” (Luke 24:6, 34; Acts 2:24, 32; etc.). Consequently, the idea that the disciples had seen only Jesus’ ghost would have troubled early Christians, including Luke, for whom Jesus’ vindication and exaltation depend on his resurrection and ascension. For Luke the truth of the resurrection kerygma requires that Jesus’ body did not decompose in the tomb but was raised by God, as Luke 24:1-12 shows narratively and as Acts 2:22-36 shows exegetically. Is Jesus’ demonstration that his risen body is composed of “flesh and bones” and that he is not a “spirit” evidence that Luke was attempting to refute “ghostly” interpretations of the resurrection appearances? Although several factors seem to corroborate this view (the word “spirit,” the tangibility of Jesus’ body, the fear of the disciples), there are two significant objections.

First, the materiality/physicality of Jesus’ risen body in Luke 24:39-40 is not inconsistent with ancient descriptions of ghosts, as many suppose. According to Daniel Ogden, descriptions of postmortem apparitions in Greco-Roman literature...


9 For the motif of fear, see Homer *Od.* 11.36-43; Pliny *Ep.* 7.27.6; also Mark 6:49; Matt 14:26; Wis 17:14; for intangibility, see *Od.* 11.206-14; Philostratus *Vit. Apoll.* 8.12.
range “from insubstantial . . . to superhumanly substantial.”

Although ghosts were often described using “the obvious metaphors of insubstantialness: shadows, breaths of air, smoke, and dreams,” ancient literature provides numerous examples of ghosts being tangible and having physical characteristics and capabilities. In the view of Gregory J. Riley, by the first century “life” in the underworld had . . . become far more substantial, and the dead had become correspondingly more tangible.” Riley still argues, however, that Luke 24:39 was intended “to counter the idea that the risen Jesus was some type of ghost or phantom,” though he admits that “this stratagem was not secure against objection.”

Deborah Thompson Prince also notes that the physicality of the risen Jesus in Luke 24 does not prove that his appearance was different from ghostly apparitions. She argues that Luke’s depiction of the risen Jesus, which incorporates multiple features normally associated with different types of apparitions, was intended to work “within the parameters of the [Greco-Roman] literary and cultural expectations of the audience to express a phenomenon that surpasses those expectations.”

This leads to the second, and more crucial, objection: whereas “ghost” and “spirit” overlap semantically in modern Western languages, πνεῦμα was not a word typically used in classical or Hellenistic Greek for a postmortem apparition. There was a wide range of terms available to the author if the concern was to dispel the idea that the followers of Jesus had seen his ghost. According to D. Felton, φάσμα, φάντασμα, εἰδώλιον, δαίμων, σκιά, ψυχή, εἰκών, δύσις, and δόκησις were all used (without clear differentiation) for “ghost.”

The soul (ψυχή) that escaped the body at death and that could, if not at rest, appear to the living (Plato Phaed. 81d). The term πνεῦμα could be used anthropologically

10 Ogden, Greek and Roman Necromancy, 220.
11 Ibid. See also Felton, Haunted Greece and Rome, 25-29, on “revenants,” that is, reanimated corpses, for which ancient Greek used standard “ghost” language.
12 Riley, Resurrection Reconsidered, 53-58, here 55. According to Sarah Illes Johnston (Restless Dead: Encounters between the Living and the Dead in Ancient Greece [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999] 159-60), earlier Greek sources show that ghosts, being insubstantial, would afflict the living through the agency of divine beings or through psychological means. Later texts do not restrict the dead to such indirect tactics (Ogden, Greek and Roman Necromancy, 220).
13 Riley, Resurrection Reconsidered, 53.
14 Prince, “Ghost’ of Jesus,” 297.
16 Felton, Haunted Greece and Rome, 23-24, 107 n. 8; such terms were used also for the robustly embodied revenants (ibid., 26). For the lexical range, see also Ogden, Greek and Roman Necromancy, 219. LSJ also notes πέμφτις (ad loc.).
in connection with ψύχη, most typically for the animating principle of human life, the absence of which means death. In early Greek usage it could be said that the soul was πνεῦμα, either metaphorically (for its fleetingness) or by virtue of its constituent essence.\(^\text{17}\) Eventually, and by extension, πνεῦμα came to be used (evidently almost exclusively in Jewish Greek) for that part of the human person that survives death (e.g., \(1\) Enoch 103:4; Heb 12:23; \(1\) Pet 3:19), a usage that arguably occurs in Luke 23:46 and Acts 7:59.\(^\text{18}\) More commonly in Luke-Acts, however, πνεῦμα indicates (1) the divine Spirit, (2) an aspect of human personality, or (3) an evil or unclean spirit, synonymous with δαίμόνιον ("demon").\(^\text{19}\)

Frequently ψυχή was used by extension for an apparition of a dead person, but an analogous usage is not found for πνεῦμα. This makes the presumed use of πνεῦμα for "ghost" in Luke 24:37, 39 a lexical singularity, which proves to be a critical weakness for the view that Luke was combating the "ghostly" interpretations of the resurrection appearances. In fact, as Terence Paige has shown, "not a single Gentile, non-Christian writer prior to the late second century ever used πνεῦμα to signify a 'demon,' 'ghost,' or 'spirit' of any sort. When Plutarch or Lucian (or Theophrastus before them) refer to such things, the terms used are always δαίμονες, δαίμονια, or φάσματα—never πνεῦματα."\(^\text{20}\) Moreover, no source in Jewish or Christian Greek before Luke uses πνεῦμα for "ghost," that is, for the apparition of a dead person's spirit.\(^\text{21}\) Some early readings of Luke 24:37, 39, however, apparently took πνεῦμα in the narrative context as meaning "ghost" and adjusted the terminology along more conventional lines.\(^\text{22}\) Nevertheless, the rhetor-


\(^{18}\) Burton, *Spirit, Soul, and Flesh*, 181; see also Luke 8:55, where πνεῦμα probably means "principle of life" or simply "breath."

\(^{19}\) The third meaning given here seems exclusive to Jewish and Christian Greek; Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Ant. rom.* 1.31.1 might be an exception (Burton, *Spirit, Soul, and Flesh*, 81). See also Josephus *B.J.* 7.6.3 §185, which defines demons able to possess the living as the spirits (πνεῦματα) of dead evil persons.

\(^{20}\) Paige, "Who Believes in ‘Spirit’?" 433 (emphasis original).

\(^{21}\) Lexicographers of the NT have not supplied any parallel to this proposed meaning of πνεῦμα: Burton, *Spirit, Soul, and Flesh*, 181; Eduard Schweizer, "πνεῦμα, πνευματικός, κτλ., E, The New Testament," *TDNT* 6:396-455, here 415; BDAG, ad loc. Plummer (*Luke*, 559) adduced 1 Pet 3:19 as a parallel, but this is questionable (those spirits do not appear). LSJ does not list "ghost" as a possibility for πνεῦμα, but "spiritual or immaterial being, angel" (ad loc.).

tical aim of excluding a “ghostly” interpretation of the resurrection appearances would have been better served had the author used one of the customary terms for “ghost,” such as φάντασμα, σκιά, or even ψυχή (Wis 17:14; Mark 6:49; Matt 14:26 [φάντασμα]).

II. Luke 24:36-43 and Ancient Necromancy

In 1990, Hans Dieter Betz observed that πνεῦμα is used in the Greek magical papyri as a synonym for the δαίμων (daimon) of a dead person potentially useful to the practitioner—as in the following spell, which was to be uttered over the skull of a person who died violently:23

I call upon you, lord Helios, and your holy angels on this day, in this very hour: Preserve me, NN . . . I beg you, lord Helios, hear me NN and grant me power over the spirit of this man who died a violent death [τούτου τοῦ βιοθανάτου πνεῦματος], from whose tent I hold [this], so that I may keep him with me, [NN], as helper and avenger for whatever business I crave from him. (PGM IV.1932-55, excerpted)24

According to the Greek magical papyri, practitioners would sometimes attempt to acquire an assistant (πάρεδρος), which could be a divine, celestial, or spiritual entity, even a material item.25 In these texts, “the πάρεδροι are frequently identified as δαίμονες, generally the δαίμονες of dead people.”26 A necromancer would enlist the aid of a god of the underworld or some other deity (such as Helios, as above) to control the dead person’s daimon. The “restless dead,” that is, those who died untimely or violently, or who were left unburied, were considered particularly sus-


23 Hans Dieter Betz, “Zum Problem der Auferstehung Jesu im Lichte der griechischen magischen Papyri,” in idem, Gesammelte Aufsätze I: Hellenismus und Urchristentum (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1990) 230-61. The term δαίμων has a remarkably broad range of meanings, including “god/goddess,” “divine power,” “fortune/genius” (of an individual), and “soul” (of an individual from the “golden age,” serving as tutelary deity): so LSJ ad loc. In the Greek magical papyri it can mean the “soul” or “spirit” of a dead person. Herein the term is simply transliterated.


26 Ibid., 284.
ceptible to necromantic exploitation.\textsuperscript{27} In the magical papyri, such entities are called \textit{είδωλα νεκύων} ("phantoms of the dead"), \textit{νεκυδαίμονες} ("daimons of the dead"), \textit{ψυχαί} ("souls"), or \textit{πνεύματα} ("spirits").\textsuperscript{28}

In Betz's opinion, the evangelists were aware of possible necromantic connotations of the resurrection appearances. Someone executed as a criminal would have been viewed as a powerful assistant to the magician who could control his daimon. According to Susan R. Garrett, the story of the sons of Sceva (Acts 19:11-20) shows that Luke knew that Paul's healing practices could have been interpreted as involving the magical invocation of the daimon of someone who died violently.\textsuperscript{29} Understood as an assistant daimon, the postmortem Jesus would be viewed as subordinate to underworld deities, open to manipulation by magicians, and malevolent and dangerous if not controlled. In Betz's view, Luke has Jesus show "\textit{dass er kein \pi(neu)ma} (v. 39), d.h. kein Totendämon ist," because of the damaging consequences of such a view for early Christian proclamation.\textsuperscript{30}

For Betz, the demonstration in Luke 24:39 that the risen Jesus has flesh and bones and is not a "spirit" thus shows that the author was attempting to exclude magical-daimonic interpretations of the resurrection appearances. Although a ghost summoned by a necromancer would be individually recognizable (as in vv. 39-40), one would expect such an apparition to be intangible or to occur in a dream.\textsuperscript{31} "Der massive Materialismus ... hat theologisch den wohlüberlegten Zweck, die konkurrierenden magisch-dämonologischen Deutungen zu verdrängen."\textsuperscript{32} Additionally, Betz argues that Luke's terminology was meant specifically to counter the necromantic understanding of the daimon of a dead person as a spirit (\textit{\pi(neu)ma}).\textsuperscript{33} To this point we may add two more features of Luke 24:36-43 that Betz mentions but does not stress. First, Luke (following Mark) does not narrate a resurrection appear-

\textsuperscript{27} Ogden, \textit{Greek and Roman Necromancy}, 225, citing Tertullian \textit{An.} 56. See also Johnston, \textit{Restless Dead}, 127-28; Zeller, "Erscheinungen Verstorbener," 4-10; and Betz, "Zum Problem," 242-43, 247, who notes an interest in executed criminals in some of the magical papyri.

\textsuperscript{28} Betz, "Zum Problem," 247; Paige, "Who Believes in 'Spirit'?" 432-33. Stephen J. Patterson (\textit{The God of Jesus: The Historical Jesus and the Search for Meaning} [Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1998] 229) seems to overstate Betz's case, describing \textit{\pi(neu)ma} as "the same word ancients use to refer to disembodied spirits who wander the earth."


\textsuperscript{31} On incubation in necromancy, see Ogden, \textit{Greek and Roman Necromancy}, 163-64.

\textsuperscript{32} Betz, "Zum Problem," 250.

\textsuperscript{33} Ibid., 249; additionally, the ascension (as a bodily assumption, not an assumption of the soul) signifies that Jesus has been installed at the right hand of God as an exalted human being and not as a \textit{Totengeist} (ibid., 250).
ance at the tomb, where necromantic apparitions would occur. Second, the appearance of Jesus in Luke 24:36 is a direct (αυτοπτος) encounter: Jesus is not conjured up. Necromantic technologies for summoning and controlling daimons were complex, involving sacrifices, invocations, and various rituals, including the manipulation of a body part or skull (PGM IV.1928-2005).

There are obvious differences between necromantic apparitions of ghosts and the appearances of Jesus in Luke 24, in which there is no necromancer, no rituals or invocation of a higher power, no apparition at the tomb, no forced reanimation of Jesus’ corpse, and no manipulation of his body. But Luke’s silence is not necessarily antimagical by design; thus Betz’s case rests on the word πνευμα. According to Paige, “the magical papyri clearly do use πνευμα in the sense of a god or δαιμων, but this is a new, non-native Greek use which postdates the rise and expansion of Christianity into Egypt.” Betz’s linguistic evidence is therefore too late to explain the usage of πνευμα in Luke 24.

III. Luke 24:36-43 and Docetism

Luke 24:36-43 is also sometimes thought to be antidocetic. A recent proponent of this view is Gerd Lüdemann: “Such blunt realism must be seen as an attack on docetism, a challenge to those who disavow the bodily reality of Jesus both as a human being and as the ‘Risen One.’” Although other NT writings could possibly be called antidocetic (see esp. 1 John 4:2-3; 2 John 7-8), the letters of Ignatius are of particular importance for assessing a purported antidocetic interest in Luke 24 because of the parallel between Luke 24:39 and Ign. Smyrn. 3.1-3.

34 Betz is surprised that Matthew and John are not reluctant to depict the risen Jesus at the tomb (“Zum Problem,” 246).
35 Ibid., 248 n. 61: the magical papyri use αυτοπτος for “direct” visions, probably in contrast to apparitions experienced in dreams or through incubation.
36 Ogden, Greek and Roman Necromancy, 163-90.
37 On corpse reanimation in literary sources and on the manipulation of skulls in necromancy, see Ogden, Greek and Roman Necromancy, 202-16; see also PGM XIII.278-82, a spell invoking a spirit (πνευμα) to reanimate a corpse.
38 Paige (“Who Believes in ‘Spirit’?” 433) concludes that this use of πνευμα in the Greek magical papyri was influenced by Jewish and/or Christian usage. Josephus B.J. 7.6.3 §185 (n. 19 above) equates πνευμα and δαιμων but focuses on possession, not apparition or necromancy.
According to Ignatius, “certain unbelievers” held that Jesus suffered in appearance only (τὸ δοκεῖν [Smyrn. 2.1; also Trall. 10]); against these “unbelievers” Ignatius insists that physical events in Jesus’ life “truly” happened (Smyrn. 1–2; also Trall. 9). Ignatius also reports that the risen Jesus said to members of the Petrine circle, “Take, handle me, and see that I am not a bodiless demon” (ουκ εἰμί δαιμόνιον ἁσώματον [Smyrn. 3.2]).

41 For Ignatius, as in Luke 24, this is coupled with an affirmation that Jesus is still “fleshly” after the resurrection (Smyrn. 3.1, 3; 5.2). The pertinent questions are, first, whether Ignatius’s opponents can rightly be labeled “docetic,” and, second, whether it is correct to draw an analogy between Ignatius and Luke 24 on the basis of their shared language.

With regard to the first question, there is the problem of definition: “docetism,” in conventional usage, covers a diverse range of views that may share little theologically or genealogically besides the common idea that “the human appearance of Christ is mere illusion and has no objective reality.”

42 Docetism was less a system or sect than a “theological option which shows up in a wide variety of early Christian texts.”

43 Concerning its origins and focal points, there is no consensus, although proposals tend to concentrate either on concerns about divine involvement with matter or about the suffering and death of Jesus, or both.

44 As John W. Marshall notes—τὸ δοκεῖν (Smyrn. 2.1; Trall. 10) notwithstanding—there is a problem in applying the christological label “docetic” to the position of Ignatius’s opponents. According to Marshall, this “reifies” his (polemical) description of their view about Jesus into a christology, implying connections with later, more systematic christological positions that may have involved significantly different reasons for questioning Christ’s existence “in the flesh.”

45 With these cautions in mind, it nevertheless seems appropriate to characterize Ignatius’s opponents as

41 On the possible literary relationship between Ign. Smyrn. 3.2 and Luke 24:39, see n. 22 above.


docetists, in that they evidently questioned the reality of Jesus’ physical existence in general, but particularly his suffering (Smyrn. 1–3).

Does the same apologetic agenda inform both Smyrn. 3.2 and Luke 24:39? Ignatius is concerned to stress the fleshly (ἐν σαρκί, σαρκικός, σαρκοφόρος) character of Jesus throughout his life, though particularly in his suffering, death, and resurrection (Magn. 11; Smyrn. 1–3; Trall. 9–10; etc.; see also 1 John 4:2-3; 2 John 7; Pol. Phil. 7.1). Ignatius Smyrn. 3.1 is especially important: “for I know and believe that he was in the flesh after the resurrection as well” (καὶ μετὰ τὴν ἀνάστασιν ἐν σαρκί). The adjunctive καί should not be missed. The emphasis on postresurrection tangibility is meant not to establish the nature of the resurrection appearances but to support the reality of Jesus’ suffering, on the basis of the continuity Ignatius presumes between Jesus’ pre- and postresurrection states. In Luke, on the other hand, one does not find a discernible emphasis on the physical (fleshly) character of the pre-Easter Jesus; such an emphasis arises only in relation to the resurrection appearance narrated in 24:36-43. Furthermore, in contrast to Luke, Ignatius does not appear reticent to use πνεύμα for the risen Jesus: in his view, Jesus before and after his death and resurrection is both fleshly and spiritual (Eph. 7.2; Magn. 1.2; Smyrn. 3.2).

In the end, since docetic christologies tend to call into question the reality of either the suffering and death of Jesus or his real bodily existence, and since Luke’s concern seems to be specifically the nature of the postresurrection appearances, it does not seem appropriate to call Luke 24:36-43 antidocetic. This is not to say that this passage would not be useful in antidocetic polemic: Irenaeus, for instance, used Luke 24:36-43 in precisely this way, but by avoiding entirely the postresurrection context of 24:39 and concentrating on the whole career of Jesus (Haer. 5.2.3).

IV. Luke 24:36-43 and Marcion

Although the traditional view holds that Marcion used an edited version of canonical Luke, Joseph B. Tyson has recently taken up the proposal of John Knox that canonical Luke is the result of an anti-Marcionite revision of a “pre-Marcionite

46 J. Marshall’s suggestion (“Objects of Ignatius’ Wrath,” 12-20) that angelomorphic christology lies behind this is compelling.

47 Schoedel, Ignatius of Antioch, 226. There is for Ignatius an essential identity but a qualitative distinction between Jesus’ pre- and postresurrection states: formerly he was παθητός, capable of suffering, but he became ἀπαθής, incapable of suffering (Eph. 7.2; also Pol. 3.2). After the resurrection Jesus remained tangible (ψυλαφήσατέ με), bodily (οὐκ εἰμί δαιμόνιον ἄσώματον), and fleshly (σαρκικός), even though spiritually (πνευματικός) united with the Father (Smyrn. 3.2-3).

48 Admittedly, this may be due to Ignatius’s incipient two-natures christology.
gospel,” and that Marcion’s Gospel was an edited form not of canonical Luke but of this Proto-Luke. Tyson’s work, together with that of Matthias Klinghardt, marks a recent interest in reassessing the significance of Marcion’s Gospel for the composition of the canonical Gospels. Tyson argues that the pre-Marcionite Gospel was a Proto-Luke based on Mark and Q and containing Luke 3–23, plus a short resurrection story perhaps similar to Mark 16:1-8. An anti-Marcionite editor produced canonical Luke-Acts by adding substantial material to Proto-Luke, including the preface, infancy narratives, other Sondergut, and postresurrection material, as well as the second volume. Tyson identifies potentially anti-Marcionite themes in Luke 24 (namely, proof from prophecy, the centrality of Jerusalem, the apostles as witnesses, the physicality of Jesus’ resurrection) and suggests that “an anti-Marcionite author, perhaps drawing on earlier oral or written material, composed the greater part of the chapter.” Tyson also admits that “it is not difficult to read Marcion’s gospel as a reaction to Luke 24,” but he proposes that his reading of Luke 24 stands together with his analyses of the prologue and infancy narratives as cumulative evidence that Luke-Acts was an anti-Marcionite project. Tyson’s overall thesis cannot be evaluated here, but we can assess whether there is sufficient basis for calling the apologetic of Luke 24:36-43 “anti-Marcionite.”


55 Ibid., 109.
Tertullian and Epiphanius both attest that something similar to Luke 24:37-39 was in Marcion’s Gospel, as this table shows.56

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Luke 24:37-39</th>
<th>Ignatius Smyrn. 3.2</th>
<th>Tertullian Marc. 4.43.6</th>
<th>Epiphanius Pan. 42.11, schol. 78</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>πτοηθέντες δὲ καὶ ἐμφοβοὶ γενόμενοι ἐδόκουν πνεῦμα θεωρεῖν. καὶ ἐπένεκ αὐτοῖς· τί τεταραγμένοι ἔστε καὶ διὰ τί διαλογισμοὶ ἀνα­βαίνοντον ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ ᾿ὑμῶν; ἰδετε τὰς χείρας μου καὶ τοὺς πόδας μου ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰμὶ αὐτός· ψηλαφή­σατε με καὶ ἰδετε, ὅτι πνεύμα σάρκα καὶ ὀστέα οὐκ ἔχει καθός ἐμὲ θεωρεῖτε ἐχοντα.</td>
<td>καὶ ὅτε πρὸς τοὺς περὶ Πέτρον ἠλθεν ἐφη αὐτοῖς, λάβετε, ψηλαφήσατε με καὶ ἰδετε, ὅτι οὐκ εἰμὶ διαμόνιον ἁσφαλήν,</td>
<td>Cum haesitantibus eis ne phantasma57 esset, immo phantas­ma credentibus, Quid turbati estis? inquit, et quid cogitationes subeunt in corda vestra? Videte manus meas et pedes, quia ego ipse sum, quoniam spiritus ossa non habet sicut me videtis habere.</td>
<td>τί τεταραγμένοι ἔστε; ἰδετε τὰς χείρας μου καὶ τοὺς πόδας μου ὅτι πνεύμα ὀστέα οὐκ ἔχει καθώς ἐμὲ θεωρεῖτε ἐχοντα.</td>
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Further details about the story as it appeared in Marcion’s Gospel cannot be determined, except that it may have included a saying similar to Luke 24:25.58 Tyson thinks that elements potentially unfriendly to Marcion’s theology—references to the Eleven and to the appearance to Simon, as well as vv. 42-43, which describe the risen Jesus requesting food and eating grilled fish—were not part of the original

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56 Table adapted from Williams, “Reconsidering Marcion’s Gospel,” 491-92; the partial paraphrase of Luke 24:37 from Tertullian Marc. 4.43.6 and the parallel from Ignatius are added (with exact parallels in boldface).

57 Marcion’s Gospel may have read φάντασμα in 24:37 (so Harnack, Marcion, 43; and NA27), although Tertullian Marc. 4.43.6, which appears to be the basis for this variant reading in NA27, does not cite Gos. Marci 24:37 directly. Markus Vinzent (“Christ’s Resurrection: The Pauline Basis of Marcion’s Teaching,” Studia Patristica 31 [1997] 225-33, here 232 n. 21) suggests that φάντασμα in Marc. 4.43.6 is Tertullian’s word, not Marcion’s; it is the characteristic word that Tertullian uses to describe Marcion’s view of Jesus’ body (e.g., Tertullian Marc. 4.42.6-7; cf. Epiphanius [Pan. 42.11, elench. 4, 10, 16, etc.], who uses δόκησις and φαντασία).

58 Tyson, Marcion and Luke-Acts, 46; Harnack, Marcion, 43; for text, see Williams, “Reconsidering Marcion’s Gospel,” 494. Neither Tertullian nor Epiphanius reports any intervening material between the two sayings.
context but were added by the final redactor of Luke 24.\textsuperscript{59} This, however, is impossible to prove or disprove, especially since Tyson allows that Marcion could have edited Proto-Luke.

In general, following Tyson’s theory, one should expect redactional traits consistent with Luke 3–23 to be present where Marcion’s Gospel and Luke 24:36-43 agree, and redactional traits consistent with Luke 1–2 and Acts where they disagree. In Tyson’s view, Proto-Luke (comprising Luke 3–23, plus some core elements in Luke 24) was edited by the same hand that was responsible for canonical Luke 1–2 and Acts. Thus, if we provisionally grant that Luke 24:36, 40-43 was not in Marcion’s Gospel, we should find these verses to be consistent with the style of Luke 1–2 and Acts (and not with Luke 3–23).\textsuperscript{60} These verses contain several Lucanisms (two genitive absolutes, ἐνθάδε, ἐπιδίδωμι, ἐνώπιον), but also two hapax legomena (βρώσιμος, όπτός).\textsuperscript{61} As Frans Neirynck notes, the demonstrations after the saying correspond formally to the angelophanies in Luke 1:13-20, 30-37, but the genitive absolute with ἐτι is consistent with the style of Luke 3–23 (Luke 8:49; 9:42; 14:32; 15:20; 22:47; 22:60; also Acts 10:44).\textsuperscript{62}

Luke and Marcion’s Gospel agree closely in v. 38-39, so these common elements cannot derive from an anti-Marcionite redactional program, even though they presuppose a nonspiritual, (flesh-and-) bones view of the postresurrection appearances.\textsuperscript{63} Gospel of Marcion 24:38-39, according to Tertullian, disagrees with canonical Luke at two significant points: Jesus’ invitation to touch him (ψηλαφήσατε με και ἰδετε); and the words σάρκα καί. The latter could be interpreted either as Marcion’s excision (from the Proto-Lucan core saying) or as an anti-Marcionite addition.\textsuperscript{64} In Marcion’s view, Christ had a body composed not of flesh but of spirit.\textsuperscript{65} According to Markus Vinzent, Luke 24:37-39 provided “a central reference for Marcion’s differentiation between the pneumatic corporeality which Christ possesses and which is the soul of the believers, and the material body which comes from the Demiurge and is therefore doomed.”\textsuperscript{66}


\textsuperscript{60} Luke 24:36b, 40 are included here despite their absence from D it.

\textsuperscript{61} Following Fitzmyer’s list of Lucanisms (\textit{Luke}, 1:110-13).

\textsuperscript{62} Neirynck, “Récit lucanien,” 678-79.

\textsuperscript{63} Tertullian says that Marcion took the saying to mean that Jesus has no bones, as a spirit does not (\textit{Marc.} 4.43.7); this evasive reading could have worked equally had Gos. \textit{Marcion} 24:39 read “flesh and bones.” Epiphanius does not refer to such a reading, but does note Marcion’s failure to excise this verse (\textit{Pan.} 42.1.11, \textit{elench.} 78).


\textsuperscript{65} Markus Vinzent, “Der Schluß des Lukasevangeliums bei Marcion,” in \textit{Marcion und seine kirchengeschichtliche Wirkung = Marcion and His Impact on Church History} (ed. Gerhard May
ιδετε, this is understandable as an excision on the theory that Marcion redacted canonical Luke. Although the heresiologists maintained that Marcion thought that Jesus’ body was intangible (e.g., Tertullian Marc. 4.8; Epiphanius Pan. 42.11, elench. 14), Harnack and Vinzent have demonstrated that this was not the case; thus for Marcion, handling Jesus’ body would not demonstrate with certainty its true essence as “pneumatic corporeality,” since it would seem as tangible as a normal human body. On Tyson’s theory of Lucan addition, this could have been added in the final redaction of Luke 24 by an editor familiar with Ignatius.

The evidence is equally ambivalent where the two sayings agree: διαλογισμός with καρδία (v. 38) is consistent with the style of Luke 3–23. Neirynck describes ἐγώ εἰμι αὐτός (v. 39a) as Lucan: while there is no exact parallel in Luke-Acts, similar formulae are found in Luke 1–2 and Acts (Luke 1:19; Acts 9:5; 10:21; 22:3; 26:15). More important, Neirynck has also demonstrated that the structure of vv. 36-38 is redactional, since it is paralleled in Luke 1:28-30. Both contain a greeting, a fearful response, and a consoling word; parallel vocabulary includes (δια)ταράσσω, ἐμφοβος/φοβέω, διαλογισμός/διαλογίζομαι. On the basis of Neirynck’s analysis, it is difficult to see Luke 24:38—which is present in Marcion’s Gospel—as deriving from a redactional program different from the one that also created the infancy narratives. The present evaluation is necessarily tentative, owing to the sparse textual data. Neither the contents of Gos. Marcion 24:36-43 nor the extent to which Marcion edited his source text (whether canonical Luke or Tyson’s Proto-Luke) can be determined. Thus, although certain elements of Luke 24:36-43 would be problematic for Marcion’s theology, it cannot be ascertained whether these were deleted by Marcion from his source text or were added in an anti-Marcionite redaction.

V. Luke 24:36-43 and Paul on Resurrection

An increasing number of scholars in the last several decades have found it probable that the author of Luke-Acts knew Paul’s letters. Generally, this view


66 For Marcion, Christ’s body was tangible but only apparently fleshly (for the importance of Phil 2:7, see Tertullian Marc. 5.20.3). See Harnack, Marcion, 83-84; Vinzent, “Christ’s Resurrection,” 232.


finds support in (1) a strong a priori probability that Luke knew the letters more than simply by reputation, (2) information about Paul’s career shared by Acts and the letters, and (3) verbal echoes of the letters in Luke and Acts.69 Regarding Luke 24, Wolfgang Schenk shows not only that Luke 24:34 is directly dependent on 1 Cor 15:4-5 but also that Luke 24:9-10, in which figure “the Eleven,” “James,” and “the apostles,” alludes to Gal 1:17-19 and 1 Cor 15:5, 7.70 If Luke used 1 Corinthians 15, the apologetic of Luke 24:36-43 may be evaluated in light of Paul’s teachings about resurrection.

Luke 24:37-39 contains similar (but opposing) language to 1 Cor 15:35-50: whereas the risen Jesus in Luke says, “A spirit does not have flesh and bones [πνεύμα σάρκα καὶ ὀστέα οὐκ ἔχει] as you see that I have,” Paul, in comparison, describes bodies in “the resurrection of the dead” as “spiritual” (πνευματικός [1 Cor 15:44, 46]). Paul also writes that “the last Adam [became] a life-giving spirit [ἐκς πνεύμα ζωοποιοῦν]” (15:45), and that “flesh and blood [σάρξ καὶ αἷμα] cannot inherit the reign of God, nor does that which is perishable inherit imperishability” (15:50). The similar language makes Paul a more likely candidate for the object of Luke’s apologetic than the other options evaluated above. Many resist the possibility that Luke 24:36-43 reacts narratively to Paul’s (or a Pauline) theology of the resurrection,71 but others (notably Reginald H. Fuller, James M. Robinson, James D. G. Dunn, and Alan F. Segal) have found fundamental disagreement between Luke and Paul.72 Although Fuller attributed Luke’s emphasis

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69 On the first point, see Morton S. Enslin, “‘Luke’ and Paul,” JAOS 58 (1938) 81-91; on the second, see Wenham, “Acts and the Pauline Corpus II”; and on the third, see the comprehensive study in Pervo, Dating Acts, 51-147.


to the narrative needs of appearance stories—the resurrection appearances had to be described in terms of the earthly Jesus in order to be understandable—there seems to be more at stake for Luke. The following discussion explores points of theological difference between Paul and Luke and examines relevant narrative strategies in Luke 24 and Acts.

Paul and Luke agreed on resurrection as embodied. Luke’s interest in this is obvious, and Paul of course insists on the term σώμα in 1 Corinthians 15. François Bovon points out that an implication of this for both Paul and Luke is “die Kontinuität der Person.” Paul expresses this in his description of the σώμα πνευματικόν; Luke’s risen Jesus demonstrates this by showing his hands and feet and declaring, “It is I myself.” It is difficult, however, to avoid the inference that they disagree as to the constitution of such a body. For Paul it is πνευματικός, while for Luke it is not πνεύμα but σάρξ καί ὀστέα. Paul’s description of resurrection bodies (1 Cor 15:35-57) distinguishes between the σώμα ψυχικόν (the natural body, animated by the human ψυχή) and σώμα πνευματικόν (the transformed resurrection body, enlivened by the divine πνεύμα). Paul uses paired opposites (vv. 42-44) to compare “what is sown” (perishable, sown in dishonor and weakness, ψυχικός) with “what is raised” (imperishable, raised in glory and power, πνευματικός). As Dale B. Martin and Jeffrey R. Asher have argued, Paul’s careful distinction between terrestrial and celestial bodies (vv. 39-41) indicates that the problem for the Corinthians may have been whether “the resurrection of the dead” implied that the natural body was innately suitable to the celestial realm. Paul agrees that it is not, explaining that the body (not the soul) is still destined for the celestial realm, but only after its transformation (vv. 50-57); the resurrection of Christ is the paradigm according to which this transformation will take place (vv. 45-49). The Corinthians would think it fitting that a body transformed for the celestial realm be defined essentially by πνεύμα, and not by σάρξ καί ὀστέα, for according to popular philosophy human/terrestrial and divine/celestial beings shared πνεύμα in common. Yet for Paul it is not the inherent suitability of human πνεύμα to the divine realm that constitutes the basis for the resurrection of the dead, but God’s eschatological transformation of the human person in Christ, flesh and blood (and soul?) into spirit in the continuity of an embodied existence.

73 Fuller, Formation, 115.
74 Bovon, Evangelium nach Lukas, 4:585-86.
75 Dale B. Martin, The Corinthian Body (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995) 104-36; Jeffrey R. Asher, Polarity and Change in 1 Corinthians 15: A Study of Metaphysics, Rhetoric, and Resurrection (HUT 42; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000) 146-205. Martin (p. 128) discerns in Paul’s anthropology a “hierarchy of essences,” according to which the heavier materials (σάρξ καί ὀστέα and ψυχή) are not appropriate to the divine realm; Asher (pp. 91-117) argues along a similar line but sees the problem in light of the idea of cosmological polarity (between terrestrial and celestial realms). 76 Martin, Corinthian Body, 119-20, 123-29.
Paul's metaphor of the seed that dies and decays when planted (1 Cor 15:36-38) might suggest that he thinks that the flesh remains behind, decomposed or decomposing, while the spirit is raised. More probably, as Segal argues, Paul has in mind a divine transformation of flesh and blood into πνεύμα (1 Cor 15:50; Phil 3:20-21), presumably with no remainder. There is a Greco-Roman analogy to this idea in ancient texts describing apotheoses: whereas older Greek writings tended to connect apotheosis with disappearance or assumption (the bodily removal of a human person by the gods into the divine realm), newer versions of old stories, deferring to Plato, conceived of the apotheosis of figures such as Herakles and Romulus as the dissolution of the mortal body and the elevation of the soul.

A closer analogy may be found in Philo, who describes Moses' apotheosis as a transformation of the twofold nature of body and soul into mind, εἰς νοῦν (Mos. 2.288; similarly also QG 1.86), although for Paul the analogous transformation does not eliminate the body. The resurrection transformation of the believer involves the corruptible and mortal body putting on incorruptibility and immortality (1 Cor 15:53-54), that is, Spirit: the body is retained, but not in its mortal and corruptible aspects/components ("flesh and blood" [v. 50]). But the resurrection transformation of Jesus' body is different for Luke. Where Paul visualizes continuity in corporeality but discontinuity in essence, Luke visualizes continuity in both aspects. This is evident in Luke 24:36-43, but also in kerygmatic and exegetical expressions in Acts (esp. Acts 2:31). Although the risen Jesus appears to the disciples in a flesh-and-bones body, Luke does not view the resurrection as mere resuscitation; but neither does Luke 24 narrate what Paul means by "spiritual

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77 Segal, Life after Death, 430-34; Allison, Resurrecting Jesus, 315-16; cf. Willi Marxsen, The Resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1970) 70; Martin (Corinthian Body, 128, 132) thinks that the transformation involves shedding the baser elements.

78 Ovid Metam. 9.266-71; 14.816-28; see Plutarch Rom. 28.8. For the connection between bodily assumption and apotheosis, see Lohfink, Himmelfahrt Jesu, 46-49.


82 In Acts 2:31 Luke transposes ὄμαξ from Ps 15:9 LXX into v. 10 so that it reads "nor did his flesh see corruption," even though the context in Acts 2:29-36 has to do with the messianic character of the resurrection, not the (de)composition of Jesus' body.
body" (the risen Jesus can be recognizable or incognito, suddenly appear or dis-
appear). 83

The disagreement may result partly from different understandings of the compo-
nents of the human person, in particular, different valuations of "flesh" and
"spirit." Paul's conviction that "flesh and blood" must be transformed in order to
have a share in God's kingdom is related to his mainly positive affirmation of
"body" in contrast with his overwhelmingly negative appraisal of "flesh." 84 An
important text for illuminating this implication of 1 Cor 15:50 is Gal 5:19-21: fol-
lowing a table of the "deeds of the flesh," Paul writes that "those who do such
things will not inherit God's kingdom" (v. 21b). According to Dunn, "the negative
factor was not . . . bodily existence itself but the ephemeral character of human
existence as existence in desiring, decaying flesh which, as it is focused on and
clung to, subverts that existence as existence before and for God." 85 For Paul, σαρξ
can signify that which is weak and corruptible about human existence: it is by
means of the flesh that sin exercises its dominion over human persons (Rom 7:5,
25; cf. 6:12), and flesh represents that component of the human person that is
opposed to the work of God (Rom 8:6-7; Gal 5:16-26). Paul speaks of an embodied
life in which the believer experiences, albeit partially and incompletely, the
indwelling and empowerment of the divine Spirit as the positive side of a trans-
formation that negatively involves the crucifixion of the flesh through the
believer's identification with Christ (Gal 5:24-25; cf. Rom 6:1-14). This embodied
life is the beginning of God's re-creative work in the human person, a work that is
completed in the resurrection of the dead, when Spirit overtakes flesh and blood
totally, just as "the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit" (1 Cor 15:45) in the
first and paradigmatic instance of resurrection. In contrast, there is no evidence
that Luke would have shared Paul's negative and dualistic assessment of σαρξ (see
Luke 3:6 = Isa 40:5 LXX; Acts 2:17 = Joel 3:1 LXX; also Acts 2:31, for resurrec-
tion as pertaining to flesh). 86 Evidently Luke did not distinguish, as Paul did,
between "body" (as a neutral term, necessary to human existence on any plane)
and "flesh" (as a negative term for what is subject to moral and physiological cor-
ruption). 87 For Luke, as for later commentators, "resurrection of the body" makes
no sense without "resurrection of the flesh" (and bones). 88

83 Wedderburn, Beyond Resurrection, 29-32.
84 See Boyarin, Radical Jew, 57-85; James D. G. Dunn, The Theology of Paul the Apostle
85 Dunn, Theology of Paul the Apostle, 72.
86 Wright (Resurrection, 658) notes that "Luke is not wedded to the special Pauline terminol-
gy in which 'flesh' (sark) always designates that which is corruptible, and often that which is rebel-
lous," but considers this grounds for not thinking that Luke's "flesh and bones" reveals a
disagreement with Paul.
87 Dunn, Theology of Paul the Apostle, 70-73.
88 E.g., Tertullian Marc. 5.10.4, which identifies "carnal" with "corporeal."
Equally problematic for Luke would be the apocalyptic language Paul uses for his primary experience of Christ (e.g., Gal 1:15), or the vagueness of his language in relation to other “visions and revelations of the Lord” (e.g., 2 Cor 12:1-4): the resurrection appearance Paul claims could be understood as a revelatory experience, that is, a vision. Paul’s correlation of his experience with those of other apostolic figures (1 Cor 15:5-8) would also jeopardize, from Luke’s perspective, the “reality” of their experiences (that is, their unquestionably nonvisionary nature). Such experiences would therefore be unverifiable but also open-ended and susceptible to deployment in heterodox claims to legitimacy. Thus, Robinson, Dunn, and Segal see Luke 24:36-43 as a reaction against Paul’s arguably “spiritualized” or “visionary” presentation of the resurrection appearances. Luke narrowly defines the resurrection appearances as to their chronology (during the forty days), their character (Jesus eating and drinking with his followers), and the persons involved (the male apostles, that is, the Twelve, who accordingly legitimate all offshoots of the Jerusalem-based movement). At the conclusion of these appearances, the risen Jesus ascends so that he can dispense (“pour out”) the promised Holy Spirit (Acts 2:33). In light of this, Paul’s tendency to see the risen Christ active as Spirit in and among believers (e.g., Rom 8:9-11; 1 Cor 15:45; 2 Cor 3:17-18), or indeed as indwelling believers (e.g., Rom 8:9; 2 Cor 13:5; Gal 2:19-20), probably would have seemed problematic to Luke.

In light of this discussion, several of the narrative devices employed in Luke 24 and Acts also supply evidence that Luke’s concern was with Pauline views. These may be listed briefly. (1) As Robinson notes, Luke consistently demotes Paul as a resurrection witness, not only by placing his experience outside the limits of the apostolic resurrection appearances (contrast Acts 9:1-8 with Acts 1:3; 10:40-41), but even by having Paul refer to others, not including himself, as resurrection witnesses (contrast 1 Cor 9:1; 15:8 with Acts 13:30-32). Paul therefore is not counted by Luke as among the “apostles” (Acts 1:21-22, 26; 15:2; contrast Gal 1:1; 1 Cor 15:8-11) and is never called by that term in Acts, except as “delegate” of the church at Antioch (Acts 14:4, 14). Paul’s career is still the narrative

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93 Ibid., 8.
focus of much of Acts, but in Luke’s presentation he is not a witness to the resurrection. (2) Related to this demotion of Paul is the promotion of Peter as the primary resurrection witness. According to Luke 24:34, which probably depends on 1 Cor 15:5, Peter is the first to whom the risen Jesus appeared, and he is also spokesman for the resurrection proclamation and hermeneutic in a variety of settings (Acts 1:15-26; 2:22-36; 3:11-16; 4:1-4, 5-12; 5:27-32; 10:34-43; cf. Luke 22:31-32). (3) In what is probably a Lucan creation, Peter corroborates the message about the empty tomb by visiting it himself (Luke 24:10-12). In light of Luke 24:37-39, it appears that Luke intended not only to resolve the problem of the women’s testimony but also to secure the character of the appearances: the primary resurrection witness determines that Jesus appears to his followers only in a manner that involves his flesh-and-bones body, absent from the tomb. (4) Where Paul can use πνεύμα to describe the presence of the risen and exalted Christ, Luke’s chronology forges a clear narrative distinction between the risen Jesus and the Spirit. For Luke, the risen Jesus is concretely present only in the resurrection appearances, and after the ascension is manifest only in visionary experiences (Acts 7:55-56; 9:1-8, etc.; 18:9-10). The Holy Spirit descends at Pentecost, poured out by the ascended and exalted Christ, who has received the Father’s promise (Acts 2:32-34).

Two issues remain. First, it is unclear whether the contrasts between Paul and Luke on resurrection bodies should be understood as evidence that the author of Luke disagreed with Paul’s argument in 1 Corinthians 15 as it stands, or as it was being interpreted in his day. Vinzent has argued convincingly for the influence of Paul’s resurrection experiences on Marcion, and one can see the potential usefulness of Paul’s “spiritual body” to Marcion’s conception of Christ’s “pneumatic corporeality,” as Vinzent has termed it. Thus, Luke could have been taking issue

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95 Vinzent, “Christ’s Resurrection,” 230-33; idem, “Schluß des Lukasevangeliums,” 81-86. Tertullian does not say that Marcion used 1 Cor 15:42-49 along these lines, but he does connect 1 Cor 15:50 and Rom 8:3 with Marcion’s view that Christ was a “phantasm” (Marc. 5.14).
with an interpretation of the resurrection appearances that lay somewhere on a trajectory between Paul and Marcion. Luke's approach, however, seems to have been to negate Paul's language, rather than to delimit its interpretive possibilities.

Second, there remains a question of narrative logic: if Luke's negation of πνεύμα and affirmation of σαρξ και ὀστέα is anti-Pauline, what can it mean for the disciples to think that they were "seeing a spirit" (Luke 24:37)? Robinson may have been correct that "this identification of the . . . resurrected Christ as the Spirit is then in substance what Luke rejects as the false assumption that they had seen a ghost."96 That is, one way to make narrative sense of "seeing a pneuma(tic body)" is to approximate it to a cultural commonplace, that of seeing a ghost, although this interpretation apparently did not motivate the apologetic negation of πνεύμα in Luke 24:37, 39. The motif of fear (v. 37) and the language of doubt (v. 38) could hint at Luke's concerns about Paul's resurrection anthropology. Since for Luke, as for later Christian authors, bodily resurrection must be fleshly resurrection, Paul's view of a "spiritual body" (1 Cor 15:44-46) becomes in Luke's story the "[disembodied] spirit" that the disciples think they see and that the author's risen Jesus expressly refutes.

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