

# Light and Existence

John Klotz

There is a song written in the thirties called "Dancing in the Dark" which includes this phrase: "*Dancing in the dark till the tune ends, we're dancing in the dark and it soon ends.*" Today, both as individuals and humanity, we are dancing in the dark. Death is the dark. The song is about love being an escape from death.

Looming darkness approaches in two guises: The dark that threatens us is *selfishness* - both individually and collectively. An Apocalypse is no longer merely a biblical metaphor. One potential apocalyptic cause is abuse of the environment for selfish, immediate profit; another is the spread of nuclear weapons and their control by unsteady hands.

The challenge to both individuals and humanity as a whole is to find and embrace the light and reject the dark.

## A. $E=mc^2$

It is probably the most important, and perhaps most famous, equation in human and scientific history. Energy = mass (matter) multiplied by the speed of light squared. To a non-scientist, the relationship of matter and the speed of light may seem a puzzle. However, it is quite simple. In Einstein's view matter was simply "*frozen light.*" They were different aspects of the same thing and ultimately that same thing was light itself. The late Stephen Hawking stated "*When you break subatomic particles down to their most elemental level, you are left with nothing but pure light.*"

Is this true? Is light ultimately the beginning, the present and the future of the existence, not just of humanity but of all that is or will ever be?

## B. The Nature of Light

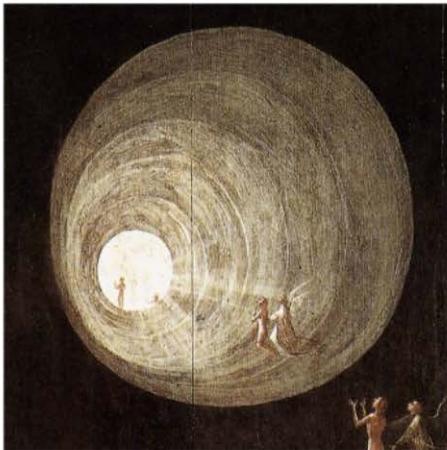
Light is ubiquitous. It pervades our existence as both physical reality and metaphor. We marvel at the blinking lights of the stars in the night sky. We happily greet the rising sun at dawn and though dazzled by the sunset we mourn

the sun's sinking beneath the horizon. In moments of despair all about us seems but a black void in which we are hopelessly lost. To many that is our destiny. Yet, light is both (a) *religious metaphor* and (b) a *quantum phenomenon* which defines and illuminates human existence.

The two are related. The identification of the Deity and Christ with light is a running theme throughout Scripture.

Metaphorically, the Gospel of St. John refers to Jesus Christ as light: *"In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness; and the darkness grasped it not."* Once, he appeared to Peter, James, and John, transfigured as a being of light along with Moses and Elijah. St. Paul claims that on his way to Damascus he was confronted by Jesus in a dazzling light that blinded him. Moreover, in the Nicene Creed Jesus Christ is identified as being created from light: *"We believe ... in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father, **Light of Light**, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father."*

Many individuals experiencing Near Death Experiences (NDEs) report advancing through a tunnel at the end of which they see a welcoming "being of light" that many identify as Jesus Christ.



This is a panel from a four-panel altarpiece by Hieronymus Bosch circa 1500 CE. Currently it is located in Venice, Italy, at the Palazzo Vecchio. It is entitled "The Ascent of the Blessed."

What is extraordinary is that it is an artistic rendition of the common experience related by hundreds if not thousands of individuals who have reported NDEs. These are individuals who have during medical treatment recorded flat lined electroencephalographs (EEGs) and cardiograms. They were pronounced dead but were eventually resuscitated.

Many report traveling through a dark tunnel towards a welcoming "being of light". These modern reports of NDEs from the mid-20th century to the present postdate by five centuries Bosch's painting.

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### **C. Defining Light**

Science examines light in many forms: the inception of life, the phenomenon of death; the evidence that consciousness survives death; and the claim that at least one extraordinary individual arose from the dead. Scientific investigation of NDEs provides a window through the veil of death that separates us from eternity. Indeed, quantum science describes "*non-locality*": a state of existence which has all the earmarks of what theologians and philosophers call "eternity." While the scientific study of NDEs is not conclusive "proof" of eternity, it does offer a scientific theory that eternity may exist in this "*non-locality*".

The key is the scientific phenomenon of light. The Shroud of Turin has, metaphorically, been described as a "2,000 year old photograph." One group of physicists in Italy has conducted experiments that indicate that the Shroud image is compatible with an ultra-violet laser light causing a scorch of linen. However, to replicate the image would require a source of ultraviolet energy beyond the current capacity of the ultraviolet light resources of humanity.

### **D. Defining "God"**

It is difficult, if not impossible, to avoid the use of the concept of "God" when dealing with the phenomena that lay at the heart of our existence. Even authors who describe themselves as atheists will define a phenomenon in the creation of our universe's existence as a "primordial consciousness." God is only three letters. "Primordial consciousness" has twenty-three. Neither the word nor the phrase is adequate to explain the existence of a consciousness that birthed our reality in the creation of the universe, the "big bang."

### **E. Beings of Light**

Assume for purposes of this discussion that the resurrection was a real event transforming Christ's corpse into a "being of light." To the extent that the corpse of Jesus was transformed into a being of light, that would have been in two stages. Jesus as dead and Jesus as resurrected. My hypothesis is that the Shroud of Turin is a picture of Jesus as dead created by the burst of light as his corpse was transformed into a Being of Light. That Being of Light has subsequently appeared

in NDEs and Bosch's painting. Absent the resurrection, the Shroud image could not exist. The transformation of Christ from a corpse to a being of light is a logical and an arguably scientific explanation of the Shroud image, but we see only the beginning of the story: the body as it begins its passage into another form of existence. That form of existence is as a being of light.

Now humanity faces extinction because of selfishness, which is one of the driving forces of evolution. Selfishness threatens a real, not metaphorical, apocalypse. To some, such as the residents of Bangladesh, the Apocalypse is not tomorrow but today.

Some of the most articulate and forceful statements about the approaching apocalypse has been Roman Catholic Pope Francis. Despite some criticisms from conservative elements in the Church, Francis has not retreated from his elevation of the environment to a religious issue. On May 21, 2014, Pope Francis told an audience; "If we destroy creation, creation will destroy us." Is Francis right? Was his statement hyperbole or prophecy?

Creation will destroy us! Humanity is dancing in the dark and must look for the light if it is to survive.

**Editor's Note:**

John Klotz - a New York lawyer - is a well known Shroud commentator and author of a most meticulous, forensic account of everything appertaining to the anticipation of, preparations for and execution of the Shroud's Carbon 14 Test. In the second part of the book John expands on the apocalyptic potential within our Age. I commend it to you. Available from Amazon.

