

BIBLICAL THEOLOGY OF MISSION

Class 3b: The Glory Of Original Man

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THE SLIDES RELATED TO THIS TEACHING ARE PLACED THROUGHOUT THESE NOTES FOR EASIER INTEGRATION OF THE MATERIAL BEING SHARED.

I. EXTERNAL GLORY OF MAN

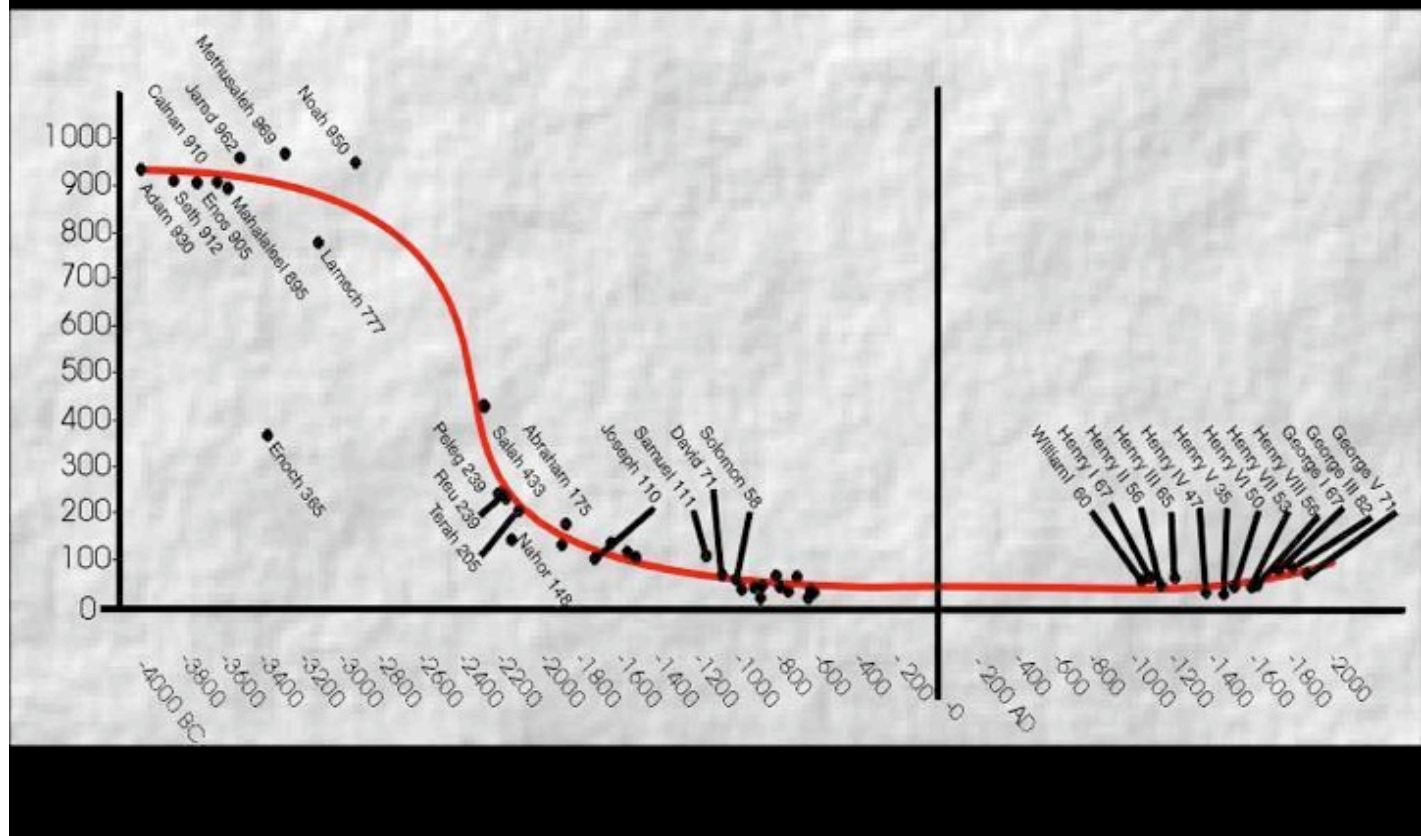
A. Cosmogenical External Glory

1. Cosmogenical Lifespans

Adam lived 930 years... Seth lived 912 years... Enosh lived 905 years... Kenan lived 910 years... Mahalalel lived 895 years... Jared lived 962 years... Enoch lived 365 years... Methuselah lived 969 years... Lamech lived 777 years, and then he died (in the Flood). (NIV Genesis 5:5-31)

Altogether, Noah lived 950 years, and then he died... Shem lived [600] years... Arphaxad lived [438] years... Cainan lived [460] years... Shelah lived [433] years... Eber lived [464] years... Peleg lived [239] years... Reu lived [239] years... Serug lived [230] years... Nahor lived [148] years... Terah lived 205 years, and he died in Haran. (NIV Genesis 9:29; 11:11-32)

Pre-Patriarchal Lifespan



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2. Cosmogenical Body Size

a) Nephilim¹

The Nephilim (Gk. gigas LXX, "giants" KJV/NKJV) were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of man and they bore children to them. These were the mighty men (Hb. gibbor, Gk. gigas LXX) who were of old, the men of renown. (ESV Genesis 6:4)

Cush begot Nimrod; he began to be a mighty one (Hb. gibbor, Gk. gigas LXX) on the earth. ⁹ He was a mighty hunter before the LORD; therefore it is said, "Like Nimrod the mighty hunter before the LORD." (NKJV Genesis 10:8-9)

b) Anakites/Anakim

The land, through which we have gone to spy it out, is a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people that we saw in it are of great height. ³³ And there we saw the Nephilim (Gk. gigas LXX, "giants" KJV/NKJV) (the sons of Anak, who come from the Nephilim), and we seemed to ourselves like grasshoppers, and so we seemed to them. (ESV Numbers 13:32-33; cf. Deut. 1:27-28)

And the LORD said to me, "Do not harass Moab... because I have given Ar to the people of Lot for a possession. ¹⁰ (The Emim formerly lived there, a people great and many, and tall as the Anakim)... ¹⁹ And when you approach the territory of the people of Ammon, do not harass them... because I have given it to the sons of Lot for a possession. ²⁰ (Rephaim (Hb. Rapha, "giants" KJV/ NKJV) formerly lived there... ²¹ a people great and many, and tall as the Anakim)" (ESV Deuteronomy 2:9-21; cf. Rephaim and Emim in Genesis 14:5)

Hear, O Israel: you are to cross over the Jordan today, to go in to dispossess nations greater and mightier than yourselves, cities great and fortified up to heaven, ² a people great and tall, the sons of the Anakim, whom you know, and of whom you have heard it said, 'Who can stand before the sons of Anak?' (ESV Deuteronomy 9:1-2)

Only Og king of Bashan was left of the remnant of the Rephaites (Hb. Rapha, "giants" KJV/NKJV). His bed was made of iron and was more than thirteen feet long and six feet wide. It is still in Rabbah of the Ammonites. (NIV Deuteronomy 3:11; cf. Joshua 12:4; 13:12)

And Joshua came at that time and cut off the Anakim from the hill country... ²² There was none of the Anakim left in the land of the people of Israel. Only in

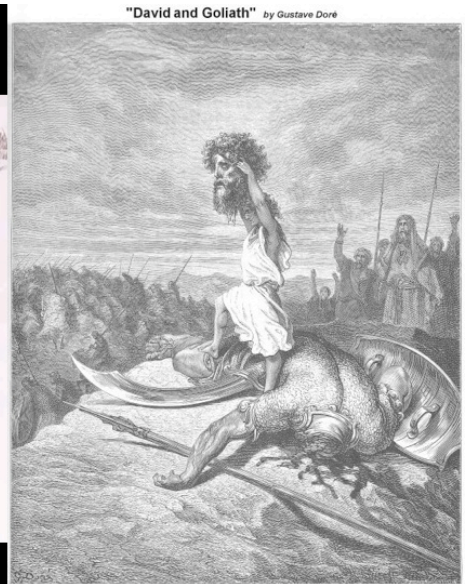
¹ Concerning the Hb. *nephilim*, I believe it simply to be a *generic term* referring to "giants," as is reflected in the Septuagint *gigas* and consequently the KJV/NKJV. Though there is some rabbinic tradition supporting the hybrid human/angel theory (cf. Book of Enoch, Book of Jubilees, Targum Jonathan), it seems more likely that the *nephilim* were simply the leaders of a rebellious movement against the line of Seth (albeit a large lot). The *nephilim* are present after the flood (Num. 13:33, cf. Gen. 6:4), and so are the comparable Emim, Anakim and Rephaim (which the KJV/NKJV also translate "giants"). Thus, you either had more angel/human reproduction after the flood (entirely possible, though nowhere recorded in scripture), or you had *nephilim* who survived the flood (seemingly contradictory to the scriptures). Thus, I would argue that the *nephilim* were simply large human beings (i.e. giants) whose genetics were passed down from Adam through Noah to the Anakites, et al.

Gaza, in Gath, and in Ashdod did some remain. (^{ESV} Joshua 11:21-22; cf. 14:12-15; 17:15)

A champion named Goliath, who was from Gath, came out of the Philistine camp. He was over nine feet tall. (^{NIV} 1 Samuel 17:4)

And Ishbi-benob, one of the descendants of the giants (Hb. Rapha, "Rapha" NIV), whose spear weighed three hundred shekels of bronze, and who was armed with a new sword, thought to kill David... ¹⁸ After this there was again war with the Philistines at Gob. Then Sibbecai the Hushathite

struck down Saph, who was one of the descendants of the giants (Hb. Rapha, "Rapha" NIV)... and Elhanan the son of Jaare-oregim, the Bethlehemite, struck down Goliath the Gittite, the shaft of whose spear was like a weaver's beam. ²⁰ And there was again war at Gath, where there was a man of great stature... descended from the giants (Hb. Rapha, "Rapha" NIV). ²¹ And when he taunted Israel, Jonathan the son of Shimei, David's brother, struck him down. ²² These four were descended from the giants (Hb. Rapha, "Rapha" NIV) in Gath (cf. Joshua 11:22), and they fell by the hand of David and by the hand of his servants. (^{ESV} 2 Samuel 21:16-22; cf. 1 Chron. 20:4-8)



B. Eschatological External Glory

Behold, I will create new heavens and a new earth... ¹⁹ I will rejoice over Jerusalem and take delight in my people; the sound of weeping and of crying will be heard in it no more (cf. Rev. 21:4). ²⁰ Never again will there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not live out his years; he who dies at a hundred will be thought a mere youth; he who fails to reach a hundred will be considered accursed. (^{NIV} Isaiah 65:17-20)

Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt. ³ Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever. (^{NIV} Daniel 12:1-3)

Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear. (^{ESV} Matthew 13:43)

But someone may ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body will they come?" ... ⁴¹ The sun has one kind of splendor, the moon another and the stars

another; and star differs from star in splendor. ⁴² So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable... ⁴⁹ And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, so shall we bear the likeness of the man from heaven. (NIV 1 Corinthians 15:35-49)

C. Typological External Glory

1. Biblical Typology

a) As Godly Men

When Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two tablets of the Testimony in his hands, he was not aware that his face was radiant because he had spoken with the LORD. (NIV Exodus 34:29)

Now if the ministry that brought death, which was engraved in letters on stone, came with glory, so that the Israelites could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of its glory, fading though it was, ⁸ will not the ministry of the Spirit be even more glorious? ... ¹² Therefore, since we have such a hope, we are very bold. (NIV 2 Corinthians 3:7-12)

All who were sitting in the Sanhedrin looked intently at Stephen, and they saw that his face was like the face of an angel. (NIV Acts 6:15)

b) As an Angel

Those who are considered worthy of taking part in that age and in the resurrection from the dead will neither marry nor be given in marriage, ³⁶ and they can no longer die; for they are like the angels. They are God's children, since they are children of the resurrection. (NIV Luke 20:35-36)

There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. ³ His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. (NIV Matthew 28:2-3)

c) As Jesus

But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body... (ESV Philippians 3:20-21)

About eight days after Jesus said this, he took Peter, John and James with him and went up onto a mountain to pray. ²⁹ As he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became as bright as a flash of lightning. ³⁰ Two men, Moses and Elijah, ³¹ appeared in glorious splendor, talking with Jesus. (NIV Luke 9:28-31)

...and among the lampstands was someone "like a son of man"... ¹⁴ His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire. ¹⁵ His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace, and his voice was like the

sound of rushing waters... His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance.
(^{NIV} Revelation 1:13)

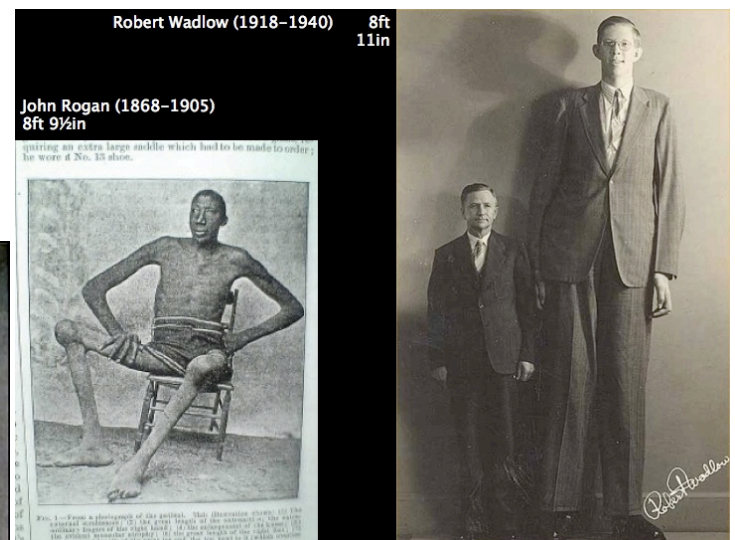
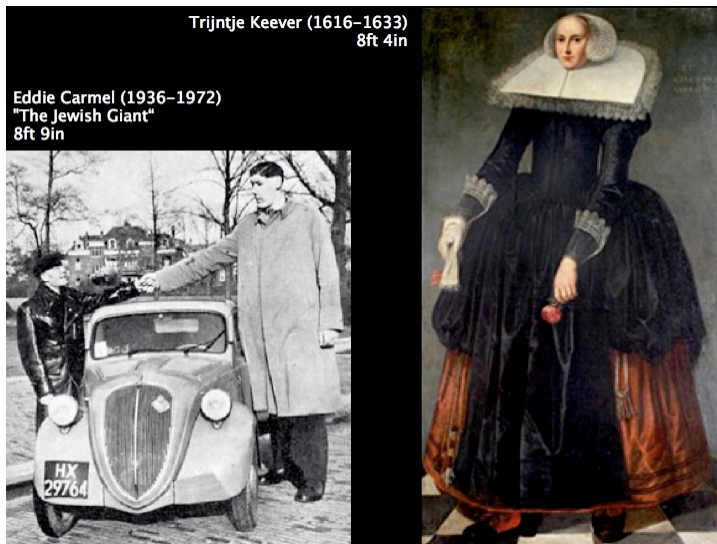
2. Historical Typology

a) Giant Hominid Fossils

- (1) Legends of extraordinarily tall humans are found on almost every continent and in almost every culture. However, much like “flood myths,” they are almost always viewed as mythical beings.
- (2) Though literally thousands of giant human footprints and bones have been found over the last couple hundred years, they have been systematically ignored because they did not fit within evolutionary theory. Evolutionists are not willing to accept that there existed in the past giant versions of modern man because there is no evolutionary explanation for their existence, just as there is no real attempt to explain giant versions of modern day animals.

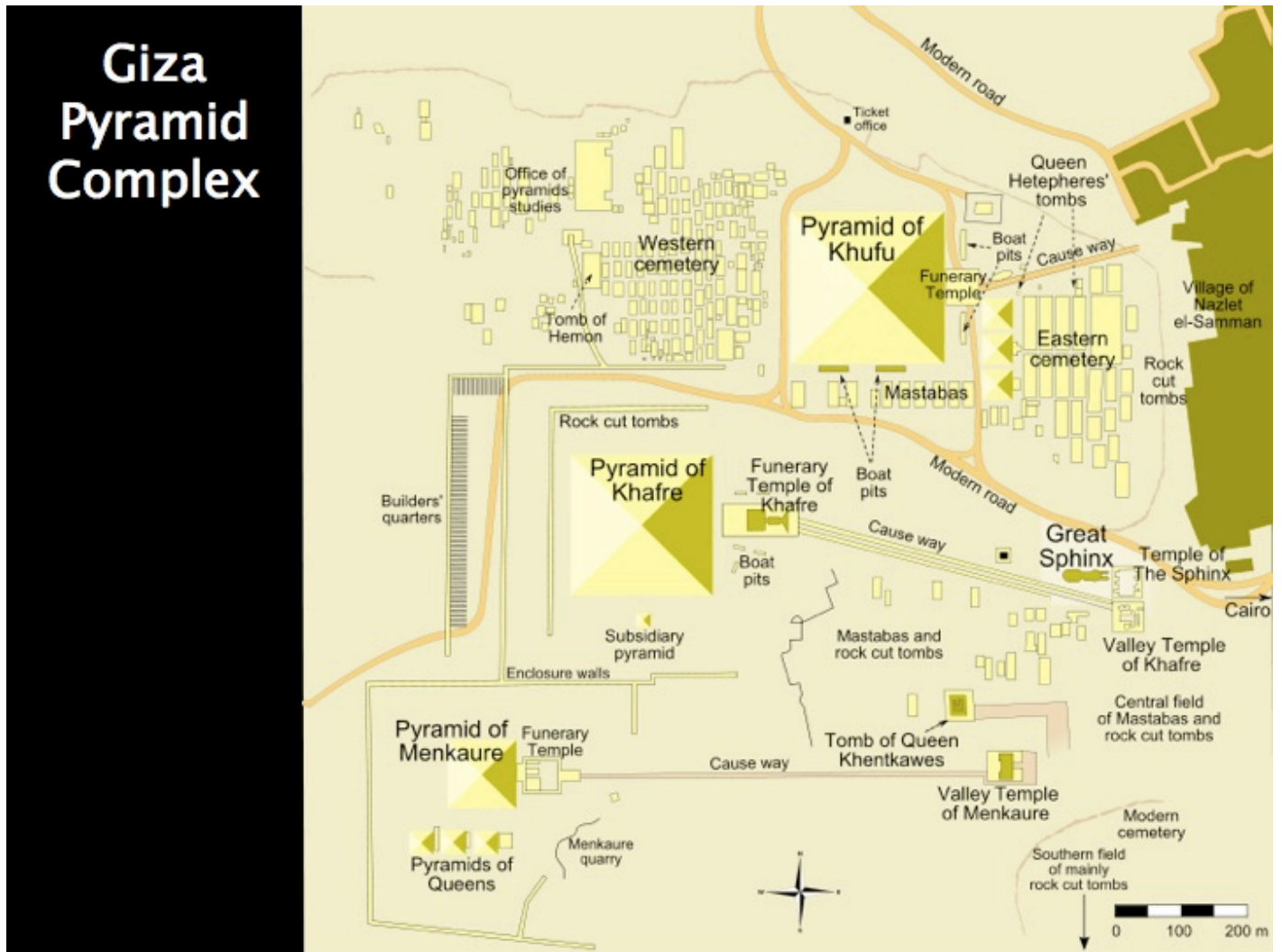
b) Historical Giants

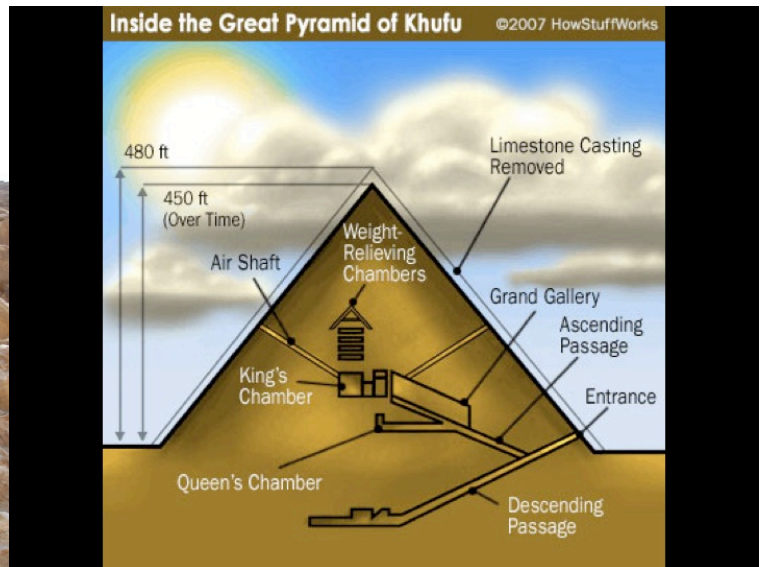
- (1) Robert Wadlow (1918-1940)
- (2) John Rogan (1868-1905)
- (3) Eddie Carmel (1936-1972)
- (4) Trijntje Keever (1616-1633)



c) Ancient Achievements

(1) Pyramids of Giza





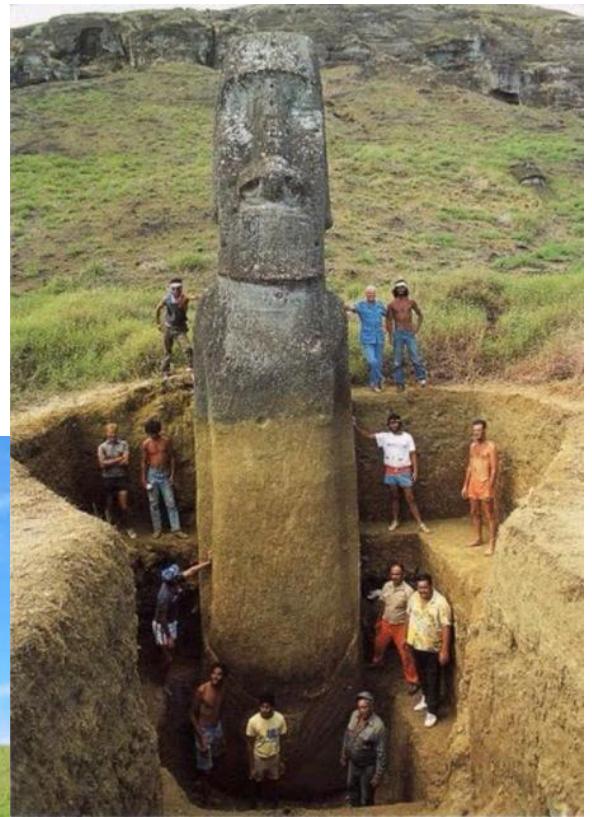
(2) Stonehenge



(3) **Machu Picchu**



(4) Easter Island Moai



(5) Banaue Rice Terraces



II. INTERNAL GLORY OF MAN

A. Cosmogenical Internal Glory

The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame. (^{NIV} Genesis 2:25)

1. Mind: Pre-Babel intelligence

Now the whole earth had one language and the same words. (^{ESV} Genesis 11:1)

2. Emotions: Pre-Flood passion

The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. (^{ESV} Genesis 6:5)

3. Will: Post-Flood achievements

The LORD said, "If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this (building of the Tower of Babel), then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them. (^{NIV} Genesis 11:6)

B. Typological Internal Glory

1. Biblical Typology

a) Mind

Behold, I give you a wise and discerning mind, so that none like you has been before you and none like you shall arise after you. (^{ESV} 1 Kings 3:12)

And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding beyond measure, and breadth of mind like the sand on the seashore... ³¹ For he was wiser than all other men... and his fame was in all the surrounding nations... ³³ He spoke of trees... He spoke also of beasts, and of birds, and of reptiles, and of fish. ³⁴ And people of all nations came to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and from all the kings of the earth, who had heard of his wisdom. (^{ESV} 1 Kings 4:29-34)

At this, some of the teachers of the law said to themselves, "This fellow is blaspheming!" ⁴ Knowing their thoughts (cf. Mt. 12:25; 16:8; Lk. 6:8; 9:47; Jn. 2:24; 6:61; 16:19), Jesus said, "Why do you entertain evil thoughts in your hearts?" (^{NIV} Matthew 9:3-4)

b) Emotions

David, wearing a linen ephod, danced before the LORD with all his might, ¹⁵ while he and the entire house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouts and the sound of trumpets. (^{NIV} 2 Samuel 6:14-15)

At that time Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit, said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth..." (^{NIV} Luke 10:21)

c) Will

One thing I have desired of the LORD, that will I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life... (NKJV Psalm 27:4)

As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem. (NIV Luke 9:51)

I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, ¹⁴ I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. (NIV Philippians 3:13-15)

2. Historical Typology

a) Michael K. Kearney
(born January 1, 1984
in Paterson, NJ) –
Kearney began talking
at four months, told
his pediatrician “I have
an ear infection” at the
age of six months,²
and learned to read at
ten months.³ He went
on to finish high-
school at six, got an
AS in geology from
Santa Rosa Junior
College at eight, and
graduated with a BA in
anthropology from
University of South
Alabama at ten. At



14, he received a MS in biochemistry from Middle Tennessee State University and at 17 earned an additional Master's degree from Vanderbilt University in computer science, where he also began teaching college courses.⁴

² Kevin and Cassidy Kearney, *Accidental Genius* (Woodshed Press, 1998), 24.

³ His father recounts, “For instance, most parents get to go through a phase of child rearing where you can spell out to your partner whatever you don't want the children to know. For us this phase lasted about two weeks when Michael was only ten months old. I would say to Cassidy, 'Why don't we go out and get some F-R-E-N-C-H F-R-I-E-S?' Michael would chime in from the baby stroller, 'That sounds good. Let's go to M-C-D-O-N-A-L-D-S.' ... In the supermarket checkout line he might say about the lady behind us, 'Dad, look at that fat lady. She's enormous.' Of course, people assumed that I had put him up to it. I would say, 'Michael, be quiet, you're embarrassing me.' He would say, 'But she's fat! Look at her! Is she going to eat all that ice cream?' People already thought that I was a ventriloquist. Cassidy and I worked out with Michael that he would whisper his comments to us. That actually worked, especially when Michael spotted the fat lady again and whispered, 'Dad, hide the ice cream.'” (quoted in Robert N. Seitz, “Book Review of *Michael Kearney*, ‘*Accidental Genius*,’ available from http://hiqnews.megafoundation.org/Accidental_Genius.htm.)

⁴ Recently, he is known for winning \$25,000 in 2008 on ABC's “Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?”, and a million dollars in 2006 on Mark Burnett's interactive pop-culture game, “Gold Rush,” on AOL.com (cf. CBS Broadcasting Inc., “\$1M To Child Prodigy In AOL's ‘Gold Rush’” (11.10.06); available at <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2006/11/10/earlyshow/main2170881.shtml>.)

- b) Tathagat Avatar Tulsi (born September 9, 1987 in Patna, India) – Having the special distinction of being one of the world's youngest scientists, Tulsi completed high school at the age of nine, earned a B.Sc. in physics at the age of ten, and a M.Sc. in physics at the age of twelve, making him also the world's youngest post-graduate.⁵ At the age of 17 he became a Senior Research Fellow at one of India's premier research institutes (Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore), working toward a Ph.D in quantum computing.⁶



- c) Jill Price (born December 1965) – Unknown to the scientific community until 2006,⁷ and to the public until 2008,⁸ Price is able to perfectly recite, and thereby relive, all the days of her life since she was 14 years old.⁹ However, powerless to stop remembering, each memory brings with it an emotion every bit as potent as it was the first day she had it, thus causing her severe depression since she remembers and relives every bad decision, insult, embarrassment,



⁵ On his sixth birthday (September 9, 1993) his father gave him a special birthday present, the bestseller *A Brief History of Time* by Stephen Hawking, which inspired him: "The main reason, why my father gave it to me, was because I always used to disturb him by asking questions about Universe, Earth, stars etc. I finished that book in 3 days and after which I was left only with more and more deeper questions. I came to know about Black holes, Einstein's theory and Quantum mechanics (all was very interesting for me). I started reading other popular science books (second one that I read was "In Search of Big Bang" by John Gribbin) and always used to think about these scientific questions. I was not able to focus on my school studies. I wanted to do some original research and the school studies was the biggest hurdle for me. I found school very boring and finally, I decided to finish my schoolings as soon as possible." (Tathagat Tulsi, "My Childhood," available at <http://www.physics.iisc.ernet.in/~tathagat/childhood.html>.)

⁶ At the age of 17, he wrote a research paper that brought him an invitation by Bell Labs of the United States to do a collaborative work with Lov Grover, inventor of a quantum search algorithm [see Tathagat Tulsi, Lov K. Grover, Apoorva Patel, "A New Algorithm for Fixed-point Quantum Search," (2005) LANL e-print quant-ph/0505007; archived at <http://arxiv.org/abs/quant-ph/0505007>.]

⁷ After James L. McGaugh, professor of neurobiology at the University of California, Irvine, spent five years bombarding Price with psychological, neurological and physiological tests and coined the new term for her condition, "hyperthymestic syndrome" [cf. James L. McGaugh, Elizabeth S. Parker and Larry Cahill, "A Case of Unusual Autobiographical Remembering," *Neurocase* 12(1):35-49 (February 2006); archived at http://today.uci.edu/pdf/AJ_2006.pdf.]

⁸ When she first published a book describing her life [Jill Price, *The Woman Who Can't Forget: The Extraordinary Story of Living with the Most Remarkable Memory Known to Science* (Free Press, 2008).]

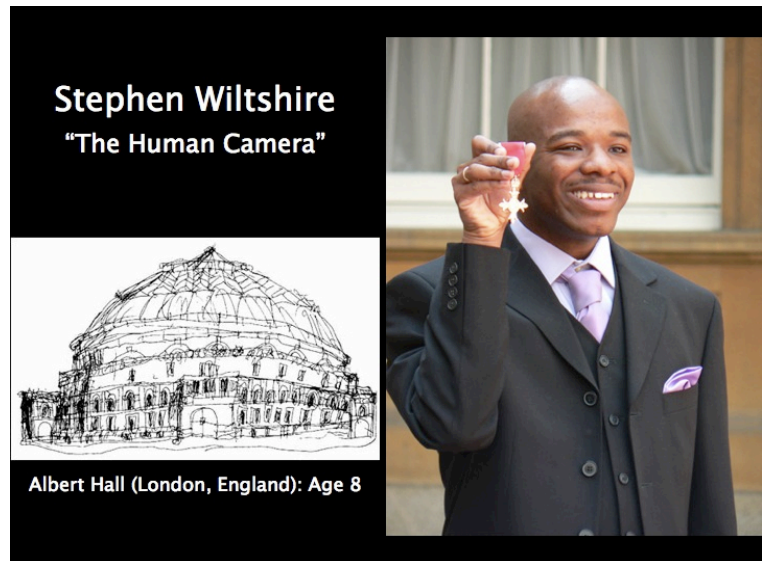
⁹ McGaugh describes her memory as "shockingly complete" beginning in 1974, when she was 8, and "near perfect" from 1980 on. McGaugh says he was convinced when she was able to tell him, off the top of her head, the dates of the last 23 Easters and what she did on those days (particularly impressive since Easter falls on different days, anywhere between March 22 and April 15, based on the Paschal full moon)... and she's Jewish! (See "A Case of Unusual Autobiographical Remembering," 40.) For a provocative interview, see Diane Sawyer, "Woman's Memories Never Fade," *ABC News* (May 9, 2008); archived at <http://abcnews.go.com/video/playerIndex?id=4824374>.

etc.¹⁰ Brain scans have now shown that parts of Price's brain are three times the size of those in other women her age, but there is no explanation to its meaning.¹¹ Jill Price

First Interview: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aAbQvmf0YOQ&feature=related>

20/20 Interview: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SoxsMMV538U&feature=related>

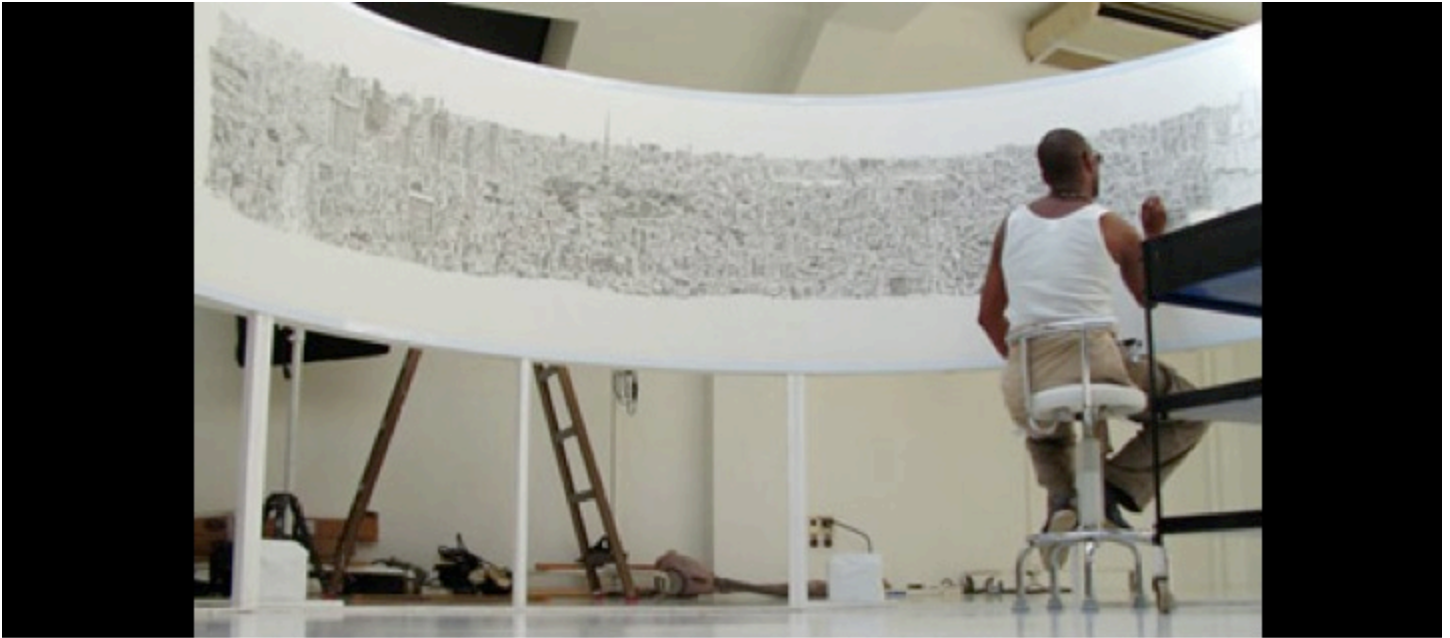
- d) Stephen Wiltshire (born April 24, 1974 in London, England) – Born autistic to West Indian parents, Wiltshire is an architectural artist who is known for being able to draw an entire landscape just by seeing it once. A few videos of Stephen: Human Camera - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a8YXZTlwTAU>; Tokyo Drawing - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=95L-zmIBGd4&feature=related> (See slides next page)



¹⁰ "Imagine being able to remember every fight you ever had with a friend, every time someone let you down, all the stupid mistakes you've ever made." [Jerry Adler, "Unable to Forget: The remarkable story of a woman who remembers every day of her life," *NEWSWEEK* (May 19, 2008); available at <http://www.newsweek.com/id/136334>.] Interestingly, Price describes her condition as given by God, "I so didn't have the life I wanted, but God had a different plan for me. I believe this happened for a reason. It's bigger than me... it could help other people." However, the standard response to her condition is evolutionary in its perspective, e.g. "Selective forgetting promotes human survival because without it, many would be paralyzed by past traumas." [Marilyn Elias, "Decades of details flood woman with unmatched memory," *USA Today* (May 6, 2008); available at http://www.usatoday.com/news/health/2008-05-07-cant-forget-price_N.htm.]

¹¹ In commenting on another case of hyperthymestic syndrome (i.e. Brad Williams of La Crosse, Wisconsin), McGaugh answers, "You want the Nobel Prize right now? Tell me that answer and I'll publish it... We don't know. We do know that he carries this information with him, that it's detailed, that it's just there. That's what we want to know -- why is it there?" [CNN.com/health, "Amazing memory man never forgets" (February 22, 2008); available at <http://www.cnn.com/2008/HEALTH/02/22/memory.man.ap/index.html>.]





10m Panorama of Tokyo



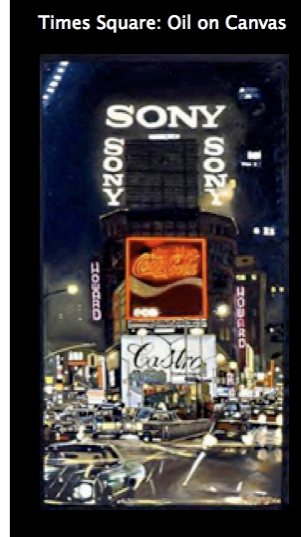
5m Panorama of Rome

Tokyo Panorama Close-up





Kremlin Palace (Moscow, Russia): photograph (top) vs. Wiltshire's drawing (bottom)



Los Angeles Skyline (2007)



- e) Akiane Kramarik (born July 9, 1994 in Mount Morris, IL) – Born to an atheistic Lithuanian mother and an ex-Catholic American father, she began having dramatic visions of heaven at age three, which launched her into drawing at four, painting at six, and writing poetry (generally arriving fully conceived) at seven.¹² Self-taught, she is considered the only known child binary



genius, in both realist painting and poetry.¹³ Moreover, she speaks four languages: Lithuanian, Russian, English and Sign Language. Video Interview: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-YdIVeBo8SE&feature=related> (see slides on next pages as well)

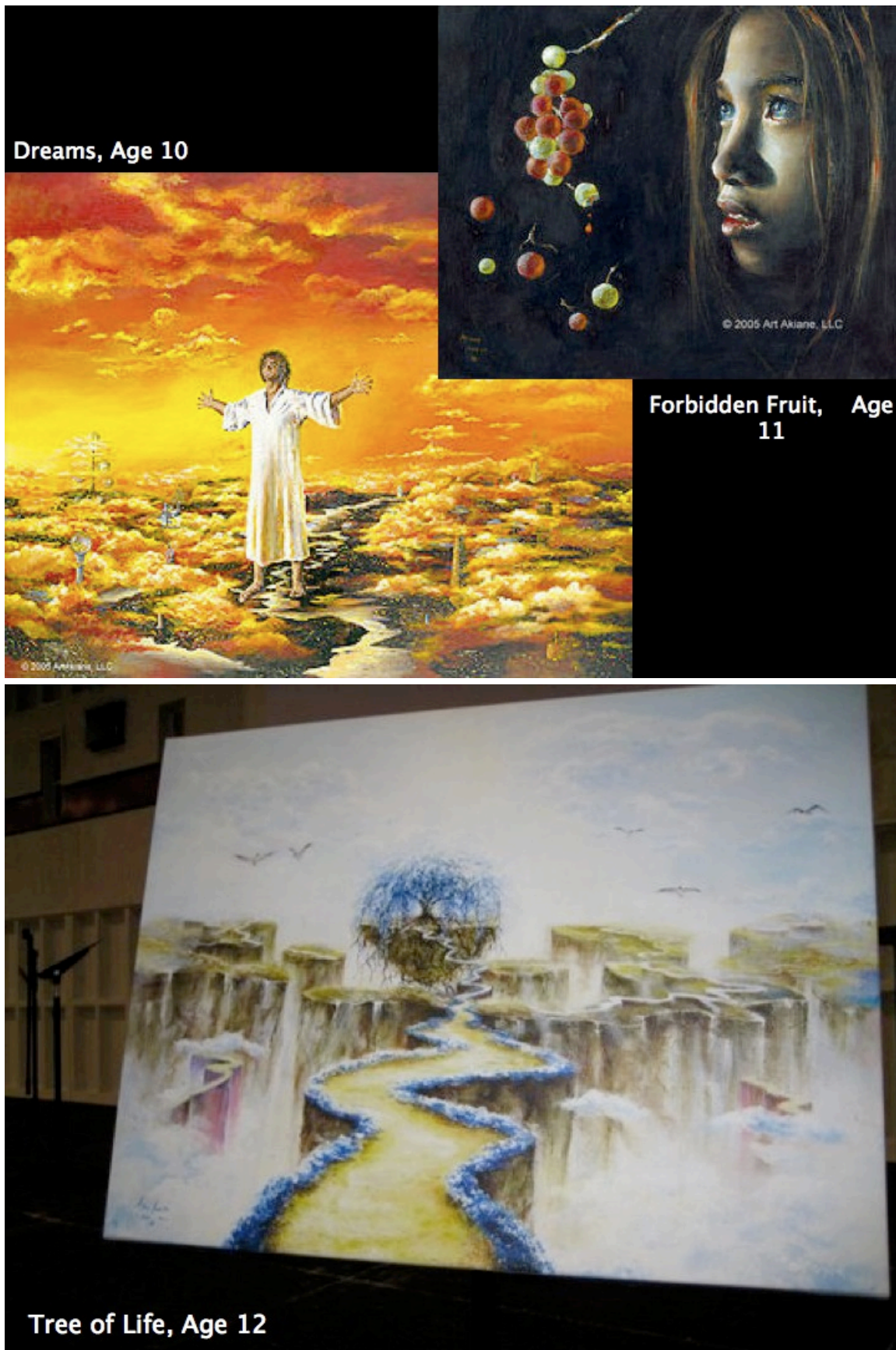
¹² Even though religion was never discussed in the home, all five of the Kramarik kids were home schooled, no baby-sitters came to the house, and the family watched no television. [See Akiane Kramarik, *Akiane: Her Life, Her Art, Her Poetry* (Nashville: W Publishing Group, 2006); see also her website, www.artakiane.com.]

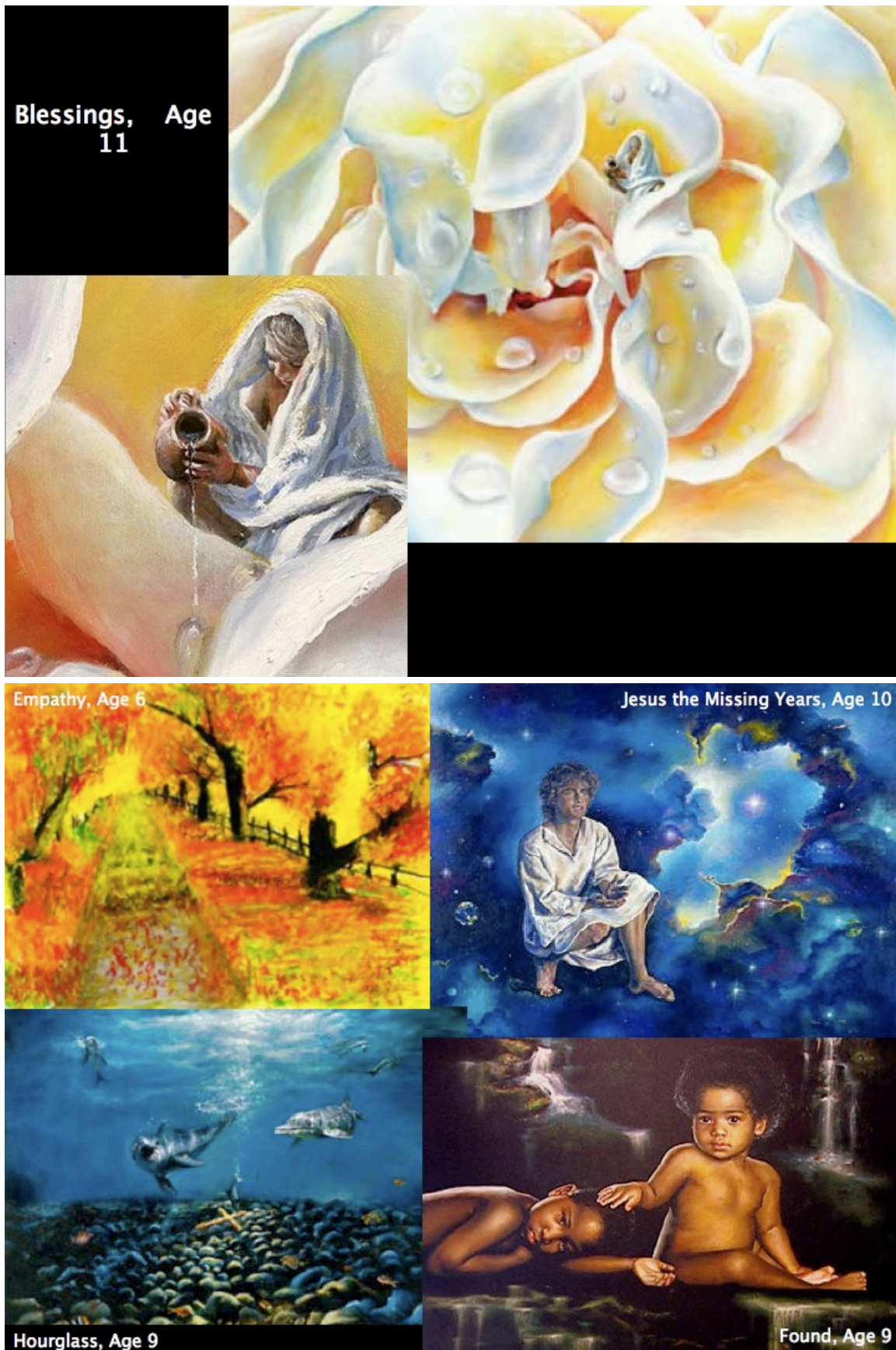
¹³ Meticulously self-disciplined, she rises at 4 a.m., five-six days a week, to get ready to paint and write in the studio. She often works over a hundred to two hundred hours on a painting, producing 8 to 20 paintings a year.



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III. PRIMARY ELEMENT OF THE GOSPEL: THE REVERSAL OF DEATH

A. Cosmogony/Eschatology without Death

1. The original intent of God in creating the earth was perpetual well-being (i.e. "good") in the context of existential perfection (i.e. no death).

God saw that the light was good... ¹⁰ And God saw that it (land and seas) was good... ¹² And God saw that it (plants and trees) was good... ¹⁸ And God saw that it (sun, moon and stars) was good... ²¹ And God saw that it (fish and birds) was good... ²⁵ And God saw that it (land animals) was good... ³¹ God saw all that he had made (including man), and it was very good. (NIV Genesis 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31)

2. This perfection was disrupted by sin, and death entered.

And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; ¹⁷ but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die." (NIV Genesis 2:16-17)

To Adam he said... ¹⁹ "By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return." (NIV Genesis 3:17-19)

3. Thus, death is the central problem of existence and *the ultimate enemy* to be destroyed. Just as an event of sin brought death into the world, so will an event promised by God drive death out of the world.

And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel. (NIV Genesis 3:15)

But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. ²¹ For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. ²² For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. ²³ But each in his own turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him. ²⁴ Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. ²⁵ For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. ²⁶ The last enemy to be destroyed is death. (NIV 1 Corinthians 15:20-26)

4. This "crushing" event which purges death from the earth is the central hope of mankind. It is not even the "crushing" event that is really the hope, but rather it is what the crushing event produces—the *reversal of death*—that is the deepest longing of every human heart. As death is the central problem of existence, so is its removal the central hope.

And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them (as in the beginning). They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. ⁴ He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain (as in the beginning), for the old order of things (post-Fall) has passed away." (NIV Revelation 21:3-4)

5. Human beings were not created to die. They were created to live forever—to perpetually regenerate. This potential is becoming increasingly recognized in the scientific community.¹⁴ This potential was originally in context to the Tree of Life, which was designed by God to perpetually heal and sustain the human body and which will be restored to redeemed man at the end of the age.

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life... On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. ³ No longer will there be any curse (i.e. death). The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. (NIV Revelation 22:1-3)

6. God expelled humanity from the Garden so that He could deal with the governmental issues created by man's sin—i.e. He did not want perpetual alienation with humanity. However, this reveals the reality of the design of the human body for perpetual existence and its relationship to the Tree of Life.

And the LORD God said, "The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever." (NIV Genesis 3:22)

B. Gospel without Death

1. To understand eschatology and the essential nature of the gospel, it is critical that one's cosmogeny be completely free from death. This is the most devastating effect that evolutionism and its philosophical predecessors have had on the gospel: the desensitization of people to the perversion and hideousness of death. Concessions with

¹⁴ Part of a larger field called "technological immortality," current scientific thinking about physical immortality involves three primary areas of study: human cloning, cryonics and nanotechnology. The purest form is found in the area of nanotechnology, which believes that in the years to come microscopic "nanorobots" will be injected into the human body to perpetually repair it—"we may be able to create tiny medical nanorobots that could go through our bloodstreams, find dangerous things like cancer cells and bacteria, and destroy them... gene-therapies and nanotechnology will eventually make the human body effectively self-sustainable and capable of living indefinitely, short of severe trauma." (Robert Freitas, quoted in Wikipedia Online Encyclopedia, "Immortality," available from <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Immortality>)

When nanotechnology overlaps with life-extension, you enter into the field of "transhumanism," which is classically defined as "a class of philosophies that seek to guide us towards a posthuman condition. Transhumanism shares many elements of humanism, including a respect for reason and science, a commitment to progress, and a valuing of human (or transhuman) existence in this life... Transhumanism differs from humanism in recognizing and anticipating the radical alterations in the nature and possibilities of our lives resulting from various sciences and technologies." [Max More (founder of the Extropy Institute), as quoted in Wikipedia Online Encyclopedia, "Transhumanism," available from <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transhumanism>]

A 2002 report, *Converging Technologies for Improving Human Performance*, commissioned by the National Science Foundation and US Department of Commerce, laid the groundwork for the convergence of nano-, bio-, info- and cogno-technologies (NBIC) and their possible use in the area of enhanced human performance and health. Some theorists have pushed this line of reason to its logical end: "technological singularity" (artificial intelligence reaching equivalence to human intelligence) [see Ray Kurzweil and Terry Grossman, *Fantastic Voyage: Live Long Enough To Live Forever* (Rodale Press, 2004); and Ray Kurzweil, *The Singularity Is Near: When Humans Transcend Biology* (Viking Penguin, 2005)] Kurzweil, as well as Richard P. Feynman, K. Eric Drexler, and Robert A. Freitas, are leaders in the field of nanotechnology. Major organizations involved include the World Transhumanist Association (www.transhumanism.org), Extropy Institute (www.extropy.org), and Immortality Institute (www.imminst.org).

Julian Huxley, grandson of Thomas Huxley ("Darwin's Bulldog") and founder of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), was the first to actually use the word "transhumanism." A prominent pre-WWII eugenicist, Huxley became an ardent humanist in the aftermath of WWII, presiding over the founding Congress of the International Humanist and Ethical Union (IHEU) in 1952. Thus, there are many similarities between Nietzsche's Übermensch (super-man) vs. Nazi Germany's Untermensch (sub-human) and the proposed "transhumanity" [for example see Robert C. W. Ettinger, *Man into Superman: the startling potential of human evolution—and how to be part of it* (St. Martin's, 1979)].

death throughout the ages have been the primary factor in the Church's loss of the apostolic gospel.

2. The gospel will be purged of all *ideologies of death* at the end of the age to prepare the way of the Lord, who will eradicate it from the earth. Until the gospel message is purified of all its compromises with death, it will only be a *retarded message* that gives the human heart a *retarded hope*, which thus produces a *retarded response* in lifestyle.

And as for us, why do we endanger ourselves every hour? ³¹ I die every day-- I mean that, brothers-- just as surely as I glory over you in Christ Jesus our Lord. ³² If I fought wild beasts in Ephesus for merely human reasons, what have I gained? If the dead are not raised, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die." ³³ Do not be misled: "Bad company corrupts good character." ³⁴ Come back to your senses as you ought ("Wake up from your drunken stupor" ESV), and stop sinning; for there are some who are ignorant of God-- I say this to your shame. (NIV 1 Corinthians 15:30-34)

3. If people concede to the product (death), they will concede to the cause (sin). People's war against sin is in direct proportion to their belief in the reversal of death (i.e. the resurrection of the dead).
- C. "The gospel" is generally accompanied by signs, wonders and miracles, which testify to the age to come.
1. Signs, wonders, and miracles testify to the age to come—and thus the reversal of death and the regeneration of creation.

...how shall we escape if we ignore such a great salvation? This salvation, which was first announced by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard him. ⁴ God also testified to it by signs, wonders and various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will. ⁵ It is not to angels that he has subjected the world to come, about which we are speaking... ⁸ In putting everything under him, God left nothing that is not subject to him. Yet at present we do not see everything subject to him (implying a future "seeing" of universal subjection, of which the signs, wonders and miracles testify). (NIV Hebrews 2:3-8)

It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened (concerning messianic restoration), who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared ("been made partakers" KJV/NKJV/NASB) in the Holy Spirit, ⁵ who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age, ⁶ if they fall away, to be brought back to repentance... (NIV Hebrews 6:4-6)

2. "Signs" are self-explanatory, testifying to the age to come—the reversal of death and the regeneration of creation.

And he said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel (of the messianic restoration) to the whole creation. ¹⁶ Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved (inclusion in the messianic restoration), but whoever does not believe will be condemned. ¹⁷ And these signs (of the messianic restoration) will accompany those who believe: in my name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new

tongues; ¹⁸ they will pick up serpents with their hands; and if they drink any deadly poison, it will not hurt them; they will lay their hands on the sick, and they will recover." ¹⁹ So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God. ²⁰ And they went out and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and **confirmed the message by accompanying signs.** (^{ESV} Mark 16:15-20)

3. Jesus' declaration of "the gospel" is generally accompanied with signs of healing that testify to the resurrection of the dead.

From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."... ²³ And he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people. (^{ESV} Matthew 4:17-23)

***As you go, preach this message: 'The kingdom of heaven is near ("at hand" KJV/NKJV/NASB/ESV; i.e. the Messianic Kingdom is soon to be established).'* ⁸ Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons (as signs or tokens of the coming Messianic Kingdom).** (^{NIV} Matthew 10:7-8; cf. Lk. 10:9)

Now when John in prison heard of the works of Christ, he sent word by his disciples, ³ and said to Him, "Are You the Expected One (i.e. Messiah), or shall we look for someone else?" ⁴ And Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and report to John what you hear and see: ⁵ the blind receive sight and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them." (^{NASB} Matthew 11:2-6)

4. The Apostolic declaration of "the gospel" is generally accompanied with signs that testify to the resurrection of the dead.

Peter said (to the lame man), "Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk." ⁷ And he took him by the right hand and lifted him up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength... ¹² So when Peter saw it, he responded to the people: "Men of Israel... ¹³ The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified His Servant Jesus (as Messiah)... ¹⁹ Repent therefore... that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, ²¹ whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began... ^{4:1} Now as they spoke to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came upon them, ² being greatly disturbed that they taught the people and preached in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. (^{NKJV} Acts 3:6-4:2)

When I came to you, brothers, I did not come with eloquence or superior wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God... ³ I came to you in weakness and fear, and with much trembling. ⁴ My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power (i.e. signs, wonders and miracles), ⁵ so that your faith (in the regeneration of creation) might not

rest on men's wisdom, but on God's power (testifying to the age to come). (NIV 1 Corinthians 2:1-5)

D. Other miracles that testify to the restoration of creation to its original glory.¹⁵

1. Casting out of Demons

He called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and sickness... ⁷ "As you go, preach this message: 'The kingdom of heaven is near (when all demons will be driven from the earth).'" (NIV Matthew 10:1-7)

Then they brought him a demon-possessed man who was blind and mute, and Jesus healed him, so that he could both talk and see. ²³ All the people were astonished and said, "Could this be the Son of David?" (NIV Matthew 12:22-23)

When he arrived at the other side in the region of the Gadarenes, two demon-possessed men coming from the tombs met him... ²⁹ "What do you want with us, Son of God?" they shouted. "Have you come here to torture us before the appointed time (i.e. the messianic age)?" (NIV Matthew 8:28-29)

When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell at his feet, shouting at the top of his voice, "What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, don't torture me!"... ³¹ And they begged him repeatedly not to order them to go into the Abyss (cf. Rev. 20:3). (NIV Luke 8:28-31; Mk. 5:1-17)

2. Transfiguration

About eight days after Jesus said this, he took Peter, John and James with him and went up onto a mountain to pray. ²⁹ As he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became as bright as a flash of lightning. ³⁰ Two men, Moses and Elijah, ³¹ appeared in glorious splendor, talking with Jesus... ³⁵ A voice came from the cloud, saying, "This is my Son, whom I have chosen; listen to him (cf. 2 Pe. 1:16-19)." (NIV Luke 9:28-35)

¹⁵ A full list of miracles in rough chronological order (all testifying to the regeneration) would include: the converting of water into wine (Jn. 2:1-11); the healing of the nobleman's son (Jn. 4:46-54); the miraculous catch of fish (Lk. 5:1-11); the healing of the demoniac (Mk. 1:23-26; Lk. 4:33-36); the healing of Peter's mother-in-law (Mt. 8:14-17; Mk. 1:29-31; Lk. 4:38-39); the cleansing of the leper (Mt. 8:1-4; Mk. 1:40-45; Lk. 5:12-16); the healing of the paralyzed man (Mt. 9:1-8; Mk. 2:1-12; Lk. 5:17-26); the healing of the immobile man (Jn. 5:1-16); the restoring of the withered hand (Mt. 12:9-13; Mk. 3:1-5; Lk. 6:6-11); the restoring of the centurion's servant (Mt. 8:5-13; Lk. 7:1-10); the raising of the widow's son to life in Nain (Lk. 7:11-16); the healing of a demoniac (Mt. 12:22-37; Mk. 3:11; Lk. 11:14-15); the stilling of the storm (Mt. 8:23-27; 14:32; Mk. 4:35-41; Lk. 8:22-25); the casting out of demons out of two men of the Gadarenes (Mt. 8:28-34; Mk. 5:1-20; Lk. 8:26-39); the raising of Jairus' daughter from the dead (Mt. 9:18, 19, 23-26; Mk. 5:22-24, 35-43; Lk. 8:41, 42, 49-56); the curing of the woman with the issue of blood (Mt. 9:20-22; Mk. 5:25-34; Lk. 8:43-48); the restoring of sight to the two blind men (Mt. 9:27-31); the healing of a demoniac (Mt. 9:32,33); walking upon Lake Galilee (Mt. 14:22-33; Mk. 6:45-52; Jn. 6:16-21); the healing of the Syro-Phoenician woman's daughter (Mt. 15:21-28; Mk. 7:24-30); the feeding of four-thousand people (Mt. 15:32-39; Mk. 8:1-9); the healing of the deaf-mute man (Mk. 7:31-37); the healing of a blind man (Mk. 8:22-26); the healing of the epileptic boy (Mt. 17:14-21; Mk. 9:14-29; Lk. 9:37-43); the obtaining of temple tax money from a fish's mouth (Mt. 17:24-27); the restoring of the ten lepers to wholeness (Lk. 17:11-19); the opening of the eyes of a man born blind (Jn. 9:1ff); the raising of Lazarus from the dead (Jn. 11:1-46); the healing of the woman with the spirit of infirmity (Lk. 13:10-17); the curing of a man with dropsy (Lk. 14:1-6); the restoring of sight to two blind men near Jericho (Mt. 20:29-34; Mk. 10:46-52; Lk. 18:35-43); the condemning of the fig tree (Mt. 21:17-22; Mk. 11:12-14, 20-24); the healing of the ear of Malchus (Lk. 22:49-51); the second miraculous catching of fish (Jn. 21:6).

There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun (cf. Dan. 12:3; Mt. 13:43), and his clothes became as white as the light. (NIV Matthew 17:1-2; cf. Mk 9:2-3)

We did not follow cleverly invented stories when we told you about the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ (Messiah), but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty (foreshadowing the majesty/glory in the Messianic Kingdom). ¹⁷ For he received honor and glory from God the Father when the voice came to him from the Majestic Glory (to be established on the earth; cf. "glorious throne"--Mt. 19:28; 25:31), saying, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." ¹⁸ We ourselves heard this voice that came from heaven when we were with him on the sacred mountain. ¹⁹ And we have the word of the prophets (i.e. OT messianic prophecies) made more certain (because of the sign/token/deposit of the coming Kingdom), and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns (i.e. messianic age)... (NIV 2 Peter 1:16-19)

3. Regeneration of Creation

A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. ³⁸ Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, "Teacher ("Lord" Mt. 8:25; "Master" Lk. 8:24), don't you care if we drown?" ³⁹ He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Quiet! Be still!" Then the wind died down and it was completely calm. ⁴⁰ He said to his disciples, "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith (in me as Messiah)?" ⁴¹ They were terrified and asked each other, "Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!" (ESV Mark 4:37-41)

And in the fourth watch of the night he came to them, walking on the sea... ³² And when they (Peter and Jesus) got into the boat, the wind ceased. ³³ And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God (i.e. Messiah)." (ESV Matthew 14:25-33)

Jesus called his disciples to him and said, "I have compassion for these people (the crowd of 4,000); they have already been with me three days and have nothing to eat (cf. famine). I do not want to send them away hungry, or they may collapse on the way." (NIV Matthew 15:32)

So they gathered them up and filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves, left by those who had eaten. ¹⁴ When the people saw the sign that he had done (of the eradication of famine in the Messianic Kingdom), they said, "This is indeed the Prophet who is to come into the world!" ¹⁵ Perceiving then that they were about to come and take him by force to make him (messianic) king, Jesus withdrew again to the mountain by himself. (ESV John 6:13-15)

4. Infilling of the Holy Spirit

And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him ("in bodily form" Lk. 3:22). (ESV Matthew 3:16)

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. ² Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³ They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. ⁴ All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues (reversing the curse of Babel) as the Spirit enabled them. (^{NIV} Acts 2:1-4; cf. Joel 2:28-3:3)

- In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation (the bringing of all things in heaven and on earth under the headship of Messiah, cf. v. 10), and believed in him (as Messiah), were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance (in the Messianic Kingdom) until we acquire possession of it (after the amnestic age), to the praise of his glory. (^{ESV} Ephesians 1:11-14)***
- For we know that if our earthly house (mortal body), this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God (immortal body), a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens... ⁴ For we who are in this tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life. ⁵ Now He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee (of what is to come). (^{NKJV} 2 Corinthians 5:1-5)***
- For no matter how many promises God has made (of messianic restoration), they are "Yes" in Christ (i.e. Messiah will yet do them). And so through him the "Amen" (lit. "so be it") is spoken by us to the glory of God. ²¹ Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, ²² set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come (in the Messianic Kingdom). (^{NIV} 2 Corinthians 1:20-22)***
- We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. ²³ Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies (the result of the fullness of the Spirit). ²⁴ For in this hope we were saved. (^{NIV} Romans 8:18-24)***

E. Resurrection of the body: the primary thrust of the apostolic gospel and ministry.

- Multiple expectations of the Jews concerning salvation vs. singular expectation of the church fathers concerning salvation.
 - Annihilationism (Pagans/Sadducees)
 - Eternal Existence of the Soul (Hellenists/Philo)
 - Resurrection of the Body (Orthodox/Pharisees)

I admit that I worship the God of our fathers as a follower of the Way, which they call a sect. I believe everything that agrees with the Law and that is written in the Prophets, ¹⁵ and I have the same hope in God as these men (i.e. Pharisees), that there will be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked. (^{NIV} Acts 24:14-15)

"The early Christians hold firmly to a two-step belief about the future: first, death and whatever lies immediately beyond; second, a new bodily existence in a newly remade world... within early Christianity there is virtually no spectrum of belief about life beyond death... whereas the early Christians were drawn from many strands of Judaism and from widely differing backgrounds within paganism, and hence from circles that must have held very different beliefs about life beyond death, they all modified that belief to focus on one point on the spectrum. Christianity looks, to this extent, like a variety of Pharisaic Judaism. There is no trace of Sadducean view or of that of Philo... We have plenty of evidence of debates about all sorts of things, and the virtual unanimity on resurrection stands out. Only in the late second century, a good 150 years after the time of Jesus, do we find people using the word resurrection to mean something quite different from what is meant in Judaism and early Christianity, namely, a spiritual experience in the present leading to a disembodied hope in the future. For almost all of the first two centuries, resurrection in the traditional sense holds not just center stage but the whole stage."¹⁶

2. 1 Corinthians 15: "the gospel" explicitly defined.¹⁷

Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you... ² By this gospel you are saved (i.e. resurrected), if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. ³ For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures... ¹² how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? ... ¹⁷ if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins...

²⁰ But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. ²¹ For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. ²² For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. ²³ But each in his own turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him. ²⁴ Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. ²⁵ For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. ²⁶ The last enemy to be destroyed is death...

¹⁶ N.T. Wright, *Surprised by Hope: Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church* (New York: HarperOne, 2008), 41-42.

¹⁷ The term "gospel" comes from one of two sources: 1) the noun *euvaggelion* (used 77 times in the NT) meaning "good tidings, good news" (USB); or 2) the verb *euvaggelizō* (used 55 times in the NT) meaning "to bring the good news, preach the good news" (USB). Depending on the translation, these two words are generally rendered "gospel or good news" and "preach the gospel or good news." Formal equivalence translations favor "gospel," while dynamic equivalence translations often use "good news."

Many times New Testament writers talk *about* the gospel, but very rarely does anyone actually detail the gospel itself. For example, the KJV/NKJV uses the word "gospel" more than any other translation (103 times) in the New Testament: Matt. 4:23; 9:35; 11:5; 24:14; 26:13; Mk. 1:1, 14f; 8:35; 10:29; 13:10; 14:9; 16:15; Lk. 4:18; 7:22; 9:6; 20:1; Acts 8:25; 14:7, 21; 15:7; 16:10; 20:24; Rom. 1:1, 9, 15f; 2:16; 10:15f; 11:28; 15:16, 19f, 29; 16:25; 1 Co. 1:17; 4:15; 9:12, 14, 16, 18, 23; 15:1; 2 Co. 2:12; 4:3f; 8:18; 9:13; 10:14, 16; 11:4, 7; Gal. 1:6ff, 11; 2:2, 5, 7, 14; 3:8; 4:13; Eph. 1:13; 3:6; 6:15, 19; Phil. 1:5, 7, 12, 17, 27; 2:22; 4:3, 15; Col. 1:5, 23; 1 Thess. 1:5; 2:2, 4, 8f; 3:2; 2 Thess. 1:8; 2:14; 1 Tim. 1:11; 2 Tim. 1:8, 10; 2:8; Phlm. 1:13; Heb. 4:2; 1 Pet. 1:12, 25; 4:6, 17; Rev. 14:6. Of these instances, only a handful give any commentary on the nature of the gospel itself beyond the genitives "of God," "of the kingdom," "of Christ," etc.: Rom. 1:1ff; 2:16; 1 Cor. 15:1-57; Gal. 3:8; 2 Thess. 1:5-10; 2 Tim. 1:8ff; 2:8ff; 1 Pet. 1:23ff; Rev. 14:6f. Only 1 Corinthians 15 directly addresses the gospel and attempts to explain its content beyond one or two sentences.

³⁰ And as for us, why do we endanger ourselves every hour? ³¹ I die every day-- I mean that, brothers-- just as surely as I glory over you in Christ Jesus our Lord. ³² If I fought wild beasts in Ephesus for merely human reasons, what have I gained? If the dead are not raised, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die." ... ³⁵ But someone may ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body will they come?"... ⁴¹ The sun has one kind of splendor, the moon another and the stars another; and star differs from star in splendor. ⁴² So will it be with the resurrection of the dead...

⁵¹ Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed-- ⁵² in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. ⁵³ For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. ⁵⁴ When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: "Death has been swallowed up in victory." ⁵⁵ "Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" ⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. ⁵⁷ But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (NIV 1 Corinthians 15:1-57)

"In early Christianity resurrection moved from the circumference to the center. You can't imagine Paul's thought without it. You shouldn't imagine John's thought without it, though some have tried. It is enormously important in Clement and Ignatius, in Justin and Irenaeus. It is one of the key beliefs that infuriated the pagans in Lyons in A.D. 177 and drove them to butcher several Christians, including the bishop who preceded the great Irenaeus. Belief in the bodily resurrection was one of the two central things that the pagan doctor Glen noted about the Christians (the other being their remarkable sexual restraint). Take away the stories of Jesus's birth, and you lose only two chapters of Matthew and two of Luke. Take away the resurrection, and you lose the entire New Testament and most of the second-century fathers as well."¹⁸

¹⁸ Wright, *Surprised by Hope*, 42-43.