

# The Alpha-Particle Irradiation Hypothesis---Part I-- Entering John's Gospel

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## Abstract:

When we enter John's Gospel after reading the Synoptic Gospels, it doesn't take long to recognize that this gospel account lifts us into the heights of divinity. Even with the Prologue we soar like an eagle and it is not surprising that St. John is symbolized by the eagle. John is not shy about testifying that Jesus is the Word, the Son of God, the pre-existent One, who was Incarnated as a human, but on occasion was called God. He repeatedly, at least 33 times, throughout John's gospel tries to remind "the Jews" and his adversaries that "he was sent by his Father. " He went so far as to bear witness to himself as the Son of God. He lets us know that he knows where he comes from and where he is going. John has a desire to explore and explain the deeper meaning of Jesus' words, actions, and miracles. Although John does not include the Transfiguration in his gospel, many scholars believe that the entire Gospel of John is similar to the Transfiguration language. Matthew reports that "His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became dazzling white." Note that the light does not envelope Jesus from without, but radiates from within him which is opposite to Moses. His face is not simply "illuminated" but shines forth. The same is manifested in his clothes. Jesus and his clothes are shining and not reflecting light. He is resplendent with his own glory, the very glory of his Father and the very imprint of God's being. On Mount Tabor, God's voice came from the cloud saying "This is my Son, listen to him!" (Luke 9:35). It is Jesus who is the complete expression of God's Will.

Jesus' Jewishness is important for Christianity because it is from the Jewish culture that Christianity came into being. According to St. John and St. Paul, Jesus was a man of his people and his time and for all time. On a theological level he has become the second Adam, the new human being who embraces all of humanity which eventually led to his failure. The Gospel of John emphasized the eternal relationship of Jesus to his Father. The first Letter of John focused on "Jesus Christ has come in the flesh." (1 Jn 4:2). The early Fathers and theologians insisted that Jesus was fully human because he could not save us if did not assume our full human nature, body and soul. The "Quest for the Historical Jesus" spearheaded by Albert Schweitzer has now been resolved by the Shroud of Turin that gives us a Jesus with a "more human face." The Shroud shows us an image of a whole human body, especially his face, that is a portrait of torture and severe pain, yet, shows great dignity, integrity, and peacefulness. God created a world that truly depends on our free human response to his divine Plan in order to make a world that reflects God's image in man. It happens to make a profound difference to God how we respond.

God works from within creation to realize the divine Will and does not oppose that Will from outside. For John, Jesus continues to be master of his own destiny, lifted up and enthroned on the cross (Jn 18:33-37); (19: 11-22), drawing all people to himself (12: 42). We are destined to grow in greater knowledge and love of the Trinitarian community of Love. The Father has revealed Himself as an image of perfect beauty and Jesus on the cross says "I Thirst." At this moment, Jesus thirsts for the vivid experience he has with the Father. "My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I behold the face of God?" (Ps 42.2). With this Jesus declares the fulfillment of this Scripture as he says, "It is finished!" (19:30). In these final words, he has finished the work the Father gave him to do in his final "Prayer of Jesus" "I glorified you on earth by accomplishing the work you gave me to do. Now, glorify me Father with you, with the glory I had with you before the world began" (Jn 17:4). In John's Gospel, Jesus did not give up his Spirit as in the Synoptics, but **he handed it over** to us through the Beloved Disciple. Even now after his death, he continues to be master of his own destiny when the soldier thrust his lance into his side to assure he was dead and they would not have to break his bones thus fulfilling Scripture. Now that he is glorified, the waters that flow out from within him is truly the source of "rivers of living water" he promised the woman at the well and to all. (They are all identifiable on the Shroud.) The sublime conclusion of Jesus' Last Discourse is given in the 17th chapter of John's Gospel and his parable of the vine and the branches (Jn 15: 1-17).

When we peruse the frontal image of the Shroud of Turin, we can visualize the meaning of the Gospel of John and contemplate what Jesus was repeatedly saying with great frustration and emotion, "But my Father sent me to do all this!"