

Natural or Miracle?- Exception or Example?

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Abstract

There is a substantial body of evidence supporting the hypothesis that the Turin Shroud surface image was caused by a very brief burst of radiant energy which emanated from the dead body which the shroud wrapped. The question of whether physics can explain this is considered and it is suggested that to do so we would need to understand the connection between mind and matter. Could the process have been possible as a result of the way he lived his life and if so was this a demonstration of the limitless potential of all human beings?

1. INTRODUCTION

It could be argued that most human beings including physicists, biologists and cosmologists have at least a tacit belief in the notion of freedom of will in their everyday lives. What would be the implications for our modern scientific world view if they are correct? A case is put forward in this paper that free will is a logical necessity. It is suggested that if free will exists then current notions of time and causality might need to be reconsidered. If 'mind over matter' as exemplified by free choice, is natural, then what constitutes a miracle? The 'measurement problem' of quantum theory implies to many scientists that rather than the mind being an emergent property of a brain, physical reality itself is contingent upon the presence of sentience in order to make it 'real'.

Although the putative process which resulted in the image formation on the Turin Shroud is clearly highly exceptional it is suggested that it was a demonstration of the capacity of all human beings to transcend space and time.

There is substantial evidence which indicates that the man whose body was wrapped in the shroud is the historical Jesus (Yeshua ben Yosef)¹. Jesus is reported to have reminded people on numerous occasions that all human beings have the capacity to be like him and to do the things which he did.

The common factor that unites all physical processes is that they obey the second law of thermodynamics² which means that they always result in states of increased disorder and degeneration eg 'moths eat, rust corrupts and thieves break in and steal' This implies a prior state of exceptional order and union from which the separating, expanding universe emerged at the big bang³. If we were purely material beings we would have no choice but to follow this momentum of increasing separation through our behaviour.

"Love thy neighbour as thyself" takes on an interesting interpretation if we all have our roots in the initial

singularity at the beginning of the universe and are all fundamentally one, as it would mean that your neighbour is yourself. Perhaps the man whose image is on the cloth realized the rational truth of the oneness of all people through his teachings and crucially through how he lived in such a way that he was able to achieve a status of being where there are "no moths and no rust and no thieves who break in and steal".

2. DEFINITIONS

'Sentience' and 'Free Will'

As these are recurrent themes of this paper, it might be worthwhile to specifically address these issues and to clarify what I mean when I use these terms.

By 'sentience' I mean the state of 'being aware'. This is not defined by the content of that awareness but describes the fact that awareness exists. A simple analogy would be the word 'Space'....not in the sense of 'Outer Space' specifically but just space as in 'room' for 'something' to exist. Your table takes up space but that space would still be there if its contents were different. So sentience could be seen metaphorically as the 'space' within which ideas, perceptions, experiences, emotions etc. exist.

Incidentally I would suggest that John Searle⁴ and Roger Penrose³ have both presented good evidence suggesting that sentience can not truly exist as a 'simulation', for example in a computer. This would imply that there is no such thing as 'Artificial Sentience'.

If we have 'Free Will' then that would imply that our actions are not entirely determined by 'nature' and 'nurture' but that there is a third independent and undetermined factor. This would mean that a choice made with 'free will' can be a cause which is not itself

secondary to any other cause or combination of causes. In other words it would be a form of 'primary' causation. I would argue that if there is 'effect' there must be 'cause'. If that cause is a result of something else then I would call that 'secondary' or 'dependent' causation. That being so we are led logically back to look for primary cause(s) to account for this. My contention is that not only does free will imply the existence of primary causation but that primary causation implies the existence of free will. I would argue that this is self evident in the same sense that "I think therefore I am" is self evident. If primary causation does exist 'where' would it function? If free will is the free choice between options then is it not logical to assume that it would be found within sentient being? Surely one must be able to be aware of options existing in order to choose freely between them!

I would go further and suggest that sentience implies the existence of free will as once there is an awareness of options there is the scope to choose between them.

It is important to distinguish freedom of choice from freedom of choices. Someone in a prison cell may not necessarily be able to choose to be outside of the prison cell but they are still able to choose between options regarding what they will do within the cell. They are also free to use their will to move their 'mind's eye', for example through choosing to focus on memories of the time before they were in the cell. Any free choice between options, whatever these options may be and however limited they are, is absolute freedom in the sense that it is a primary cause, and in the sense that the chooser 'could have done otherwise'. I am therefore suggesting that our very sentience as human beings is fundamental evidence that we do indeed have free will. If not for sentience there would be no meaning behind the concept of 'now' or 'the present' as all points in time would be equivalent without a 'cursor' to highlight the point of 'experience'. As 'the present' is made by us it is perhaps not unreasonable to imagine that the future is undefined and can be described in terms of possibilities or potentialities for the very reason that through our choices we each have a role in shaping it!

3. BACKGROUND

To address the question of whether the image on the shroud is natural or miraculous we would need to have a working definition of what we mean by 'nature'. The notion of miracle is often taken to refer to something which is 'supernatural' or outside 'natural law'.

Within the framework of empiricism nature is considered to be the set of all observable phenomena. The term 'observation' is generally used to suggest experience acquired directly or indirectly via the senses such as sight and hearing.

Schrödinger pointed out that the empirical model of reality did not include a description of our existence as sentient beings:

"We step with our own persons back into the part of an onlooker who does not belong to the world, which by this very procedure becomes an objective world".

"Colour and sound, heat and cold, are our immediate sensations. Small wonder that they are lacking in a world model from which we have removed our own mental person".

"The objective world has only been constructed at the price of taking the self, that is, mind, out of it, remaking it mind is not part of it; obviously, therefore, it can neither act on it nor be acted on by any of its parts".⁵

Many people assume that if there were a power of mind to influence matter that this would be by definition 'super'-natural. This is because it is often assumed that in nature matter obeys physical laws which define what it is and what it does. The mind is further assumed itself to be an emergent product of these physical laws and it is therefore believed by many that the relationship between mind and matter is one of mind being determined by matter rather than matter being influenced by the mind.

However, it could be argued that although these are common abstract assumptions, if we look at our notions of personal responsibility, accountability, morality etc. these all assume that we have free will. How would we define free will?

Will, according to dictionary definition, implies determination by an act of choice. The designation 'free' when applied to this suggests that there is no compulsion or 'force', which compels one to make a specific selection from available options. This would mean that any sentient being that can exercise free will is able to harness what philosophers call a 'prime cause'. Material structures would not in and of themselves have the power to perform this simple act of choice. To quote one of the founders of quantum theory Erwin Schrödinger:

"My body functions as a pure mechanism according to the laws of nature. Yet I know, by incontrovertible direct experience, that I am directing its motions, of which I foresee the effects that may be fateful and all-important, in which case I feel and take full responsibility for them.

The only possible inference from these two facts is, I think that I –I in the widest meaning of the word, that is to say, every conscious mind that has ever said or felt 'I am the person, if any, who controls the 'motion of the atoms' according to the laws of nature."⁵

If we do have free will then we are constantly shaping the temporal evolution of our actions and our being through the choices that we make. All it takes is one person with free choice to mean that the world is neither predetermined nor random and there are over six billion of us! If free will exists then is it possible that this is singularly the full explanation of 'the arrow of time'? If the past is fixed and the future is defined by potentiality, then could this be because of the existence in 'the present' of sentient beings such as ourselves and our fellow human beings?

Schrödinger observed that consciousness generates a "present" tense and made a startling deduction from this:

"I venture to call (the mind) indestructible, since it has a peculiar time-table, namely Mind is always now"

and “*This means a liberation from the tyranny of old Chronos. What we in our minds construct ourselves [time] cannot, so I feel, have dictatorial power over our mind, neither the power of bringing it to the fore nor the power of annihilating it.*”⁵

The theoretical physicist Professor Lee Smolin of the Perimeter Institute also makes some fascinating comments about time:

“More and more, I have the feeling that quantum theory and general relativity are both deeply wrong about the nature of time. It is not enough to combine them. There is a deeper problem, perhaps going back to the origin of physics.

Around the beginning of the seventeenth century, Descartes and Galileo both made a wonderful discovery: You could draw a graph with one axis being space and the other being time. A motion through space then becomes a curve on the graph. In this way, time is represented as if it were another dimension of space. Motion is frozen, and a whole history of constant motion and change is presented to us as something static and unchanging. If I had to guess (and guessing is what I do for a living), this is the scene of the crime. We have to find a way to unfreeze time- to represent time without turning it into space. I have no idea how to do this. I can't conceive of a mathematics that doesn't represent a world as though it were frozen in eternity. It's terribly hard to represent time, and that's why there's a good chance that this representation is the missing piece.”⁶

Perhaps the conscious observer unfreezes time?

We all have the common sense notion that the past is contained within us in the form of memories such that the past has already happened and is fixed, but that the future is not yet fixed, and that we can influence the future with the choices which we make.

If this notion is correct then surely we would need to expand our notion of natural law to include the direct influence of mind upon matter. To do so we would need to understand how mind and matter are related.

The relationship between mind and matter is usually seen in one of two ways which I will consider individually.

The first is the materialist view that mind is merely an emergent phenomenon which arises out of a certain arrangement of atoms which form brain cells in a particular juxtaposition and network. Within this view sentience is merely an ‘onlooker’ which has no role in determining our actions, and free will is an illusion.

The second is the dualist view that mind and matter are fundamentally distinct and separate but that mind is able to influence matter through some as yet unexplained mechanism.

What if there was a third way?

What if mind and matter were part of a continuum?

To define them as part of a continuum we would need to define what mind and matter actually are. Many people might assume that of the two the one which would prove most difficult to define would be mind, as matter has presumably already been defined by science.

Has it really been defined?

As Richard Feynman famously stated in his series of lectures “The character of physical law” all that physics has done so far is to mathematically describe what matter does and hasn't revealed fundamentally what matter, space and time actually are or why they interact as they do.⁷

One could make a case that the whole of physicality (matter, space and time) could ultimately resolve into two qualities. These are separation and causality. Mind can also be expressed as the summary of two qualities. These are sentience and free choice. Use of the term ‘minds’ also implies separation as an implied property of individuality and ‘self’. The notion of free choice also implies causality, as it implies that our choices play a causative role in determining our actions.

This would be so, however ‘trivial’ the options were. However limited your range of options are, if you can choose freely between them, in the sense that you could have made a different choice at will, then your choice acts as a causative factor in determining your actions.

The big bang model of the origin of the universe has been explained by many cosmologists as suggesting that the whole physical universe of matter, space and time arose out of nothingness.

If mind and matter are part of a continuum then it might make sense to consider whether this might have been ‘propelled’ by a ‘choice’ for separation. Schrödinger himself argued that ‘time’ is a product of mind and therefore that mind can not be made or ended by time, and must therefore be eternal. If ‘before’ the big bang there was no separation and if ‘we’ are eternal then we must have once been ‘one’ and since this state exists beyond time then in a very real sense we still are one. This would mean that our neighbour *is* our self which might lend credence to Jesus’ exhortation to love our neighbour *as* ourself. Taken in this way it is not a moral platitude, but a statement of mathematical reason.

The big bang model suggests that separation, space and time emerged from a state of being which is timeless, singular and dimensionless. There was initially a brief period that was ‘photon dominated’ which we might loosely describe as the era of ‘light’ and then matter condensed out from this. It is suggested in this paper that perhaps what generated the image on the Turin Shroud was one man’s choice to reverse for himself that initial choice to exist in separation such that matter was transformed into light and the dead body which the shroud wrapped may have shone momentarily brighter than the Sun. Clearly this choice would not have been merely an aspirational, notional ‘wish’ but would have been expressed through all that he did and all that he was.

4. DISCUSSION

It is reported that at one point Jesus took three of his disciples up a mountain and there was ‘transfigured’ before them. His face shone ‘as the sun’ and his raiment ‘white as the light’. This would imply, if it is an accurate account, that his whole body was physically radiant at this

moment. This is interesting in view of the evidence suggesting that the image on the Turin Shroud is consistent with it having been caused by a momentary burst of radiant energy which shone from the dead body of the man that the shroud wrapped⁹. Clearly these would be two different events. One of these was on the mountain and the other in the tomb, but in view of the immense accumulated evidence that the Turin Shroud was the burial cloth of Jesus,^{1,8,10} it is interesting that there is a report that a similar phenomenon of radiance was observed during his lifetime. It is said that when they came down from the mountain there was a man asking Jesus for help to cure his son. This man had already brought him to some of the disciples and they had not been able to cure him. The disciples asked Jesus why they couldn't cure him, and he replied that it was because of their 'unbelief' and that:

"If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you."

This is interesting as he is indicating the limitless potential of all human beings. This also implies that the point which needs explaining, reaches beyond why he has the ability to cure people, to suggest why on occasions the disciples did *not* have this ability! The implication is that the natural state of human beings is to be able to do these things, but that our 'ignorance' or 'unbelief' restricts us. With regard to the dichotomy posed in the title of this paper "Exception or Example" perhaps the man whose body was once wrapped by the shroud is actually both exceptional and exemplary. He is possibly unique and highly exceptional, in that he arguably realised the limitless potential that all human beings are capable of, and in as much as that is so he is also an example of what humanity could be capable of.

In this paper there has been much generalisation about the nature and properties of sentience and free will and this has then been related to each of us as individual sentient beings, but what is an individual and how can we understand individuality and 'self'?

As we have seen it was argued by Schrödinger that as time is a property of sentience then the latter can have no beginning or end in time, which would imply that as 'streams of consciousness' we can have no beginning or end. Since the universe of space, time and matter seems to have arisen from a state of no-thing-ness i.e. a state of being where there is no separation, it would seem that we were once all one. Since that state is beyond time, this would imply that fundamentally we are still all one. If that is so then what are we, and how do we exist in separation?

Jesus reportedly stated that his father and he were one and the same, but he also referred to his father as 'our' father and said "Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called Children of God" What could he have meant by peacemakers? In the foregoing, it has been argued that the two factors which summarise both the physical universe and ourselves as sentient beings 'within' it, are separation and causality. In the context of physicality space, time and matter are synonymous with separation, and natural law describes the architecture of physical causation. As

Feynman pointed out it describes it but doesn't yet explain it. It has been suggested in this paper that matter, space and time follow the causation lines described by natural law in the same way that minds can follow the dictates of free will. Free will implies primary causation (i.e. although various factors may influence you, nothing forces you to make the choices which you make). It has therefore been argued that the origin of space, time and matter themselves at the big bang, may be the results of the choice to exist in the state of separation. If our fundamental nature were to be one with all other sentient being then perhaps our continued separation one from the other is a product of our individual pattern of restrictions, which limit our freedom, and therefore make us distinct and hence separate. Physical causality can be seen as an expression of force, which acts in a causative manner to determine the behaviour of matter. A choice made through the exercise of free will could not be a deterministic product of force. Freedom of will would therefore imply an absence of force which could be described by the term 'peace'. The saying "Peace on Earth. Good will to men" would make particular sense in this context.

So we can see that perhaps will is what happens in a state of what we might call 'peace', where there is no force, and perhaps force is what happens when will is no longer free. I have suggested that our individuality as sentient beings is defined as an amalgam of freedom and restriction, which corresponds to the relative predominance of 'peace' and 'enforcedness' within our natures. Attitudes and behaviour which promote separation and ignorance such as arrogance, racism etcetera restrict our ability to appreciate the nature and potential of human beings and therefore of ourselves.

The reason matter obeys physical force, may be just that matter is what thought has become and force is what will has become.

We are an amalgam of the two as living sentient beings- an amalgam of mind and matter.

It is important to clarify here that free will is still viable in this context. My point is that although matter in and of itself is not capable of free will, we are not purely material. If quantum theory shows that mind is necessary to make matter real, then mind can not be made of matter nor can it be a product of matter. One could compare mind and matter to water and ice. Ice is frozen water and as such is fixed but mix it with liquid water, and it can be made to slide.

In the introduction to this paper I alluded to the notion of "the arrow of time". This concept has been written about by many scientists and describes the enigma of why there is a 'direction' to time such that we experience everything proceeding one way in time and not the other. This is described by the second law of thermodynamics as being from order into chaos.

One thing that scientists admit to finding a real challenge is to account for where the initial order came from. If the Universe emerged from an initial state of union, through a choice to exist in separation then perhaps matter just

simply exists as the expression of this choice. Order, then, proceeds into more and more chaotic states following this initial decision. This leads ultimately to the final expression of separation, which would be the complete disintegration into nothingness.

This would mean that the universe emerged from out of no-thing-ness and that ultimately it returns to a state of nothingness. A certain saying comes to mind: "I am the alpha and omega: The first and the last!"

It is important to distinguish this concept of no-thing-ness from the nihilistic 'void'. A thing is something material and exists in space and time but I have argued that the roots of our existence lie beyond space and time and that in becoming temporal we have become restricted in scope.

To understand the dichotomy of 'natural vs miracle' perhaps we need to take a fresh look at what we consider to be the fundamental nature of the physical universe, and also what we consider to be the fundamental nature of a human being.

The unique properties of the image on the Turin Shroud can not be replicated even with 21st century technology and it would seem that any successful theory of image formation would need to account for the unique event which occurred involving the dead body which the shroud wrapped. The surface properties, photographic negative properties and distance-coded information latent in the image all seem to indicate that it was formed by a short intense burst of radiant energy, which emerged from the body which was wrapped by the shroud.

It has been suggested that in order to account for the image formation process we need to extend our understanding of Physics itself.

Could it really be coincidental that the event which caused the image which, as far as we know, is unique in human history, appears to be clearly and unambiguously linked to the person of the historical Jesus, whose life arguably had one of the greatest impacts on human history as a result of what he taught and how he lived?

Is it possible that this could be a clue to the direction in which physics needs to be developed? Perhaps such a development would address the issues highlighted by the quotes I have taken from Schrödinger and from Smolin.

As we have seen, Schrödinger made a case that mind must be eternal. He also argued that fundamentally we are all one. I would suggest that the second is implied by the first as if mind is eternal then one could infer that we have our roots in the original singularity, within which there is no separation.

One could say that a mind is defined by the two complementary properties of sentience and free will. The background state of being aware could be seen as identical for all of us but what differs is the content of our awareness and our individual memories, experiences and histories. The capacity for free choice could also be

identical, but what differs between us is the pattern of choices we make and have made.

If the original singularity contained the pluripotent capacity for limitless awareness and limitless freedom, then within that singularity there would have been no thing to mark us each out as discrete individuals. Perhaps it is our individual patterns of ignorance and restriction that marks us each out as separate, in our existence away from this singularity.

One can consider three ways of looking at the origin of the universe from this singularity. The first is the one that is most commonly expressed by cosmologists i.e. that it was a 'random fluctuation' which was inherently uncaused, and will therefore ultimately remain a mystery. The second is the one that is most commonly expressed by religion that it was an act of creation by God, and will therefore ultimately remain a mystery. A third way is the one that I am suggesting, which is that it is the result of a choice to experience separation not by the singularity itself but by the sentient beings such as ourselves, whose existence is itself responsible for the existence of space, time and matter. I would contend that space, time and matter are both the pre-requisite and the definition of separation. You can not have separation without a physical Universe and you can not have a physical Universe without separation. If Schrödinger was right that sentience is eternal and fundamentally singular in its origin then would it not make sense to consider the possibility that the physical universe is the result of a choice to be separate?

If people 2000 years ago considered what they called 'God' to be the creator of the Universe or of 'Heaven and Earth' would Jesus perhaps have been suggesting a clue to this notion when he said "Is it not written you are gods"?

Perhaps it is easier to account for all the suffering, injustice and horrors which exist in this world if we consider that we each wield power which is potentially absolute through that which we call 'free will'. The choices people make are sometimes the cause of suffering of others through acts of cruelty although clearly in a chaotic universe natural disasters can occur at any time. Chaos theory suggests that a butterfly flapping its wings can cause a storm half way across the world, so clearly chaotic events are generally not the direct result of free will. Arguably, it makes more sense to understand these things as the joint result of free will and chaos rather than blaming it all on 'God' or the absolute state of perfect freedom, knowledge and union from which we came.

Cosmologists looking at the origins of the Universe often remark about the amazing level of order which existed at the beginning and postulate that this is responsible for what they term 'the arrow of time' which is the observation that there is a one way momentum from the origin of the universe onwards which means that everything moves from a state of prior order into states of greater and greater chaos with time.³ If the origins of the singularity were from the original state of perfect union, then this would perhaps explain why it was so ordered to

begin with. The drift into greater states of chaos can thus be seen as matter following the initial choice to separate. Further, one could make a case that matter is simply the product of that initial choice to be separate 'frozen' in time, and 'unfrozen' as the 'present' or the 'now' through the existence of separate conscious observers.

It may seem like a big claim to make that every human being can be 'omnipotent' but I have argued that this is the logical implication from the observation that we have free will. The power of primary causation is the power of all powers, as it is ultimately the determining factor behind all that exists. I have suggested that primary causation is logically tied in with the existence of free will- that 'you can't have one without the other'. It could therefore be argued that each human being is more powerful than the whole physical universe. This is because physicality itself is defined by secondary causation, as matter is itself of itself not capable of free choice.

I have argued that it is the choice to separate which fixes us as separate individuals, who therefore incarnate into physical bodies which become our 'vehicle' in separation. If this is correct then perhaps what Jesus demonstrated is that the choice to unite through 'loving your neighbour as yourself' negates your need to exist in a physical body. If the atoms that comprise that body are the expression of the choice to be separate, then it begins to make sense that the reversal of that choice unenforces the atoms and releases their residual energy as light.

Individuals who are remembered for their wisdom and compassion have been depicted in art as having light around them since at least several centuries before Jesus. An obvious example of this is Siddharth Gautama (who is more commonly known as the Buddha).

Could this be a representation of the fact that in living a life through the axiom of 'loving the neighbour as oneself' these individuals were also reducing the enforced nature of their atoms such that they began to shine? This was then perhaps carried to its full conclusion by Jesus as he was able to do this completely and demonstrate the limitless capacity of all human beings. "...and nothing shall be impossible unto you"

The subtitle of this paper is "Exception or Example".

I think most people would agree that the man whose body was once wrapped in the shroud is highly exceptional and unique, as far as we know in human history, with regard to his teachings and how he embodied these teachings through his life. One could say that he could be described as the embodiment of compassion itself. If this were the case then he would have become an undistorted reflection of the original and final singularity of all being which is often described by the word 'God', hence the description of him by many as being the son of God. However, it is interesting that he said "Blessed are the Peacemakers for they shall be called children of God"

Perhaps he was telling us that although he was exceptional, each of us had the potential to follow his example as 'peacemakers' and that therefore, all of

humanity have the potential to become sons and daughters of God. I have argued that being a peacemaker in the full sense of the word translates into physical terms as a reduction in the enforced state of the very atoms which comprise our physical bodies such that these might then begin to 'shine' as matter converts to 'light'

5. CONCLUSIONS

There is sometimes a tendency for advocates of science and of religion each to stereotype the other unfairly. Scientists are often described as having a purely materialistic outlook which precludes the consideration of anything which is not primarily material in nature. I have quoted certain scientists who clearly refute this stereotype. Religious thought is often portrayed as being confined by arbitrary historical dogmas, but many religious people are capable of thinking for themselves and applying reason as an arbiter for forming their religious opinions. Dogma exists both in science and religion. The philosophy of materialism is often defended by some scientists in a very dogmatic way which leads some people to refer to 'scientism' as an expression of faith in materialism.

Reason could arguably be a common factor which can be applied both to science and to religious or spiritual enquiry.

Many centuries after the Turin Shroud image appeared on the cloth we are now able with the use of 21st Century technology to analyse the image to yield detailed information which has perhaps been latent in the image for nearly two thousand years. This information provides evidence equating the man whose body was once wrapped in the shroud to have been the historical Jesus of Nazareth. On the shroud we have physical evidence that something happened to his dead body which transformed it in some way associated with the release of a short intense burst of radiant energy⁹.

We can derive this information from the image but we are not able to replicate this process even today with any known technology. Is it possible though that the man on the shroud was trying to show us that we are able to replicate the principles he stood for in our lives, and in so doing, follow the example that he left us? Perhaps then, we would be able to see the truth of his words that "nothing would be impossible" for us.

Whenever someone was healed after coming into contact with Jesus he did not tell them that he had healed them or that God had healed them, but he would tell them that "[their] faith had made [them] whole" He was always attesting to the limitless potential and value of every human being and for that reason I submit that the question of exception or example is resolved in the final analysis by saying that he was both exceptional and an example of what all humanity is capable of.

Examining the image on the Turin Shroud forensically seems to confirm the biblical accounts of the torture and death of Jesus of Nazareth. The image, which can not be replicated by modern technology, can be studied with modern technology to reveal that the image is the result of a unique event which occurred to the dead body of Jesus. This event may well imply that the image on the cloth is a photographic negative of the moment of resurrection itself. If so then perhaps it is tangible evidence that human beings survive physical death, not because his dead body resurrected but because this demonstrates that his identity survived physical death. The fact that his ‘spirit’ enlivened his dead body is a demonstration that we are not mere products of an arrangement of atoms in a body. This is perhaps a clue that fundamentally the nature of mind is such that it transcends space and time themselves, and has an origin which has its roots beyond the origin of the physical universe. Perhaps he was encouraging us to recognise that immensity in every single human being such that if our lives are transformed by this recognition, then our natures, and perhaps even our physicality might also be transformed. In so doing we would be following his exceptional example to transform our natures such that all things would become possible for us.

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