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**Integral development taken to the highest can involve the body as well and the mind or consciousness. The fullest expression of this may involve a dramatic transformation of the body, as indicated in this review of traditions that emphasize the complete transformation of the body in the process of enlightenment.**

## **Death and Resurrection: Enlightenment and the Body of Light**

**By John White**

### **Summary**

Enlightenment or God-realization is not purely a psychological event. Bodily changes also occur, most dramatically in the higher phases of enlightenment. In the final phase, according to esoteric teachings in various sacred traditions and hermetic schools, the body is alchemically changed from flesh into light, becoming immortal. This transubstantiated body is called different names, such as resurrection body, light body, solar body and diamond body. This presentation looks at the phenomenon from a cross-cultural and evolutionary perspective. It then focuses on Christianity as a sacred tradition whose purpose is to enable people to develop through the resurrection of the body to become *Christed*.

Sacred traditions and some hermetic schools aim at enlightenment and "stepping off the wheel of death and rebirth" into a condition of existence described in one holy scripture as "that which never dies and that which was never born." In the course of seeking enlightenment or God-realization, practitioners of esoteric disciplines in those sacred traditions and hermetic schools have, over millennia, gained astounding knowledge about the psychophysical operation of the human body-mind and how to cultivate our potential for spiritual growth. In fact, nearly all our knowledge about higher human development comes from those traditions and schools. They have developed disciplines and psychotechnologies which are now studied within transpersonal psychology.

Transpersonal psychology examines human development beyond the ego to enlightenment, but its emphasis is on the mental or noetic aspects of the process. Paralleling that psychological development are physical or somatic changes in the body, especially in the brain and nervous system; this aspect of higher human development is little known to Western science, even less studied and does not have a name. I propose the term "transpersonal physiology" for this aspect of the enlightenment process.

For this conference, I will focus on what I understand to be the final phase of the enlightenment process for human beings. In that phase, enlightenment becomes literally so through the transubstantiation of flesh, blood and bone into an immortal body of light. It is the ultimate development of both transpersonal psychology and transpersonal physiology. If involution is the materialization of Spirit and evolution is the spiritualization of matter, then the end of evolution's final enlightenment is the full and complete return of matter to Spirit.

### **1. A Model of Consciousness**

Fundamental to my presentation is the model of consciousness which I use. It is a seven-stage model of body-mind development from birth to enlightenment. (See Chart 1.) Essentially drawn from the ancient yogic/chakra model of consciousness, it was articulated in modern form by the American spiritual teacher Adi Da (formerly Da Free John). Adi Da calls it "The Seven Stages of Life." The seventh stage is enlightenment, and Adi Da divides that into three substages or phases. In advancing

sequence, they are transfiguration, transformation and translation, resulting in what he calls "whole bodily enlightenment." Transfiguration is characterized by the body-mind being pervaded by what he calls Divine Radiance as the person abides in God-realization. Transformation is characterized by the manifestation of extraordinary powers and faculties (such as psychic healing capacities, genius and longevity) as spontaneous expressions of still-further pervasion of the body-mind by Divine Radiance. Ultimately, this process of abiding consciously in the Divine leads to translation or conversion of the individuated being beyond all phenomenal appearances into the "Divine Domain" of Radiant Life-Consciousness. ("The Seven Stages of Life" is reprinted as Appendix I to my anthology *What Is Enlightenment?* [Jeremy P. Tarcher, 1985; Paragon House, second ed., 1995].)

In my opinion, Adi Da's model is incomplete in describing the seventh stage. I have therefore modified it to account for the data I present here. In my modification, the seventh stage still has three phases. I have retained transfiguration and transformation as the first and second phases, naming them (following the traditional yogic terminology which Adi Da has adapted) *sa haja samadhi* ("easy" enlightenment or "open eyes" enlightenment) and *bhava samadhi* ("outshining"). In *sahaja samadhi*, the person permanently enters *Turiya* or nondual consciousness. In *bhava samadhi*, if no conditions arise to the notice, the person abides as what Adi Da calls the Radiant Transcendental Being. (At this phase of enlightenment, the person probably does not dream at all, but simply experiences sleep as continuous luminosity.) The third and final phase in the seventh stage of enlightenment is transubstantiation or *sarupya samadhi* ("whole-body enlightenment"). This is the psychophysical process which concludes the entire evolutionary process of higher human development. It results in a deathless body of light--the perfection of the human body-mind. At that point--which is apotheosis--there is no difference between an avatar who descends from the Divine Domain and a *jivanmukti* who ascends to the Divine Domain. I have adopted the term *soruba samadhi* from Bab aji and the 18 Siddha Kriya Yoga Tradition by Marshall Govindan (Kriya Yoga Publications: Montreal, Canada, 1991), but have elected to use the Sanskrit *cog na te, sarupya samadhi*.

In my model of consciousness, translation concludes the enlightenment process, but it completely transcends the human domain and annihilates the individual in all respects, even the most subtle or celestial form of embodiment. In translation, as Adi Da explains and I agree, the embodied individual dissolves or vanishes entirely out of space-time on all planes or levels of the cosmos and returns to what I call the Preluminous Void, leaving nothing behind which can be said to have been part of the body-mind of that individual, not even a psychic trace. (The Preluminous Void is synonymous with Ground of Being in its unmanifested state or the condition which prevailed before God said, "Let there be light.")

## 2. Jesus and the Body of Light

The best-known example of transubstantiation and perfect ion of the human body-mind is Jesus of Nazareth. Because Jesus is so widely recognized and variously interpreted, and because Christianity has such widespread influence around the globe, I am going to refer to the life and teaching of Jesus in this discussion of higher human development to enlightenment. I regard Christianity as a sacred tradition whose purpose is to enable people to become Christed (Vitvan's term). That is, Christianity has both a theory and a practice for attaining enlightenment in the highest degree. However, I maintain, that sacred esoteric core of the tradition has been lost in the exoteric forms which have arisen over doctrinal and ritualistic differences not essential to the process of growth to Christhood. I

hope this presentation helps to restore public awareness of Christianity as a path to enlightenment. It is, in my view, important not only for fundamentalists but also for transpersonalists who dismiss the simple faith of fundamentalists and thereby overlook the possibility of connecting with a western enlightenment tradition whose roots extend to ancient Egypt.

Fundamentalist Christians often speak about the blood sacrifice of Jesus. They declare that his shedding of blood was a mighty act of salvation. "Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?" a Christian hymn asks? In other words, the hymn asks whether the listener is cleansed from sin and redeemed from damnation by accepting the blood sacrifice of Jesus as the sign of his ruler ship of creation.

To ATP members and others attending this conference, that fundamentalist view of Jesus and Christianity probably appears naive, literalist and superficial. It is indeed just that. It is an example of what Ken Wilier calls the pre/trans fallacy. The fundamentalist view is mistaken because it makes a prepersonal, prerational interpretation of what is a transpersonal, translational event. It is an exoteric understanding of a situation which in truth requires an esoteric understanding. In other words, they have the teaching but not the key to the teaching which unlocks its meaning. Magical thinking characteristic of children is mistakenly applied to a situation which is actually true magic. True magic, the work of a magus or hermetic sage, is another way of naming the alchemical process of changing "base lead" or the egoic body-mind into "gold" or the golden body (see Section 3 below). The fundamentalist interpretation is essentially correct, although the essentials are not perceived or comprehended by them. Understanding the sense in which the interpretation is right (and also the sense in which it is wrong) has profound importance for transpersonal psychology, transpersonal physiology and noetics, the study of consciousness. I want to expand on that and then use my conference time to explore, via shared inquiry and dialog, something which both fundamentalists and I say--for quite different reasons--is central to human history and the hunger for perfection.

I'll use an analogy to begin. When aviation first allowed people to fly into remote areas of the Pacific in the 1930s and '40s, one island's native population thought that the planes were gods arriving from the heavens, just as gods have been portrayed throughout history in myths from early cultures around the world. Although the "gods" were simply cargo planes which anyone native to Western culture would have understood as a flying machine, the island natives lacked such understanding. To them, the airplane had properties which bespoke divinity in terms of their world-view. So, with a sense of sacred awe, they wove reeds together to reproduce the basic shape of the airplane. That cultic object of woven reeds then became the focus of religious worship for them. The religion itself was later observed by anthropologists and described as a "cargo cult." (Whether it continues to exist is unknown to me, although I would suppose not.)

The naive and superficial view of the airplane which those cargo cultists held is a form of pre/trans fallacy called fundamentalism. Similarly, Christian fundamentalists reduce the life and teaching of Jesus to a cultic object of worship. To extend my analogy, Christian fundamentalists lack understanding of the spiritual equivalents of aerodynamic principles, metallurgy, machine production and aerial navigation--all of which are, metaphorically speaking, of profound significance in the life of Jesus. If all that had been understood by the cargo cult natives, very soon they would have stopped worshipping a woven reed figure and started to study aviation and aircraft manufacture in order to "be as gods" themselves (to quote the words of Jesus, who was himself quoting Torah).

My study of the evolution of consciousness, psychotechnologies and the sacred traditions of the world provides me with a perspective in which I can say that the blood of Jesus did indeed "save the world," as fundamentalists claim, although they do not understand it correctly. They do not understand it correctly because, as the rishis of ancient India put it, "Knowledge is structured in consciousness." Understanding of reality is limited by the degree to which a person has ascended in consciousness. The fundamentalists' consciousness has not evolved to the point where they can see the deeper or metaphysical dimensions of Jesus's sacrificial act. Despite that, as I've noted above, their literal interpretation of that transpersonal event is essentially true. I'll explain.

### 3. Concepts of Resurrection

My noetic research is focused on what can be called "cross-cultural concepts of resurrection." I'm exploring the phenomenon of the light body and the process by which it is attained--the transubstantiation or alchemical transmutation of the human body.

Sacred traditions and metaphysical schools of thought generally agree that reality is multileveled and that each "level" of reality is composed from different energies or from matter with different degrees of vibration and density. In their totality, these energies and forms of matter constitute a spectrum of substance. At one end of the spectrum is purely physical matter; at the other end is pure Spirit prior to its manifestation as matter and energy. This spectrum of substance is one of the two primal forms of God constituting the cosmos. The other is the spectrum of consciousness. Together, they are the inner and outer aspects of reality, the subjective and objective, the intention and extension of God.

Via our body-mind, we humans partake of all levels of reality, although we are generally unaware of the higher levels. Nevertheless, we have the potential to awaken or become conscious of the full spectrum of our being as consciousness and substance. Thus, we exist on all levels of reality and have a form or container or vehicle for our consciousness on each of those levels--a container or vehicle which is composed from the substance of that level. Our physical body of flesh, blood and bone is the container of consciousness through which we function at the level of reality we know as ordinary space-time. At death, however, as the physical body decomposes, the other (energy) bodies withdraw from it and our consciousness continues to function in those other containers or bodies which are native to the other levels of reality and which are "nested" or resident within the physical body. Those energy bodies have been given various names by various traditions, depending on how many levels of reality are identified in the tradition's metaphysics. In one tradition they are termed the gross, the subtle and the causal levels and bodies. In another they are the physical, the vital, the emotional, the mental and the spiritual levels and bodies. In yet another they are termed "koshas" or sheaths of finer and finer substance enfolding the physical body. Still more names could be given from still other metaphysical systems.

This presentation is focused on the "highest" or "final" energy body. Some of the names given to that body are as follow:

- In the Christian tradition and esoteric Judaism it is called "the resurrection body" and "the glorified body." St. Paul called it "the celestial body" or "spiritual body."
- In Sufism it is called "the most sacred body" (wujud al-aqdas).
- In Taoism it is called "the diamond body" and those who have attained it are called "the immortals"

and "the cloudwalkers."

- In Tibetan Buddhism it is called "the light body."
- In some mystery schools it is called "the solar body."
- In Rosicrucianism it is called "the diamond body of the temple of God."
- In Tantrism and yoga it is called the "the vajra body," "the adamantine body" and "the divine body."
- In Vedanta it is called "the superconductive body."
- In Kriya yoga it is called "the body of bliss."
- In Gnosticism and Neoplatonism it is called "the radiant body."
- In the alchemical tradition, the Emerald Tablet calls it "the Glory of the Whole Universe" and the "golden body."
- In the Hermetic Corpus it is called "the immortal body" (soma athanaton).
- In ancient Egypt it was called "the Akh."
- In Old Persia it was called "the indwelling divine potential" (fravashi or fra varti).
- In the Mithraic liturgy it was called "the perfect body" (soma telion)
- In the philosophy of Sri Aurobindo it is called "the Divine Body" composed of supramental substance.
- In the philosophy of Teilhard de Chardin it is called "the ultrahuman."
- In the philosophy of Nietzsche it is called "the Overman (das Uebermensch)."

There probably are other traditions which have analogous terms, and I would be glad to be informed of them. As I see it, these are different terms for the same ultimate stage of human evolution (although I feel quite tentative about Nietzsche and Teilhard de Chardin because they are not specific in their writings about the somatic changes which lead to the evolved human).

If I understand these terms correctly, they refer to the condition, described above, in which a human being, by a combination of personal effort and divine grace, attains a deathless condition through the transubstantiation or alchemical transmutation of his or her ordinary fleshly body. The traditions speak of the process in different ways. Is the immortal body created or released, attained or manifested? Is it preexistent within the individual and the gross matter of the body and other energy bodies simply "burned" away? Or is the gross matter of the body altered through a process not yet recognized by physical science which changes the atoms of flesh into something unnamed on the Periodic Table of Elements? Is there more than one route to the perfected human body-mind? Does the process involve a combination of aspects of these processes?

These are provocative questions, but I have no definitive answers to offer here. I am seeking answers and I welcome whatever information you may have to share. I am also seeking access to authentic "secret schools" or "mystery schools" (such as described in Michael Murphy's novel *An End to Ordinary History*), but so far no avenue of contact has revealed itself to me.

#### **4. Higher Human Development to Immortality**

Whatever the process may be, the transubstantiated individual is then capable of operating within ordinary space-time through that altered vehicle of consciousness which is immortal. That deathless body is no longer carbon-based as is biological flesh. Rather, it is composed from a finer, more ethereal form of energy-substance unknown to conventional physics, but long known to metaphysics and higher mysticism. That condition is, for the individual, the most exalted phase of higher human

development.

But if we share a common human nature, then what is possible for one is possible for all, at least theoretically. For humanity in a collective sense, then, the body of light is the final stage of evolution, the perfection of Man, the complete manifestation of the mystical body of Christ. Attaining the body of light is an alternative to death or, more correctly, the conquest of death. As Dr. Charles Musès put it in an article in *Astrologia* (Vol. 1, No. 2, 1974), which I quoted in *Kundalini, Evolution and Enlightenment*:

The most ancient Egyptian teachings were concerned with an occult science--now lost and as yet far beyond the reach of our technology--whereby while still in this life, the carbon-based body, by suitable extradimensional radiation, could be transformed into the new type of energy-substance and form the imperishable, radiant body. In this manner, the initiate so treated could enter into a higher dimensional objective world--without the trauma of physical death.

I see uniqueness in Jesus' demonstration-teaching of that--at least, insofar as I can judge on the basis of historical documents. I will discuss that uniqueness in Section 10. First, however, let's be clear that, contrary to what Christian fundamentalists believe, the resurrection of Jesus did not involve reconstitution of his flesh, blood and bone into a functioning biological organism. It was not restoration of his physical body or reanimation of a decomposing corpse. And thus the so-called Second Coming of Christ will not be the reappearance of a flesh-bodied Jesus of Nazareth wafting down to earth upon a cloud. As I explain in *The Meeting of Science and Spirit*, "The final appearance of the Christ will not be a man in the sky before whom all must kneel. The final appearance of the Christ will be an evolutionary event marking the disappearance of egocentric Man--and the ascension of God-centered Man. A new race, a new species will inhabit the Earth--people who collectively have the stature in consciousness which Jesus had. And in that process, the kingdom of God will truly be established on Earth through the governance of the Christ in the hearts, minds and souls of all people."

## 5. Mistaken Fundamentalism

Similar examples of fallacious fundamentalism may be seen in ancient China and in Orthodox Judaism. In ancient China, I've read, it was common for men to save their cut hair and fingernails on a lifelong basis, so that they could be placed in the grave or tomb upon the person's death in order to be ready for use in restoring the body to life. Likewise, in Orthodox Judaism it is believed that the Messiah will resurrect dead bodies upon his coming, so Orthodox Jews retain even amputated body parts for burial with the person.

My point is this: whether Christian, Chinese, Jewish or some other form of fundamentalism, it is a mistaken literalism and "spiritual materialism" which needs to be corrected by providing insight and understanding. I certainly don't want to make large claims about my own insight and understanding--I'm just a babe in the cosmic woods--but insofar as I understand this situation correctly, there is absolutely no need to collect body parts. Doing that is entirely superfluous and a literal-minded view which misdirects one's energy and consciousness. The important thing is, as the *Bhagavad Gita* puts it, to "fix your heart on God" and then invoke the Holy Spirit, the Shekinah Glory, the Goddess Kundalini, etc. Support that with moral behavior, contemplative practice, cultivation of the mind,

works of social goodness and civic responsibility--in other words, live a life of integral practice--so that your entire being--body, mind and spirit--is oriented to the attainment of enlightenment. God will take care of the rest. It's not a matter of having all your body parts collected; dead flesh is dead flesh. It's a matter of enlivening your energy bodies so that the "highest" one is developed to the point of self-mastery. Then you can "cast off" the flesh body through the death process, but without the trauma of "dying." Rather, you "release" the light body from its cocoon.

## **6. The Human Potential for Godhood**

If there is such a thing as human nature and human potential, and if there is an inner unity or common core to world religions--which I assert is so--we should not expect that realization of the human potential for transubstantiation would be limited to just one sacred path to enlightenment (Christianity). Why shouldn't there be other paths in which practitioners attained the resurrection body but called it something different, such as solar body, diamond body, light body, radiant body, astral body or adamantite body? I've already indicated that many sacred traditions hold the concept and amplifying knowledge. Salvation understood as enlightenment is precisely what Jesus demonstrated for us. And enlightenment means, in the last phase of spiritual unfoldment, literally becoming light. As Indian holy man Satya Sai Baba puts it, "On the spiritual path, first you go toward the light, next you're in the light, then you are the light."

## **7. Jesus, Resurrection and the Shroud of Turin**

The best-known western example of transubstantiation and perfection of the human body-mind is Jesus of Nazareth. He was described by people of his time with the Aramaic term M'shekha, from which we get "Messiah." The Greek translation of M'shekha is "Christos" or "Christ." Significantly, the term "Messiah," which literally means "the anointed one," more broadly means "enlightened" or "perfected" or "the ideal form of humanity." Thus, Jesus was regarded as the perfected form of humanity.

When Jesus arose from the dead after crucifixion, he functioned in a resurrection or glorified body. The resurrection body, it seems, is attained by a process which involves transubstantiation of human flesh. That is indicated most directly by the Shroud of Turin, which I accept as being what legend maintains, namely, that it was the funeral shroud of Jesus when he was buried in the tomb after crucifixion. Although a carbon-14 test in the late 1980s purportedly showed that the Shroud was no older than the 13th century--and therefore was a hoax--it has now been shown that the test results were badly flawed by the presence of biological material (mold or microorganisms) and carbon smoke particles on the fabric. When that skewing of the data is taken into account and a corrected dating is calculated, the age of the Shroud moves far enough back in time to place it at the crucifixion. Moreover, still newer research has identified pollen grains on the Shroud which could only have come from the close vicinity of Jerusalem during the months of March and April, when such vegetation is in bloom. For these and other research-based reasons, the Shroud is now clearly established as an authentic first-century relic, precisely as legend holds.

As for the image of the Man in the Shroud, research likewise indicates that it is no hoax. Frank Tribe notes in his book *Portrait of Jesus?* that the closest science can come to explaining how the image of the Man in the Shroud got there is by comparing the situation to a controlled burst of high-intensity

radiation similar to the Hiroshi ma bomb explosion which "printed" images of disintegrated people on building walls. Apparently, a self-induced nuclear "explosion" was the means by which Jesus transubstantiated. For the next forty days he functioned in a body of light--a glorified body--in which he appeared and disappeared at will. (And thus St. Paul could rightly ask in his Epistle to the Corinthians, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is they victory?")

This line of reasoning means that Jesus actually died physically, biologically. While he may have been alive in a yogic swoon or a near-death condition when placed in the tomb, he nevertheless underwent biological death in order to attain resurrection. But unlike the typical corpse which undergoes decomposition into its elements, Jesus's physical body was altered (by means which I am trying to discover) into something more elemental, indeed, more fundamental, although it is not understood by fundamentalists. Jesus literally offered his flesh and blood--in fundamentalist terms, he shed his blood--in a mighty sacrificial event whose dimensions are far beyond the comprehension of the fundamentalists. They have an essentially correct understanding of that event but their literalism reduces and devalues it to the simplistic belief that Jesus's sacrifice for everyone means that he did all which was required and therefore they, the literalists/fundamentalists, don't have to do anything except believe. They believe that the bread and wine of Holy Communion are actually transubstantiated into the flesh and blood of Jesus, but that is childish magical thinking, and the symbolic significance of the sacrament is missed. Holy Communion is not magical but mystical, and points to the possibility of the true imitation of Christ, even to the point of whole-body enlightenment.

The truth is that Jesus called people to duplicate himself, to grow into "the stature and fullness of Christ," so that in our own bodies--our own flesh and blood--we perform the imitation of Christ. Institutional Christianity, from evangelical to mainstream churches, aims at producing Christians when it should aim at producing Christs. Jesus's life, death and postmortem acts opened "the gates of heaven" for everyone, but no one will pass through the gates unless he or she lives a God-centered life resulting in God-realization. And in the final phase of God-realization, one literally becomes light.

## **8. Ascended Masters and the Illuminati**

There may have been others before Jesus who attained the glorified body or resurrection body, as he did in the tomb; that is implied in various ways in biblical and extrabiblical literature. The pharaonic ceremonial tradition of ancient Egypt is primarily about the process of consciousness transference from the flesh body to the spirit body or akh. Knowledge of that process may have passed into Judaism via Moses, who became a member of the Pharaoh's household when he was rescued as a baby by a pharaoh's daughter. From Moses, according to esoteric legends, the akh-knowledge descended through the centuries as an underground stream in some branches or schools of Judaism, emerging publicly and most dramatically through the resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. (Legends and some esoteric documents also have the tradition continuing through some of the early Christians to the Cathars of southern France, and thence to the Knights Templar and modern Freemasonry as expounded by scholars such as Manly P. Hall and W. L. Wilmshurst.)

Although Jesus is the Western exemplar of resurrection, there are others, both eastern and western, whom history and legend record as similarly transubstantiated. According to legends in various esoteric traditions, a number of "ascended masters" have attained to that condition and are accessible to us when they choose to be. Among them are Melchizedek, Ezekiel, Count St. German, Boganathar,

Kriya Babaji Nagaraj (also known as Mahavatar Babaji and Shiva Baba), Kuthumi, Dwaj Khul, El Morya, Matsyendra Nathan and Swami Ramalingam. Collectively, they are known as the White Brotherhood, the Illumined Ones or true Illuminati.

In a different but related situation--that of near-death research--are reports by the thousands of people who, while clinically dead, find themselves in a nonterrestrial environment and then become aware of the presence of a being of light. These light-beings have been identified by the near-death experiencers as gods, angels, devas, saints, holy people, mythological personalities and other figures associated with divinity. The reports imply a veritable society of such entities, operating in what seem to be vehicles of consciousness identical to what Jesus operated in via his resurrection. That society resides at the top of the divine hierarchy of worlds extending from the lowest physical level to the highest of the metaphysical. The hierarchy has often been called the Great Chain of Being; it connects all life to God, from the lowest microorganisms, through humanity, to the forms native to the higher worlds, such as angels and archangels. At the highest level, the Logos where creation itself begins are those Christed ones of humanity who have ascended to the throne of God or that condition of existence which is the seat of power for God's governing of the cosmos. Despite the apparently vast distance which separates them from us, they are simply "elder brothers and sisters" of ours who have traveled the evolutionary path before us.

It seems to me that enough has been described about these light-beings to begin sketching a sociology of ascended masters. Although their social organization is not apparent in all details, it is nevertheless clear that they present themselves to us in ways which appeal to our deepest nature and which urge us to externalize that nature in every aspect of our own being, including relationships and social organization. They are models for human aspirations of spiritual growth. And thus Jesus, properly understood, is not a vehicle of salvation as fundamentalists claim, but a model of perfection drawing us beyond ego to the transpersonal and the mystical.

## 9. Meetings with Babaji

Here is an example of how light-beings interact with humanity. The recently deceased yogini, Swami Sivananda Radha, a dear friend for whom I have the highest respect, recorded her experience of meeting Babaji when she was in India at her guru's ashram, studying to become a sannyasin. (Whether this Babaji is the same person as Kriya Babaji Nagaraj was unknown to her.) In her book *The Divine Light Invocation* (Timeless Books: Yashodhara Ashram, Kootenay Bay, B.C., Canada, 1990), she tells of her experience.

I sat inside this cave and began to meditate when I became aware that there was someone standing near me.

I looked up. It was a man. At first there seemed to be nothing out of the ordinary about his appearance. I was about to take no notice of him when I realized that this was Babaji, the famous figure who had appeared to a number of spiritual aspirants in North India over the previous centuries. He radiated a great dignity, an aura and presence that were unmistakable to me.

...earlier during my stay in India...I was on the shore of the Ganges washing my clothes and thinking of the stories I had heard about Babaji. The stories had made such a strong

impression on me that I had been meditating on Babaji, hoping that I might also be granted a meeting with him. I felt a special affinity for him. As I was washing I became aware of someone beside me. I looked up and saw an old man who had his head twisted to one side in a curious fashion, as though he did not want me to get a full view of his face. He took over the washing from me, with no objection on my part. Later when I thought about the incident, I realized it was quite peculiar to allow a stranger to take over a job like that from me. He asked what I was doing in India and what I had come in search of. I answered his questions but I had the distinct impression that he knew the answers before I spoke to him. I asked him who he was and he answered, "The one you are looking for." "Babaji?" I questioned. As I watched I saw him begin to drift out over the water and up into the air.

I realized that the man who was before me at the temple ruins was the same person I had seen beside the Ganges.

Babaji taught Radha the Divine Light Invocation. She kept her meeting with Babaji secret for many years, but began teaching the Light Invocation. Afterward, she told me, people would come to her and ask if she knew about Babaji. They'd say, "I saw him standing next to you." Others would say, "Is your guru such and such--with long hair, tall and slim? I saw him during the Invocation." That kind of experience dispelled all doubts in her about the reality of the experience.

## **10. Translation Beyond Enlightenment**

As important as it was for Jesus to attain the resurrection body, it was not, according to Christian tradition, the final event nor the most important event in Jesus' effort to "save" humanity--it was penultimate. The ultimate event was his "ascension into heaven" forty days after his resurrection. Jesus' ascension is the primary historical example of what I have called translation. Through a process which I do not understand and have little more information about than the name, Jesus was able to dissolve out of space-time altogether. That is of paramount importance for humanity because, as he conducted the process, it forever changed the human condition by fundamentally altering the human potential and, thus, human destiny.

It did so, in my judgment, by actually changing the metaphysical structure of the Void itself with regard to the consciousness and energetics underlying the morphogenetic blueprint for human evolution. Prior to Jesus, occasional sages apparently had attained to avatarhood, but none of them, so far as I can "read" their records, attempted to do what Jesus did, which was to insert the human potential for apotheosis into the morphogenetic map of human destiny on a species-wide basis. Thanks to Jesus' death, resurrection and ascension, for the first time in history it became possible for everyone to be Christed. That was accomplished not by his teaching or even by his transubstantiation, but by his ascension. As I say in "The Meaning of the Christ" in *The Meeting of Science and Spirit*, by passing altogether out of space-time and returning to the Preluminous Void, as Jesus of Nazareth he would not be found anywhere, but as the Christ, he would be found everywhere as the very ground of our being. That, I think, is the uniqueness of Jesus and his role in history.

According to the Gospel of John 17:4-5, Jesus said he had "finished the work which thou [God] gavest me to do" and his ascension was a return to "the glory which I had with thee before the world was."

He said he was ready to return wholly to the Christic state, beyond all embodiment, even a body of light. He returned to the Preluminous Void--the unmanifest state of God before he said, "Let there be light." That state is the "home" of the Christos. In its fundamental and "final" state, the Christos is an eternal condition which transcends the entire cosmos. It is a state which is timeless, spaceless and prior to the manifestation of the entire cosmos. It is that aspect of God which is our own innermost being as "the Son." It calls humans to ascend to godhood through the evolutionary drama working itself out in time and space. It is that which calls us to rise through all the planes of nature and structures of consciousness to return to the source of being, the Supreme Identity, the Self of all.

As a person practices spiritual disciplinesóprayer, meditation and esoteric psychotechnologiesóto deepen his or her relationship with God, the person ascends in spirit to higher and higher planes of existence. Mystical experience and arcane metaphysics come to the forefront of the person's consciousness, and the light of God shines ever more brightly through every aspect of the person's life. Ultimately, the quest for enlightenment leads one to actually becoming lightói.e., attaining the light body and becoming a being of light. Morality and virtue are then understood to be the human reflection of divine attributes, and the practice of mysticism is understood as a process of becoming, quite literally, more and more godlike.

From my perspective, someday in a distant evolutionary future we humans will "wear the seamless robe of light." I aspire to that. May all beings attain enlightenment!

22 October 1999