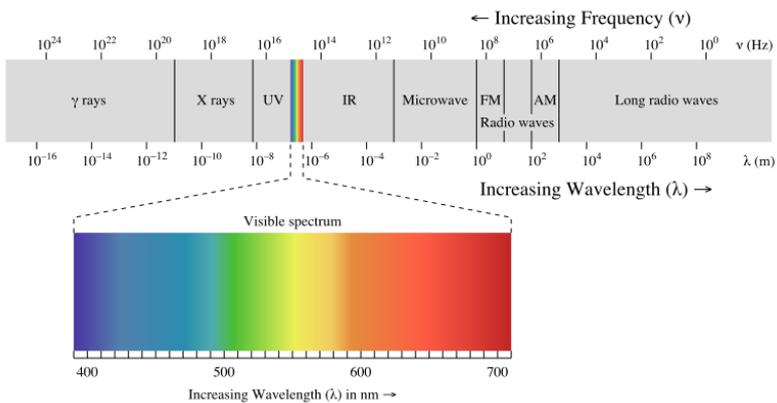




Let There be Light

Let there be light  
and there was light.



When I am in the world,  
I am the light of the world

# “LET THERE BE LIGHT”

## PART I

Just the other day, after a brief rainstorm, a beautiful rainbow framed the glistening palm and pine trees as it stretched across the eastern sky between our house and the sun. I can't imagine that there are people in the world who have never seen a rainbow at one time or another in their lives. For me, the sight of a rainbow generates a joyful feeling, a happy and contenting thought. I can believe though, that there are many who have never heard Harold Arlen's and E.Y. Harburg's "Over the Rainbow," sung by Judy Garland in the movie, *The Wizard of Oz*, way back in 1939. The song still brings tears to our eyes.

*Somewhere over the rainbow, way up high,  
there's a land that I heard of once in a lullaby.*

*Somewhere over the rainbow skies are blue,  
and the dreams that you dare to dream really  
do come true.*

Those were innocent days in the middle of the Great Depression, when beautiful melodies were accompanied by tender lyrics filled with hope and trust for a better future; immediately followed by World War II. Will times ever change? Probably not!

Among the many wonderful song lyrics "Yips" Harburg wrote in those days was "Brother Can You Spare a Dime." The only thing that seems to have changed between then and now is the price of a cup of coffee and the utterly different character of the music. Still, there's always hope.

Every school kid ought to know how the droplets of water suspended in the air refracts and reflects the “white light” of the sun, which is simply electromagnetic radiation beaming at us as the water vapor sorts out the glorious colors we see in the sky. That “spectrum” of visible light has a wavelength ranging from 400 nanometers to about 700 nanometers as shown on the cover of this little booklet. That’s only a small percentage of the “light” that is coming our way; the rest is not visible to our eyes such as x-rays, gamma rays, radio waves, infra red, ultra violet etc. There is quite a bit of physics involved in this pleasant phenomenon. The sight of a rainbow, aside from being a symbol of hope and luck, such as finding a pot of gold at the end of it can also be considered a super-highway to the beginning of time and space. According to the latest calculations, 13.7 billion years ago.

“At the start of the twentieth century, scientists believed they understood the most fundamental principles of nature. Atoms were the solid building blocks of nature, people trusted Newtonian laws of motion, most of the problems of physics seemed to be solved. However, starting with Einstein’s theory of relativity which replaced Newtonian mechanics, scientists gradually realized that their knowledge was far from complete. Of particular interest was the growing field of quantum mechanics, which completely altered the fundamental precepts of physics.” (from [particleadventure.org](http://particleadventure.org))

When Max Planck first suggested that radiation is quantized i.e., coming in discrete amounts, it was “Albert Einstein, one of the scientists who took Plank’s ideas seriously, who proposed a quantum of light that would behave like a particle. Einstein’s other theories explained the equivalence of mass and energy, the particle-wave duality, and special relativity,” all in 1905, his “miracle” year. (Ibid)

In 1927, George Lemaitre, a Belgian priest, worked out the math suggesting that the universe had a beginning. Sir

Arthur Eddington, his teacher, one of the great scientists of his day, criticized his idea which brought about a published response, Lemaitre wrote:

*If the world has begun with a single quantum, the notions of space and time would altogether fail to have any meaning at the beginning; they would only begin to have a sensible meaning when the original quantum had been divided into a sufficient number of quanta. If this suggestion is correct, the beginning of the world happened a little before the beginning of space and time.*

Having also been criticized by Einstein, he was later able to convince him of the “singularity” idea in a California meeting in 1933, supported by Hubbell’s “red shift” observations of 1929 showing the universe expanding. From that time on the “big bang” theory was on a secure path to being accepted by most scientists. There may be some who have a disagreement with the “Planck Epoch” or the Plasma Epoch, but for the most part, big bang thinking seems to have solved all the research done since 1900. The study of the universe is generally the province of theoretical physicists.

Prof. Dale Gary of the New Jersey Institute of Technology says: “The amazing fact is that we can trace the big bang back to it’s earliest moments, at least as far back as  $10^{-10}$  s and possibly back to  $10^{-43}$  s. This is an incredible short period of time (10 with 43 zeros behind it), so we can truthfully say that we can trace the universe back to the first instant of creation. In doing so, we are probing not just the very earliest universe, but also the highest energy of particle physics.”

If the big bang is correct and if, indeed, this was the beginning of all that presently is – following the traditional big bang cosmology of a “gravitational singularity” before inflation took place, no physicist would argue against the fact that at that initial point “light” came into existence. Still, many physicists believe that theories of quantum gravitation such as string

theory, loop quantum gravity or causal sets will offer different explanations of the “plasma” state. Most of these folks are pure determinists, as was Einstein, who said, “God doesn’t play dice with the universe.” That, of course, would be Spinoza’s god, the god of pantheism, surely not Georges Lemaitre’s God. It was ironic that Lemaitre used Einstein’s “cosmological constant” equations which were meant to keep the universe in a steady state, in order to speed up its expansion over time. Eventually Einstein lost the argument with Niels Bohr, one of the greatest theoretical physicists of all time, over the “uncertainty” in quantum mechanics, and spent the rest of his life trying to prove a determinist point of view.

The name photon was coined by Gilbert Lewis in 1926, it derives from the Greek word for light: phôs, and: on, meaning unit. The photon is a stable, gauge/boson with no mass and no electrical charge. It is a particle of light. The photon exhibits both wave-like and particle-like properties as do all the particles of matter. Based on our scientific understanding, the electromagnetic field itself is produced by photons. The wave-particle duality is a phenomenon of particle physics. The “duality” is not technically a real duality, it’s the behavior of the phenomena that constitutes the mystery. No matter how it acts it’s still light. Duality is an aspect of “complementarity” that was proposed by Niels Bohr and others. It stated that the wave/particle phenomenon can be viewed in one way or the other, but not both at the same time. The observer seems to be the problem, leaving us with Heisenberg’s “uncertainty principle” (1927). The detail of complementarity is more involved than can be stated here, but it is important, in my view, to at least understand the basics. Until future physicists can come up with a provable “grand unified theory” or some other super theory, we will have indeterminacy and uncertainty in the sub atomic world. Let’s

walk the rainbow highway back to the initial point of the “big bang” and do what everyone else does – speculate!

As far as we know, we humans are the only creatures in the universe who are capable of transcending the immediate to try to comprehend the unfathomable. Yet astrophysicists, now knowing the speed of light, and with remarkable equipment, are able to observe supernovae explosions which happened millions of years ago earth time. The phrase “back to the future” describes this beautifully. Unfortunately no one has yet built machinery enabling us to do the same with regard to the future, but all through history we have had thousands of individuals who have had the power to predict the future with calculable accuracy. Some were charlatans others were not; they were the Prophets of every generation. By and large their track record has been pretty good, particularly those of the Hebrew scripture.

From the point of the initial expansion, light was set free and time and space were born for us to live in, and the direction pointed only forward. As certain particles started “freezing out,” the highest energy subsequently brought along with it a process of annihilation and entropy. If there is a forever, it doesn’t appear to be in this universe. One cannot describe the infinite with a finite model. Had there been an equal amount matter and anti-matter the whole program would never have advanced as it did. It just so happened that there was a little more matter around than anti-matter, if that were not the case there would have been no chance for life as we know it. Some think it was “luck.”

Since 1964 we are able to “see” the light of the big bang from about  $10^{-10}$  s. The microwave background radiation of 3° celsius in all directions proved Lemaitre’s beginning correct. That is spectacular after 13.7 billion years! Admittedly it’s a small number when you consider the insane national debt, but it is important for us to know that there was a beginning before

which, many say, there was nothing. Nothing, like the word infinite, can not be described except in mathematical symbols, just as God cannot be described except symbolically as Spirit. We can not see a before-the-beginning, nor see the Creator in this life. Humankind has a tendency to see God as Einstein and Spinoza saw him, in the beauty and actions of our natural surroundings; until the Incarnation, man had to look “over the rainbow” or not look at all.

In 1994 Random House published a book by Michio Kaku titled *Hyperspace: A Scientific Odyssey Through Parallel Universes, Time Warps and the Tenth Dimension*. Kaku, now in his late 60's, is a protege of Edward Teller, one of the many scientists of atom-bomb fame. Kaku is a well educated proponent of alternative cosmology, and a very successful spokesman for higher physics. It would be wrong to criticize his deep faith in the alternate ways he believes that the universe may have come about. Genuine faith has a close relationship with conscience, and a good conscience is to be respected. Chapter 9 in *Hyperspace*, titled “Before Creation” begins with these paragraphs:

*“Did God have a mother?”*

*Children, when told that God made the heavens and the earth, innocently ask whether God had a mother. This deceptively simple question has stumped the elders of the church and embarrassed the finest theologians, precipitating some of the thorniest theological debates over the centuries. All the great religions have elaborate mythologies surrounding the divine act of Creation, but none of them adequately confronts the logical paradoxes inherent in the questions that even children ask.*

*God may have created the heavens and the earth in 7 days, but what happened before the first day? If one concedes that God had a mother, then one naturally asks whether she, too, had a mother, and so on, forever. However, if God did not*

*have a mother, then this answer raises even more questions: Where did God come from? Was God always in existence since eternity, or is God beyond time itself?*

I love this understanding put neatly as a question a child might ask. It shows me how deeply Kaku and thousands of other physicists are stuck when thinking about God, the Creator, as a person made in the image of man, rather than the other way around. Although “person” is used in the explanation of the Creator as God the Father in the Trinity, it is also made perfectly clear, theologically, that “God is Spirit.” (John 4: 24). Many scientists and science writers mention a “Mind of God” with a full understanding that it is a euphemism relating to the human psyche and that they are sure eventually the concept of God will naturally fall of its own weight since everything is simply condensed energy, both macro and micro. Regardless of the fact that superstrings, multiverses, wormholes, parallel universes and the like are all mathematical hypotheses, concocted, for the most part, to win favor over the belief in a Creator, still, no one should look down at or try to stifle the advance of science as long as science respects the moral and ethical norms of society. The strange world of physical-cosmology, a branch of astrophysics, hooked up with the new world of quantum mechanics is a totally legitimate direction for man’s natural curiosity about causes and origins. At the same time no one should demean another man’s natural propensity for trusting in an Almighty Creator. Billions of people have complete assurance resting on that hope. I would like to answer Kaku’s question about “what happened before the first day?”

Creatio Ex Nihilo (Creation From Nothing) absolutely makes no sense in Lemaitre’s “Day without yesterdays” if there was no uncreated cause that put in motion all that we see today. We can see, in our imagination, black holes connecting to wormholes, and mathematics as the language of creation of a

different sort, but this puts man's imagination in a quandary: to explain the unexplainable while he is still not able to explain the uncertainty in quantum mechanics. We can also see where it is most natural to place one's faith in something you hope for – without empirical proof. The fact that humans can relate to realities that transcend the practical, is why we are of the species *Homo Sapiens Sapiens*, even though sometimes we don't act with the wisdom we're capable of. Science and Theology are finally getting around to meaningful dialogue, fostered by both religious and scientific institutions, without rancor.

*Science can purify religion from error and superstition; religion can purify science from idolatry and false absolutes. Each can draw the other into a wider world, a world in which both can flourish.* (John Paul II). How refreshing!

Can we call it superstition when the writer of Genesis has God say:

*Let there be light, and there was light?*

Or can we say that the prophet comes pretty close to big bang cosmology with regard to the grand expansion? If we can accept the idea that the Creator is the omnipotent, uncreated force behind “heaven and earth and all things, seen and unseen,” we may just have complementarity between practical and particle physics. Before day one there was nothing – except God. Many know that, with the same faith as others know of the power of mathematics. Kaku quotes Einstein as saying:

*The creative principle resides in mathematics, in a certain sense, therefore, I hold it true that pure thought can grasp reality, as the ancients dreamed.*

What I am suggesting is that in reality, God *is* Pure Thought, The Ultimate Good, and that it is entirely possible more of us will eventually grasp it with the help of science, as was Blessed John Paul II's hope; Why is it necessary that faith in higher-math and faith in God have to be mutually exclusive?

Surely, Georges Lemaitre didn't deny higher-mathematics! It got him to exactly:

*Where the dreams that he dared to dream really did come true.*

## PART II

Light has a wonderful way of inspiring people. The great Dante Alighieri saw God as a point of exceedingly brilliant light as the center of whirling fiery circles. In *The Paradiso* he wrote:

*Whenever on its gyre we gaze intent  
A point beheld I, that was raying out  
Light so acute, the sight which it enkindles  
Must close perforce before such great acuteness  
And whatsoever star seems smallest here  
Would seem to be a moon, if placed beside it.*

Many of the ancient creation myths reference the primordial “egg” and speak about light being divided from the darkness at a beginning. Man has, for the most part, always perceived of God as having produced light or a celestial realm as the first step in creation. From Wikipedia, “the term light has been used in spirituality (vision, enlightenment, darshan, Tabor Light). Bible commentators such as Ritenbaugh see the presence of light as a metaphor for truth, good *as opposed to* evil, knowledge *as opposed to* ignorance. ( my italics). In the first chapter of Genesis, Elohim is described as creating light by fiat (*Let there be light*), and seeing the light to be good. In Eastern religion, Diwali—the festival of lights—is a celebration of light over darkness. etc, etc.”

In the New Testament light is mentioned 80 plus times in various contexts but most importantly when Jesus refers to

himself as Light: “...*I am the light of the world.*” He, being the new light that shines in the darkness of worldly depression and despair, of brutality, carelessness and hate, A light that some are still blind to. The Incarnation was a new beginning, the new creation, the true purpose of the Creator’s prime move. As the Son of the Father before all ages, God from God, *Light from Light*, true God from true God, One in being with the Father, as we say, redeemed mankind by his cross and resurrection; and of whom the prophet Isaiah wrote:

*“The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, by way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the gentiles—the people who were sitting in darkness saw a great light, and those who were sitting in the land and the shadow of death, upon them a light dawned.”*

It was by the light of a celestial conjunction in the east that all of humanity was led to the newborn child in Bethlehem. The world would be bathed in the Light of “truth as a person,” Jesus of Nazareth; God, as a man, among men, who was sent by the Father to bring his message to every generation. Love God, love your neighbor.

*“I have come into the world as light, so that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness.” “... if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him.”*

The fact that the Holy Bible is the best selling book in the world year after year, explains how people are yearning to be reached by the Word of God, to be touched by the brilliant light of Christ. A strong faith is positively contingent on staying close to the gospel; the “good news;” as John the Evangelist tells us: *“What has come into being in him was life, life that was the light of men.”*

In our opinion there is nothing more illuminating with regard to the life of Jesus and his teaching than personally and

quietly reading the New Testament and referencing it with the Hebrew Bible. The tremendous power of the scripture working with one's imagination, and in our case memory, since we had the good fortune to visit Egypt and Palestine, forms a vivid picture of the Saviors presence among us over two thousand years ago. It was his magnetic drawing power and the hope for enlightenment that brought Nicodemus, a well to do member of the Sanhedren and notable Pharisee to meet with Jesus one night so as not to compromise his status with his peers. At that meeting the well known "born again" dialogue took place between them. (John 3: 1-21). Traditionally, there is reason to believe that Nicodemus was martyred sometime in the second half of the first century after having become a Christian. He is now a saint of the Roman Church.

We're making use of St. Nicodemus here, as a starting point in an embellished narrative to relate two stories that have the power to turn ones attention to Jesus in a most captivating way. Both these stories have a marvelous timelessness about them, you can see them happening today in your minds eye, almost as though you were an "onlooker." The characters are so real they could be neighbors or people you know or have known. John's gospel is chronologically a bit different from the synoptics and most scholars think more accurate. That is not to demean the others, because each one has something very special to offer in its own way. One gets to love them all for different reasons. All together they give a full picture of what the Father wanted us to understand through the Son by means of faith, with the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

No collection of books in the world have gotten more criticism by more scholars over time than the New Testament. The stories and teachings tell much more than the words can express. Like its predecessor, the ancient Hebrew texts, it is backed up by traditional verbal understandings that stand tall against the scrutiny of archeology, anthropology and ancient

history. Whether you trust and believe in the stories themselves is predicated on something imbedded deep inside of each and every one of us. This predilection is simply the belief in God, written on the human heart; nothing more than sharing in his life, and the life of Christ within us. Perhaps it's somewhat similar of how light was set free and time and space were created for us to live in. Out of darkness, metaphorically, came a new light in Christ.

According to St. John's gospel, Jesus produced his first public miracle at a wedding feast to which the family and his recent followers were invited. It was given at the town of Cana, in Galilee, along one of the main north/south roads, about eight miles north of Nazareth where the family lived. The land around the Sea of Galilee was a predominantly a Jewish enclave with few foreigners. To the north were large estates run by tenant farmers. The southern part of Galilee was mostly smaller farms worked by the owners and their families with hired hands when needed. Joseph and the family had, most likely, been known in the area for some time, since he and his Stepson, and perhaps others in the family were wood workers; makers of plow handles and yokes for animals, and maybe even sheep folds, fences and gates etc. The host of the party had run out of wine. Though no business of Jesus', at the request of his mother he reluctantly instructed the servants to fill six, thirty gallon stone jars, made for washing, with water. Once they were full, Jesus had the steward draw from them and take a sample to the bridegroom, who remarked to the steward that he had kept "the best wine until now." Needless to say this act must have had an enormous effect on his followers; Andrew, his brother Simon, who he named Peter, Philip and Nathanael, as well as on many of the other guests. His mother, though, seemed to have known all along what her son was capable of. Seeing what he had seen, one could presume that it was Peter who suggested they go over to to Capernaum, about

twenty or thirty miles to the northeast where he and his brother had a fishing business on the Sea of Galilee. It was most likely a prosperous business since it provided fresh fish for the surrounding towns. Peter, not a shy person, was so enthralled with this young man who had chosen him as a friend that he immediately suggested they spend a few days with him and his family at his home. Jesus' family obviously accepted and went along with Peter, Andrew and the others and stayed "only a few days."

Now that it was clear that this was no ordinary man, Mary may have told them of her life with Joseph, Jesus' stepfather. John did not mention him in the "Cana" story, so it is probable that Joseph had passed away earlier, since he may have been considerably older than Mary. While visiting Peter and his family, Mary could have shared her experience of the encounter with the angel Gabriel some thirty years earlier, relating this while Jesus was sleeping; including the story about she and her husband finding Jesus, at the age of twelve, astounding the teachers of the law with his incredible knowledge of scripture. The expectation of the Messiah at this point in Israel's history was very real according to the Prophets. The Messiah, the Christ, was hoped for by all; a king who would break the yoke of the Roman occupiers and hopefully, settle the differences between the Essenes and the Samaritans with regard to the Temple.

The time for the Jewish Passover was once again near. Philo of Alexandria tells us that thousands of Jews from all over the known world made the trek in an endless stream to the Holy Temple in Jerusalem for the festival. One can only imagine the clamor and confusion on the roads leading up to the Temple Mount. They came in caravans and each group brought the obligatory donation to the Temple treasury on behalf of their community. As Jesus and his group came up from Galilee, hundreds who had known him through his

miraculous works followed him and his small band to the Holy City. The weather in late March and early April would range between seventy and eighty degrees Fahrenheit during the day and in the forties at night. Those who could afford it would try to find nightly shelter at the inns along the way Others would camp in the open. Many would be reminded of the forty year trek out of Egypt led by Moses, where they were often in a state of despair, and loss of faith in their God.

When Jesus got to the Temple he found that the courts had become a “market place.” With a sense of righteousness he cleared much of the area by kicking over the tables and benches of the cashiers and vendors, to the great annoyance of the participants. He understood exactly what was going on. The Holy Temple, the house of God, was being perverted. The house of prayer had become a den of thieves. “Many believed in his name when they saw the signs that he did.” After this incident, the hierarchy was convinced that this was a real troublemaker and perhaps even a revolutionary, never mind his miracles and partiality to the poor and dispossessed, he had to be stopped! It was around this time that Jesus got his visit from Nicodemus, and their conversation about being “born again” of water and the spirit took place.

John the Baptist earlier, had been baptizing as a voice “crying in the wilderness” for people to repent from sin on behalf of the arrival of the Messiah. “Make straight his path,” he said. Here we shall pick up on two stories which I wish to relate about Jesus being “light” of the world.

Traveling between Juda and Galilee, Jesus was becoming widely known throughout all of Isreal. Many had heard his teaching and some actually observed the miraculous works he was doing. He had made converts even in Samaria with his visit to Jacobs well in Sychar, and the curing of a nobleman’s son etc. The people were beginning to take sides either for him or against him. The miracles he was able to

display, and the insistence that all his teaching and power came only from “his Father,” God, convinced thousands that this man could be the Messiah, yet his humble beginnings and the fact that he came from Galilee was not quite what they were expecting. Many, on the other hand, believed he was a charlatan or worse a “devil”. By this time there were hardly any that did not know of him or have some opinion about him.

The feast of Shelters is an eight day feast corresponding to the months of September /October at a time when the fruits and crops are harvested. Jesus had told his brothers that he would not go up to Jerusalem for the feast, but after they had gone he went up as well. At the festival, the Jews were on the look out for him. In the middle of the feast, he knew of the dilemma about him and began once again to teach in the Temple Courts amid the crowds. He emphasized that his teaching was not from himself, but from God, the one who sent him, which gave credence to those who began to think he was flirting with blasphemy. Many believed he was the prophet Elijah who had returned, or indeed, the Christ. The Pharisees knew that his popularity was fast growing among the people so they sent the Temple guards to arrest him. When the guards heard what he had to say they were astounded; they returned to the chief priests and Pharisees and told them that they had never heard words spoken like this. John’s gospel put it this way:

*The officers then came to the chief priests and Pharisees, and they said to them, “Why did you not bring Him?” The officers answered, “Never has a man spoken the way this man speaks” The Pharisees then answered them, “You have not also been led astray, have you? No one of the rulers or Pharisees has believed in Him, has he? But this crowd which does not know the Law is accursed.” Nicodemus (he who came to him before, being one of them) said to them, “Our Law does not judge a man unless it first hears from him and knows*

*what he is doing, does it?" They answered him, "You are not also from Galilee, are you? Search, and see that no prophet arises out of Galilee;" then everyone went to his home.*

Since Jesus was teaching every day in the temple, he and his small coterie retired to the Mount of Olives, just across the Kidron valley from the temple. Many scholars believe that there was a olive press shelter there where he and his disciples could stay over night. Obviously, some of his disciples would have provided food, which they had done many times before. This would be the same location where much later, Judas would betray him. At sunrise, Jesus and his little band is said to have returned to the Temple Courts, where Jesus sat down and began to teach the people who, by now, were looking forward to hearing his inspiring words. John tells the touching story of the woman who was caught in adultery:

*The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman caught in adultery, and having set her in the center of the court, they said to him, "Teacher, this woman has been caught in adultery, in the very act. Now in the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women; what then do You say?" They were saying this, testing him, so that they might have grounds for accusing him. But Jesus stooped down and with his finger wrote on the ground. But when they persisted in asking him, He straightened up, and said to them, "He who is without sin among you, let him be the first to throw a stone at her." Again He stooped down and wrote on the ground. When they heard it, they began to go away one by one, beginning with the older ones, and he was left alone, and the woman, where she was, in the center of the court. Straightening up, Jesus said to her, "Woman, where are they? Did no one condemn you?" She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said, "Neither will I condemn you. Go. From now on sin no more."*

This was an astonishing situation for those who observed what had taken place. For them only God had the

power to forgive sin, and here was this man embarrassing the Pharisees and scribes right before their eyes. As he moved off from the court center, they shuffled along behind him to the “treasury” which was under the colonnade which encircled the Court of the Women. By this time the crowd must have been quite large. John continues:

*Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, “**I am the Light of the world; he who follows me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life.**” So the Pharisees said to him, “You are testifying about yourself; your testimony is not true.” Jesus answered and said to them, “Even if I testify about myself, my testimony is true, for I know where I came from and where I am going; but you do not know where I come from or where I am going. You judge according to the flesh; I am not judging anyone. But even if I do judge, my judgment is true; for I am not alone in it, but I and the Father who sent me. Even in your law it has been written that the testimony of two men is true. I am he who testifies about myself, and the Father who sent me testifies about me.” So they were saying to him, “Where is Your Father?” Jesus answered, “You know neither me nor my Father; if you knew me, you would know my Father also.” These words he spoke in the treasury, as he taught in the temple; and no one seized Him, because His hour had not yet come.*

*The Jews said to him, “You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?” Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I AM.” Therefore they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple.*

One can only imagine how difficult it must have been for those in power to accept what he was in fact saying. He was comparing himself to God. They were certainly ready to set aside all the cures and other “gift” miracles upon hearing these blasphemous statements, and many simply thought he had gone

mad. As Jesus and the disciples exited the temple precincts, probably through the underground passage leading to the Hulda Gates on the south side of the temple wall, they scurried down the broad stairway heading to the lower city. As they went along the Tyropoeon Valley Road, Jesus came across a man, blind from birth; he was most likely begging. Since the city was crowded, he was sitting against a wall of one of the houses near the street hoping some people would be charitable. Only John could continue the story from here:

*As He passed by, he saw a man blind from birth. And his disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he would be born blind?" Jesus answered, "It was neither that this man sinned, nor his parents; but it was so that the works of God might be displayed in him. We must work the works of him who sent me as long as it is day; night is coming when no one can work. **While I am in the world, I am the Light of the world.**" When he had said this, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and applied the clay to the man's eyes, and said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which when translated means, Sent). So he went away and washed, and came back seeing. Therefore the neighbors, and those who previously saw him as a beggar, were saying, "Is not this the one who used to sit and beg?" Others were saying, "This is he," still others were saying, "No, but he looks like him." He kept saying, "I am the one." So they were saying to him, "How then were your eyes opened?" He answered, "The man who is called Jesus made clay, and anointed my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash'; so I went away and washed, and I received sight." They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know."*

*They brought to the Pharisees the man who was formerly blind. Now it was a Sabbath on the day when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes. Then the Pharisees also were asking him again how he received his sight. And he said*

*to them, “He applied clay to my eyes, and I washed, and I see.” Therefore some of the Pharisees were saying, “This man is not from God, because he does not keep the Sabbath.” But others were saying, “How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?” And there was a division among them. So they said to*



*the blind man again, “What do you say about him, since he opened your eyes?” And he said, “He is a prophet.”*

*The Jews then did not believe it of him, that he had been blind and had received sight, until they called the parents of the very one who had received his sight, and questioned them, saying, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? Then how does he now see?” His parents answered them and said, “We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but how he now sees, we do not know; or who opened his eyes, we do not know. Ask him; he is of age, he will speak for himself.” His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone confessed him to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue. For this reason his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.”*

*So a second time they called the man who had been blind, and said to him, "Give glory to God; we know that this man is a sinner." He then answered, "Whether He is a sinner, I do not know; one thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." So they said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" He answered them, "I told you already and you did not listen; why do you want to hear it again? You do not want to become his disciples too, do you?" They reviled him and said, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he is from." The man answered and said to them, "Well, here is an amazing thing, that you do not know where he is from, and yet He opened my eyes. We know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is God-fearing and does his will, he hears him. Since the beginning of time it has never been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. If this man were not from God, He could do nothing." They answered him, "You were born entirely in sins, and are you teaching us?" So they put him out of the temple.*

*Jesus heard that they had put him out, and finding him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" He answered, "Who is he, Lord, that I may believe in him?" Jesus said to him, "You have both seen him, and he is the one who is talking with you." And he said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped him. And Jesus said, "For judgment I came into this world, so that those who do not see may see, and that those who say they see may become blind." Those of the Pharisees who were with him heard these things and said to him, "We are not blind too, are we?" Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would have no sin; but since you say, 'We see,' your sin remains.*

These two wonderful stories related by John the Evangelist allow us to understand exactly why Jesus used the illuminating metaphor of light in referring to himself. It was to

lead us out of the darkling past into a new life of light or understanding with regard to himself, “who is the blessed and only Sovereign, King of kings, Lord of lords, who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light(1 Tim 6: 15).

*Somewhere over the rainbow skies are blue, and the dreams that you dare to dream really do come true.*

*The Pool of Siloam as it appears today. Much more of it is to be excavated, perhaps in a more peaceful time.*