

Symbols & Substance

Genesis from An Artist's Perspective

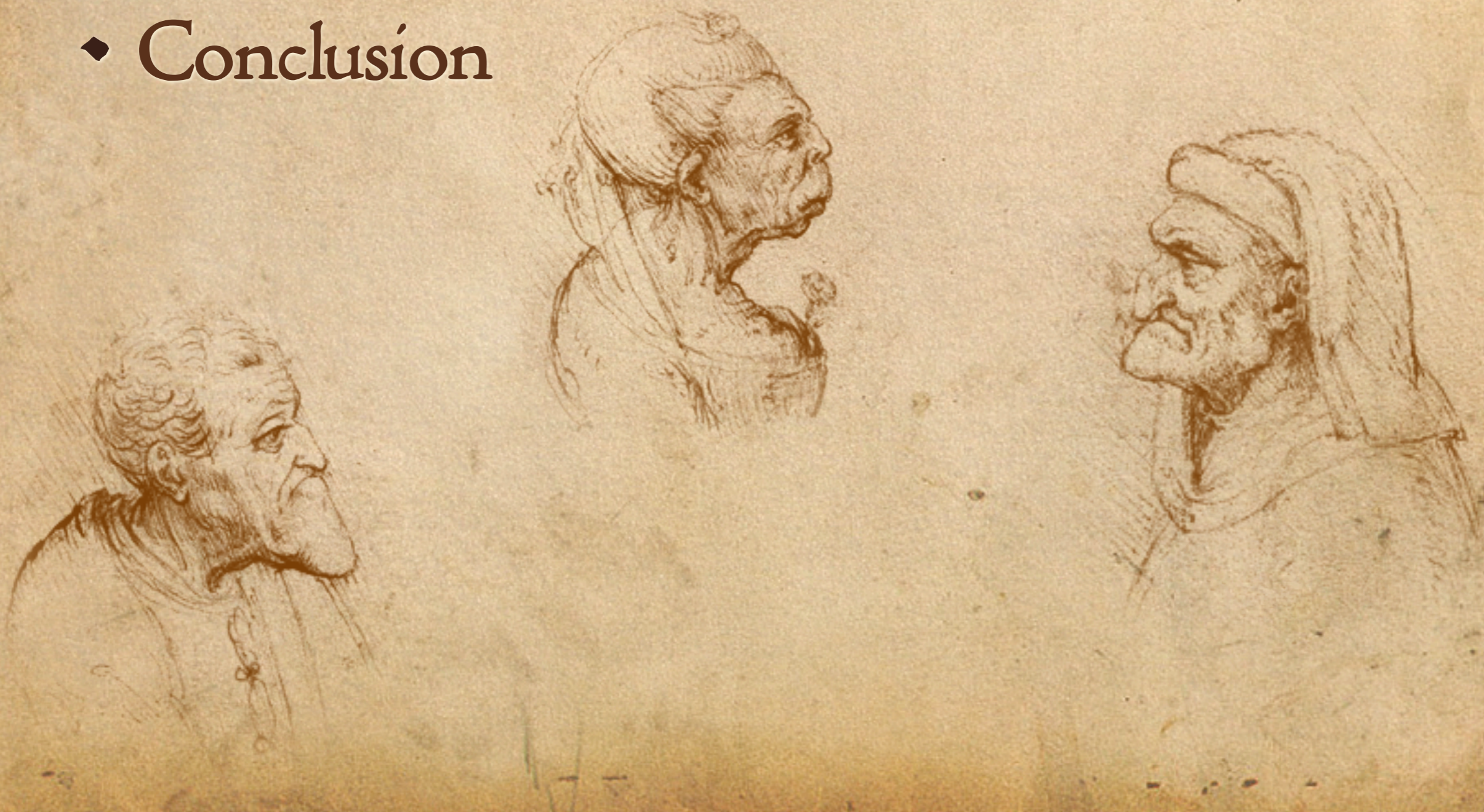
Outline



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- ◆ Preterism and Renaissance Thinking
- ◆ Symbols and Substance In Genesis

Outline Continued

- ◆ The Continuity of The Scriptures
- ◆ Conclusion



Who Am I?




Mark Chiacchira

Background

- ◆ 20 Years with the *WALT DISNEY* Company
- ◆ Senior Illusrator/Designer
- ◆ Executive Graphic Support
- ◆ Multimedia Producer
- ◆ 3D Animator



Worked with...

- ◆ George Lucas (Star Wars)
- ◆ Jim Henson (Muppets)
- ◆ Walt Disney Imagineering
- ◆ Apple Computer 
- ◆ Answers in Genesis





Brief Testimony

Introduction

(The importance of Preterism)

Preterism Is The Key

Knowing the end of God's redemptive story is that key to unlocking and understanding the beginning of that story.

Newer revelation is the substance of the Genesis shadow.



It's Important Because...

- ◆ It affects the way we live.
- ◆ It destroys false and cultic religions.
- ◆ It promotes an optimistic view of the future.
- ◆ It preserves the integrity and authority of Jesus Christ.



Hermeneutics



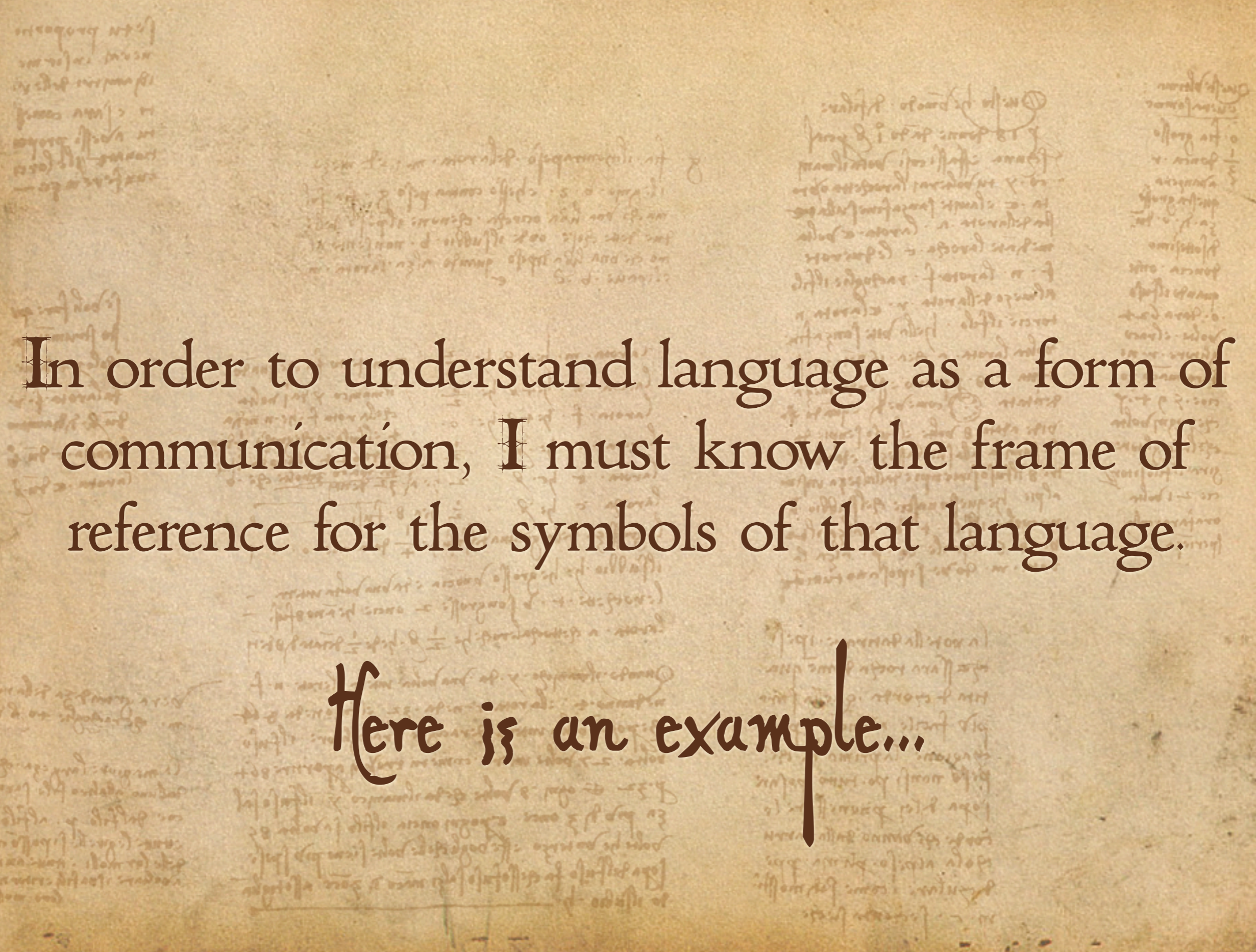
What is this big word?

The science of interpretation and explanation, especially in the branch of theology that deals with the general principles of Biblical interpretation.



Language

All language is metaphorical. Whether a language is phonetically based like most modern languages, or pictorially based as in many ancient and eastern languages, or even motion based language such as sign language for the deaf.



In order to understand language as a form of communication, I must know the frame of reference for the symbols of that language.

Here is an example...

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The Letter



K

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- ♦ A chemist sees the letter *K* as Potassium.
- ♦ A sailor sees the letter *K* as a speed (Knot).
- ♦ A jeweler sees the letter *K* as a caret.
- ♦ A chess player sees the letter *K* as a King.
- ♦ A child sees the letter *K* as the 11th letter in the alphabet of the English language.
- ♦ An Apple Computer geek like myself, sees the letter *K* as a unit of measurement (Kilobyte).

The symbol K remains the same in all of these examples, but has different meanings to each individual mentioned based upon cultural understanding.

Ken Ham was a science school teacher. Henry Morris (Author of 'The Genesis Record' and 'The Genesis Flood') was a Hydrologist and engineer. It's no coincidence that these men approach the scriptures from their own cultural background rather than that of the ancients.

What Is Culture?

Culture = Religion Externalized

"Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life." - Proverbs 4:23

So where do we begin?

- ◆ We begin with the ancient Jewish literature and their own cultural writings.
- ◆ This includes non-canonical literature.
- ◆ Ancient cultural beliefs and rituals.



Relevant Ancient Writings Include:

- ◆ The Dead Sea Scrolls
- ◆ 1 Enoch
- ◆ The Targums (Aramaic Scriptures)
- ◆ Jubilees, Barnabas, Didache
- ◆ The Talmud
- ◆ And Many Others

Which Scriptures did the first Christians know and use, and how did they understand the things which they were reading? Evidence suggests that the texts which became the Old Testament of the Western Church were not identical to those used by the early Church. By removing these texts from their cultural context in the so-called Pseudepigraphal writings, has hindered our ability to reconstruct much of early Christian thought.

Did you know that Enoch had long been treated as Scripture by the Church? (By some estimates up to 500 years). Both Jude and Barnabas had even quoted it as scripture.

In later Jewish writings there is no reference to 1 Enoch for several centuries, even though it was cited as Scripture by the early Church, and the quantity of material found in the Qumran caves places Enoch along with the major texts of the Hebrew Scriptures: There were 20 copies of 1 Enoch found as compared with 21 copies of Isaiah, 20 of Genesis, and only 6 of Jeremiah.

Barnabas 16 also quotes 1 Enoch as Scripture: 'for Scripture says...' is followed by 1 Enoch 89.56 'It will come to pass in the last days that the LORD will deliver up to destruction the sheep of the pasture with their sheepfold and their watchtower.' The Letter of Jude also quotes Enoch as a prophet (Jude 14).

Many Christians are unaware that many New Testament references are made to Enoch. It is a book about the high priestly functions and visions of the ancient temple religion.

The collection of writings now known as 1 Enoch were lost to the West until rediscovered in Ethiopia in 1770, and parts of a Greek copy were found in Egypt in 1886. It had, however, been available in Constantinople at the end of the eighth century, and was used by George Syncellus the famous Byzantine historian. The texts known as 2 Enoch travelled north with Christian missionaries into Russia, as they survive in the Old Slavonic language.

The early Church read 1 Enoch as Scripture; Clement and Origen both knew and quoted from it. 1 Enoch, has a very different description of the people who returned from Babylon, and the Ezra tradition. Far from restoring the true temple and the true Scriptures, they were a generation of impure apostates who had forsaken wisdom and lost their vision (1 En.89.73; 93.8-9).

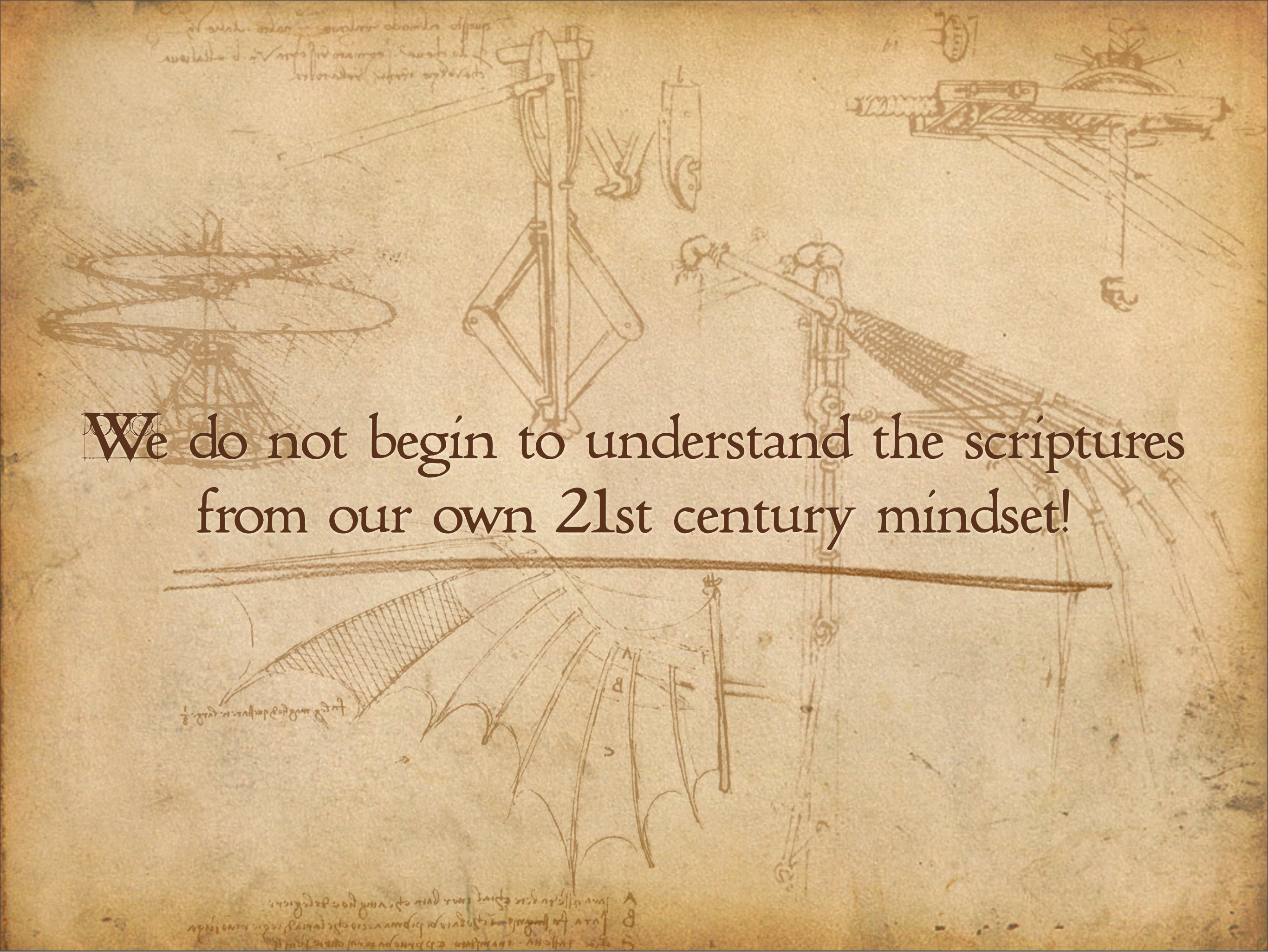
According to 1 Enoch 10.12, this judgment was to occur "seventy generations" from Enoch, during which time the angels who sinned were to be kept in bonds "until the day of the consummation, the great judgment in which the age shall be consummated" (16.1-2). It should be noted that according to Luke (who claims to have "traced the course of all things accurately" in Luke 1.1-4), there are exactly seventy generations from the generation of Enoch to the generation of Jesus Christ (Luke 3.23-37).

From a preterist perspective, 1 Enoch adds considerable weight to the many passages in the New Testament which clearly indicate that the consummation of the age together with Christ's second coming took place in A.D. 70 at the destruction of Jerusalem. This being the case, it should not surprise us to learn that 1 Enoch was banned by Hilary, Jerome, and Augustine and was subsequently lost to Western Christendom for over a thousand years. Frankly, it was suppressed. Why? Because it could not be made to fit their idea that Christ's coming had not yet been fulfilled. 1 Enoch's "seventy generations" was just too troublesome. It could not be made to stretch past the First Century.

Jubilees was also considered scripture by the early Christians. It contains an expanded version of the days of creation in Genesis and also quotes Enoch. Because Jubilees quotes Enoch, it too is associated with false prophesy and was subsequently removed.

Ancient Context

We must become immersed in their ancient culture and define terms the way they did. The only way to do this is to study their own writings and cultural materials.



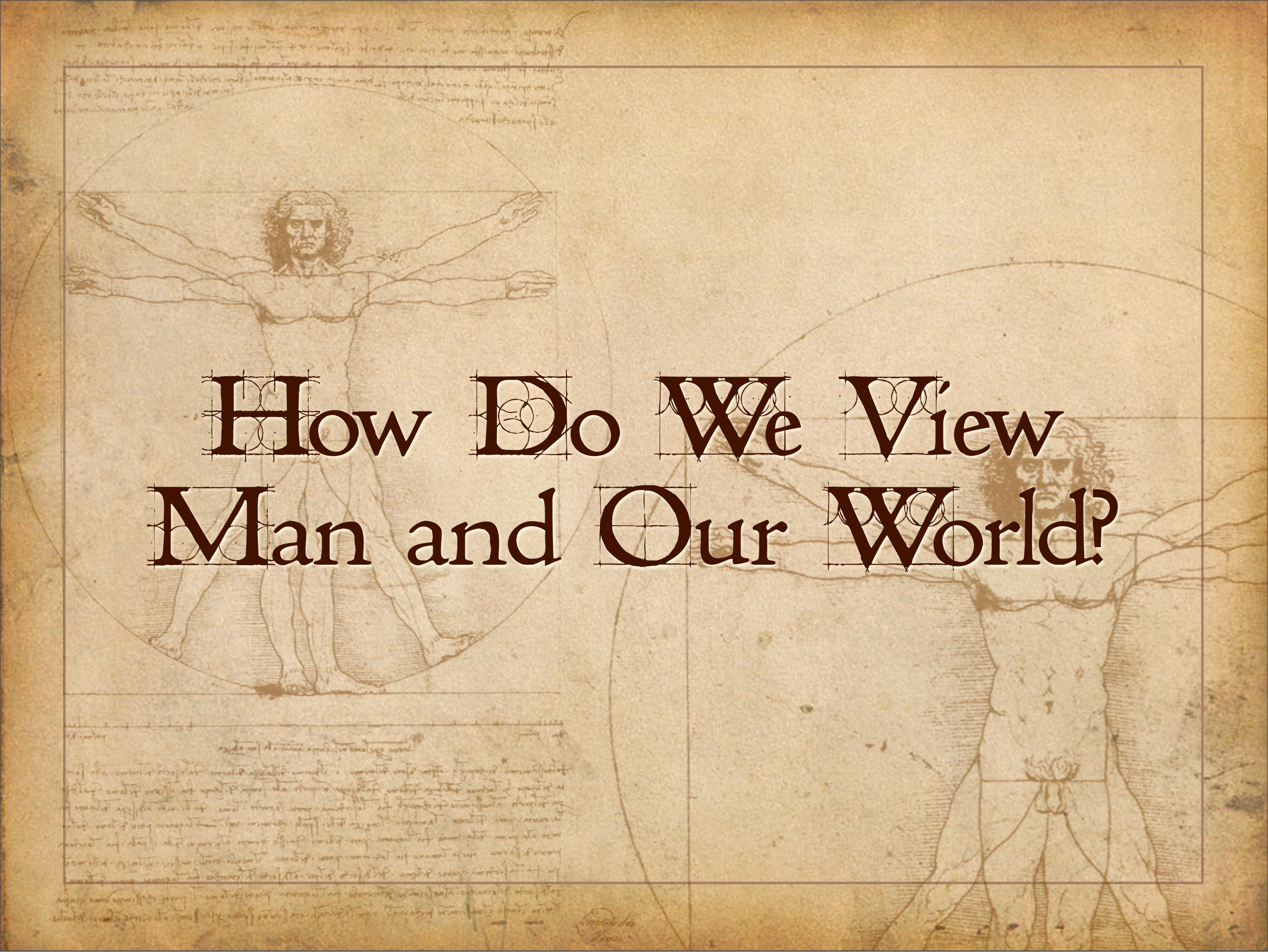
We do not begin to understand the scriptures
from our own 21st century mindset!

Consider This

We see only what we look for.



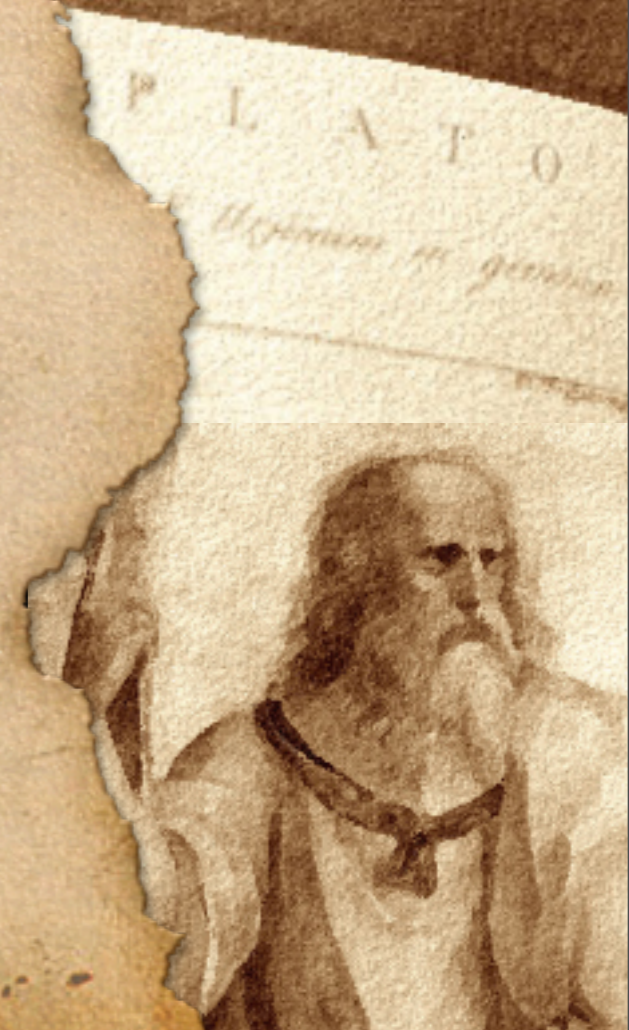
In the ceiling of the Sistine chapel there is the familiar picture of the creation of Adam, and we tend to focus on the Creator in the cloud, stretching out his finger towards Adam. But look closely at the cloud and you will see that it is shaped like the human brain. The Creator enthroned in the human mind? What was Michelangelo saying about the creation of Adam? Was this the tradition he received, or was it an inspiration? And at the side of the Creator, in the very center of the brain, there is a dark haired female figure: Wisdom, beside the Creator as Adam is brought to life. Because we see only what we look for in that picture, we miss Wisdom, both who she is and where she is; and what is true of this picture is also true of the ancient texts. Reading with familiar eyes - what we often call the traditional reading - we miss what is actually there. We have a tendency to see what we have only been taught to see, to hear what we have been taught to hear, and to use only what we have always used, whether or not that is true to the original, or even to the Scriptures.



How Do We View
Man and Our World?

It's No Secret...

- ◆ That modern culture is deeply influenced by Plato and his mentor Socrates.
- ◆ These men laid the foundation of modern sciences, mathematics, and Western philosophy.
- ◆ Taught a dualistic nature of man.

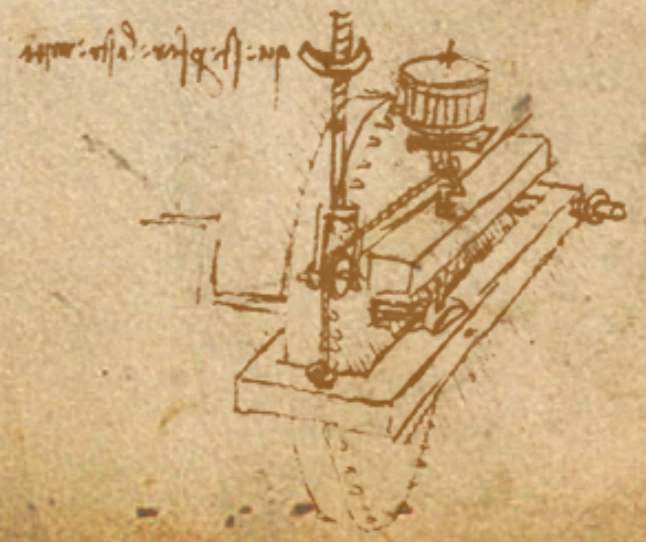
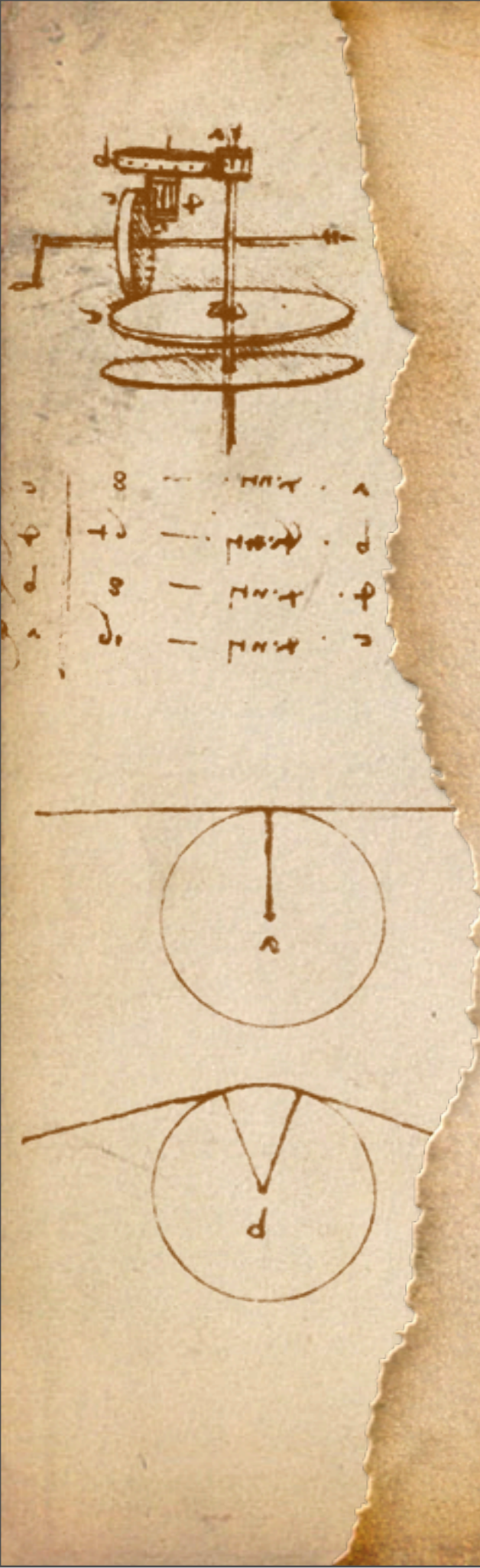


A 'dualist' is someone who believes that Good and Evil — or God and the Devil — are independent and more or less equal forces in the world.

One problem with Plato's dualism was that, though he speaks of the soul as imprisoned in the body, there is no clear account of what binds a particular soul to a particular body. Their difference in nature makes the union a mystery.

Scientific Influence

- ◆ Our lives are influenced daily by science and dualistic thinking.
- ◆ Science is the presupposition behind most of our thoughts.
- ◆ It also influences how we begin reading the scriptures whether we realize it or not.



How many of us have iPods, cell phones, computers etc.? Be honest, don't we analyze everything through scientific glasses?

We want to know how things work by our very nature. We are inquisitive creatures.

Before Becoming Preterist

- ◆ How did you understand the “Heavens and Earth” terminology? (Physical universe?)
- ◆ How about the “elements” that melt with fervent heat? (Periodic Table elements?)
- ◆ How did you understand the nature of the Resurrection? (Physical bodies out of graves?)
- ◆ How about the curse in Genesis? (Physical change?). Or, “The Death” in Adam? (Physical?)

After Becoming Preterist

- ◆ “Heavens and Earth” terminology is now understood as the **covenantal** people of God.
- ◆ The “elements” are now understood as the “elementary” principles of the **covenantal** Law.
- ◆ The nature of the Resurrection is now understood to be the **covenantal** status change in Christ Jesus.
- ◆ The curse in the Garden was the **covenantal** separation from eternal life. This was the “Death”.

Do we see a theme here?

Covenant

If...

- ◆ the "Heavens and Earth are covenantal
- ◆ the Law is covenantal
- ◆ the curse is covenantal
- ◆ the Death and the Life are covenantal
- ◆ ...and if the Resurrection is covenantal
- ◆ How about the Genesis Creation account?

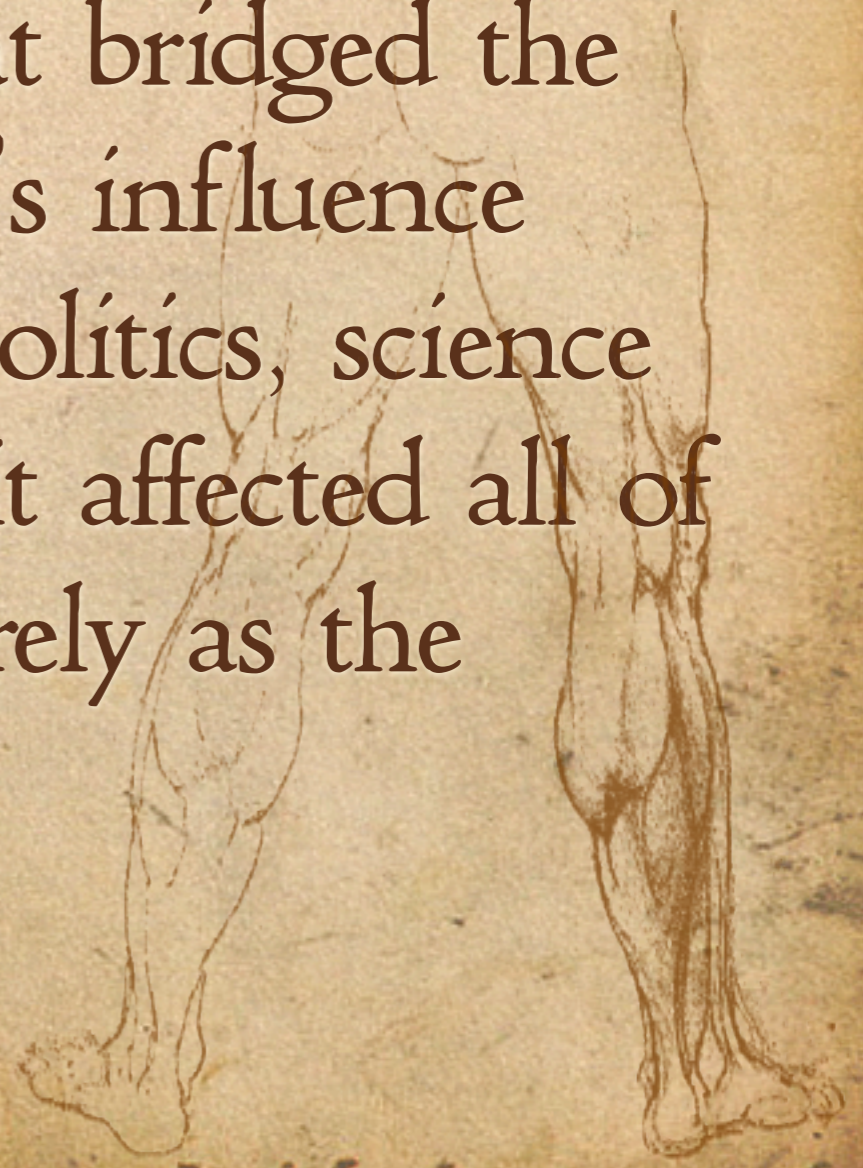


Preterism and
Renaissance **T**hinking

The Renaissance

The word Renaissance actually means "rebirth".

It was a cultural movement that took place in the late middle ages. It's that period that bridged the middle ages and the modern era. It's influence affected literature, philosophy, art, politics, science medicine, and religion. In essence, it affected all of life. I really see the Renaissance purely as the pursuit of truth.



Why?

The people of that era understood that in order to progress, they needed to look back into history and learn from the past.

The fuel for this rebirth was the rediscovery of ancient texts that had been forgotten by Western civilization, but were preserved in the Byzantine Empire otherwise known as the Eastern Roman Empire.

Cultural Change Took Place

They went back into Roman history and studied their architecture, commerce, art, transit and philosophies. These brought new ideas and great cultural changes.

It is most well known for...

The Arts and Innovation.

People began to examine concepts like lighting, shading, contour, size, foreshortening, surface, shadow, overlapping, and density. In other words, they examined their world, and determined how to artistically reproduce the natural world in which they lived.

This produced...

very powerful and fantastic visual images of things like angels and demons.

Combined with philosophy, this created a vehicle of influence for the Roman church and its power.

This natural progression of images produced imaginative stories like Dante's Inferno, and entertaining dramas portraying comedies and tragedies found in the likes of Shakespeare and others. This is emotional material that has real power!



Preterism needs it's own Renaissance



By creating visual images, music, literature, and information based upon the ancient Hebrew understanding and their culture, our modern world will forever be changed in a way that brings lasting peace and happiness.



Symbols and **S**ubstance
In **G**enesis

Genesis

For thousands of years many questions have been asked concerning this ancient text.

Some of these might include:

- ◆ Is Genesis literally true? Or, in other words, is it historically accurate?
- ◆ Was the fruit that Adam and Eve had access to, the means by which one could live eternally?
- ◆ Did animals not eat each other?
- ◆ Did the snake actually speak? Etc.

Truth

Genesis is profoundly true, but as to the question of history, it is not a relevant question because it was not written as history. Even though it contains historical elements and people, the Bible must be treated with respect and be allowed to speak for itself. It is the literature of a pre-philosophical culture, in which very important issues were discussed by means of vivid imagery and elements which involved things like talking snakes.

Anyone who has seen pictures of the Lamb with seven eyes and seven horns in the Book of Revelation knows that taking things too literally helps no one.

Neatly Woven

Like a basket, Genesis uses poetry, prophecy, historical places, apocalyptic imagery, and morality in a unique way as to convey its message. It is very much constructed like the New Testament Revelation.

Morality

Truth

Imagery

Poetry

Prophecy

Places

People

Covenant

Symbols

- ◆ Symbols in Genesis and throughout the Old Testament, are described as shadows or the former things by the apostles.
- ◆ Shadows are determined by their substance when light is cast upon it.
- ◆ The substance in front of all these symbols is intended to point the reader to Jesus the Christ and his redemptive plan toward His covenant children.

This means that the Old
Testament must always be
interpreted in light of the
New Testament.

The substance always
defines the shadows!

Example:

He also says, "In the beginning, O Lord, you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. They will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment. You will roll them up like a robe; like a garment they will be changed - Hebrews 1:10-12

Does this sound like Genesis 1:1?

Example Continued:

In that He says, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away. -Hebrews 8:13

Does this sound like the garment that was wearing out in the previous Hebrews 1 passage? In this light, how does this writer define Genesis 1:1?

Covenant!

Covenant Animals, Plants and Heavenly Bodies.

"And in that day will I make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven, and with the creeping things of the ground: and I will break the bow and the sword and the battle out of the earth, and will make them to lie down safely. And I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving kindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the LORD.

Covenant Animals, Plants and Heavenly Bodies. (Continued)

And it shall come to pass in that day, 'I will hear,' saith the LORD,
'I will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth; And the earth
shall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oil; and they shall hear Jezreel.
And I will sow her unto me in the earth; and I will have mercy upon
her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to them which were not
my people, 'Thou art my people'; and they shall say, 'Thou art my God'."

-Hosea 2:18-23 (NKJV)

Covenant Animals, Plants and Heavenly Bodies In Enoch

Selective reading

Animals in the second Dream-Vision of Enoch

In the second Dream-Vision section of the Book of Enoch is a symbolic account of the history of Israel, that uses animals to represent human beings and human beings to represent angels.

- White color for moral purity; Black color for sin and contamination of the fallen angels; Red the color for blood reference to his martyrdom
- White bull is Adam; Female heifer is Eve; Red calf is Abel; * Black calf is Cain; White calf is Seth;
- White bull / man is Noah; White bull is Shem; Red bull is Japheth; Black bull is Ham; Lord of the sheep is God; Fallen star is either Samyaza or Azazel; Elephants are Giants; Camels are Nephilim; Asses are Elioud;
- Sheep represent the faithful; Rams are leaders; Herds are the tribes of Israel; Wild Asses are Ishmael, and his descendants including the Midianites; Wild Boars describe Esau and his descendants, Edom and Amalek; Bears (Hyenas/Wolves in Ethiopic) are the Egyptians; Dogs are Philistines; Tigers are Arimathea; Hyenas are Assyrians; Ravens (Crows) are Seleucids (Syrians); Kites are Ptolemies; Eagles are possibly Macedonians; Foxes are Ammonites and Moabites;

Enoch also describes the release from the Ark along with three bulls... white, red and black describe Shem, Japheth, and Ham in 90:9. It also covers the death of Noah described as the white bull and the creation of 70 nations which were scattered at Babel(Genesis 10-11). I relate this to the multiplication of the plants on the land and are scattered at Babel. Interesting side note: How many disciples does Jesus send out to reclaim his land in Luke 11? 70!

"And they began to bring forth beasts of the field and birds, so that there arose different genera: lions, tigers, wolves, dogs, hyenas, wild boars, foxes, squirrels, swine, falcons, vultures, kites, eagles, and ravens" 90:10.

It goes on to describe the story of Moses and Aaron (90:13-15) including the miracle of the sea parting for them to pass, and the creation of the stone commandments. Eventually arriving at a "pleasant and glorious land" (90:40) where attacked by dogs (Philistines), foxes (Ammonites, Moabites) and wild boars (Esau's clan).

"And that sheep whose eyes were opened saw that ram, which was amongst the sheep, till it †forsook its glory† and began to butt those sheep, and trampled upon them, and behaved itself unseemly. 45. And the Lord of the sheep sent the lamb to another lamb and raised it to being a ram and leader of the sheep instead of that ram which had †forsaken its glory†." - This is David replacing Saul as leader of Israel.

This type of imagery continues to describe the history of Israel all the up to the Maccabean revolt of 167 BC against the Seleucids. This is not a modern invention!

No matter how one classifies Enoch, Jubilees or many of the other ancient documents, making animals men, plants, heavenly bodies like the Heaven and Earth, angels or trees planted by rivers which symbolize wisdom are commonplace in the ancient world as shown here. They help us understand this ancient way of thinking! Yes?

James Jordan Quotes

“Let us look back at the event recorded in John 21. To begin with, we have to remember that in Biblical symbolism the land represents Israel and the sea represents the gentiles. The land is above the sea, with mountains on it reaching up toward heaven. The land is a “priestly” territory between God’s heaven and the rest of the world. Throughout the Old Testament the gentiles are often spoken of in terms of the sea, or are reached by crossing waters of one sort or another. This land-sea symbolism is applied consistently in the book of Revelation to distinguish the Jews and Judaizers from the gentiles.”

James Jordan Quotes Continued

“CORRESPONDING TO THIS, THE PRIESTLY PEOPLE ARE SYMBOLIZED AS SHEEP, GOATS, AND OXEN, WHILE THE GENTILES ARE SYMBOLIZED BY FISH.

Jonah, for instance, is swallowed by a big fish and then spat out again. This symbolized Israel's going into Assyrian exile and then being returned to the land.

Thus, the fish was Assyria, a place where Israel would be protected while dwelling in the gentile sea.” -James Jordan

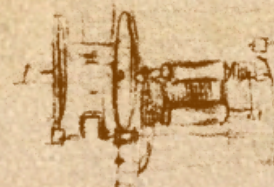
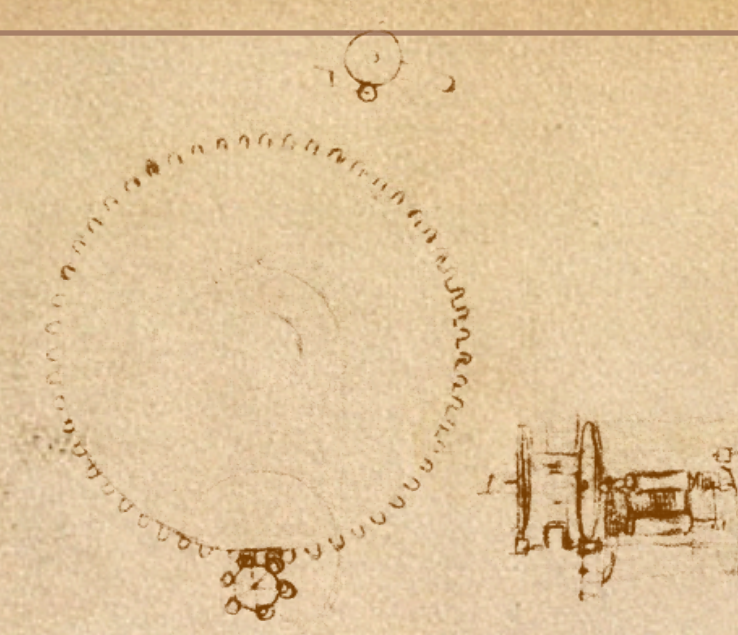
James Jordan Quotes Continued

But as it happens, a theology presented in terms of plants, animals, stars, blood, guts, hair, smell, water, etc. - which is how God does theology - turns out to be very useful in dealing with pagans who think in the same categories. - James Jordan

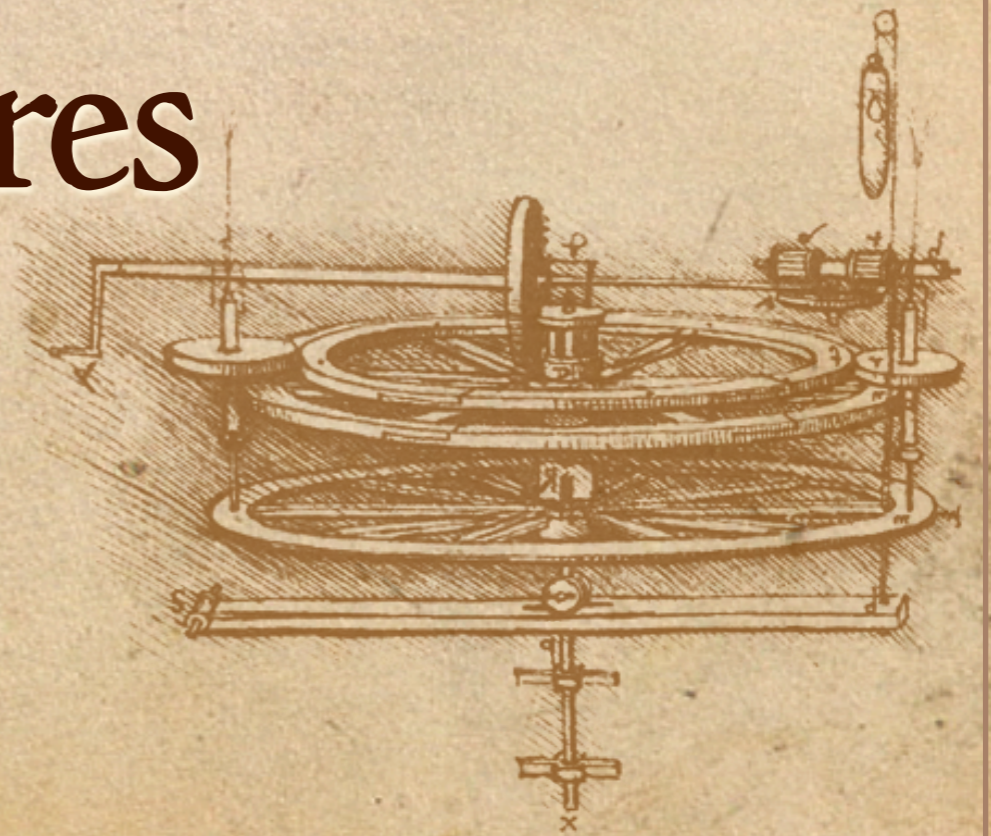
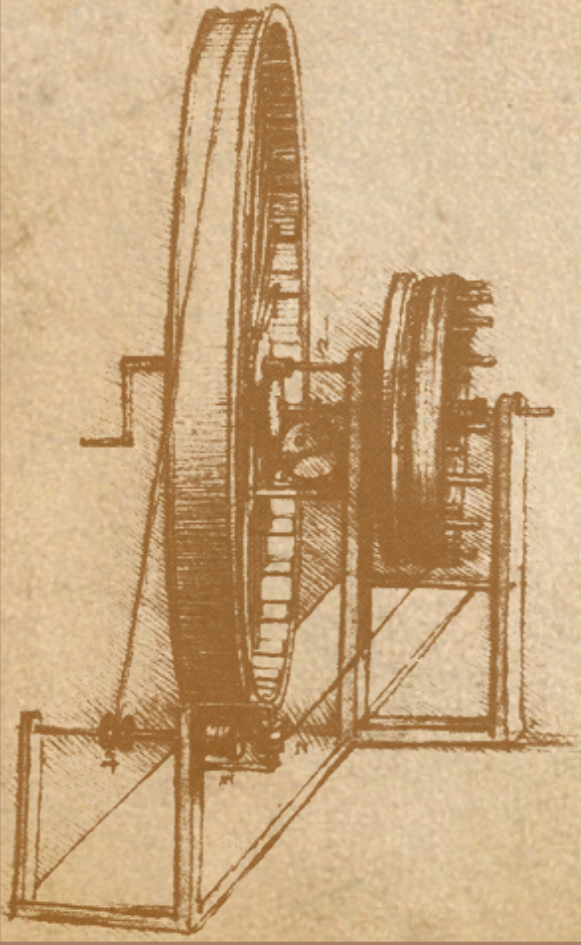
Substance

The substance of Genesis is not about magical fruit, talking snakes, or whether animals did or did not eat each other!

The substance of Genesis is Jesus the messiah, his covenant creation (his children), and their need for him.



The Continuity of the Scriptures



One Last "Toledot" Example

- (Genesis 2:4) "These are the generations of the heavens and the earth."
- (Genesis 5:1) "This is the book of the generations of Adam"
- (Genesis 6:9) "These are the generations of Noah."
- (Genesis 10:1) "These are the generations of Shem, Ham, Japheth..."
- (Genesis 11:10) "These are the generations of Shem"
- (Genesis 11:27) "These are the generations of Terah."
- (Genesis 25:12) "These are the generations of Ishmael." Etc.

This goes on 3 more times in Genesis. The point is that these are all about people! To make the first one about the literal universe, is in my opinion making the same mistake that the futurist uses in the Matthew 24:34 passage concerning the word generation!

The Bible Is Consistent!

From beginning to end, the Bible uses a consistent and very powerful artistic imagery in order to promote its message of God's redemptive plan. This imagery is unique to the ancients and makes Jesus the central focus of all these things.

It is Jesus who is the second Adam and who restores all things lost in the first Adam. And, it is He who restores the symbol of wisdom (The Tree of Life) in the garden which we now inhabit so that our eyes and ears may see differently and restrain knowledge apart from Him.



Conclusion

To the pioneers come the arrows!

We are those pioneers who are laying the foundation for those who will eventually see these things. We are the agents of change.

Last Thought

Continue to love truth, and share it with love and respect, being mindful that each person is growing in God's knowledge and wisdom at a level different than yours.

Love your brother and sister, and show them the grace God has shown you!

May God bless you!

Thank You!