

The Prologue of the Fourth Gospel

The Life & Light of the Divine Logos (Jn 1:1-18)

A. Introduction

B. The Prologue of John's Gospel

A Relation of the Word to God, creation, humanity (1-5)

B Testimony of John the Baptist (6-8)

C Coming of the Light/Word and rejection (9-11)

D Receiving the Word & becoming children of God (12-13)

C' Coming of the Word and reception (14)

B' Testimony of John the Baptist (15)

A' Relation of the Word to humanity, re-creation, God (16-18)

C. The Word (*Logos*)

¹In the beginning was the Word (*logos*), and the Word (*logos*) was with God, and the Word (*logos*) was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. (NRSV)

1. The Creative Word (*memre*) of God

T. Neofiti on Gen 1:1. "From the beginning with wisdom the Word (*memre*) of the Lord created and perfected the skies and the earth"

2. The Wisdom (*Hokmah*) of God

Prov 8:30 I [Wisdom] was beside him as a master workman.

3. The Word Preexisted

4. The Word was with God

5. The Word was (same quality as) God

D. The Life (*Zōē*)

³ All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has (*and continues to*) come into being ⁴ in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. (NRSV)

E. The Light (*Phōs*)

a. The Light is invincible

What has (*and continues to*) come into being ⁴ in him was life, and the life was the light (*phōs*) of all people. ⁵ The light (*phōs*) shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it....

b. The Light enlightens everyone

⁹ The true light (*phōs*), which enlightens (*phōtidzei*) everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. (NRSV)

F. The Children (*Tekna*) of God

¹² But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God. (NRSV)

G. The Word became flesh (*Sarx*)

¹⁴ And the Word (*logos*) became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. (NRSV)

Gal 5:17. "For what the flesh (*sarx*) desires is opposed to the Spirit (*pneuma*), and what the Spirit (*pneuma*), desires is opposed to the flesh (*sarx*)."

H. Reflections

1. The Logos/Word of God is a metaphor used to describe God's creative action in the universe.
2. The Logos/Word as creative action of God is the Source of human life and enlightenment.
3. The Logos/Word is universally available to every human being. It is the Spark of Life and Light for every person, whether they have heard of Jesus Christ or not.
4. The Logos/Word can be received, believed, yielded to by anyone anywhere—whether they have heard of Jesus Christ or not—because the Logos/Word has giving Life and Light to every human being.
5. The Logos/Word became uniquely and supreme identified with the person, Jesus of Nazareth, such that Jesus has become, from that point forward, the definitive incarnation of the Logos. Whatever does not measure up to Jesus Christ is not of God (some Scriptures). This means:
 - Accepting the life and teachings of Jesus is the norm for recognizing and nurturing the Divine Life and Light in us and others.
 - Looking for how much Divine Life and Light non-Christians and Christians have already and then trying to encourage them to walk the path of Christ and realize Christ within them.
 - Realizing God knows what it is like to be a human. God knows the limitations, sufferings, and joys that all humans share. We have no excuse. We cannot say that God does not know what it is like to suffer pain and temptation. We cannot say that God remains aloof and far away. God is so close that we need to take special efforts to "see" God.