

HANDOUT #1: PROLOGUE

We will begin, then, with the creation of the world and with God its Maker, for the first fact that you must grasp is this: the renewal of creation has been wrought by the Self-same Word who made it in the beginning. There is thus no inconsistency between creation and salvation; for the One Father has employed the same agent for both works, effecting the salvation of the world through the same Word who made it at first.

–St. Athanasius, *On the Incarnation* [1] 4th century

Writing in the Greek language, the inspired writer expresses Jesus as the divine Logos. This significant word, logos, is used 330 times in the New Testament but it is used specifically to express the Second Person of the Divine Trinity only 7 times in the New Testament:

Four times in John’s Gospel

John 1:1	“In the beginning was the Word : the Word was with God and the Word was God.
----------	---

John 1:14	“The Word became flesh, he lived among us, and we saw his glory....”
-----------	---

Once in 2nd Timothy

2Tim. 4:2	“I charge you, in the name of his appearing and of his kingdom: proclaim the Word and, welcome or unwelcome insist on it.”
-----------	---

Once in the First Epistle of St. John

John 1:1	“Something which has existed since the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our own eyes, which we have watched and touched with our own hands, the Word of life—his is our theme.”
----------	---

And once in The Revelation of Jesus Christ to His servant John

Rev. 19:13	He is known by the name, The Word of God.”
------------	---

Looking carefully at Genesis 1:1-3 do you see the mystery of the Most Holy Trinity hidden in these 3 verses? Hint#1: the Hebrew word ruah means both wind and spirit. Hint #2 read John 1:4 and 9. The Hebrew words are in bold print.

God the Father	“In the beginning God [Elohim] created heaven and earth.” Genesis 1:1
God the Holy Spirit	“Now the earth was a formless void, there was darkness over the deep, with a divine wind [ruah] sweeping over the waters.” Genesis 1:2 [divine ruah = God the Holy Spirit]
God the Son	“God said , ‘Let there be light , and there was light.’ Genesis 1:3 [Jesus is both the Word and the Light]

It is also interesting to note that the Hebrew word elohim is the plural of the Hebrew word for god (the Hebrew words *el* and *eloha* can mean “god” as in a pagan deity but these words are capitalized when referring to the One true God). Only God’s Covenant name, Yahweh, is used more often than the plural form Elohim for God the Father in the Old Testament [Elohim = ca 2,600 times; Yahweh ca. 6,800 times]. For more information on the different names of God in the Bible please see “The Many Names of God” in the Documents section.

HANDOUT #2: THE PROLOGUE

Please read John 1:14-18. The Incarnation of Christ and John's Witness of Christ

Verse 14: *The Word became flesh, he lived among us, and we saw his glory, the glory that he has from the Father as only Son of the Father, full of grace and truth.*

A more literal translation is "only begotten from the Father". The use of the word "only-begotten" [monogene] is important because it is only used 5 times in the New Testament of Christ as the Son of God and it is used this way only in the writings of John the Apostle: Jn 1:14; 1:18; 3:16; 3:18; and 1 Jn 4:9.

Jesus Christ the "only begotten Son" of God (New Jerusalem translation)

John 1:14	"the glory that he has from the Father as the only [begotten/monogene] Son of the Father,..."
John 1:18	"No one has ever seen God; it is the only [begotten/monogene] Son, who is close to the Father's heart..."
John 3:16	"For this is how God so loved the world: he gave his only [begotten/monogene] Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life."
John 3:18	"No one who believes in him will be judged; but whoever does not believe is judged already, because that person does not believe in the name of God's only [begotten/monogene] Son."
1John 4:9	"This is the revelation of God's love for us, that God send his only [begotten/monogene] Son into the world that we might have life through him."

In each case the Greek texts use the word "monogene" = mono/only and gene/begotten.

The meaning of this word "only begotten" is crucial to a correct understanding of these passages because this word clearly signifies that Jesus is not one of many god/sons and that He comes directly from the God the Father and not from an earthly father. He is "begotten" He is not created as we are created.

M. Hunt copyright 2001 www.AgapeBibleStudy.com

HANDOUT #3: The Prologue

The Prologue in verses 1 – 18 :

1. This section states themes that will be repeated in the next 21 chapters.
2. The Prologue is like Sts. Matthew and Luke's infancy narratives which deals with Jesus' roots and origins.
3. The structure of the Prologue may be influenced by "Wisdom Personified" (see Wisdom 9:9-12 and Proverbs 8:22-36). Wisdom was with God, wisdom shares in creation, wisdom is God's gift to human-kind. The same progression is found in the Prologue.
4. The Prologue moves like a pendulum. Each point on the left will be matched by a point on the right.

The Word of God verses 1-2	→	Role in Re-creation verse 17
Gift to humankind verses 4-5	→	Gift to humankind verses 4-5
Testimony of John verses 6-8	→	Testimony of John verse 15
Word enters the world verses 9-11	→	Incarnation verse 14

5. God reveals himself through creation (verses 2-5), but He also reveals Himself through the Old Testament (verses 10-13). Through the Word we become the children of God (verses 12-13). God finally reveals himself in creation (verse 14) when *The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.*

Comparisons between Genesis and the Prologue of the Gospel of St. John

1. Genesis refers to beginning of time → Gospel refers to absolute beginning.
2. In Genesis God creates by His Word, "God said, let there be light..." → Gospel = God creates through His Living Word
3. In Genesis God's creation reaches its climax when creating man "in his own image and likeness" → Gospel = Incarnate Word culminates when man is raised- new creation, to the dignity of being a son of God.