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JOHN 1:1-18

Title - Subject:
The Creator becomes the Savior

by
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1:1

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

The fourth Gospel was written by John. He wrote it when the first three, the so-called synoptic Gospels, had already been written.

He writes in Greek. Some still speculate on the Hebrew-Aramaic origin of the first three Gospels, but it is sure that no Hebrew original ever existed for John.

He begins his gospel using the very same words found at the beginning of the Greek translation of Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning."

He is clearly talking of the beginning spoken of in Genesis, the beginning of all time, the creation of the world itself.

Genesis 1:1, reads, "In the beginning God¹ created the heaven and the earth."

It was fascinating when I read the commentary of a Jewish man, writing about the incredible meaning of this passage here. Summarizing our understanding of this passage, we can say that John simply expands the words of Genesis with their natural development. Because being God the creator of the world, he had to be its Savior also.

In Genesis 1:3 we read: "And God said, Let there be light: and there was light."

God spoke the world into existence. It was so natural for John to write that "In the beginning was the Word."

Reading the whole passage, we have already learned that the Word is a person and that he became a man, Jesus of Nazareth, our Savior.

He adds: "the Word was with God" making it clear: the Word is a person.

He says more of this person: "the Word was God".

Though distinct from the God he was with, he was God.

¹ Genesis 1:1 in Hebrew reads, בראשית ברא אלהים את השמים ואת הארץ

The word God in the original is *Elohim*, which is plural, though followed by a singular verb.

Verse 2 says: "And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness *was* upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."

We see here the Trinity at work. Those who fail to see it, fail to see how the three divine persons wonderfully worked the Creation as well as the Redemption of man.

The first two times the word God occurs, the Greek has a definite article, *ho Theos*. The third time, when applied to the Word, it does not have the article. Jehovah's witnesses will knock at your door and tell you that the lack of the definite article implies inferiority in the divinity of the Word.

But it is not so.

Theos without the article is found in this very passage in reference to the Godhead. See the Greek in verse 6, 12, 13, 18.

The meaning of the word *Theos* without the article is peculiar to the Greek language, since it indicates quality². The definite article used in the first two occurrences of God, show identity.

We are facing here one of the strongest Trinitarian statements in the Bible: the two distinct persons of the Trinity, the Father and the Son, are identified and both recognized the Divine attributes of God.

So the Word is God, but not God the Father.

1: 2 - 3

The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made.

The text says that the Word was. It does not say that the Word was created. If there ever was a right moment to make it clear that the Word - and by consequence the Son of God - is a created being, this was the right time to do it. On the contrary, John says that at the beginning of time itself, the Word was.³

He goes on saying that ALL things were created by him. And he says it in a more undisputable way adding that NOTHING was made without him.

I wonder if there is any way it could have been written better and if those that pervert the truth of this passage have any excuse at all.

The apostle Paul had written his epistles before John wrote his Gospel. He wrote: **"By him were all things created..." Colossians 1:17.**

The same wonderful truth is taught at the beginning of the epistle to the Hebrews, which reads: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days

² See for example Mark 1:1. There it says, "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the son of God". The word son of God in Greek is "Υἱοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ". No article before the word "son" in the original. Son here is intended in a qualitative way, he is the Son of God, and for sure not "a son of God." Similar constructions can be found in many other places of the New Testament.

spoken unto us by *his* Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, **by whom also he made the worlds."**

1:4

In him was life; and the life was the light of men

Jesus openly said: "I am the way, the truth and the LIFE." John 14:6.

He also taught his disciples: "For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself" John 5:26.

Jesus was never created. He has life in himself.

1:5

And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

The light was created on the first day. It was spoken into existence by God. God did not create the darkness. Darkness is the absence of light. The sentence says, in other words: Light has power to remove darkness, but darkness has no power over light.

1: 6 - 8

There was a man sent from God, whose name *was* John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all *men* through him might believe. He was not that Light, but *was sent* to bear witness of that Light.

How can we underestimate our personal contribution to the cause of Jesus? We all are called to testify of the Light and the Life that is in him.

When reading this passage for this study, I was tempted not to read verses from 6 to 8. Then I realized that if I did so, I would remove man's contribution entirely.

God wants us to have a part in His plan. We are not only called to be saved, but also to be witnesses of the wonders of God.

Acts 1: 8 reads, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

Never underestimate the importance of your witness to the Truth. If you are here today it is because someone witnessed to you about Jesus. And may be your witness is the only way someone can be saved.

1: 9 - 10

That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not."

What a sad thing. He is the true Light. He is the Creator of everything, but the creatures were not interested in knowing Him

Romans 1:19-23 reads: "Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed *it* unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Because that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things."

1: 11

He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

The world did not receive Him. So he came to his own, to Israel. But even they would not receive him.

1: 12

But as many as received him, to them gave he power⁴ to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name: Who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

God's invitation is universal.

No matter who you are, if you believe you have the power, the authority, like others also translate, to become a child of God.

This "power" is given to the believer because God's Word and promises are true.

Whenever I promise something to my son, in due time he will remind me of what I said: he will have "power" over me.

We have the power to become the sons of God, "because if you confess the Lord Jesus, and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from *the* dead, you shall be saved." Romans 10:9.

⁴ Or, "authority", "right"

This is the promise God made to us.

1: 14

And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."

The Agent of Creation Himself became a man. John here raises his voice, claiming the authority of an eye-witness. The word beheld here, in Greek is the verb *theaomai*. It is the root of the word theatre in English. John here wants to communicate the reader how sure he was of what he saw!

Elsewhere the same apostle wrote: "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (For the life was manifested, and we have seen *it*, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship *is* with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. "- 1 John 1:1-3

John was an eyewitness and had the full intelligence of what he saw

1: 15 - 17

John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me. And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, *but* grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

The old dispensation is through. The law was before Jesus, now it is the time for Grace and Truth. We are no more under the law of Moses, because we are saved by grace, in Christ Jesus:

Ephesians 2 : 4 - 10, "But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love *with* which He loved us (even when we were dead in sins) has made us alive together with Christ (by grace you are saved), and has raised *us* up together and made *us* sit together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in *His* kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

For by grace you are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are *His* workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them."

1: 18

No man hath seen God ⁵ at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared *him*.

Some believe the Trinity to be an abstract doctrine, something closer to philosophical speculation than to a reality. It is not so. In this passage we learn that God, that was invisible, became visible in Jesus Christ. In His Son, the God that men could not understand (see) became accessible (visible).

Colossians 1:15 says that Jesus: ***“is the image of the invisible God.”***

Colossians 2:9: ***“For in Him - Jesus - dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.”***

In Hebrews 1:1-3 we read: ***“God, who at many times and in many ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds, who being the shining splendor of His glory, and the express image of His essence, and upholding all things by the word of His power, through Himself cleansing of our sins, He sat down on the right of the Majesty on high.”***

So, there can't be a more practical and vital doctrine than this.

We live the reality of our triune God every day.

Ephesians 4:4-6, ***“There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”***

It is so clear and so intimately true, because this is the way Christians know God, “above all”, the Father, “through all”, the Son and “in you all”, the Holy Spirit.

Is this theory or a daily reality for every Christian? As confirmed in Ephesians 2:18, where we read: ***“For through him (Jesus) we both (Jews and Gentiles) have access by one Spirit unto the Father.”***

The triune God that was at work when the world was created, is at work today, in us, the redeemed.

⁵ “God” has no article in the original Greek in this case also.

Conclusion

Our wonderful invisible God sent His Son, by whom He created everything, to save us.

All the religions in the world boast philosophy, prophets, truths, all they can claim to be or teach, but what the Bible says about Jesus can be said only about Jesus: He is the Son of God, the Creator of the world, who became man to save us.

There is no greater, wonderful truth than this!

The end of the discussion is simple:

1. Be saved.
2. Be a witness.

The decision to make... **Be saved**

The responsibility ... If you are saved, **be a witness** – someone's salvation may depend upon it.

“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.”⁶

⁶ 2 Corinthians 13:14