

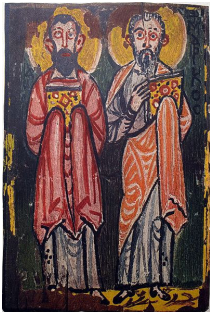
The Gospel of
JOHN
Chapters I-10

Lesson 1:
Introduction & Prologue
Chapter 1:1-18

The Gospel of
JOHN

Lesson 1


- Introduction**
 - *Authorship*
 - *Date & place of writing*
 - *Purpose in writing*
 - *Important manuscripts*
- Prologue (1:1-18)**
 - *The Word in the Beginning (1:1-4)*
 - *The Light of Men (1:5-13)*
 - *The Word Became Flesh (1:14-18)*



Codex Washingtonensis
(ca AD 450)

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The Gospel of
JOHN
Authorship



John, an Apostle of Jesus Christ

- Although, John never mentions his own name, almost all scholars have attributed this book to his writing.
- One of the “son’s of Thunder (Zebedee)”
- The apostle “whom Jesus loved” is the writer of this book (Jn 21:20-24)
- One of Jesus’ most trusted disciples

Events in the Life of John, the Apostle

- One of the first disciples to be called to follow Jesus
- Witnessed the transfiguration
- Was spoken to by Jesus while on the cross
- Given the responsibility and care of Mary, Jesus’ mother
- Saw Jesus alive after His resurrection
- Saw Jesus ascend into heaven before the Pentecost (Acts 1-2)
- Banished to the Isle of Patmos where he recorded the Revelation
- Thought to have been the only apostle to die a natural death

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The Gospel of
JOHN
Date & Place of Writing

Irenaeus of Lyons

(~AD 180) recorded, “John, the disciple of the Lord, who also had leaned upon his breast, had himself published a Gospel during his residence in **Ephesus** in Asia.”

“Most conservative scholars suggest a date around **AD 85-90**, when the author had achieved advanced age but was still in full possession of his memory and active in ministry.” (Tenny)

Think about the influence of this Gospel with the writings of his 3 Epistles and his book of Revelation..... if they were truly written at the same time and place.



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The Gospel of **JOHN**
Purpose of Writing

John 20:30-31 And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written **that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ**, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

Comparison to the Synoptic Gospels

Matthew possibly written to convince the **Jews** through the use of OT teachings

Mark possibly written for a **Roman** audience, interested in what Jesus did

Luke possibly written to convince the more culturally refined **Greek** (the most chronological and orderly account of Jesus' life

*“Probably it will not be too wrong to suggest that the Gospel of John was written for **Gentile Christians** who had already acquired a basic knowledge of the life and works of Jesus but who needed further confirmation of their faith.” (Tenny)*

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The Gospel of **JOHN**
Introduction

Manuscripts (MSS) Compared to Ancient Literature

Author	Book	Date Written	Time to Earliest Existing MSS (years)	No. of Copies
Homer	Iliad	~800 BC	400	643
Herodotus	History	480-425 BC	1,300	8
Thucydides	History of Peloponnesian War	460-400 BC	1,300	8
Plato	(Various)	400-350 BC	1,300	7
Demosthenes	Philippics	350-322 BC	1,400	200
Caesar	Gallic Wars	100-44 BC	1,000	10
Livy	History of Rome	59 BC-AD 17	400	20
Tacitus	Annals	AD 100	1,000	20
Pliny the Younger	Natural History	AD 61-113	750	7
(Various)	New Testament	AD 50-96	50	5,735*

* "The Text of the New Testament, Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration", 4th Edition, 2005 (p. 50) by Bruce Metzger and Bart Ehrman

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The Gospel of **JOHN**
Introduction

Important Manuscripts

ⲑ⁵²

- **AD 100-150**
- Uncials on Papyri
- Text-Type: Alexandrian
- Portion of **John 18:31-33, 37-38**
- Location: Chester Beatty Library (Dublin, Ireland)

Oldest copy of any portion of NT text known to exist today!

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The Gospel of **JOHN**
Prologue

How would you begin to tell the story of Jesus; highlighting who He said He was?

- **Matthew & Luke** begin with His physical birth
- **Mark's** first mention of Jesus is at His baptism

John focuses on Jesus' deity.....

Col 2:9 For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily

Heb 1:3 who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

“John is going to write about God, but his God is not some remote being living on top of Mount Olympus. His God is love, and in love for sinful people he came to this earth. The true Godhead and the true manhood of Jesus Christ constitute the necessary preliminary to all that John has to say to us.” (Morris)

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The Gospel of **JOHN** **Prologue**

The Word in the Beginning

John 1:1-4 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. (2) He was in the beginning with God. (3) All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. (4) In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

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The Gospel of **JOHN** **Prologue**

“In the beginning.....”

Gospel of John

- What happened before time began
- How God’s plan was set in motion
- **What “should interest man”**

*God’s powerful Word was active in both; the **consistent order** of creation will now come live upon the earth, providing life to all. When the beginning began, **the Word** was already there!*

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

Genesis

- **What interests man**
- When time began
- God breathed life into man
- Human journey started

Genesis 1:1
In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

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The Gospel of
JOHN **Prologue**

λόγος Term that both Greeks and Jews would have recognized as something significant..... It could be depended upon; ***the Word***

John 1:1 In the beginning was the λόγος , and the λόγος was with God, and the λόγος was God.

The reading may have seemed easy to accept until it was clear that John was literally speaking about God!

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The Gospel of
JOHN **Prologue**

1. John's gospel opens with a discussion focused upon the Greek word, *logos*; translated as "the Word" in almost all of the English versions of the Bible.

- **Using a Bible dictionary, what does the word *logos* mean?**
It can mean.... speaking a single word, speaking a whole of a message, reasoning (or thought), Divine expression
- **From verse 14, this "Word" seems to be describing someone. Who is described as *logos*?**
Jesus, the Messiah
- **From the Greek definition, why do you think He is referred to as "the Word"?**
God's words are absolute truth (Jn 14:6); Jesus came from Heaven speaking the will of His Father (Jn 6:38); seeing Jesus was seeing God (Jn 14:9); Words of life.
"John reveals the Word of God not merely as an attribute of God, but as a distinct Person with the Godhead, dwelling with the Creator before the creation began, and acting as the divine agent in creation." (Tasker, TNTC)

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The Gospel of
JOHN

Prologue

2. In verses 1-4, list at least six descriptions of “the Word”.

- **“In the beginning”** - God spoke everything into existence; the Word was already existing
- **“with God”** – two personalities together
- **“was God”** – deity; same nature as God, our Creator
- **“same was in the beginning with God”** – separate personalities existed at the beginning
- **“all things made through Him”** – acted with the Creator
- **“in Him was life”** – God alone has “in Him” life for man

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The Gospel of
JOHN

Prologue

The Light of Men

John 1:5-13 And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. (6) There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. (7) This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe. (8) He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. (9) That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world. (10) He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. (11) He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. (12) But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: (13) who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

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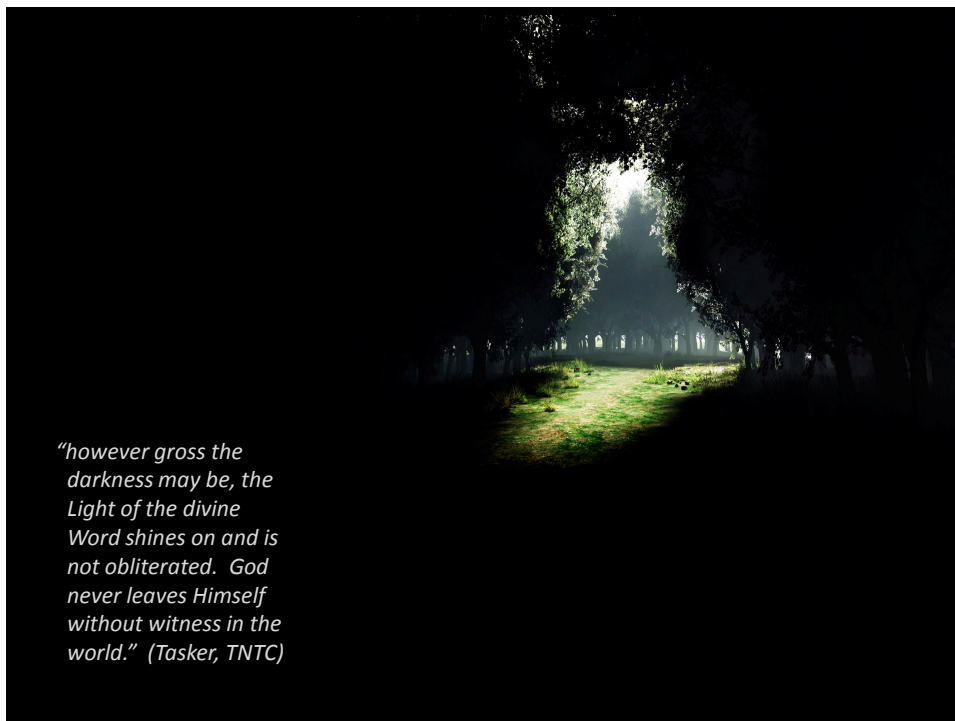
The Gospel of **JOHN** **Prologue**

3. Verses 6-8, mention a man named John.

- **Was this the author or someone else?**
John, the baptizer
- **What does it say this man named John did (what was his mission)?**
Came to bear witness of the Light, that all through Him might believe
Key points to recognize about John in this text:
 - *Only his function, not his appearance or character, is described*
 - *He was divinely sent*
 - *He was to take a subordinate role to “the Word”*
 - *He was not the “genuine light” but the one who witnessed it*

More emphasis will be given to John in next week’s lesson

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The Gospel of JOHN	Prologue
<p>4. What effect does light have on total darkness?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p>• What was the reaction of the world to the coming of this light (vs. 4-10)?</p> <p><i>Did not comprehend (vs 5), did not know Him (vs 10)</i></p> <p>Isa 53:3 <i>He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.</i></p> <p>Mat 13:55 <i>Is this not the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary? And His brothers James, Joses, Simon, and Judas?</i></p> <p>• What importance does this same author (the apostle John) give to "walking in the light" in his first epistle (1 John 1:5-7)?</p> <p>1 John 1:5-7 <i>This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. (6) If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. (7) But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.</i></p> 	
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The Gospel of JOHN	Prologue
<p>5. John writes about two different responses to this light (vs. 11-12).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p>• Who did not receive this light?</p> <p><i>"His own"- the Jews who were diligently searching for the Messiah</i></p> <p>• What was given to those who did believe in His name?</p> <p><i>The "right" to become children of God, or "authority", or "privilege"</i></p> <p>John 1:12 <i>But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:</i></p> 	
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The Gospel of
JOHN

Prologue

This Word Became Flesh

John 1:14-18 And the **Word became 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. (15) John bore witness of Him and cried out, saying, "This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me is preferred before me, for He was before me.' " (16) And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace. (17) For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. (18) No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.

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The Gospel of
JOHN

Prologue

6. Verse 14 states that this “*Word became flesh and dwelt among men*”. The word “dwelt”, actually means an “abode”, “tent” or “tabernacle.” What was the significance of the “tabernacle” to the Jews (Exodus 40:34-38; 29:46; 25:8)?

Represented God’s presence among them!

Exodus 40 - “the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle
Exodus 29 - “I will dwell among them”
Exodus 25 - “I may dwell among them”

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The Gospel of
JOHN **Prologue**

How does deity expose man to absolute truth?

- He takes on another form; one that is visible to man (who cannot see God)
- The medium God chose to manifest His word was sending “Himself” in human form so man can touch Him, physically hear Him and personally bear witness of Him

This “Word” (λόγος) is:

- *absolute truth*
- *spiritual life to all who would believe in Him*
- *what the prophets of old validated in their consistent message to man*
- *what we have before us was divinely revealed and preserved so we would not have to be actual eye-witnesses*

The creator of the world walked the earth, His creation! He came bringing spiritual enlightenment. He came to show God in the flesh.

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The Gospel of
JOHN **Prologue**

Phil 2:5-8 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, **being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.** And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.


John 20:30-31 And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written **that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ,** the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

Yet..... Most of mankind will never believe!

The Gospel of
JOHN

Prologue

Next Week: John 1:19-51



“We have found the Messiah”

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