

Raymond E. Brown - John 1 :1-18 (Prologue de l'évangile selon Jean)

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1. THE INTRODUCTORY HYMN
(i 1-18)

First Strophe

1 In the beginning was the Word;
the Word was in God's presence,
and the Word was God.
2 He was present with God in the beginning.

Second Strophe

3 Through him all things came into being,
and apart from him not a thing came to be.
4 That which had come to be in him was life,
and this life was the light of men.
5 The light shines on in the darkness,
for the darkness did not overcome it.

(6 There was sent by God a man named John 7 who came as a witness to testify to the light so that through him all men might believe — 8 but only to testify to the light, for he himself was not the light. 9 The real light which gives light to every man was coming into the world!)

Third Strophe

10 He was in the world,
and the world was made by him;
yet the world did not recognize him.
11 To his own he came;
yet his own people did not accept him.
12 But all those who did accept him
he empowered to become God's children.

That is, those who believe in his name—13 those who were begotten, not by blood, nor by carnal desire, nor by man's desire, but by God.

Fourth Strophe

14 And the Word became flesh
and made his dwelling among us.
And we have seen his glory,
the glory of an only Son coming from the Father,
filled with enduring love.

(15 John testified to him by proclaiming: "This is he of whom I said, 'The one who comes after me ranks ahead of me, for he existed before me.'")

16 And of his fullness
we have all had a share -
love in place of love.

17 For while the Law was a gift through Moses, this enduring love came through Jesus Christ. 18 No one has ever seen God; it is God the only Son, ever at the Father's side, who has revealed Him.

15: *testified*. In the historical present tense.

NOTES

i 1. *In the beginning*. In the Hebrew Bible the first book (Genesis) is named by its opening words, "In the beginning"; therefore, the parallel between the Prologue and Genesis would be easily seen. The parallel continues into the next verses, where the themes of creation and light and darkness are recalled from Genesis. John's translation of the opening phrase of Gen i 1, which is the same as that of LXX, reflects an understanding of that verse evidently current in NT times; it does not necessarily give us the original meaning intended by the author of Genesis. E. A. Speiser (The Anchor Bible, vol. 1) translates: "When God set about to create heaven and earth . . ."

beginning. This is not, as in Genesis, the beginning of creation, for creation comes in vs. 3. Rather the "beginning" refers to the period before creation and is a designation, more qualitative than temporal, of the sphere of God. Note how the Gospel of Mark opens: "The *beginning* of the Gospel of Jesus Christ [the Son of God] . . ."

was the Word. Since Chrysostom's time, commentators have recognized that each of the three uses of "was" in vs. 1 has a different connotation: existence, relationship, and predication respectively. "The Word was" is akin to the "I am" statements of Jesus in the Gospel proper (see App. IV). There can be no speculation about how the Word came to be, for the Word simply was.

in God's presence. We attempt here and in vs. 2 a rendering that will capture the ambiguity of the Gr. *pros ton theon*. Two basic translations have been proposed: **(a)** "with God"=accompaniment. Blass-Debrunner (*A Greek Grammar of the NT and Other Early Christian Literature*), § 239, points out that although *pros* with the accusative usually implies motion, it is sometimes used in the sense of accompaniment, according to the general weakening in Hellenistic Greek of the distinction between prepositions of motion and of localization, e.g., between *eis* and *en*. The idea of pre-creation accompaniment appears in John xvii 5: "that glory which I had *with you* [para] before the world existed." See the alternate reading of vii 29. **(b)** "towards God"=relationship. In an article in *Biblica* 43 (1962), 366-87, De la Potterie has argued strongly that the dynamic sense of *eis* and *pros* is not lost in John's Greek. He insists that when John uses *pros* and the accusative, it does not mean accompaniment. He points (pp. 380 ff.) to vs. 18, which forms an inclusion with vs. 1, and the expression found there *eis ton kolpon* (literally, "into the Father's bosom," or as we translate, "ever at the Father's side"). The argument that he draws from vs. 18 for the dynamic interpretation of the *pros* in vs. 1, however, depends on the dynamic use of *eis* in vs. 18, and this is disputed. An argument is also drawn from I John i 2, ". . . this eternal life such as it was in the Father's presence [*pros ton patera*]." Yet, since the subject of this sentence is "life," communion rather than relationship seems to be implied. Comparisons between John and I John on the basis of vocabulary present difficulty, for the same words appear in the two works with slightly different nuances. Our own view is that there is a nuance of relationship in John i 1b, but without the precision of that relationship between the Word and God the Father that some would see, e.g., filiation.

God's presence. The article is used with *theos* here. When the Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit are involved, *ho theos* is frequently used for God the Father (II Cor xiii 13). Verse 18, the inclusion with vs. 1, speaks of the Father, as does the parallel just mentioned in I John i 2. By emphasizing the relationship between the Word and God the Father, vs. 1b at the same time implicitly distinguishes them.

was God. Vs. 1c has been the subject of prolonged discussion, for it is a crucial text pertaining to Jesus' divinity. There is no article before *theos* as there was in 1b. Some explain this with the simple grammatical rule that predicate nouns are generally anarthrous (Blass-Debrunner, §273). However, while *theos* is most probably the predicate, such a rule does not necessarily hold for a statement of identity as, for instance, in the "I am . . ." formulae (John xi 25, xiv 6—with the article). To preserve in English the different nuance of *theos* with and without the article, some (Moffatt) would translate, "The Word was divine." But this seems too weak; and, after all, there is in Greek an adjective for "divine" (*theios*) which the author did not choose to use. Haenchen, p. 313, objects to this latter point because he thinks that such an adjective smacks of literary Greek not in the Johannine vocabulary. The NEB paraphrases the line: "What God was, the Word was"; and this is certainly better than "divine." Yet for a modern Christian reader whose trinitarian background has accustomed him to thinking of "God" as a larger concept than "God the Father," the translation "The Word was God" is quite correct. This reading is reinforced when one remembers that in the Gospel as it now stands, the affirmation of i 1 is almost certainly meant to form an inclusion with xx 28, where at the end of the Gospel Thomas confesses Jesus as "My God" (*ho theos mou*). These statements represent the Johannine affirmative answer to the charge made against Jesus in the Gospel that he was wrongly making himself God (x 33, v 18). Nevertheless, we should recognize that between the Prologue's "The Word was God" and the later Church's confession that Jesus Christ was "true God of true God" (Nicaea), there was marked development in terms of philosophical thought and a different problematic. See COMMENT.

3. all things came into being. From the 2nd century on, this has been taken as A reference to creation. Pollard sees it as a wider reference to all God's external actions, including salvation history, because the Fourth Gospel is not interested in cosmology. However, we shall see that the Prologue had a history independent of the Gospel and does not necessarily have the same theology as the Gospel. In any case, "all things" is a wider concept than "the world," the sphere of man, which will be mentioned in vss. 9-10. The verb "came into being" is *egeneto*, used consistently to describe creation in the LXX of Gen i.

apart from him. Boismard (*St. John's Prologue*) insists that "without him" is not an adequate translation, for not only causality but also presence is implied.

3b-4. These lines are sometimes divided in another way, thus: "3b and apart from him there came to be not a thing which came to be. / 4 In him was life." In such a division, the clause "which came to be"—instead of beginning vs. 4—completes vs. 3. This alternate division is found in the Clementine Vulg.; and according to Mehlmann, "De mente," it was Jerome's own division (except for one instance). But De la Potterie, "De interpretatione," insists that Jerome changed to this division only about A.D. 401 for apologetic reasons. Most modern commentators use the division we have chosen in our translation; Barrett and Haenchen are exceptions. In an attempt to prove that our division is the most ancient Boismard gives an impressive list of patristic writers who used it; and he suggests that the above alternate translation was introduced only in the 4th century as anti-Arian apologetics. The Arians used our division, "That which had come to be in him was life," to prove that the Son had undergone change and therefore was not truly equal to the Father. To counter this the orthodox Fathers preferred the alternate translation, which removed the basis of the Arian interpretation. Not all scholars, however, accept such an explanation of the origin of the alternate division. Mehlmann, "A Note," tries to show that it was pre-Arian; and Haenchen suggests that *our* punctuation arose among the Gnostics. Be this as it may, the poetry of the Prologue favors our division, for the climactic or "staircase" parallelism of the lines requires that the end of one line should match the beginning of the next. In our division the "came to be" at the end of vs. 3 matches the "had come to be" at the beginning of 4. Moreover, there is an interesting parallel at Qumran for 3b which helps to confirm our reading (1QS xi 11): "And by His knowledge all has come to

be, and by His thought, He directs all that is and *without Him not a thing is done* [or made]." See De la Potterie for an exhaustive discussion of the whole problem.

4a. *That which had come to be in him was life.* There are five very difficult problems in this line: **(a)** "That which *had come to be*." The Prologue shifts from the aorist *egeneto*, "came to be," which was used twice in vs. 3, to a perfect *gegonen*, "had come to be." Some believe that this is an attempt to give a generic idea of created being: "all that which had come to be." Normally, however, the emphasis in the perfect tense is on duration: something took place in the past but still has effect at the time of speaking, **(b)** "In him" or "in it"? Van Hoonacker in 1901 and Loisy in 1903 suggested a possibility that had not been recognized by earlier commentators; namely, that this phrase should be translated "in it" and considered to be a *casus pendens* resuming "that which had come to be." The resultant translation, "That which had come to be, in it was life," offers serious difficulties. If a resumptive were intended, *en touto* ("in this") would be more normal; also the word "life" has no article and should be a predicate, not a subject. That "life" in 4a should be a predicate is also suggested by the "staircase" parallelism, since what would then be a predicate in 4a would be a subject in 4b. There is a variant of the "in it" translation that is opted for by Mollat in SB: "That which had come to be, in it he was life." This translation avoids some of the difficulties just mentioned; but it introduces as subject the pronoun implied in the verb, and there is no other example of this in vss. 1-5. See Lacan, pp. 67-69. **(c)** If we accept the reading "in him," to which group of words do we associate it? There are two possible readings: "That-which-had-come-to-be was life in him" and "That-which-had-come-to-be-in-him was life."

Many modern scholars accept the first reading, "was life in him," and thus join Eusebius, Cyril of Alexandria, Augustine, and most of the Latin Fathers. This translation usually entails that the subject, "that-which-had-come-to-be," be taken in the same sense as the "all things" which came into being of vs. 3; namely, that it refer to the whole of creation. However, 4b ("this life was the light of men") seems to indicate that not all creation but only living creatures or, more likely, men are meant by "that-which-had-come-to-be" in 4a. A further difficulty in this translation is the awkwardness of the verb, and many have to paraphrase: "found life" or "was alive." Even the tense of the verb is difficult since we would expect a present tense: "is alive in him." For these reasons recent treatments by Lacan and Vawter find this translation too awkward. If the author of the Prologue wished to express the sentiments of the hymn in Col i 17, "In him all things subsist," he chose a very obscure way to do so.

Origen, Hilary, Ambrose, and the older Greek Fathers accepted the second reading: "That-which-had-come-to-be-in-him was life." This would be the reading normally indicated by the position of the phrase "in him" in Greek. The clause "that-which-had-come-to-be-in-him" has nothing to do with a change within the Word or with the pre-existence of divine ideas in the Word. Rather, following vs. 3, the clause represents a narrowing down of creation; vs. 4 is not going to talk about the whole of creation but a special creation in the Word, **(d)** "was life" or "is life"? There is respectable textual evidence for reading a present tense in vs. 4a; however both Bodmer papyri support the imperfect. The same tense is required in both lines of 4, and the evidence for the imperfect in 4b is overwhelming (even though Boismard, p. 12, would correct it and read the present in both lines). We suggest that the imperfect was original in 4a, but some scribes changed it to the present because it fitted better with the reading mentioned above: "That-which-has-come-to-be is life in him." **(e)** "life"—does this mean natural life or eternal life? If the subject of line 4a is taken to be the whole of creation, then eternal life would be singularly inappropriate. But if, as we suggest, a special aspect of creation is meant, i.e., creation in the Word, then eternal life is quite appropriate. The word for "life" (*zōē*—see App. 1:6) never means natural life in John or the Johannine Epistles. The identification of this life with the light of men in the next line makes us think that eternal life is meant. In the Prologue to I John (i 2) "life" is specified as "eternal life."

4b. *this life was the light.* Some would reverse subject and predicate: "the light of men was this life"; they point to viii 12, "the light of life." (See discussion in Boismard, pp. 18-19.) Once again "staircase" parallelism suggests that "light" is the predicate since it is the subject of 5a. The symbolism of light is related to Gen i.

5. *shines on.* Bultmann's suggestion, p. 264, that this verb was originally imperfect has no textual support.

did not overcome. Does this aorist refer to a specific attempt of the darkness to overcome the light? Or is it a complexive aorist summing up a series of attempts (Blass-Debrunner, §332)? Or is it a gnomic aorist indicating that darkness is always trying to overcome light (Blass-Debrunner, §333)? If, as we think, this is a reference to the sin in Gen iii, then the normal meaning of the aorist as a single past action is suitable.

overcome. The Greek verb *katalambainein* is hard to translate, and we can distinguish four tendencies among translators: **(a)** "to grasp, to comprehend." Cyril of Alexandria, the Latin tradition, Lagrange, Macgregor, Braun are among the many who interpret the verb as a reference to intellectual comprehension. If "the light" is a reference to the incarnate Word, this meaning is quite intelligible; for then the line is saying that men did not perceive the light brought by Jesus during his ministry (iii 19). The best argument for this translation is found in the parallels in vss. 10, 11: "yet the darkness did not comprehend it... yet the world did not recognize him... yet his own people did not accept him." Note that if in vs. 5b we accept "comprehend," the initial *kai* should be translated as "yet," and not as "for." **(b)** "to welcome, receive, accept, appreciate." Dupont, Bultmann, and Wikenhauser are among those who prefer this meaning, which matches the meaning of *paralambainein* ("accept") in vs. 11. Although Black does not regard "receive" as an adequate translation of the Greek, he suggests that the original Aramaic was *la qabblēh qablā*, "the darkness did not receive it." (The Aramaic play between *qablā*, "darkness," and *qabblēh*, "receive it," is obvious.) Other proponents of an Aramaic original for the Prologue reconstruct the original verb otherwise. Burney thinks of an original *'aqbēl*, "darken," misread as *qabbēl*, "receive"; Schaefer abandons wordplay and suggests *'ahad*, "overcome"; Nagel points out that the root *qbl* in later Aramaic (Syriac) has a note of opposition, and he makes other suggestions that can mean both "grasp" and "overcome." The Aramaic evidence is scarcely conclusive, **(c)** "to overtake, overcome [grasp in a hostile sense]." Origen, the majority of the Greek Fathers, Schlatter, Westcott, and Boismard are among those who accept this meaning. *Katalambainein* has this meaning in its only other use in John (xii 35): "the darkness will come over you." The

opposition between light and darkness in Johannine dualistic thought seems to demand such a verb to describe their encounter. As we shall see, the concept of the Word in the Prologue is similar to that of personified Wisdom in the OT. It is worth noting that Wis vii 29-30 compares Wisdom to a light that darkness cannot *supplant*, for wickedness does not prevail over Wisdom. Another parallel is in the *Odes of Solomon* xviii 6: "That the light may not be overcome by the darkness." The *Acts of Thomas* 130 speaks of a "light that has not been overcome." These reasons and parallels cause us to accept "overcome" for vs. 5b, but we admit that reading 5b as the reason for 5a ("for the darkness did not overcome it") destroys the parallelism with 10c and 11b. **(d)** "to master." This is Moffatt's attempt to capture the two meanings of "understand" and "overcome." Another ambiguous translation might be "absorb." Finally, we should mention the possibility that *katalambanein* had one meaning when the verse stood as part of an independent hymn, and took on another meaning when the hymn became the Prologue of the Gospel.

6. There was. This is not the *en*, "was," used of the Word in vss. 1-2, but the *egeneto* used of creation in vss. 3—4. John the Baptist is a creature. *sent by God*. In i 33 John the Baptist will speak of "the one who *sent* me to baptize"; in iii 28 he says, "I am *sent* before him."

7. all men. The concern has shifted from the "all things" of vs. 3 to the sphere of men. Some see here a view of John the Baptist's role that contradicts i 31, where it is said that John the Baptist came that Jesus might be revealed *to Israel*. But the idea is that ultimately John the Baptist's message would touch all men, just i 1-18 9 as Jesus' message, spoken in Israel, would touch all men. The Fourth Gospel stresses more the role of John the Baptist as a witness than as a baptizer.

8. not the light. In v 35 Jesus calls John the Baptist a lamp; but Jesus himself is the light (iii 19, viii 12, ix 5).

9. Some would take this verse as poetry continuing vs. 5, thus:

He was the real light
that gives light to every man;
he was coming into the world.

Line 9a can mean, "The real light was," or, if we supply a subject from the verb form, "He was the real light." The meaning must in part be determined by what is done with 9c where the verbal form is simply a participle ("coming into the world"), probably modifying "light." If we read 9a as "He was the real light," then the separated participle in 9c is very awkward; notice how it has to be artificially avoided above by supplying another "he was" in 9c. If we read 9a as "The real light was," then the participle of 9c is the periphrastic continuation of the verb: "The real light was . . . coming into the world." Periphrastic circumlocution is known in classical Greek, but its frequency in the NT may be under Aramaic influence (Blass-Debrunner, §353). The periphrastic use of *einai* ("to be") plus a present participle as a circumlocution for the imperfect occurs nine times in John. The special difficulty in i 9 is that the verb "was" is separated from the participle by a clause, although we have examples of similar separation in i 28; Mark xiv 49; Luke ii 8 (see Zerwick, *Graecitas Biblica*, § 362). Perhaps the motive behind the separation in vs. 9 was to end the verse on the theme of "the world" which would be picked up in vs. 10. Further, if on the basis of Blass-Debrunner, § 3531 one wishes to stress that in such cases of separated periphrasis there is a certain independence granted to the main verb, then the idea is that there *was* a real light and it was *coming* into the world.

Along with Bernard, Gachter, Käsemann, and others, we think that the evidence is strongly against considering vs. 9 as part of the poetry of the Prologue. It does not have the conjunctive particle *kai* which is so common in the poetic parts of the Prologue; it uses subordination which they do not. The "light" is the subject of vs. 9; and this subject is not taken up in vs. 10. Rather the masculine pronoun in vs. 10 ("light" is neuter) indicates that its subject is the Word, the same subject that is prominent in the opening lines of the other stanzas (vss. 1, 3, 14). The periphrasis that we have postulated for vs. 9 would be strange in poetry, and quite unlike the use of "was" in vss. 1-2. Verse 9 is a contrast with vs. 8—the real light is Jesus, not John the Baptist—and belongs to the same level of the Prologue's literary history as vs. 8, namely, the level of final redaction. Curiously enough, Schnackenburg considers only 9c to be editorial.

real light. "Real" reflects *alēthinos*; see App. 1:2.

gives light. Some think that this does not mean the light of revelation, but the spotlight of judgment, the pitiless, all-revealing light not to be avoided. Verse 7, however, seems to imply a light that one believes in.

to every man. If John the Baptist's witness was for all men, the sphere of enlightenment from the real light can scarcely be less.

coming into the world. There are two possible words for the participle to modify: **(a)** "man"="The real light which gives light to every man coming into the world." This is the interpretation of the early versions (OL, Vulg., OS, Boh.), the Greek Fathers (Eusebius, Cyril of Alexandria, Chrysostom), and many modern scholars (Burney, Schlatter, Bultmann, Wikenhauser). It creates a redundancy, for in rabbinic literature "they who come into the world" is an expression for men. On this basis Bultmann thinks that we should simply excise "man" in vs. 9 as a gloss, **(b)** "light"="The real light . . . was coming into the world." This interpretation is supported by the Sahidic, the Latin Fathers (Tertullian and Cyprian), and by most modern commentators (Lagrange, Braun, Dupont, Westcott, Macgregor, Bernard, Boismard, etc.). It fits the context better, for in vs. 10 the stress is on the Word (=the light) as being in the world. We note too that "coming into the world" is not used in John to describe men, but is used to describe Jesus the light; e.g., iii 19: "The light has come into the world" (also xii 46). It seems, finally, that the contrast of vs. 9 with vs. 8 also demands this interpretation: John the Baptist was not the light; the real light was coming into the world.

10. He was. The Word, not the light.

the world. See App. 1:7. This is part of the creation of vs. 3, but only that part of creation that is capable of response, the world of men. This is seen clearly in iii 19: "The light has come into *the world*, but *men* have preferred darkness to light."

was made. Or "came to be"—the *egeneto* of creation in vs. 3.

not recognize. In the question of whether this verse refers to the OT or the NT presence of God's Word among men, we might remember that in the OT the basic sin is the failure to obey Yahweh, while for John the basic sin is the failure to know and believe in Jesus. (Naturally, knowledge of Jesus would also imply repentance and a new life in his service.)

11. *To his own*. The expression is neuter; it occurs again in xix 27 where the disciple takes Mary *to his own* (to his own home, into his care). In vs. 11a the idea seems to be what was peculiarly his own in "the world," i.e., the heritage of Israel, the Promised Land, Jerusalem.

his own people. Here the expression is masculine. Those who think that this hymn was originally in Aramaic point out that *dilēh* ("his own"—without differentiation of gender) would have been found in both 11a and 11b. They are hard put to explain why the Greek translator chose two different genders to express it. The reference is clearly to the people of Israel; according to Exod xix 5, Yahweh said to Israel: "You shall be *my own possession* among all the peoples." Bultmann rejects this and sees a cosmological reference, rather than a reference to salvation history. His interpretation flows from his presupposition that the Prologue was originally a Gnostic hymn.

12. Do lines 12a-b belong to the original hymn, or are they prose comment? Bernard, De Ausejo, Green, Haenchen, Robinson, Schnackenburg do *not* accept them as part of the hymn. In part the position taken will depend on whether or not one regards this stanza as referring to the historical career of the incarnate Word. If one does, it seems odd to end the stanza on the negative note of vs. 11. If poetic format is the absolute guide, however, then these lines are cast differently from the preceding verses.

all those who did accept him. This clause in the nominative is an expansion of the indirect object of "empower" (literally "he empowered *them*") in vs. 12b. It is an example of the *casus pendens* construction where a word or phrase is taken out of its normal place in the sentence and put first. The construction occurs 27 times in John, compared with 21 times in all three Synoptics. However, the phrase thus moved is usually the expansion of a nominative or an accusative, rarely of a dative as here. The construction is Semitic but is also found in colloquial Greek of non-Semitic origin.

empowered. Literally "gave power" (*edōken exousian*), or, if we wish to translate the Gr. *exousia* more exactly, "gave authority or right"—Dodd, *Interpretation*, p. 270, characterizes "power" as a most misleading translation. However, to make of this a semi-judicial pronouncement whereby the Word gave men the *right* to become God's sons is to introduce an element strange to Johannine thought: sonship is based on divine begetting, not on any claim on man's part. Bultmann and Boismard are probably correct in seeing the Greek as an awkward attempt to render the idea behind the Semitic expression, "he gave [*nathan*] them to become."

God's children. "Children"=*tekna* (also xi 52); *huios*, "son" is used in John only for Jesus. Contrast Matt v 9, which uses *huioi* for men: the peacemakers shall be called God's sons; also Paul in Gal iii 26. Yet, while John preserves a vocabulary difference between Jesus as God's son and Christians as God's children, it is in John that our *present* state as God's children on this earth comes out most clearly; I John iii 2: "Beloved, we are God's children now."

That is, those who believe in his name. This clause also explains the indirect object of "empowered," just as vs. 12a; only while 12a is in the nominative, 12c is in the dative. (We have tried to capture the better agreement of 12c by introducing it with "That is.") That 12a and 12c really say the same thing has left its mark in the copying of the text. Some of the Latin, Greek, Syriac Fathers and the *Diatessaron* seem to omit 12c, while a few Latin Fathers, Philoxenus of Mabbug, and an Ethiopic witness omit 12a. Boismard, *Revue Biblique* 57 (1950), 401-8, argues that the present text of John is a conflation of alternate readings. However, the fact that 12c is in typical Johannine language and thought pattern makes it possible that 12c is an editorial expansion of the hymn. It may have been added to stress that not only the original acceptance of Jesus (aorist in 12a), but also continued belief in him (present in 12c), entitled men to become God's children.

believe in. See App. 1:9 on *pisteuein eis*, a typically Johannine construction.

in his name. This is also typically Johannine (ii 23, iii 18; I John v 13). Belief in the name of Jesus is not different from belief in Jesus, although the former expression brings out clearly that to believe in Jesus one must believe that he bears the divine name, given to him by God (xvii 11-12). For the possibility that this name may be "I AM" see App. IV.

13. Is vs. 13 part of the original poetic hymn, or part of the editorial comment? Bernard, Gaechter, Green, Haenchen, Jeremias, Käsemann, Robinson, Schnackenburg, and Wikenhauser are among those who think of it as editorial expansion. Certainly the style is different from the clearly poetic stanzas of the hymn. The apologetic motif is strong in 13, and this is not true of the poetic verses. Verses 1-5, 9-12, and 14 sing of the Word's activities, while vs. 13 tells of those who believe in him. There is really only one serious objection to considering both 12c and 13 as editorial additions: 12c is dative, 13 is nominative (like 12a—we have tried to express the difference by the dash). Could it be that we are encountering additions made by different hands? However, on the level of ideas, 12c and 13 can go together, for in Johannine thought those who believe and those begotten by God are equivalent: "Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Messiah is begotten by God" (I John v 1).

those who were begotten. The textual evidence for reading a plural is overwhelming, with not a single Greek ms. supporting the singular. The singular, "he who was begotten," is read by one OL witness, perhaps by the OS^{cur}; and the text is applied to Jesus by a number of Fathers (Justin?, Irenaeus, Tertullian) and by some early writings (*Liber Comicus, Epistula Apostolorum*). On this rather slender evidence the singular has been supported by a considerable number of scholars: Boismard, Blass, Braun, Burney, Dupont, Mollat (Bible de Jérusalem), Zahn, and others. The patristic evidence for the singular is difficult to evaluate because it may be that the text is simply undergoing adaptation to Jesus in order to support the virgin birth. One can imagine an *a fortiori* argument: if it is true that Christians are not begotten by blood, by carnal desire, etc., how much more true was this of Jesus. The Latin evidence also has pitfalls, for the Latin *qui* is both singular and plural and the difference between *qui natus est* and *qui nati sunt* is only in the verb. Three arguments seem conclusively to favor the plural. *First*, both the ancient Bodmer papyri read a plural. *Second*, texts in the process of transmission tend to become more, not less, christological. Is it logical to suppose that scribal tradition on such a large scale would dilute a valuable reference to the virgin birth of Jesus if the singular were the original reading? *Third*, John and I John never describe Jesus as having been begotten by God (I John v 18 is dubious); but they do speak thus of those who follow Jesus (iii 3-8; I John iii 9, iv 7, v 1-4, v 18a). Recently J. Schmid has discussed the problem thoroughly, only to opt for the plural, as do Barrett, Bultmann, Lightfoot, Wikenhauser, and others.

The only argument *against* the plural is the relationship of vs. 13 to 12b. Boismard, p. 37, asks how can the Word empower men to *become* God's children if they were already begotten by God? But this is to impose too exact a logic on the sequence. Verse 13 explains what is meant by God's children; it explains that those who accepted Jesus were those who were granted to Jesus by the Father (vi 37, 65); they were not the ones begotten from below, but the ones begotten from above (iii 31).

begotten. Although this verb can mean "born" (as of a female principle—see NOTE on iii 3), the idea of agency implied in "begotten" is clearly more appropriate. In I John iii 9 the seed of God is mentioned.

not by blood. The word for "blood" is plural. This is curious against a background of Hebrew mentality, for there the plural of "blood" means bloodshed. Bernard suggests a background of Greek physiology where the embryo was thought to be made of the mother's blood and the father's seed. In this interpretation the three negatives in the verse rule out woman, lust, and man. Such an interpretation eliminates any use of the text to prove the virgin birth of Jesus. Others suggest that we are to think of the "blood" of vs. 13b and the "flesh" of 13c as a unit, the Hebrew "flesh and blood," equivalent to "man" (Matt xvi 17; I Cor xv 50). This explanation is ruled out by the fact that "blood" is a plural, and by the order "blood, flesh"; moreover, 13c speaks not of the "flesh" but of the "desire of the flesh." Boismard, p. 44, mentions the possibility that "blood" might be a dignified way of speaking of seed. Such euphemism seems unlikely since there is no hesitation of speaking about seed in the Johannine writings (I John iii 9).

nor by carnal desire. Literally "the desire of the flesh." The word "desire" is omitted in some Ethiopic mss. and in some of the Fathers, perhaps in order to bring the text more into conformity with the "flesh and blood" idiom mentioned above. *Thelēma*, "will, desire," appears for "lust" in some of the Greek papyri of this period. "Flesh" here is not a wicked principle opposed to God. Rather, it is the sphere of the natural, the powerless, the superficial, opposed to "spirit," which is the sphere of the heavenly and the real (iii 6, vi 63, viii 15).

nor by man's desire. Man was looked on as the principal agent in generation; some considered the woman's role no more than that of a vessel for the embryo. This clause is omitted in Vaticanus, ms. 17, and some Fathers. Boismard, *Revue Biblique* 57 (1950), 401-8, suggests that the redundancy in these clauses and the evidence for the omission of one or the other point to the fact that we have a conflation of alternate readings.

14. Does vs. 14 belong to the poetry of the Prologue? De Aulsebrook thinks that 14a-b form a two-line strophe or stanza by themselves; and he puts 14c-e with 16 and 18 as another strophe. Schnackenburg eliminates 14c-d as an addition and retains only 14a-b,e as the original poetry. Green regards just 14e as an addition. For Käsemann the whole verse is an addition. On the basis of poetic format it may be noted that the *kai* pattern appears in the first three lines. The last line cannot be easily excised from the poetry since it ties in so closely with 16. It seems best to accept the whole of 14 as poetry, and this is the view of the majority of the critics.

became flesh. "Flesh" stands for the whole man. It is interesting that even in the unsophisticated christological terminology of the 1st century it is not said that the Word became a man, but equivalently that the Word became man.

made his dwelling. *Skēnoun*, related to *skēnē*, "tent," is literally "to pitch a tent." In the NT it is found only here and in Revelation; see COMMENT for OT background.

among us. Literally "in us"; compare Rev xxi 3: "Behold the dwelling of God is with men; He will dwell with them." Here, the first person makes its appearance in the Prologue; "us" refers to mankind.

we. This is a more confined use of the first person, for the "we" is not mankind but the apostolic witnesses, as in the Prologue of I John. It is this shift of meaning reflected in "us" and "we" that makes some think of vs. 14c-d as being an addition.

seen. For *theasthai* see App. 1:3. Compare I John i 1: "... something we have seen [*hōran*] with our own eyes; something we actually looked at [*theasthai*], and felt with our own hands." De Aulsebrook, pp. 406-7, thinks that this is a reference to seeing the resurrected Christ, but such a jump from the Incarnation is rather abrupt.

glory. For *doxa*, see App. 1:4.

of an only Son. Literally "as of an only Son"; the versions (OS, Copt, Eth.) and Tatian seem to have read the "as" earlier in the line: "as the glory of an only Son." Kačur thinks this is the original reading. However, the versions would not be precise on a point like this; moreover, it may have been theologically desirable to avoid the reading "as of an only Son," lest someone interpret it to mean, "as if he were an only Son." The meaning of "as" is, of course, not "as if" but "in the quality of."

only Son. For a complete treatment of this term *monogenēs* see D. Moody, *Journal of Biblical Literature* 72 (1953), 213-19. Literally the Greek means "of a single [*monos*] kind [*genos*]." Although *genos* is distantly related to *gennan*, "to beget," there is little Greek justification for the translation of *monogenēs* as "only begotten." The OL correctly translated it as *unicus*, "only," and so did Jerome where it was not applied to Jesus. But to answer the Arian claim that Jesus was not begotten but made, Jerome translated it as *unigenitus*, "only begotten," in passages like this one (also i 18, iii 16, 18). The influence of the Vulg. on the King James made "only begotten" the standard English rendition. (Actually, as we have insisted, John does not use the term "begotten" of Jesus.) *Monogenēs* describes a quality of Jesus, his uniqueness, not what is called in Trinitarian theology his "procession." It reflects Heb. *yāhîd*, "only, precious," which is used in Gen xxii 2, 12, 16, of Abraham's son Isaac, as *monogenēs* is used of Isaac in Heb xi 17. Isaac was Abraham's uniquely precious son, but not his only begotten.

coming from the Father. "Coming" is not in the Greek but is supplied from the context. What word does this phrase modify: "Son" (W. Bauer, Boismard, Bultmann, Westcott) or "glory" (Braun, Dupont, Lagrange)? In v 44 Jesus attacks the Jews for not seeking that glory which comes from the One God. Thus there is a Johannine parallel for glory coming from the Father, but not exactly in the sense meant here. See also xvii 22 where it is said implicitly that Jesus has been given glory by the Father. There are also Johannine parallels for the application of the phrase "from [*para*] the Father" to the Son (vi 46, vii 29, ix 16, xvi 27), and two other uses of the "only Son" (iii 15-17; I John iv 9) mention the Father's sending of the Son into the world. There is no major difference in meaning no matter which word the phrase modifies. If we read "an only Son coming from the Father," the reference is to the mission of the Son, not his procession within the Trinity; the "we have seen" makes this certain.

filled with. What does this adjective modify: the Word, the glory, or the Son? The nominative masculine singular form would make agreement with "the Word" of 14a the most regular construction, and this is the understanding of the Latin translations. (This is another reason why some scholars regard 14c-d as an addition.) However, as Blass-Debrunner § 137, points out, this adjective is sometimes treated as indeclinable; hence it could modify "glory" (so Codex Bezae, Irenaeus, Athanasius, Chrysostom) or "only Son." There is no major difference in meaning.

enduring love. Literally two nouns, *charis* and *alētheia*; for Boismard the construction of the adjective "full" followed by two determinatives is a proof that Luke edited the Prologue, for there are five examples of such a construction in Acts. *Charis*, "grace," appears in John only here; it is found 25 times in Luke-Acts, and in Paul it is quite common for God's gift of redemption. For *alētheia*, "truth," see App. 1:2. However, these two words are used here in a unique way reflecting the famous OT pairing of *hesed* and *'emet*. God's *hesed* is His kindness or mercy in choosing Israel without any merit on Israel's part and His expression of this love for Israel in the covenant. Suggested translations are: "covenant love," "merciful love," "kindness," "loving-kindness." For the Qumran Essenes their community was a covenant of *hesed*. God's *'emet* is His fidelity to the covenant promises. Suggested translations are: "fidelity, constancy, faithfulness." In Exod xxxiv 6 we hear this description of Yahweh as He makes the covenant with Moses on Sinai: "The Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and rich [*rab*] in *hesed* and *'emet*." See also Pss xxv 10, lxi 7, lxxxvi 15; Prov xx 28. Kuypier, *art cit.*, gives a complete treatment.

The real objection to seeing the Prologue's *charis* and *alētheia* as a translation of *hesed* and *'emet* is that *hesed* is normally rendered in LXX by *eleos*, "mercy," not by *charis*. However, John's use of Scripture is often not faithful to LXX. J. A. Montgomery, "Hebrew *Hesed* and Greek *Charis*," *Harvard Theological Review* 32 (1939), 97-102, has shown that *charis* is an excellent translation for *hesed*. The Syriac translates both the *hesed* and *'emet* of the OT and the *charis* and *alētheia* of John i 14 by the same words (*taibūtā* and *qushtā*). The Christian Syro-Palestinian dialect renders *charis* by *hasdā* (= *hesed*). As for *alētheia*, in a passage like Rom xv 8 it clearly represents the covenant fidelity of the OT. It is interesting to note that the Word of God who comes down from heaven in Rev xix 11-13 is called "faithful and true [*pistis . . . alēthinos*]," which is probably another reflection of the *hesed* and *'emet* motif.

15. John the Baptist makes this statement of Jesus in i 30. It is agreed today that this verse is an addition to the original hymn, an addition of the same type as vss. 6-8(9), awkwardly breaking up vss. 14 and 16.

testified. Literally, historical present, although Haenchen, p. 353, treats it as a real present in the sense that John the Baptist is now giving witness along with the community. The use of a present for an aorist tense in vivid narrative is common in the NT. Some regard it as a sign of Aramaic influence, but it is found in classical writers as well. Black says there is nothing especially Semitic about its use, although it is overdone in Mark and John. It is probably to be regarded as an example of less polished writing. We shall note the historical presents in the textual notes to the translation.

by proclaiming. Literally perfect tense: "and has proclaimed": the perfect here has simply the value of a present tense (Blass-Debrunner, §341). The present of the verb *krazein* is rare, and the perfect is used in its place (Blass-Debrunner, § 101). John the Baptist's witness to Jesus and proclamation of him is looked on as still in effect against the claims of the sectarians.

I said. Even in i 30 the reference to a previous statement by John the Baptist is awkward; here it is illogical and the sure sign of editing.

16. A few commentators (Bernard, Käsemann) would exclude this verse from the original hymn. On the one hand, vs. 16 is closely tied in to 14, with 16a picking up the theme of fullness (not quite in "staircase" fashion, however), and 16c picking up the theme of love. Perhaps (see below) the introductory *kai* is present. On the other hand, the poetry of 16 is not of the same

quality as that of the rest of the hymn. If 16 was an addition, then we have to accept two stages of editing, for it would not make sense to say that the same editor at the same time added both 15 and 16 (16 expands 14; 15 is an interruption). It is perhaps best to opt for simplicity and accept 16 as part of the hymn.

And. Verse 16 begins with *hoti* ("that, because, for") in the best witnesses, including the Bodmer papyri. However, there is respectable Greek evidence for *kai*—also in the versions and the Fathers, but they would not necessarily be precise witnesses in an instance like this. The best argument for *hoti* is the possibility that *kai* was introduced in imitation of the initial *kai* found throughout the poem. Boismard, pp. 59-60, and Bultmann argue, on the other hand, that *hoti* may be an insertion reflecting the Alexandrian exegesis of Origen's time wherein it was thought that John the Baptist was still speaking: "He existed before me because of his fullness we have all [even I] had a share." The suggestion that *hoti* represents a misunderstanding of the Aramaic relative *de* (Burney; Black) is too speculative. If *hoti* is original, then vs. 16 is a proof that the Word who became flesh was in truth filled with enduring love, for of that fullness we were all able to have a share.

fullness. *Plērōma*, occurring only here in the Johannine writings, is an important Pauline theological term; it appears in the hymn of Col i 19: "And in him God was pleased for all the *plērōma* to dwell." Its exact connotation in the Prologue depends to some extent on what "filled with" in vs. 14 modifies.

we. This refers to mankind as did the "us" in 14b; see NOTE on "we" in vs. 14c.

in place of. The preposition *anti* does not occur again in the Johannine writings; perhaps this is an argument against considering vs. 16 as editorial, for we would expect the editor to use typical Johannine vocabulary. Several meanings are possible for it here: **(a)** "Love in place of love." This idea of *replacement*, as held by the Greek Fathers (Origen, Cyril of Alexandria, Chrysostom), connotes the *hesed* of a New Covenant in place of the *hesed* of Sinai. Verse 17 seems to support this. The objection that John would not have considered the giving of the Law on Sinai as *hesed* because of the Johannine opposition to "the Jews" seems to overlook the fact that John never denies the role of Israel. In iv 22 we hear: "Salvation is from the Jews [=Israel, on a foreigner's lips]." **(b)** "Grace upon grace" or "grace after grace": *accumulation*. Many modern commentators (Lagrange, Hoskyns, Bultmann, Barrett) support this reading on the basis of a text in Philo (*De Posteritate Caini* 145) where *anti* clearly has this meaning. Normally, however, accumulation would be expressed by *epi*, while *anti* implies opposition or substitution. The translation of *anti* as accumulation is strongly supported by Spicq in *Dieu et l'homme* (Paris: Cerf, 1961), pp. 30-31, citing W. Hendriksen's specialized study of *anti* in the NT. **(c)** "Grace for grace" or "grace matching grace": *correspondence*. The idea behind this translation is that the grace that constitutes our share corresponds to the grace of the Word. Bernard, J. A. T. Robinson, and Lacan support this translation which is close to a recognized meaning of *anti*, "in return for." Joüon compares *anti* to Heb. *keneged* in Gen ii 18, 20, "a helper matching him"; see *Recherches de Sciences Religieuses* 22 (1932), 206. The translation of *charis* as reflecting *hesed* fits in with translation (a) more easily than with the other two translations, but it is not impossible in (b) and (c).

17. That this verse does not belong to the original hymn is maintained by Bernard, Bultmann, De Aulsebrook, Käsemann, Schnackenburg, and others. Among its peculiarities is the mention of historical figures (e.g., Moses), a feature not found in the Pauline hymns; yet Heb i 1 mentions the prophets. Bultmann says that the contrast in this verse between Law and grace (*charis*="love") belongs more to Pauline theology; however, see below. There is no *kai* connective. It is perhaps best to see in vs. 17 an editorial explanation of 16c.

was a gift. "To give a law" is not a Greek expression, but is typically Semitic.

this enduring love. Once again this represents the two nouns *charis* and *alētheia*. The articles before the nouns indicate a reference to the "enduring love" already spoken of in vs. 14, whence our translation as "this." If one accepts the translation of 16c as "love in place of love," then one understands the gift of the Law through Moses as an instance of *hesed* and *'emet*, an understanding that truly reflects the OT outlook. The theory that vs. 17 contrasts the absence of enduring love in the Law with presence of enduring love in Jesus Christ does not seem to do justice to John's honorific reference to Moses (i 45, iii 14, v 46). Rather vs. 17 contrasts the enduring love shown in the Law with the supreme example of enduring love shown in Jesus. It is true that in the Gospel Jesus speaks derogatively of "your Law"; yet this reflects opposition not so much to the Law as given to Moses as to the Law interpreted and used by the Jewish authorities against Jesus and Christianity. There is no suggestion in John that when the Law was given through Moses, it was not a magnificent act of God's love. A contrast similar in spirit to that of John i 17 is found in Heb i 1: "God spoke of old to our ancestors through the prophets, but in these last days He has spoken to us through His Son." Boismard, pp. 62-64, argues that enduring love is not so much a divine attribute but a reference to qualities inherent in man and planted there by Jesus Christ. The distinction is probably too subtle.

18. Some scholars who regard vs. 17 as editorial accept 18 as part of the original poem, e.g., De Aulsebrook and Bernard. It might be set up in four lines of poetry, thus:

No one has ever seen God;
it is God the only Son,
ever at the Father's side,
who has revealed him.

Bernard, however, sets it up in three lines, combining 18b-c in one line. In either case there are no *kai*'s; the co-ordination is poor; and there is *casus pendens*—indications that we are not dealing with hymnic poetry.

God the only Son. This phrase is set off by itself in *casus pendens* and then resumed in the last clause of vs. 18 by *ekeinos* ("that one") as the subject of "revealed," thus: "God the only Son . . . that one has revealed Him." The textual witnesses are not in agreement on the reading; there are three possibilities: **(a)** [*ho*] *monogenes theos*, "God the only Son." This is supported by the

evidence of the best Greek manuscripts, including the Bodmer papyri, by the Syr., by Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, and Origen. This reading is suspect as being too highly developed theologically; yet it is not anti-Arian polemic, for the Arians did not balk at giving this title to Jesus. Some object to the strangeness of the statement that only God can reveal God, and the implication that only God has seen God. **(b)** *monogenes huios*, literally "the Son, the only one." This combination appears in three of the other four uses of *monogenes* in the Johannine writings (iii 16, 18; I John iv 9), and its appearance here may have resulted from a scribal tendency to conform. This reading is attested by the versions (Latin, OS^{ant}), by the later Greek witnesses, and by Athanasius, Chrysostom, and the Latin Fathers, **(c)** *monogenes*, "the only Son." While this is the simplest reading, it may have resulted from conformity with vs. 14. One could explain reading (b) as an expansion of this. It has the poorest attestation of the three readings: Tatian, Origen (once), Epiphanius, Cyril of Alexandria. Boismard accepts it, but the complete lack of Greek textual support makes it suspect.

ever at the Father's side. Literally "the one who is in[to=*eis*] the bosom of the Father." For *eis* see NOTE on "in God's presence" in vs. 1; De la Potterie would stress the dynamic force of the preposition as indicating an active and vital relationship. "Bosom" connotes affection. Does the use of the present participle ("the one who is") imply that the earthly Jesus, the Word-become-flesh, was with the Father at the same time that he was on earth? Thüsing and Windisch, *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde die älteren Kirche* 30 (1931), 221 ff. argue against such an interpretation; Haenchen points out that *einai* has no past participle and maintains that the present participle here has a past connotation, "the one who was." If one wishes to support simultaneity in earth and in heaven, however, one may invoke iii 13 where Jesus speaks of himself as "the Son of Man who is in heaven," and viii 16, "I have at my side the One who sent me." Others think that the reference to the Son at the Father's side is a reference to the Ascension. Thus the whole career of the Word is sketched in the Prologue: the Word with God; the Word come into the world and become flesh; the Word returned to the Father. This great cycle of descent and ascent is prominent in the Gospel, e.g., xvi 28. No conclusive decision about these various interpretations seems possible.

revealed Him. The "Him" is not expressed but is demanded if we translate the verb as "reveal." The verb *exēgeisthai* means "to lead" but is not attested in this meaning in the NT or in early Christian literature (Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, p. 275); there it means "to explain, report," and especially, "to reveal [divine secrets]." In the article he has devoted to this verse (also *Prologue*, pp. 66-68), Boismard defends the meaning "lead" here, connecting the verb with the phrase "into the Father's bosom," thus: although no one has ever seen God, the only Son who is with the Father has led men into the Father's bosom. And so, the Word who was with God has become man and led men back up to God. This suggestion works against Boismard's other thesis that it was Luke who adapted the hymn to the Gospel of John as a Prologue, for it is precisely in the Lucan writings that the verb does not mean "to lead."

COMMENT: GENERAL

If John has been described as the pearl of great price among the NT writings, then one may say that the Prologue is the pearl within this Gospel. In her comparison of Augustine's and Chrysostom's exegesis of the Prologue, M. A. Aucoin points out that both held that it is beyond the power of man to speak as John does in the Prologue. The choice of the eagle as the symbol of John the Evangelist was largely determined by the celestial flights of the opening lines of the Gospel. The sacred character of the Prologue has been reflected in a long-standing custom of the Western Church to read it as a benediction over the sick and over newly baptized children. Its former place as the final prayer of the Roman Mass reflects its use as a blessing. Indeed, it took on a magical character when it was used in amulets worn around the neck to protect against sickness. All these attestations of sublimity, however, do not remove the fact that the eighteen verses of the Prologue contain for the exegete a number of bewildering textual, critical, and interpretative problems.

Problem of the Relation of the Prologue to the Gospel

In the estimation of some, the Prologue has little to do with the substance of the Gospel but represents a phrasing of the Christian message in Hellenistic terms to catch the interest of Greek readers. For others, the Prologue is a preface to the Gospel—an overture, an outline, or a summary. Yet, as the opening of a Gospel, the Prologue has a certain uniqueness. In Jewish and Hellenistic literature the normal opening of a book that recounts a story is either a lapidary summary of contents (Luke, Revelation) or the heading of the first chapter (Mark). Such a poetic opening as the Prologue can be matched only in epistles like I John and Hebrews. As for content, although two other Gospels, Matthew and Luke, have a preface before they begin the account of Jesus' public ministry, these prefaces take an entirely different approach from that of the Prologue. They move the story of Jesus back to his conception, but John's poetic opening takes it back before creation. The Prologue is not concerned with the earthly origins of Jesus but with the heavenly existence of the Word in the beginning.

If we grant that the concept behind the Prologue is unique, we notice relationships between it and the body of the Gospel. Verses 11 and 12 seem to be a summary of the two main divisions of John. Verse 11 covers the Book of Signs (chs. i-xii), which tells how Jesus came to his own land through a ministry in Galilee and Jerusalem and yet his own people did not receive him. Verse 12 covers the Book of Glory (chs. xiii-xx), which contains Jesus' words to those who did receive him and tells how he returned to his Father in order to give them the gift of life and make them God's children. J. A. T. Robinson, p. 122, insists on the number of themes shared by the Prologue and the rest of the Gospel: pre-existence (i 1=xvii 5); the light of men and of the world (i 4, 9=viii 12, ix 5); opposition between light and darkness (i 5=iii 19); seeing his glory (i 14=xii 41); the only Son (i 14, 18=iii 16); no one, save the Son, has seen God (i 18=vi 46). And, of course, the two interruptions about John the Baptist are related to what the Gospel will say about him (i 7 is picked up in i 19; i 15=i 30). Thus, at least in its present form, the Prologue cannot be said to be totally extraneous to the Gospel.

Nevertheless, there are some differences between the Prologue and the Gospel which must be accounted for. There are highly poetic lines in the Prologue, exhibiting a climactic or "staircase" parallelism whereby a word prominent in one line (often the

predicate or last word) is taken up in the next line (often as subject or first word). This parallelism, while found both in the OT (Ps xcvi 13) and elsewhere in John (vi 37, viii 32), never attains the perfection illustrated in vs. 1-5 of the Prologue. In John, Jesus' discourses have a solemnity and phrasing that goes beyond ordinary prose, but there is nothing of length in the Gospel to match the poetic structure of the Prologue. (That is why, although vs. 15 is the same as vs. 30, we set up vs. 15 as prose, for it does not match the poetic style of the Prologue; yet we set up vs. 30 in the semi-poetic format of the solemn pronouncements.)

In addition to a difference of format, there are also theological concepts and terms in the Prologue that have no echo in the Gospel. The central figure of the Prologue is the Word, a term which does not occur as a christological title in the Gospel. The important terms *charis*, "covenant love," and *plēroma*, "fullness," of vs. 14, 16 do not occur in the Gospel; and *alētheia*, "endurance, fidelity," has a different meaning ("truth") in the Gospel. The picture of Jesus as the Tabernacle ("tent dwelling") in vs. 14 does not occur in the Gospel, where Jesus is the Temple (ii 21).

The confusing combination of similarities and dissimilarities between Prologue and Gospel has been interpreted in different ways. Ruckstuhl is convinced by the similarities that the same hand composed both Prologue and Gospel, while J. A. T. Robinson is persuaded that the same author wrote the Prologue after he had written the Gospel. Schnackenburg, convinced by the dissimilarities that the Prologue was not originally the work of the evangelist, rejects as secondary additions any lines of the Prologue that have Johannine characteristics. Today many authors are moving toward positing an originally independent poem that has been adapted to the Gospel. This may explain the Johannine features in the non-poetic lines, but does not explain the Johannine features in the original poem. If one takes any of the many critical reconstructions of the original poem (see below), even Schnackenburg's, where there has been a systematic attempt to rule out Johannine features, one is still left with a poem that is more at home in the Johannine writings than anywhere else in the NT. This is easily seen by comparing it with the Prologue to I John and to Rev xix 13 where Jesus is called the Word of God. Therefore, while it is perfectly reasonable to recognize that the evidence points to the composition of the Prologue as independent of that of the Gospel, it seems also reasonable to posit that the Prologue was composed in Johannine circles. The similarities between the *poetry* of the Prologue and the Gospel are thus accounted for.

De Aulsebrook's study of the hymns of the NT suggests that the solution lies in seeing that the original poem underlying the Prologue was a hymn of the Johannine church. Hymns to Christ are mentioned in the NT in Eph v 19 and perhaps also in Col iii 16. Pliny, writing to Trajan ca. A.D. 111 (*Epist.* x 96:7), describes the Christians of Bithynia in Asia Minor as saying "a hymn to Christ as to a God." Eusebius (*Hist.* v 28:5; GCS 9:500) cites a testimony that speaks of psalms and hymns which from the beginning were sung to Christ as the Word, divinizing him. It is interesting that these references to hymns have some connection with Asia Minor; thus the conjecture that the original of the Prologue was a hymn of the Johannine church at Ephesus has a claim to likelihood. To test the hypothesis let us first compare the Prologue with some of the known NT hymns.

If we analyze Philip ii 6-11, we find a sequence not unlike that of the Prologue. Philippians begins the hymn with Christ Jesus being in the form of God, as the Prologue begins by telling us that the Word was God. Philippians says that Jesus emptied himself and took on the form of a servant, becoming [or being born] in the likeness of man; the Prologue says that Word became flesh. Philippians says that God has exalted Jesus so that every tongue will proclaim that Jesus is the Lord, to the glory of the Father; the Prologue ends on the theme of God the only Son being ever at the Father's side, and vs. 14 speaks of the glory of an only Son coming from the Father. In both instances the exaltation or glory is witnessed by men.

An analysis of Col i 15-20 also shows similarities to the Prologue (see J. M. Robinson, JBL 76 [1957], 278-79). In Colossians we hear that the Son is the image of the invisible God; in the Prologue he is the Word of God. In Colossians all things are created in, through, and unto the Son; in the Prologue all things are created through, in, and not apart from the Word. In Colossians the Son is the beginning; in the Prologue, "In the beginning was the Word." In Colossians all the fullness dwells in the Son and all things are reconciled through him; in the Prologue we have all had a share in the fullness of the Word-become-flesh.

Even a short hymn like that of I Tim iii 16 shows parallels to the Prologue. There we hear, "He was manifested in the *flesh* . . . he was taken up in *glory*." The opening verses of Hebrews form a short hymnic prologue resembling the Johannine Prologue. Heb i 2-5, without using the expression "the Word," says that God "*spoke to us by a Son . . . through whom also He created the world. He reflects the glory of God . . . upholding the universe by his word [rema] of power. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.*" Later on, Heb iv 12 speaks of "the word of God," but the exegesis that sees this as a personal reference to Jesus is dubious.

Support for seeing traces of an original hymn in the Prologue is found in the collection of 2nd-century Christian semi-Gnostic hymns known as the *Odes of Solomon*. See Braun, JeanThéol, I, pp. 224-51, for the relation of these *Odes* to the *Gospel of Truth* and the Dead Sea Scrolls. These hymns have a certain relation in style and vocabulary to the Prologue, especially Nos. vii, xii, xvi, xix, and xli. Ode xli 13-14 says that the Son of the Most High has appeared in the perfection of his Father: "A light has gone out from the Word which was in him from the beginning . . . he was designated before the creation of the world." Ode xviii 6 says that the light was not conquered by the darkness. Thus we have Johannine themes preserved in hymnic style. We may mention, however, that the existence of such Christian semi-Gnostic hymns really does nothing to prove Bultmann's contention that the Prologue hymn was originally part of the Revelatory Discourse Source and originally a Gnostic hymn written in praise of John the Baptist. The few passages cited in the *Odes* are possibly dependent on John. In the early Gnostic literature there are few, if any, good parallels *of length* for the format that Bultmann finds in the Prologue. More specifically, there is not the slightest evidence that the Baptist sectarians ever referred to John the Baptist as the Word. The strong anti-Gnostic features in the Prologue (vs. 3, 14) also militate against this suggestion.

The Formation of the Prologue

If we accept the evidence that the basis of the Prologue consisted of a hymn composed in the Johannine church, what verses belonged to this hymn and how was it joined to the Gospel? There is no agreement on either question. In the latter question some think that there were two stages of editing the hymn to adapt it to the Gospel; some think that there was one, and this was done by the final redactor. Gaechter suggests that the adaptation was made by the translator who worked with John and put his thought into Greek. Boismard thinks that Luke redacted this hymn because he finds Lucan expressions in vss. 14 and 17; the similarities with the Pauline hymns are also traced through Luke.

In the former question concerning what belonged to the original hymn there is even more debate. We give below a cross section of scholarly opinion. All those cited regard vss. 6-8, and 15 as secondary additions; and many would add vss. 9, 12-13, 17-18. The only general agreement is on vss. 1-5, 10-11, and 14 as parts of the original poem. The principal criterion is the poetic quality of the lines (length, number of accents, co-ordination, etc.). However, as Haenchen has pointed out against the strict adherents to this criterion (Gaechter, Bultmann, Käsemann, Schnackenburg), the type of regularity they demand is not found in most of the Pauline hymns. Moreover, if the poetic criterion is set on the basis of a hypothetical *Aramaic* original, we are on very subjective grounds. Another criterion in determining the lines of the original is thought pattern, for example, the exclusion from the poem of the apologetic lines written against the Baptist sectarians. However, when a scholar rather arbitrarily forms a set of presuppositions about the original import of the poem (the Gnostic theory), and then proceeds to eliminate lines that do not agree with his hypothesis, this criterion becomes very subjective.

Bernard	accepts		1-5,	10-11,	14,			18.
Bultmann	"		1-5,	9-12b,	14,	16,		
De Aulsebrook	"		1-5,	9-11,	14,	16,		18.
Gaechter	"		1-5,	10-12,	14,	16,	17,	
Green	"	1,	3-5,	10-11,	14a-d,			18.
Haenchen	"		1-5,	9-11,	14,	16,	17,	
Käsemann	"	1,	3-5,	10-12,				(uncertain of 2)
Schnackenburg	"	1,	3-4,	9-11,	14abe,	16,		

Once the original lines have been determined, there is the problem of breaking them up into stanzas or strophes. Matching length is a criterion here, although De Aulsebrook completely ignores it. Strict mathematical proportion, however, is not to be demanded, as it is not found in the Pauline hymns. The development of thought can also be an important criterion, but there is much disagreement on the development in the Prologue.

In the NOTES we have advanced the reasons for and against the various theories about individual lines. With great hesitancy we suggest the following outline of the formation of the Prologue, emphasizing its tentative nature.

The original hymn:

First strophe:	1-2.	The Word with God.
Second strophe:	3-5.	The Word and Creation.
Third strophe:	10-12b.	The Word in the World.
Fourth strophe:	14, 16.	The Community's Share in the Word.

To this hymn have been added two sets of additions:

1. Explanatory expansions of the lines of the hymn:
 - vss. 12c-13, added at the end of the third strophe, to explain how men become God's children;
 - vss. 17-18, added at the end of the fourth strophe, to explain "love in place of love."
2. Material pertaining to John the Baptist—perhaps originally the opening verses of the Gospel, displaced when the Prologue was prefaced to the Gospel by the final redactor:
 - vss. 6-9, added at the end of the second strophe, before the treatment of the Incarnation;
 - vs. 15, added in the middle of the third stanza.

We see no way of being certain whether these two sets of additions were the work of one man and done at the same time.

There are several questions that we make no attempt to settle. Burney, Black, and Bultmann argue strongly for an Aramaic original for the hymn; the evidence is not conclusive. Lund and Boismard see a pattern of chiasm in the final form of the Prologue (see Introduction, Part IX:D). Lund's arrangement, *art. cit.*, is spectacularly intricate. Boismard's is simpler, and is supported by some valid observations (the concluding vs. 18 picks up the theme of the opening vs. 1; and vs. 15 matches vss. 6-8). However, the parallels Boismard finds between vss. 3 and 17 and between vss. 4-5 and 16 are highly imaginative. We remain in doubt on the applicability of a chiasm pattern to the Prologue.

The question of where the Prologue begins to speak of the incarnate career of the Word as Jesus Christ will be discussed below. However, we should mention the novel theory of De Aulsebrook that the whole hymn refers to the Word-become-flesh. He correctly insists that the Pauline hymns tend to refer to Jesus Christ throughout. Philippians, for example, is speaking of Jesus Christ even when it speaks of his being in the form of God before he emptied himself and took on the form of a servant. This way of speaking is strange to Christian theology in the aftermath of Nicaea; for before the Incarnation one speaks of the Second Person of the Trinity and it is insisted that Jesus Christ came into being at the moment of the Incarnation. But the NT made no

such precise distinction in its terminology, and De Ausejo may well be right. At least one may say that even in its opening verse the Prologue does not conceive of a Word that will not be spoken to men.

COMMENT: DETAILED

First Strophe. *The Word with God* (vss. 1-2)

If it is unusual to open a Gospel with a hymn, the praise of the Word is not an unfitting opening to the written account of the apostolic kerygma. In v 24 and xv 3 Jesus characterizes his message as a "word"; the Prologue shows that the messenger himself was the Word. We may have a hint of such a contrast in the Gospel itself in x 33—36 where there seems to be a contrast between God's *word*, which is addressed to men and makes them gods, and God's Son, who is sent into the world and is called God (= "The Word was God"). Since the first words of the Prologue opened Genesis, they are peculiarly fitting to open the account of what God has said and done in the new dispensation.

The description of the Word with God in heaven before creation is remarkably brief; there is not the slightest indication of interest in metaphysical speculations about relationships within God or in what later theology would call Trinitarian processions. The Prologue is a description of the history of salvation in hymnic form, much as Ps lxxviii is a poetic description of the history of Israel. Therefore, the emphasis is primarily on God's relation to men, rather than on God in Himself. The very title "Word" implies a revelation—not so much a divine idea, but a divine communication. The words "In the beginning," although they refer to pre-creation, imply that there is going to be a creation, a beginning. If this poem was going to concentrate on God Himself, there would be no beginning. The Prologue says that the Word was; it does not speculate *how* the Word was, for not the origins of the Word but what the Word does is important. The Prologue does not proceed in the direction of its Qumran parallel cited in the NOTE on vss. 3b-4. There in good Hellenistic fashion God's knowledge is stressed as a creative factor; here in the manner of the OT God's Word is stressed. We shall discuss the background of the concept of "the Word" in App. II, but we may emphasize here that the whole cast of the hymn as salvific history removes it a distance from the more speculative Hellenistic world of thought. As Dodd, *art. cit.*, p. 15, points out, no Hellenistic thinker would see a climax in the Incarnation, just as no Gnostic would triumphantly proclaim that the Word had become flesh.

As mentioned in the NOTE on 1c, the Prologue's "The Word was God" offers a difficulty because there is no article before *theos*. Does this imply that "God" means less when predicated of the Word than it does when used as a name for the Father? Once again the reader must divest himself of a post-Nicene understanding of the vocabulary involved. There are two considerations.

The NT does not predicate "God" of Jesus with any frequency. V. Taylor, ET 73 (1961-62), 116-18, has asked whether it ever calls Jesus God, since almost every text proposed has its difficulties. See our article treating all the pertinent texts in TS 26 (1965), 545-73. Most of the passages suggested (John i 1, 18, xx 28; Rom ix 5; Heb i 8; II Pet i 1) are in hymns or doxologies—an indication that the title "God" was applied to Jesus more quickly in liturgical formulae than in narrative or epistolary literature. We are reminded again of Pliny's description of the Christians singing *hymns* to Christ as God. The reluctance to apply this designation to Jesus is understandable as part of the NT heritage from Judaism. For the Jews "God" meant the heavenly Father; and until a wider understanding of the term was reached, it could not be readily applied to Jesus. This is reflected in Mark x 18 where Jesus refuses to be called good because only God is good; in John xx 17 where Jesus calls the Father "my God"; and in Eph iv 5-6 where Jesus is spoken of as "one Lord," but the Father is "one God." (The way that the NT approached the question of the divinity of Jesus was not through the title "God" but by describing his activities in the same way as it described the Father's activities; see John v 17, 21, x 28-29.) In vs. 1c the Johannine hymn is bordering on the usage of "God" for the Son, but by omitting the article it avoids any suggestion of personal identification of the Word with the Father. And for Gentile readers the line also avoids any suggestion that the Word was a second God in any Hellenistic sense.

There is a further consideration, however. We have mentioned the suggestion by the Catholic scholar De Ausejo that the Word throughout the Prologue means the Word-become-flesh and that the whole hymn refers to Jesus Christ. If this is so, then perhaps there is justification for seeing in the use of the anarthrous *theos* something more humble than the use of *ho theos* for the Father. It is Jesus Christ who says in John xiv 28, "The Father is greater than I," and who in xvii 3 speaks of the Father as "the only true God." The recognition of a humble position for Jesus Christ in relation to the Father is not strange to early Christian hymns, for Philip ii 6-7 speaks of Jesus as emptying himself and not clinging to the form of God.

Because vs. 2 repeats vs. 1 some scholars ascribe it to the secondary editing of the hymn. If we regard vss. 1-2 as a strophe, however, then vs. 2 may be an inclusion: the strophe begins and ends on the theme of "the beginning." Lund claims it as an example of chiasm since the ideas of vs. 2 are in inverse order from 1a,b. Bultmann, p. 17, is probably correct when he insists that the repetition is far from otiose. The great danger for any Hellenistic community in reading that the Word was God would be polytheism, and vs. 2 insists again on the relationship between the Father and the Word.

Second Strophe. *The Word and Creation* (vss. 3-5)

With the appearance of "came into being" (*egeneto*) in vs. 3 we are in the sphere of creation. All that is created is intimately related to the Word, for it was created, not only through him, but also in him. We find the same idea in the hymn of Col i 16: "For in him were all things created . . . all things were created by him and in him." The same unity that exists between the Word and his creation will be applied in John xv 5 to Jesus and the Christian: "Apart from me you can do nothing."

The fact that the *Word* creates means that creation is an act of revelation. All creation bears the stamp of God's Word, whence the insistence in Wis xiii 1 and Rom i 19-20 that from His creatures God is recognizable by men. Moreover, the Word's role in creation means that Jesus has a claim on all; as vs. 10 will poignantly insist, the world rejected this claim. The expression "all"

(panta) in vs. 3 is a quasi-liturgical formula which captures the fullness of God's creation. Notice its use in Rom xi 36: "For from Him and through Him and to Him are *all things*. To Him be glory forever. Amen." See also I Cor viii 6 and the appearance of *panta* in the hymn of Col i 16.

Boismard, pp. 102-5, asks what type of causality does the Word exercise in creation: efficient or exemplary causality? In Appendix II we shall point out that the creative word of God in the OT seems to be the efficient cause of creation. Yet personified Wisdom and the Torah (which are also part of the background of the Prologue's use of the Word) seem to exercise in creation the causality of a model or exemplar. Therefore there may be elements of both types of causality in creation through and in the Word. Boismard states: "It is therefore probable that for St. John also the Word of God plays a part in creation because it is the pronouncement of an idea, and not because it is endowed, as such, with effectiveness." However, there is nothing in the Prologue to stress that the Word is the pronouncement of a divine idea, and such speculation belongs more to the Greek world and later theology.

We note finally that in saying that it is through the Word that all things came into being, the Prologue is at a distance from Gnostic thought whereby a demiurge and not God was responsible for material creation, which is evil. Since the Word is related to the Father and the Word creates, the Father may be said to create through the Word. Thus the material world has been created by God and is good.

The interpretation of vs. 4 depends on how one solves the difficult problem of its translation (see NOTE). In the translation accepted it marks a progression over vs. 3 in two ways. First, the fact of creation (that all things came to be) is no longer in view; emphasis has shifted to *what* had come to be. Second, the focus is on a special aspect of what had come to be, namely what had come to be in the Word—the special creation of the Word. It is true that for some scholars the Prologue has at this point passed from creation to the Incarnation (Spitta, Zahn, B. Weiss, Vawter). They point out that the gift of life which is mentioned in vs. 4 is associated in the Gospel with the coming of Jesus (iii 16, v 40, x 10). Yet, a jump from creation in vs. 3 to the coming of Jesus in 4 seems exceedingly abrupt, especially when the "that which had come to be" in 4 is a link to "came to be" in 3. If vss. 4-5 refer to the coming of Jesus, then the clearer reference to his coming in 9 and 10 seems tautological. Also the editor of the Prologue has inserted a reference to John the Baptist *after* vs. 5, and one can scarcely imagine that the editor would introduce John the Baptist after describing the ministry of Jesus and its effect. Clearly the editor thought that the references to the coming of Jesus began in vs. 10; he put the coming of John the Baptist in vss. 6-8 before the coming of Jesus, and used vs. 9 to connect John the Baptist to the moment of that coming. Of course, the editor could have misunderstood the import of vss. 4—5, but he was much closer to the original hymn than we are. This objection also militates against the theory of Käsemann, who sees a reference to the coming of Jesus, not in vs. 4, but in 5, which he joins to 10, and against the theory of Bultmann, who begins the work of the revealer in history with vs. 5, which he joins to 9.

We suggest that the meaning of vss. 4-5 lies much closer to that of vs. 3. From the opening words of the hymn there has been a deliberate parallel to the opening chapters of Genesis. This carried into vs. 3 with its use of *egeneto* (see NOTE); and now it carries into 4-5 with the mention of light and darkness, for light was God's first creation (Gen 13). "Life" is also a theme of the creation account in Gen i 11 ("living creatures" in i 20, 24, etc.). Of course, in its first chapter Genesis is speaking of natural life while the Prologue is speaking of eternal life. Yet, eternal life is also mentioned in the first chapters of Genesis, for ii 9 and iii 22 speak of the tree of life whose fruit, when eaten, would make man live forever. Man was shut off from this life by his sin; but, as we see in Rev xxii 2, the eternal life of the Garden of Eden prefigured the life that Jesus would give to men. In John vi Jesus will speak of the bread of life which a man may eat and live forever—a bread, therefore, which has the same qualities as the fruit of the tree of life in Paradise. John viii 44 mentions man's loss of the opportunity for eternal life in Paradise when it describes the devil as a murderer from the beginning and the father of lies (the serpent lied to Eve). And so we suggest that in vs. 4 the Prologue is still speaking in the context of the creation narrative of Genesis. That which had especially come to be in God's creative Word was the gift of eternal life. This life was the light of men because the tree of life was closely associated with the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If man had survived the test, he would have possessed eternal life and enlightenment.

Verse 5 may also be interpreted against this background. There was an attempt by darkness to overcome the light—namely the fall of man. Notice that the aorist, "overcame," thus receives its normal meaning as referring to a single past action. But the light shines on, for although man sinned, a ray of hope was given to him. Gen iii 15 says that God put enmity between the serpent and the woman and that the serpent was not destined to overcome her offspring. In particular, the seed of the woman, which for the NT was Jesus, would be victorious over Satan. (We emphasize that we are dealing here with the Christian and, perhaps, late Jewish understanding of Gen iii 15, not the understanding of the original author of the passage.) That Johannine circles capitalized on Gen iii 15 we see in Rev xii, where the victory of Jesus over the devil is pictured in terms of the victory of the woman's child over the serpent.

Parenthesis: *John the Baptist's Witness to the Light* (vss. 6-9)

If the second strophe dealt with the creation by the Word and the Word's initial gift of life and light and the attempt by the darkness to overcome the light, the third strophe will deal with the Word's own coming into the world to defeat the darkness. Between the two strophes an editor has inserted four verses dealing with John the Baptist and his role of preparing men for the coming of the Word and the light.

Boismard and others have made an interesting suggestion about the origin of vss. 6-7: that they were the original opening of the Gospel which was displaced when the Prologue was added. The first words of vs. 6, "There was sent by God a man named John," would be a normal opening for a historical narrative. Judg xiii 2 opens the Samson narratives with: "And there was a man of Zorah of the Danites" (also xix 1; I Sam i 1). Moreover, if at least the substance of 6-7 came before i 19, there would have been a good sequence: 7 says that John the Baptist came as a witness to testify, and 19 if. presents his testimony and the

circumstances under which it was given. In such circumstances the strange expression "to testify to the light" makes more sense. Ordinarily light can be seen and there is no need for someone to testify to it; but in 19 ff. it is a question of testifying before those who are hostile and who have not yet seen Jesus.

Verse 8 has a motif of its own. We have mentioned in the Introduction (Part V:A) that one of the goals of the Fourth Gospel was a refutation of exaggerated claims made by the sectarians of John the Baptist. The Prologue in vs. 8 subordinates John the Baptist to Jesus. Is the refutation even more specific? Did the sectarians think of John the Baptist as the light? It has been suggested that the *Benedictus*, the hymn of Zachary in Luke i 68-79, was once a hymn to John the Baptist, subsequently adapted to Christian use. Verses 78-79 connect the ministry of John the Baptist with that moment when the day dawns from on high to give light to those who sit in darkness. Thus it *may* be that the sectarians claimed the title of light for John the Baptist.

Seemingly vs. 9 is the transition that the editor has made to adapt vss. 6-8 to their present place in the Prologue. The stress on real light picks up the theme of 8; the stress on coming into the world prepares for 10. J. A. T. Robinson, p. 127, thinks that all four verses (6-9), as well as 15, were part of the original opening of the Gospel; really, however, only 6-7 read well before 19. The picture of light coming into the world to enlighten men is a messianic one taken from the OT, particularly from Isaiah. In the description of the messianic prince of peace Isa ix 2 announces: "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; light has shone on those who dwelt deep in the land of darkness." In the second part of Isaiah (xlii 6) Yahweh proclaims of His servant: "I have given you as a covenant to the people, a light to the nations . . . to bring out from prison those who sit in darkness." In the third part of Isaiah (Ix 1-2) we hear the clarion call to Jerusalem: "Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. For behold, darkness shall cover the earth; and thick blackness, the peoples; but the Lord will rise upon you . . . and nations shall come to your light." The Prologue associates the witness of John the Baptist, the Isaian voice in the wilderness, with the prophetic proclamation of the coming of the light. The Fourth Gospel was not alone in adapting to Jesus the OT prophecies pertaining to light; Matt iv 16 applies Isa ix 2 to the ministry of Jesus.

We may mention in passing that H. Sahlin, *art. cit.*, has attempted to show that vss. 6-9 belonged to the original form of the Prologue and were applied to the Word. For example, he reads, "He [the Word] became man, sent by God. He came as a witness to testify to the light . . ." Sahlin suggests that under the influence of Synoptic parallels like Mark i 4 the verses were mistakenly applied to John the Baptist. This is ingenious but completely beyond the range of proof.

Third Strophe. *The Word in the World* (vss. 10-12b)

The third strophe of the original hymn seems to deal with the Word incarnate in the ministry of Jesus. However, many scholars do not share this view. Westcott, Bernard, and Boismard suggest that the reference to the Word's presence in the world in vss. 10-12 is to be interpreted in terms of the activity of the divine word in the OT period; and Schnackenburg, p. 88, thinks of the presence of Wisdom in the world and in Israel. The period between Adam and Moses has been suggested for vs. 10; the Sinai covenant and the subsequent infidelity of Israel for 11; and the faithful remnant of Israel for 12.

Of course, this view means that the editor of the Prologue misunderstood the hymn in inserting the reference to John the Baptist before vs. 10. Moreover, it runs against the fact that most of the phrases found in 10-12 appear in the Gospel as a description of the ministry of Jesus. If the Word is in the world (10a), Jesus says that he has come into the world (iii 19, xii 46), that he is in the world (ix 5); and frequently these statements are in juxtaposition to the theme of his being the light, just as i 10 follows i 5 with its theme of light. The presence of the Word in the world is rejected, for the world does not recognize the Word (10c). In like manner the presence of Jesus in the world meets rejection (iii 19), for men do not recognize who Jesus is (xiv 7, xvi 3; I John iii 1). The particularly poignant rejection of the Word by his own people (11b) is also matched in the ministry of Jesus as he is rejected in Galilee (iv 44) and by the Jewish people in general (xii 37). The phrase "did not accept" (*paralambanein* in 11; *lambanein* in 12) is used of Jesus in iii 11 and v 43 (*lambanein*). Indeed, as we have pointed out, vss. 11 and 12 are really short summaries of the two parts of the Gospel: the Book of Signs and the Book of Glory. The opening line of the Book of Glory (xiii 2) announces: "Having loved *his own* who were in the world, he now showed his love for them to the very end." In other words, in place of the Jewish people who had been his own (i 11), he now has formed around himself a new "his own," the Christian believers (i 12).

The conclusive argument that vss. 10-12 refer to the ministry of Jesus is, in our opinion, found in 12. Schnackenburg has no difficulty with 12 since he rejects that verse from the original hymn; but any commentator who accepts 12 as part of the hymn must reckon with the statement that the Word's career in the world empowered men to become God's children. It seems incredible that in a hymn coming out of Johannine circles the ability to become a child of God would have been explained in another way than in terms of having been begotten from above by the Spirit of Jesus (iii 3, 5; see COMMENT on xx 17 in *The Anchor Bible*, vol. 29A; I John iii 9). If the revelation of the OT empowered men to become God's children, the whole conversation with Nicodemus is unintelligible. Dodd, *Interpretation*, p. 282, argues that before the coming of Jesus there were children of God and cites xi 52 about the dispersed children of God. But does John mean that these dispersed people are already children of God without having heard of Jesus and being begotten from above? Or does John not mean that these are people who have been called by God to be his children and to accept Jesus as their shepherd?

Thus we agree with Büchsel, Bauer, Harnack, Käsemann, and others that the third strophe of the hymn refers to the earthly ministry of Jesus. We note that the hymn of Philip ii 6-11 passes from Jesus in the form of God directly to Jesus in the form of a servant, from heaven to the ministry of Jesus, without any description of God's work in the OT period. In the hymn in Col i 15-20 the thought passes from the Son as the image of God and the first-born of all creation to the death of Jesus.

A few remarks may be made on the individual verses. As we shall point out in App. II, the rejection of the Word by men in vs. 10 is quite similar to the rejection of Wisdom by men in En xlii 2: "Wisdom came to make her dwelling place among the children of men and found no dwelling place." This is a reflection of the Johannine theology that Jesus is personified Wisdom. Verse 11 is not synonymous with 10 (*pace* Bultmann), but marks a narrowing down of the activity of the Word to Israel. It represents the sentiment expressed in Matt xv 24 that Jesus was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. In John xii 20-23 when the Gentiles come to Jesus, this is a sign that the ministry is over and the hour is at hand. To some the contrast between non-acceptance in vs. 11 and acceptance in 12 seems too sharp; nevertheless, exactly the same contrast is found in iii 32-33: "He testifies to what he has seen and heard, but *no one accepts* his testimony. *Whoever does accept* his testimony has certified that God is truthful." Such sharp contrasts are found in early Christian hymns, for example, I Tim iii 16, "He was manifested hi the flesh, justified in the Spirit."

Verses 12c-13. The reason for the evaluation of these verses as editorial comment on vs. 12 has been advanced in the NOTES, where we found it necessary to explain the verses in order to justify our translation. The editor has made his addition between strophes.

Fourth Strophe. *The Community's Share in the Word-become-flesh* (vss. 14 and 16)

The last strophe of the hymn introduces the community and gives poetic expression to what the career of the Word means in the life of the community. In particular, vs. 14a,b summarizes and gives more vital expression to what was said in 10-11; 14c-e and 16 expand on the idea of becoming God's children from 12 by showing how we share in the fullness of God's only Son. This is the last strophe of the hymn, and it forms an inclusion with the first strophe. Verses 14 and 1 are the only two verses in the hymn that mention "the Word" specifically.

v. 1	The Word was (<i>ēn</i>)	matching	v. 14	The Word became (<i>egeneto</i>)
v. 1	The Word in God's presence	matching	v. 14	The Word among us
v. 1	The Word was <i>God</i>	matching	v. 14	The Word became <i>flesh</i>

Thus the eternal being of the Word in the opening strophe is contrasted to the temporal becoming of the Word in the last strophe. Only when one understands the summary quality of the last strophe, which captures the activity of the preceding verses of the hymn and deliberately contrasts it to the theme of the first strophe, can one see that there is no contradiction to suggest that the third strophe deals with the ministry of Jesus and still 14a is a clear reference to the Incarnation. Verse 14a,b offers a summary of the Word's activity for community admiration and praise, since community participation is to be expected in a hymn. When the hymn was adapted to serve as Prologue for the Gospel, this summary verse could also point ahead to the career of Jesus to follow.

Verse 14a describes the Incarnation in strongly realistic language by stressing that the Word became *flesh*. The word "flesh" seems to have been associated with the Incarnation from the earliest days of Christian theological expression. Rom i 3 describes God's Son who was descended from David according to the flesh; and Rom viii 3 catches even better the element of scandal in this when it speaks of God's "sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh." The hymn in I Tim iii 16 contrasts manifestation in the flesh with vindication in the Spirit. Does the mention of flesh in John i 14 represent a kenotic element comparable to what we find in the hymn of Philip ii 7: "He emptied himself, taking on the form of a servant, becoming in the likeness of man"? De Ausejo in his article on "flesh" in John (EstBib 17 [1958], 411-27) stresses this. Since in his opinion the whole hymn has been in praise of the incarnate Jesus, the statement in vs. 14a that the Word became flesh must have a special emphasis of weakness and mortality. Käsemann, p. 93, however, insists that the scandal consists in the presence of God among men and not in the becoming flesh—not the how, but the fact. For Käsemann 14a says no more than 10a, "He was in the world." The parallelism between 14a and 14b gives support to Käsemann's contention.

Is there a polemic intent in vs. 14a? Certainly its theology would not have been compatible to Gnostic or Docetic strains of thought. No line in the hymn gives sharper expression to the difference between the Prologue's concept of the Word and that of the Stoics and of the *Corpus Hermeticum*. The Greek who admired the *logos* as formulating the orderliness of the world aspired to be joined with God in His universe. The suggestion that the ultimate encounter with the *logos* of God would be when the *logos* became flesh would have been unthinkable. The Prologue does not say that the Word entered into flesh or abided in flesh but that the Word *became* flesh. Therefore, instead of supplying the liberation from the material world that the Greek mind yearned for, the Word of God was now inextricably bound to human history. Yet, while 14a would not be acceptable to some of the schools of philosophical or theological thought in the Hellenistic world, we cannot be certain that it was written against such views. The Johannine Epistles are more clearly polemic, as in I John iv 2-3: "Every spirit that acknowledges Jesus Christ *come in the flesh* belongs to God, while every spirit that severs Jesus does not belong to God" (also II John 7). There *may* be an element of polemic on this point in the Gospel in passages like vi 51-59 and xix 34-35. We may note finally that the hymn's stress on flesh in vs. 14a is somewhat different from the attitude in the editorial comment on the hymn in 13, where it is emphasized that God's children were not begotten by the desire of the flesh.

Let us turn now to the attitude toward revelation implied in "The Word became flesh." The title, "the Word," was appropriate in vs. 1 because the divine being described there was destined to speak to men. When the title is used for the second time in vs. 14, this divine being has taken on human form and has thus found the most effective way in which to express himself to men. Thus, in becoming flesh the Word does not cease to be the Word, but exercises his function as Word to the full. In commenting on this verse Bultmann, p. 42, formulates one of the theses that runs through his thought-provoking commentary, namely, that contact with the Word-become-flesh is contact with revelation itself, for Jesus brings no teaching and is not a guide to heavenly mysteries such as found hi the Gnostic picture of teachers descended from heaven. The contrast with the Gnostic picture is

valid: Jesus is incarnate Wisdom or revelation itself. But does not Bultmann make too much of a revealer without a revelation? Perhaps this is by way of over-reaction to an older view where Jesus was thought to proclaim revelation in a series of ordered propositions. First, it is true that throughout John the stress is on accepting Jesus, and much of the time this means accepting his claim to be sent from God. But, as Käsemann, pp. 95-96, insists, if the fact that Jesus was sent is all important, this is in itself a tremendous revelation of "the one thing that is necessary." It is a revelation that the Creator is here present to his creatures; and the Creator does not come with empty hands, for he gives light and life and love and resurrection. Second, there remains a considerable amount of teaching in what Jesus says. For instance, there is teaching about his Father's salvific love for men (iii 16-17), about the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, about the Law and its obligations (v 16-17, vii 19-23), about the duties of love among Christians (xiii 12-17, 34), about Baptism (iii 5), and about the Eucharist (vi 51-58—of course, Bultmann rejects the sacramental passages as additions of the Ecclesiastical Redactor). Much of the teaching that Matthew puts in the Sermon on the Mount is found in John, scattered at times, and in variant forms, but nevertheless present. Therefore, we may say that if the Word became flesh, it was not only to be encountered but also to speak.

Verse 14b and the succeeding lines show that, if the Word has become flesh, he has not ceased to be God. In 14b this is given expression in the verb *skēnoun* ("make a dwelling; pitch a tent") which has important OT associations. The theme of "tenting" is found in Exod xxv 8-9 where Israel is told to make a tent (the Tabernacle—*skēnē*) so that God can dwell among His people; the Tabernacle became the site of God's localized presence on earth. It was promised that in the ideal days to come this tenting among men would be especially impressive. Joel iii 17 says, "You will know that I am the Lord your God who makes his dwelling [*kataskēnoun*] in Zion." At the time of the return from the Babylonian Exile Zech ii 10 proclaims: "Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion, for look, I come and will make my dwelling [*kataskēnoun*] in your midst." In the ideal Temple described by Ezekiel (xliv 7) God will make His dwelling in the midst of His people forever, or as the LXX has it: "*My name shall dwell in the midst of the house of Israel forever.*" (The latter is interesting in view of the Johannine interest in *the name*.) When the Prologue proclaims that the Word made his dwelling among men, we are being told that the flesh of Jesus Christ is the new localization of God's presence on earth, and that Jesus is the replacement of the ancient Tabernacle. The Gospel will present Jesus as the replacement of the Temple (ii 19-22), which is a variation of the same theme. In Rev vii 15 the verb *skēnoun* is used of God's presence in heaven, while in xxi 3 the great vision of the heavenly Jerusalem echoes the promise of the prophets, "He will dwell [*skēnoun*] with them, and they shall be His people." Thus, in dwelling among men, the Word anticipates the divine presence which according to Revelation will be visible to men in the last days.

As an intermediary between the pentateuchal and prophetic use of "tenting" and the use of "tenting" in the Prologue we may call attention to passages in the Wisdom Literature where Wisdom is said to tent or make her dwelling among men (see App. II). In the hymn of Sir xxiv, Wisdom sings: "The Creator of all ... chose the spot for my tent, saying, 'In Jacob make your dwelling [*kataskēnoun*], in Israel your inheritance.'" Thus, in making his dwelling among men, the Word is acting in the manner of Wisdom.

There is another aspect of the divine presence suggested in vs. 14b. The radicals *skn* which underlie the Greek verb "to tent" resemble the Hebrew root *škn* which also means "to dwell" and from which the noun *shekinah* is derived. In rabbinic theology *shekinah* was a technical term for God's presence dwelling among His people. For instance, in Exod xxv 8 where God says, "Let them make me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them," the Targum or Aramaic translation has, "I shall cause my *shekinah* to reside among them." Like the use of *memra* discussed in App. II, the use of *shekinah* as a surrogate for Yahweh in His dealings with men was a way of preserving God's transcendence. The Targum of Deut xii 5 has God's *shekinah* dwell in the sanctuary rather than His name. The threat in Hos v 6 that Yahweh will withdraw from Israel becomes in the Targum a threat that He will cause His *shekinah* to ascend to heaven and depart from men. Even the omnipresence of God which no sanctuary can compass is called His *shekinah* in the Talmud. Though some of these works stem from a period later than the 1st century A.D., the theology of the *shekinah* was known at that time; and it is quite possible that in the use of *skēnoun* the Prologue is reflecting the idea that Jesus is now the *shekinah* of God, the locus of contact between the Father and those men among whom it is His delight to be. See L. Bouyer, "Le Schekinah, Dieu avec nous," BVC 20 (1957-58), 8-22.

The thought of the divine presence in Jesus who now serves as the Tabernacle and perhaps as the *shekinah* overflows into vs. 14c: "We have seen his glory." In the OT the *glory* of God (Heb. *kabod*; Gr. *doxa*—see App. I:4) implies a visible and powerful manifestation of God to men. In the Targums "glory" also became a surrogate, like *memra* and *shekinah*, for the visible presence of God among men, although its use was not as frequent as that of the other surrogates. (If in Exod xxiv 10 we are told that Moses and the elders saw the God of Israel, in Targum Onkelos we hear that they "saw the glory [Aram. *yeqar*] of the God of Israel.") However, what we are primarily interested in is the constant connection of the glory of God with His presence in the Tabernacle and the Temple. When Moses went up Mount Sinai (Exod xxiv 15-16), we are told that a cloud covered the mountain and the glory of God settled there while God told Moses how to build the Tabernacle. When the Tabernacle was erected, the cloud covered it and the glory of God filled it (Exod xl 34). The same phenomenon is reported when Solomon's Temple was dedicated (I Kings viii 10-11). Just before the destruction of the Temple by the Babylonians, Ezek xl 23 tells us that the glory of God left the city; but in the vision of the restored Temple Ezekiel saw the glory of God once more filling the building (xliv 4). Thus, it is quite appropriate that, after the description of how the Word set up a Tabernacle among men in the flesh of Jesus, the Prologue should mention that his *glory* became visible.

Do lines 14c,d refer to a particular manifestation of the glory of the incarnate Word? We have mentioned in the NOTE that "we have seen" seems to be a reference to apostolic witness, like the "we" of the Prologue to I John. Many suggest, therefore, that the hymn is referring to the moment when Peter, John, and James witnessed the Transfiguration of Jesus, a scene not recorded in John but found in the Synoptics and II Pet i 16-18. On that occasion Luke ix 32 says that they saw his *glory*. And just as the Prologue speaks of the glory of an only Son, so at the Transfiguration the heavenly voice proclaimed Jesus as "my beloved Son" ("beloved" has the connotation of "only"). The account of the Transfiguration in II Peter may throw some light on the problem mentioned in the NOTE, whether in vs. 14d "coming from the Father" modifies "glory" or "Son." In II Pet i 16-17 the author

speaking as Peter says, ". . . we had been eyewitnesses of his majesty. *He received from God the Father honor and glory . . .*" (Bo Reicke, *The Anchor Bible*, vol. 37); here clearly it is glory that comes from the Father. A reference to the Transfiguration would fit in well with the Tabernacle theme we saw in vs. 14b, for the scene on the mount of the Transfiguration is described in the Synoptic Gospels in terms evocative of God's appearance to Moses on Sinai, and the building of tents or tabernacles is specifically mentioned (Mark ix 5). Thus, there is much to recommend the suggestion that 14c,d is an echo of the Transfiguration. However, it remains no more than a possibility that the Johannine writers knew of the Transfiguration scene.

It is worth while to compare Bultmann's exegesis of vs. 14 with that of Käsemann. Stressing the kenotic aspect of 14a, Bultmann, p. 40, speaks of the scandal implicit in the realization that the revealer is none other than a man. As for the "we have seen his glory," this is not an unrestricted vision. If we were to see transparently, the flesh would be meaningless; were we not to see at all, there would be no revelation. Käsemann, writing against Bultmann, insists on the glorious character of the Word-become-flesh. The flesh is not simply an incognito through which men must see; rather the glory of the Word keeps breaking through the flesh in the miraculous works which can be seen. Käsemann would thus draw together the miracles of the Johannine Jesus and his revelatory discourses (and to some extent destroy the dichotomy of sources that Bultmann has posited—see Introduction, Part II:B[2]). The miraculous in John is not the dross left from the sign-source but is an essential part of the presentation of the incarnate Word. In "the Word became flesh," Käsemann sees not so much that the revealer is only a man, but that God is present in the human sphere.

The theme of enduring covenant love (*hesed* and *'emet*—see NOTE) that appears in vs. 14e and is taken up in 16 fits in well with the Tabernacle and glory references that we have discussed. The great exhibition of the enduring covenant love of God in the OT took place at Sinai, the same setting where the Tabernacle became the dwelling for God's glory. So now the supreme exhibition of God's love is the incarnate Word, Jesus Christ, the new Tabernacle of divine glory. If our interpretation of "love in place of love" is correct, the hymn comes to an end with the triumphant proclamation of a new covenant replacing the Sinai covenant.

Parenthesis: *John the Baptist Testifies to the Pre-existence of Jesus* (vs. 15)

Verse 14 has stated that the pre-existent heavenly Word became flesh. Apparently the redactor who added vss. 6-9 has also added 15, intending to confirm vs. 14 with John the Baptist's testimony that Jesus is pre-existent. There is obvious polemic against any suggestion that John the Baptist might be greater than Jesus because he began his ministry first. See COMMENT on i 30. J. A. T. Robinson's suggestion that, like vss. 6-7, vs. 15 was part of the original opening of the Gospel is difficult, especially since then there would be no apparent reason for the same statement in vs. 30. We suggest that the final redactor, seeing that it might be useful here to emphasize the theme of pre-existence, copied into the Prologue the sentence from vs. 30.

Verses 17-18. As we have explained in the NOTE, vs. 17 merely spells out what has been said in 16 by naming the two occasions of God's demonstration of covenant love, namely, in the gift of the Law to Moses on Sinai, and in Jesus Christ. Verse 17 suggests more clearly than the hymn the superiority of the enduring love expressed in Jesus Christ, and vs. 18 spells out that superiority. Naturally it is the failure of Moses to have seen God that the author wishes to contrast with the intimate contact between Son and Father. In Exod xxxiii 18 Moses asks to see God's glory, but the Lord says, "You cannot see my face and live." Isaiah (vi 5) exclaims in terror, "Woe! I am lost . . . for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts," where it is not even a question of seeing God's face. Against this OT background that not even the greatest representatives of Israel have seen God, John holds up the example of the only Son who has not only seen the Father but is ever at His side. We may well suspect that this theme was part of the Johannine polemic against the Synagogue, for it is repeated in v 37 and vi 46. However, the theme that only the Son had seen the Father would also impress the Hellenistic world which knew of the invisible God whose substance could not be grasped by men.

The editorial expansion of the hymn in vs. 18 is not lacking in adroitness; the editor has managed to incorporate in it several inclusions with vs. 1. Just as in vs. 1 the Word was God, so here the only Son is called God. Just as in vs. 1 the Word was in God's presence, so in 18 the only Son is ever at the Father's side. It is the unique relation of the Son to the Father, so unique that John can speak of "God the only Son," that makes his revelation the supreme revelation.

Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John, I-XII*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday (Anchor Bible, 29A), 1970, p. 3-37.