

In The Beginning Was The Word

Many of us would have loved to live during the time of Jesus Christ so that we could see, know, and maybe touch Him. Luke, the physician, tells us in his gospel that Theophilus, who lived near the time of Jesus Christ, wanted to know more about Jesus. He was not an eyewitness, but he probably wished that he had been. People have always believed that there is a god. History tells us about the gods of the Egyptians, Babylonians, Phoenicians, Romans, and Greeks. The Greeks even had an altar to the “Unknown god.” They did not want to miss any god.

THE LOGOS. There were also philosophers who were struggling to understand the world and how one comes to know God. Heraclitus (540 B.C.) was a philosopher who tried to explain the world in which we all live. He believed that there was a principle called “The Logos” which was like human reason and gave order to the world. Philo of Alexandria (15 B.C. - A.D. 50) was a Jewish philosopher, who believed that the Logos existed between God and the universe. It had created everything that we see, touch, and know. It helped us to know and think about the existence of God. The Logos was the glue of the universe. He believed that God worked through the Logos to give order to the

world. Does this sound rather philosophical? The answer is yes, but they were looking to understand the existence of our universe and themselves.

Just as Luke wrote his gospel in order to help a single person named Theophilus, the Apostle John wanted to help an entire group of people believe that Jesus is God (John 20:31). So he started his gospel with something they already knew. He used their Greek word Logos in order to introduce them to Jesus. He is going to introduce them and us to someone who is beyond our understanding. He is beyond us . . .

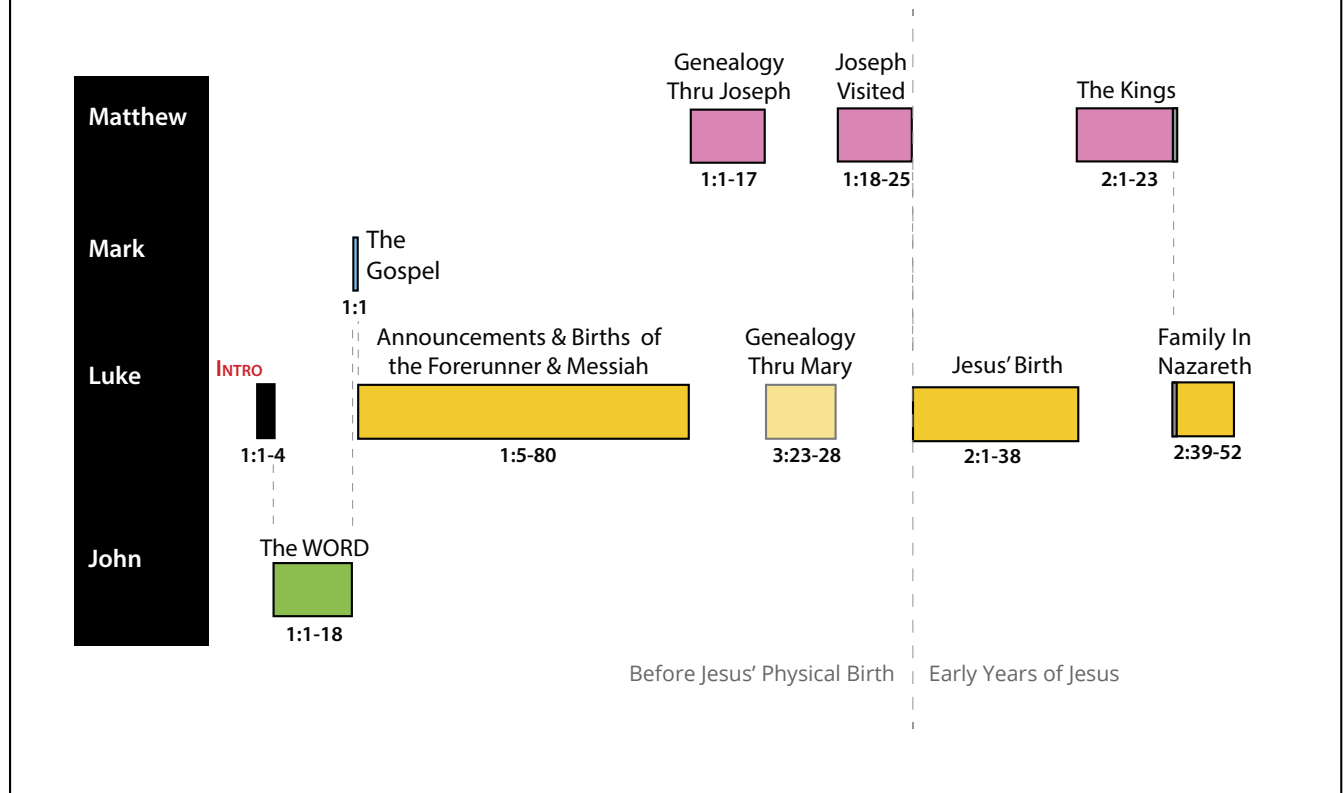


Glory of God's Power

Courtesy NASA/JPL-Caltech

Life and Heart of Jesus

Before Jesus' Physical Birth - Early Years of Jesus



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

WORD WAS IN THE BEGINNING. Just like Luke, John starts at the beginning. While Luke started with the reason for writing his gospel, John starts at the real beginning, before anything was in existence - except for the LOGOS.

The Greek word for "was" in John 1:1 is in the imperfect tense. That means there was continuous repetitive action in the past. It was the Word or LOGOS that was existing before there was a beginning - before the beginning began. That is the LOGOS was not created. It was always existing. If we could go back in time we would always find the LOGOS already existing.

WORD WAS WITH GOD. The LOGOS was also with God. The philosophers of his day would probably not have agreed with this statement. They viewed the LOGOS as a

force. But John says that the LOGOS is not a force. There was a relationship between the LOGOS and God when he says, "with." They were not distant. The LOGOS was with God. There was a personal relationship between them. So, the LOGOS existed before there was a beginning, and the LOGOS was with God.

WORD WAS GOD. Next we are told that the LOGOS was God. This LOGOS is not the philosopher's divine reason or some creative force, but God Himself. The actual Greek text reads differently than our English Bibles. The word order is reversed. Here is the Greek text,

... kai theos en ho logo.

A literal translation of this Greek phrase would be "and God was the Word." The Greek language indicates the subject when the definite article, ho, precedes the subject. The Greek

word LOGOS means “Word”. Therefore, HO LOGOS (the Word) is the subject and THEOS (God) is the predicate since it does not have a definite article before it. It is an error to translate this phrase as “the Word was a god” by arguing that the definite article does not appear before theos. It is also an error to insert an indefinite article since there is no indefinite article in the Greek.

It should be noted that the predicate confers on “the Word” the same substance, nature, or essence as the theos. That is, the Word has all of the attributes of God. Or put another way, the LOGOS is just like THEOS (God) in every way. The very character of the LOGOS is that of God. The LOGOS is God. There

is not one God and the LOGOS. The LOGOS IS God. That is, there is God the Father and God the LOGOS (Word) - Jesus Christ.

How can the LOGOS be with God and be God?

That is one of the great mysteries of God. Would we not expect God to be very different from us? The message is that God is not like us. John tells us that this is true. God is a mystery. The scriptures teach that God is the Father, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. James 2:19 says that God is one. Since scripture is always accurate, we must believe that God is one and yet exists in three persons. We call this a trinity.

THE CREATOR. The philosophers also believed that the LOGOS created the world and John gives them good news. This LOGOS that they have been desiring to understand not only existed before the beginning, not only was with God and was God, but created everything.

He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. (NASB) John 1:2-3

Did you see the “He”? The LOGOS is not an it, a thing, a force, but a “He.” The LOGOS is a being, but He was not created either. He was not a super-human, an angel, or “a god” as some teach.

Now the Holy Spirit makes two very important comments. First, everything that has ever come into being has come into being through the LOGOS. If something came into existence, He created it. If the LOGOS was created,

then that would imply the LOGOS had to create itself. That is not possible. Nothing can create itself. Second, we are told that only the LOGOS created anything. That means that no one else did any creating. There is only one Creator and the Creator is the LOGOS.



IN HIM WAS LIFE. And just in case anyone is comfortable with an incorrect conclusion about who the LOGOS is, John adds this,

In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. (NASB) John 1:4

The LOGOS was not created. He has always been alive. He has always been alive because He has life in Himself. Wow, now that is an awesome thought. Have you ever seen a woman give birth to a baby? Have you ever heard a baby cry after leaving its mother’s womb? Some say that the child gains human life on that day, but that is not true. The baby

actually has been alive for nine months. It is helpless! It was smaller than the eye can see. But it is an amazing fact that nothing creates itself or anything else before it comes into existence. The LOGOS was not created, because He is the only Creator. He did not need to be created, because He has always been. He does not need to eat, drink, or breathe air. He has life in Himself.

That is an awesome definition of God. God is one who has life in Himself. He is self-sustaining, life-sustaining, and creates things out of nothing.

CONCLUSION. One of the great joys about God is that He is a mystery. Sometimes we have a low view of God. We think that God is like us (Ps. 50:21). How can God be god if He was like us? But He is not like us. We have no idea where He came from. We will never understand Him completely. We have no clue how anything started. How can a being be life-sustaining? How can any being create something out of nothing? How can a being speak and things appear? How can a being control the forces of the universe? How can a being be God and also be the LOGOS? The answer is simple. He is beyond us . . . His name is Jesus!

What are you going to do with Him?