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Article of the Month  
June, 2017

### **The Word**

The New Testament Scriptures are replete with texts referring to the “Word” or to “words.” In English, of course, we tend to use only one word to express several meanings behind “word.” For instance, we might say that an article had 553 words in it. We simply are counting individual words. Or we might say that Dr. X is “the last word” on the subject. In that case we mean that he understands the subject thoroughly and is the expert on it. Also in that case, we realize that “word” doesn’t mean word at all; it means the entire explanation of something. The Greeks use different words for these multiple meanings. And since the Bible is very exacting, it pays us occasionally to look into the true meanings so that our understanding of the Lord’s “Word” will not be insufficient. (In that usage — “The Lord’s Word” — we obviously DO NOT mean ONE WORD! We mean many hundreds of pages of writings — everything the Lord had recorded for our benefit.)

This article will not be a study of the various Greek words for “word.” While that is profitable, it is an entirely different subject than we have in mind. We will be looking at the Greek word “**logos**” only — because it has some very special uses.

### **“Logos”**

“**Logos**” is used many times in Scripture — not always with the same implications. Perhaps our first task is to define the word in its common usage. It refers to the **entire study** of a matter. It refers to the **philosophy** or **science** of a subject. Very much like “Dr. X” in the paragraph above, when we say that he is the “last word” on the subject, we mean that he understands all of its intricacies. He understands the subject inside and out. That is the meaning of “**logos**.”

We have adapted into English the word “logos” every time we end a word with “logy.” We use it for theology, geology, biology, terminology, genealogy, anesthesiology, cardiology — Well! The list is nearly limitless. In every case we mean the science or total study of the matter. The Scriptures also use it that way. The Apostle Peter, for instance, tells us in I Peter 3:15 that we should be able to give a REASON (“logos”) for the hope that is within us. (The NAS Bible says “defense” instead of “reason.”) Peter means that we need to be “truth scientists.” We need to be able to explain EVERYTHING behind our faith structure — not just say, “I believe it because I have faith.” We need to give a “**logos**” (an explanation) for our hope.

## **THE “Logos”**

Because “logos” is such an all-inclusive term, the Apostle John uses it AS A NAME! John uses “Logos” as a name or title for Jesus in his pre-human existence. How appropriate! Jesus, in his capacity as the active agent for all creation, EMBODIES the science, the truth, the philosophy, the TOTAL explanation for EVERYTHING in God’s plan.

Let’s look at the first chapters of *both* the Gospel of John, and the first Epistle of John. They are remarkably alike and compliment each other in explaining this great *being* we sometimes casually call “The Word.”

John 1:1, of course, is the object of many discussions, arguments, dissertations, and reasonings. Trinitarians love it — although it in no way substantiates their position! John 1:1 opens by saying, “In the beginning was the Word (logos).” The “beginning” here spoken of is the beginning of creation in the spirit realm. God, of course, has no beginning. So this verse is taking us to that point in time when creation BEGAN. In actuality, the “Logos” was the very first created being. He introduces himself to us in Revelation 3:14 with that very thought in mind. He calls himself “the Beginning of the Creation of God.” Colossians 1:15 enhances this thought by stating: “And he is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation.” According to John 1:3, he was the ONLY direct creation of God. Once the Logos came into existence, EVERYTHING ELSE EVER CREATED was created with the Logos being the *active agent of God* in the creative process. As John writes it: “All things came into being by (or through) him; and apart from him nothing came into being that has come into being.” We must stagger at the honor, the position, the strength, and the authority of the “Logos!” While God, Himself, is the Architect of all creation, God chose to honor the “Logos” with the actual DOING of the work. Thus his “name” (Logos) is so appropriate. In him God vested THE WHOLE STORY regarding the Plan of the Ages. Colossians 1:16, 17 repeats the concept:

16. For by him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities — all things have been created by him and for him.
17. And he has existed prior to all things, and in him all things hold together.
18. ...and he is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, so that he himself might come to have the first place in everything.

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19. For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fulness to dwell in him.

What more can be said about this precious relationship of God to His *direct* creation, the "Logos?"

John 1:1 adds some other information for our benefit. It states, "and the Word was with God." There are two important facts in this phrase for our edification. Unfortunately they are very obscured by our inability to read Greek. The word "WITH" is an unfortunate translation. It DOES NOT MEAN "with." It is the Greek word "pros," and it literally means "toward." It functionally often means "in the service of." Paul uses the word, for example, in Hebrews 2:17 and 5:1 where the NAS translates it "pertaining to." John 1:1 should read either (quite literally) "and the word was TOWARD God," or more idiomatically, "and the Word was in the service of God." What a difference this makes! Once we see that the "Logos" was God's active agent in the creation of *everything*, we can see the reason that John so states the matter. Paraphrased, we have the lovely true intent of the Apostle:

Jesus in his prehuman existence was God's only direct creation. He was the beginning of the whole creative process, and he thereafter served God.

This gives a clarity to John's Gospel which is easy to miss. After all, what would it mean if it really said that the Logos was WITH God? The thought is full of emptiness of meaning! Would it mean they were never apart? The sentence simply has no functional meaning as most translations render it.

Also missing from our notice in our English Bibles is that the Greek has the word "THE" before the Word "God" in this phrase. Thus it reads, "and the Word was in service of THE God." Many of us might not know that "God" is a very common word in Scripture — common in the sense that it is applied to things, to Jesus, to the Father, to the prophets, to false gods and prophets, to angels, and even to ordinary men who exercise certain authority. It simple means "mighty one." So John, in 1:1, wants us to understand that it is THE God whom the Logos serves. It is his station in life *to do the will of his Father* — a claim Jesus often repeated during his years on earth.

John concludes the verse, "and the Logos was God." The absurdity of the surface meaning of these words should be evident to all. The Logos was SERVING God; he **WASN'T** God! Here again, the English reader is deprived of clarity. There is no "THE" in front of this word "God." The Greeks DO NOT use the words "a" or "an" as we do in English. If their word for "the" is *not present*, it implies that we SUPPLY our English word "a" at that point. Hence, what John actually said was "and the Logos was a god." The Logos was a mighty one. — Or, as William Barclay, the famous translator and Greek scholar points out, the meaning in the Greek is more like, "And the Logos was godlike."

In I John 1, the Apostle repeats with slight variation what he had written in his Gospel account. John begins by repeating that Jesus' existence was "from the beginning." Then

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John rejoices that he was able to see this magnificent Logos when he became a man. John 1:10 comments on this: “He was in the world, and the world was made through him, and the world did not know him.” This throws much light on what Jesus’ frame of mind must have been when he became a man.

In I John 1:1, John uses another descriptive phrase for the Logos. He calls him “The Word (logos) of Life.” Our understanding is much enlarged by this additional title. Jesus was the logos (***the entire philosophy and complete compendium***) of ***LIFE***. We can take from this that God’s entire plan which was embodied in this individual we call the “Word,” **is about life**. Every aspect of what life is and will be is centered in Jesus. Not only is life centered in him, but LIFE is what God intends as His objective for the entire intelligent creation. God is not about death; He is about life. Understanding all of this, according to John, brings *joy* to those who understand it. (I John 1:4)

### **The Priestly Function**

The Apostle Paul in Hebrews 7 brings to our attention a unique individual by the name of Melchizedek. It seems clear that this individual is Jesus, both in his pre-human existence as “The Logos” and in his future position during the Millennial Age. When we read the specifics offered by the Apostle Paul, it seems they could not really apply to anyone else.

When mankind fell from favor in Eden, it is said that they “hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God.” (Genesis 3:8) The word “presence” here is the Hebrew word for “face,” and it represents or symbolizes FAVOR. In Acts 3:19-21, we find verses which explain that God’s face or favor will return toward man at a specific time. But God cannot look at imperfection. So the turning of His face back toward mankind requires that He use an intermediary — a mediator — between Himself and man until man is perfected and can be returned to God directly. (See I Corinthians 15:21-28.) Thus God says He will “send Jesus, the Christ appointed for you, whom heaven must retain until the times of restitution of all things which God spoke by the mouths of His holy prophets from ancient time.” (Acts 3:19, 20)

There have existed six millennia since Adam fell. While God has ALLOWED man’s experiences with evil during that entire span of time, He has not let man’s experience progress without an oversight so that all things will eventually work for good. That oversight has been provided by a “priest.” (A priest is someone who stands between God and man.) That “priest” is Melchizedek, the Logos, Jesus in his pre-human condition and in his post-human condition. As Paul writes (Hebrews 7), Melchizedek is “priest of the Most High God.” We have seen WHY this priest was needed. Mankind had fallen, and God would not deal with him directly until he is RESTORED. Unless God had intended to let the race go untended, wildly letting things go anywhere that man wanted without regard to God’s intent to continue a work in the earth, there HAD TO BE A PRIEST in between. Who better to serve that position than the Logos, the One who had

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MADE man, who would SACRIFICE himself FOR man, and who would ultimately RESTORE man? As Paul states it, Melchizedek “abides forever (and) holds his priesthood permanently.” (Hebrews 7:24) Paul shows us that Melchizedek was not only present in Abraham’s day, but that he was yet around in Paul’s day! “It is witnessed that he lives on!” (Hebrews 7:8) In Hebrews 5:5-9 it seems almost undeniable that Paul equates Melchizedek with Jesus. He does so from the first advent forward; but there is no reason to think that it is this SAME Melchizedek in the ages preceding the first advent.

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Thus we have a beautiful and true story of the history and future of all creation. The first created was “The Logos” — he who would later become Jesus. As John said of him, “He was in the world, and the world was made through him, and the world did not know him.” But they WILL know him — with joy and rejoicing — when he restores all of creation to perfection, handing it over again to God Who will be “all in all.” Meanwhile, Melchizedek (The Logos) has been “priest of the Most High God” ever since the fall in Eden. His priesthood continues into the Millennial Age when he becomes Mediator of a New Covenant. The “WORD” is he who contains ALL of the the information and power regarding LIFE. He will pass this information and opportunity on o the world of mankind. And, in the end, in the fullest sense the prayer will be answered: “Thy Will be done in earth as in heaven.”