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WAS MARTHA'S CONFESSION IN  
JOHN 11:27 USED IN THE EARLY  
CHURCH AS A CREED?

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A Thesis Presented to the Faculty  
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,  
Department of Exegetical Theology  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Master of Sacred Theology

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by

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June 1963

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Reader

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this thesis is to determine whether John 11:27 reflects an early Christian creed or, as an explanation from Martha, served in the early Church as a creed.<sup>1</sup> In his other-

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... the author of this study speaks of a creed he does not mean to indicate that this was a confession of faith that was universally accepted by early Christians or that it enjoyed a long and popular usage. Rather, this study is concerned with showing that the three appellations in John 11:27 may have been used by individual Christians or by some local churches as a confession of Christian faith.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. H. B. Swete, Early Christian Creeds (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1909), pp. 1-10.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this thesis is to determine whether John 11:27 reflects an early Christian creed or, as an exclamation from Martha, served in the early Church as a creed.<sup>1</sup> In his otherwise excellent chapter "Creedal Elements in the New Testament" in Early Christian Creeds,<sup>2</sup> J. N. D. Kelly does not list John 11:27 as "evidence in the New Testament to show that the faith was already beginning to harden into conventional summaries."<sup>3</sup> This seems an unfortunate omission since Martha's confession contains not only one or two, but three Christological affirmations joined together asyndetically.

To fulfill the aim of this thesis we must attempt to determine precisely what John 11:27 means. Ἐγὼ πεπίστευκα ὅτι οὐ εἶ ὁ Χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ ὁ εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἐρχόμενος must be investigated, and yet this investigation must be limited in some way to prevent it from expanding beyond its nature and purpose. It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to include

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<sup>1</sup>When the author of this study speaks of a creed he does not mean to indicate that this was a confession of faith that was universally accepted in early Christendom or that it enjoyed a long and popular usage. Rather, this study is concerned with showing that the three appellations in John 11:27 may have been used by individual Christians or by some local churches as a confession of Christian faith.

<sup>2</sup>J. N. D. Kelly, Early Christian Creeds (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1960), pp. 1-29.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 13.

an exhaustive study of Johannine Christology, specifically the Johannine presentation of the Father-Son relationship. These areas, in themselves, require major studies. In this study therefore, the author used this guiding principle: the three appellations were investigated to the extent that such an investigation had relevance for determining whether John 11:27 may have been an early creedal formulation.

In John 11:27 Martha confesses, "Ἐγὼ πεπίστευκα ὅτι σὺ εἶ ὁ Χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ ὁ εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἐρχόμενος."

This passage, in itself, is striking, but it leaps into special prominence when we note how strikingly it coincided with the purpose of the entire Fourth Gospel as stated in John 20:31. Here the author writes, "Ταῦτα δὲ γέγραπται ἵνα πιστεύητε ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ Χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ . . . ."

Even a cursory reading of the context of John 11:27 shows the importance of this verse. The illness of Lazarus was for the glory of God that the Son of God might be glorified (John 11:4,40). The disciples realized the great risk involved in a journey to Bethany (John 11:7,8,16) and advised against such a trip (John 11:12). Furthermore, Jesus purposely delayed the trip to Bethany until Lazarus had died (John 11:6,15). Apparently Jesus thought that after physical death had taken place, He could demonstrate more effectively that He was ἡ ἀνάστασις καὶ ἡ ζωὴ (John 11:25). The comment that Lazarus had been dead four days (John 11:39) emphasizes that Jesus was the sole cause of Lazarus'

resurrection. This comment is probably an allusion to the Jewish belief that the soul remained near the body for three days but on the fourth day all hope for revival was gone.<sup>4</sup> The members of the Sanhedrin recognized the importance of Jesus raising Lazarus and they resolved to kill both Jesus (John 11:47-53) and Lazarus (John 12:10). All these details make evident the importance of this pericope in the total context of the Fourth Gospel.

The confession of Martha follows Jesus' claim that He is *ἡ ἀνάστασις καὶ ἡ ζωὴ*. It would require a major study to determine precisely and fully the meaning of these terms in John's Gospel. But their general importance in the Fourth Gospel gives added meaning to their usage in this particular pericope. In John, Jesus is portrayed as He who has life and who gives it (John 1:1-4; 5:26; 6:37; 1 John 1:2; 5:11-20) so that believers might share in His life (John 3:16; 6:63; 10:10; 17:2,3; 20:31). For believers Jesus is even in this age the resurrection (John 11:25,26; 5:24; 1 John 3:14). For them Jesus is the Resurrection and the Life because they are included in the messianic age which He inaugurates. Or, as the Arndt-Gingrich lexicon expresses it, "Christ calls himself

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<sup>4</sup>W. H. Cadman, "The Raising of Lazarus," Studia Evangelica, in Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der Altchristlichen Literatur, edited by Kurt Aland, Walther Eltester and Erich Klostermann (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1959), LXXIII, 428.



(J[ohn] 11:25) ἡ ἀ[νάστασις] and ἡ Ἰωάνη since he mediates both to men."<sup>5</sup> The resurrection for John is also a future event (cf. John 5:28,29; 6:39,40,44,51-56; 12:48; 1 John 2:28,29; 3:2; 4:17).

Several emphases in John 11:27 also stress the importance of this verse. Both *ἐγώ* and *σύ* are emphatic pronouns. They could be translated, "I, myself, am persuaded that You--and no one else--are the Messiah. . . ." The fact that Martha uses the perfect tense ( *πεπίστευκα* ) is also of importance. This perfect of existing state might be translated, "In the past I came to faith and I am still convinced."

Professor Paul M. Bretscher, the advisor for this thesis, suggests that the perfect tense is used in some instances in John to signal a confession. Several passages in the Gospel support this observation (cf. John 1:34; 5:33; 6:69; 8:31; 19:35; 20:29). The immediate context of John 11:27 also supports the interpretation that *πεπίστευκα* in this verse has this meaning. This verse would then be translated, "I, myself, confess that You--and no one else--are the Messiah, the Son of God, the One who was to come and has come into the world." It should also be noted that for John the act of believing--not faith per se--is of utmost importance. The

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<sup>5</sup>Walter Bauer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, translated and adapted by William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 60.

frequent usage of the verb πιστεύω coupled with the fact that the noun πίστις does not appear in the Gospel demonstrates this.

This brief examination of the context and structure of John 11:27 indicates that this verse is very important in John's Gospel. These factors also suggest that this pericope and also the verse under consideration (John 11:27) may have been very important in the early Christian Church.

On the basis of John's Gospel and his First Epistle the author of this paper concludes that ὁ Χριστός ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ ὁ εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἐρχόμενος embrace three distinct themes.

In John, Jesus is presented as the Christ, i.e. the Messiah. Through His signs and teaching Jesus fulfilled and surpassed Jewish Messianic expectations. John also presents Jesus as the Son of God. As the Son of God Jesus was sent with a mission and with the authority to consummate His mission. He came that people might have life. His teaching, which He received from the Father and communicated to people, showed that the expectations of the sacred Jewish writings and of the Old Testament religious leaders were fulfilled in His arrival as the Son of God. When the Jews rejected Him as the Son of God they forfeited all hope of sharing the life which was in Him.

Jesus is finally presented by John as the One who came into the world. This participial phrase actually serves to

bind together the presentations of Jesus as the Messiah and as the Son of God. This phrase concerns itself with the Johannine theme that whatever Jesus did in this world, He did that people might know and believe in Him and in the Father. As the expected eschatological being who had arrived, Jesus took knowledge of, and trust in, God out of the realm of Old Covenant prophecy and the often idle speculations of Rabbinic Judaism and inserted them into the realm of historical fulfillment. Ordinary human beings had seen, heard, touched and believed on the One who had come in fulfillment of expectations and had revealed God, i.e. His Father.

As the preceding résumés indicate, each of the three appellations in John 11:27 has a singular meaning which John elucidates by a definite theme in his Gospel and First Epistle. These three themes have independent meaning but their full meaning is understood only when the relationship to each other is recognized.

After examining the usage of these appellations throughout the Gospel and First Epistle of John and after attempting to determine their meaning, the author concludes that John 11:27 may very well reflect an early Christian creed or be a passage which served as a creed in the early Church in and around Ephesus. In any case, the First Epistle indicates that it was of prime importance to the readers of that document to confess that Jesus was the Christ, i.e. the Messiah (1 John 2:22; 5:1), the Son of God (1 John 4:15; 5:5,10) and that

He became incarnate, i. e. entered the world (1 John 4:2; 5:20).

It is not within the purpose or scope of this paper to explore and solve various isagogical problems connected with a study based on John's Gospel and First Epistle. But we must make a few introductory remarks about the background of these two documents and defend the usage of both as a basis for this study.

In addition to the Gospel, in which the verse under consideration is found, we use also the First Epistle of John as a basis for this study since its terminology and theology are strikingly similar to that of the Fourth Gospel. Furthermore, the same terms and grammatical constructions that appear in the Gospel are found also in the First Epistle. It is true that the First Epistle adds nothing unique to this study; that is, it adds very little theological material not already found in the Fourth Gospel. However, certain passages in First John do add dimension to the three appellations of John 11:27 as they appear in the Gospel. Though the bulk of the material used in this study to explain John 11:27 is taken from the Gospel, nevertheless the evidence for the conclusions arrived at in this study is primarily based on the content of the First Epistle.

Although some scholars reject the common authorship of these two documents, the author of this dissertation is persuaded that the Gospel and First Epistle may nevertheless

serve as a common basis for this study.<sup>6</sup> Even scholars who reject the common authorship permit this. The two documents are so similar in basic theological content and even in style and diction that there appears to be no valid reason why one may not study them as a unit. C. H. Dodd, who rejects the common authorship, supports the writer's position. Dodd conceives of

the First Epistle of John, . . . to have been written by an author who was quite possibly a disciple of the Fourth Evangelist, and certainly a diligent student of his work. He has soaked himself in the Gospel, assimilating its ideas and forming his style upon its model. He sets out to develop, commend and apply certain of these ideas to meet the particular needs of this situation. His work is therefore in one aspect our earliest commentary upon

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<sup>6</sup>There is no paucity of very scholarly articles that either defend or reject the common authorship of John's Gospel and First Epistle. The article which apparently set the pace for later studies is the study by H. J. Holtzmann in Jahrbuch für Protestantische Theologie published in 1881, 82. Although Holtzmann rejected the common authorship of these documents, many scholars who have re-examined his material and have added some original evidence have concluded for common authorship. The author of this study suggests that anyone wishing to review good scholarly articles defending the common authorship of these documents read the articles by Robert Law, The Tests of Life (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1914), pp. 339-63; Alan England Brooke, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Johannine Epistles (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1912), pp. i-xxvii; Robert Henry Charles, "Authorship of the Johannine Writings," A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Revelation of St. John (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1920), I, xxix-1; and Wilbert Francis Howard, "The Common Authorship of the Johannine Gospel and Epistles," The Fourth Gospel in Recent Criticism and Interpretation, revised by C. K. Barrett (London: Epworth Press, 1955), pp. 280-95. For those who wish to review the position of a scholar who rejects the common authorship of John's Gospel and First Epistle the author of this study suggests the writings of C. H. Dodd in "The First Epistle of John and the Fourth Gospel," Bulletin of the John Rylands Library, XXI (1937), 129-56 and C. H. Dodd, The Johannine Epistles, in The Moffatt New Testament Commentary (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1946), XVI, xlvi-lvi.

the Fourth Gospel, and has a definite value as such.<sup>7</sup>

Hans Windisch, who also rejects the common authorship of these documents, would hardly object to a study based on both these works. He writes, "Dasz I (II III) Joh und Evgl Joh aus der gleichen eigenartigen theologischen Sphäre stammen, ist unumstritten. . . ." <sup>8</sup> Therefore, whether one accepts or rejects the common authorship of John's Gospel and First Epistle, it is still a defensible procedure to conduct a study using both documents as a common basis.

The author of the Fourth Gospel and First Epistle is usually identified as John the son of Zebedee or John the Elder.<sup>9</sup> Christian tradition from early centuries down to the present day favors the former view, although modern scholars are generally of the latter opinion. Modern scholars regard John the Elder as a devout pupil of John the son of Zebedee. The supporting evidence for this view seems not to be sufficiently convincing. It may therefore still be advisable to operate on the assumption that the early Christian tradition may have been correct when it believed that John the son of Zebedee wrote the Fourth Gospel.

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<sup>7</sup>Dodd, Bulletin of the John Rylands Library, XXI, 156.

<sup>8</sup>Hans Windisch, Die Katholischen Briefe, in Handbuch zum Neuen Testament, edited by Hans Lietzmann (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1951), XV, 109.

<sup>9</sup>Recently it has also been argued that John Mark might be the author of the Fourth Gospel. Pierson Parker, "John and John Mark," Journal of Biblical Literature, LXXVIII (1960), 97ff.

Concerning the place from which the Fourth Gospel and the First Epistle of John originated, most modern scholars agree upon a location in or near Ephesus.

Concerning the date of composition, it is generally believed that the First Epistle and Gospel of John were written at approximately the same time, that is, in the last decade of the first century.<sup>10</sup> It is difficult to determine which document was written first. But the author of this study thinks that when the First Epistle was written, the Gospel had already been written, or perhaps the Gospel was simply a rather well defined body of oral tradition.<sup>11</sup>

The author of the Fourth Gospel explicitly sets forth the purpose of his composition in John 20:31. Assuming that this document is among the last literary pieces which later became a part of the New Testament canonical Scripture we can only conjecture why this author felt compelled to compose this document. Perhaps Archibald M. Hunter has conjectured correctly concerning the reason the Fourth Gospel was composed. He

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<sup>10</sup>Not all scholars accept this late date for John's Gospel. For example, William Foxwell Albright, "The Bible after Twenty Years of Archaeology," Religion in Life, XXI (Autumn, 1952), 537-550, thinks that recent archaeological evidence supports an early date for John's Gospel. He notes that E. C. Torrey, A. T. Olmstead and Erwin Goodenough regard the Fourth Gospel as a very early document going back to the very beginning of Christianity. Albright himself concludes, largely on the basis of evidence supplied by the Dead Sea Scrolls, "There is no reason to date the Gospel after A. D. 90; it may be earlier." Ibid., p. 550.

<sup>11</sup>Law, op. cit., p. 359 and Brooke, op. cit., pp. xxvif.

writes:

You may read Mark, and Luke, and get so engrossed in the details about the man Jesus that you fail to see the divine halo around His head. But John knew that the Jesus who had once lived and died in Galilee was now "the Lord of glory." So he resolved to show us Christ in His true nature and setting--the divine Christ who came forth from the bosom of the Father, unveiled Him to men, died for the world's sin, rose again and passed to the right hand of God, whence He comes again through His Spirit to those who love Him. In short, he shows us Jesus not as a figure of ancient history but as the eternal contemporary, the light of the world, the only true and living way, now as then, to God. . . .<sup>12</sup>

Martin Franzmann's opinion should also be noted. He writes, "The writings of John are, as it were, a recapitulation of the whole New Testament."<sup>13</sup> He also notes, "John's writings constitute a résumé of the New Testament proclamation, but they are anything but a mere résumé. They are a new and fresh revelation of the 'unsearchable riches of Christ (Eph. 3:8).'"<sup>14</sup>

On the basis of these opinions, the opinions of other scholars and the evidence in the Gospel itself, the author of this paper places the occasion of the writing of the Fourth Gospel in a situation where the early Christians needed to be

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<sup>12</sup>Archibald M. Hunter, Introducing the New Testament (Second edition; Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1957), pp. 67-68.

<sup>13</sup>The Word of the Lord Grows (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1961), p. 249.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 251.



reminded of the contemporary and eternal purpose of Jesus' mission.

Since the Gospel of John was probably written about two decades after the composition of the Synoptic Gospels, we naturally inquire regarding their relationship to John. There are primarily three views which are advocated concerning the relationship of the Synoptics and John. The author of this paper rejects the suggestion that the Fourth Gospel was written to displace the Synoptics.<sup>15</sup> But the suggestions that John represents an independent tradition<sup>16</sup> or that he wanted to provide supplementary material<sup>17</sup> have merit. We must note also that scholars have discovered some noteworthy evidence in the Fourth Gospel which suggests that John knew of and may have read Mark's Gospel.<sup>18</sup>

Nevertheless it remains until now a debatable issue

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<sup>15</sup> Benjamin W. Bacon, The Gospel of the Hellenists, edited by Carl H. Kraeling (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1933), p. 113.

<sup>16</sup> P. Gardner-Smith, Saint John and the Synoptic Gospels (Cambridge: University Press, 1938).

<sup>17</sup> Theodor Zahn, "The Relation of the Fourth Gospel to the Earlier Gospels," Introduction to the New Testament, translated from the German by John Moor Trout and others (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1909), III, 254-99.

<sup>18</sup> Charles Kingsley Barrett, The Gospel according to St. John (London: S. P. C. K., 1955), pp. 34-55 and J. N. Sanders, "John, Gospel of," The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible (New York: Abingdon Press, 1962), III, 936-37.

whether or not John knew or had read any or all of the Synoptic accounts. The rather cautious opinion of Merrill Tenney is about as definite a one as might be entertained in this matter. He writes,

One cannot state dogmatically that John knew and read Matthew, or Mark or Luke. Nevertheless, the general omission of Jesus' Galilean ministry, the almost total absence of the parables, the definite reference to the selectivity in the miracles (20:30) and the dovetailing of some of John's historical data with that of the Synoptics make one feel that the author was trying to give the public fresh information that had not previously been used in writing.<sup>19</sup>

Let us now turn our attention briefly to the setting of the First Epistle. Regarding the origin and purpose of the First Epistle of John we must agree with W. F. Howard that it was written at a time of great crisis.<sup>20</sup> Martin Franzmann notes that the First Epistle is wholly and vigorously polemical.<sup>21</sup> Although the letter itself does not name the false teachers and their heresy, the letter does present hints for a rather general overview of their false teachings. Above all, the letter presupposes that in the congregation to which the letter was directed there existed loveless living and a denial that Jesus was the Messiah and the Son of God. Scholars often connect the heresy to which John's First Epistle addresses it-

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<sup>19</sup>The New Testament: An Historical and Analytical Survey (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing House, 1955), p. 208.

<sup>20</sup>Howard, op. cit., p. 293.

<sup>21</sup>Franzmann, op. cit., p. 261.

self with the heresy of Cerinthus as described by Irenaeus. According to Irenaeus, Cerinthus taught that Jesus was merely human and that after his baptism there descended into him from the Supreme Power Christ in the form of a dove and that he then proclaimed the unknown father and performed miracles; finally Christ withdrew again from Jesus, so that it was Jesus who suffered and rose again, while Christ remained impassible, being pure spirit.<sup>22</sup>

C. H. Dodd gives a very plausible explanation for the background in which the First Epistle was composed. He writes,

The First Epistle of John appears to reflect a critical moment at the early stage in the process of developing Gnostic sects. It speaks of a group of Christian teachers who have gone wrong. . . . The fellowship of the Church was rent; the unity of belief was broken; the rank and file might well be disturbed and perplexed. . . .

What then did the dissenters teach? All that we are told directly is that they denied the reality of the Incarnation. The denial was characteristic . . . , of the "Docetists." But in fact any "Gnostic" was bound to find some way to avoid the scandalous idea that the Son of God, the Revealer, the Intermediary between the Divine and the human suffered the degradation of direct contact with matter, the embodiment of all evil; and above all he was bound to deny that the Divine could suffer. The false prophets therefore were certainly on the track which led to later Gnostic heresies.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>"Irenaeus against Heresies," Ante-Nicene Fathers, edited by Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1908), I, 352.

<sup>23</sup>The Johannine Epistles, XVI, xviii-xix.

The preceding quotation was noted for two reasons. First, it quite accurately and completely summarizes the probable background of John's First Epistle. Secondly, it shows the significance which a verse such as John 11:27 might have for the Christian Church whose faith was threatened by serious errors taught in its immediate environment.

Having concluded these introductory remarks, we proceed next to the thesis. In chapter two we attempt to determine the meaning of  $\acute{\omicron}$   $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$  in John 11:27; in chapter three the meaning of  $\acute{\omicron}$   $\nu\iota\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$   $\tau\omicron\upsilon$   $\theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$ ; in chapter four the meaning of  $\acute{\omicron}$   $\epsilon\iota\varsigma$   $\tau\omicron\nu$   $\kappa\omicron\sigma\mu\omicron\nu$   $\acute{\epsilon}\rho\chi\omicron\mu\epsilon\nu\omicron\varsigma$ . Chapter five will present a summarization and synthesis of the materials in the three preceding chapters together with the conclusions which the author has drawn.

#### The Old Testament Background

$\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$ ,  $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$ ,  $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$ ,  $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$   
 are used in the Septuagint to translate words from the  
 $\text{מָשִׁיחַ}$  word *Messiah*.<sup>1</sup> The Aramaic form  $\text{ܡܫܝܚܐ}$  is the  
 basis for the Greek transliteration which appears in  
 John 1:41 and 4:42.<sup>2</sup>

In the original Old Testament the terms from the

<sup>1</sup>The Hebrew words these Greek words translate are  $\text{מָשִׁיחַ}$ ,  $\text{מְשִׁיחַ$ ,  $\text{מְשִׁיחִים}$ , and  $\text{מְשִׁיחִים}$ .

<sup>2</sup>James G. Thompson, *The Words of Jesus*, translated by  
 G. W. H. Lampe (Oxford: T. & A. Clark, 1922), p. 291.

## CHAPTER II

### THE MESSIAH

The purpose of this chapter is to determine the meaning of the title *Χριστός* as used in John's Gospel and First Epistle. This involves more than a study of the passages in which this title appears for such a study must include the references by John to Messianic beliefs well known when he composed these two documents. It is not within the scope or purpose of this chapter to present a complete and comprehensive discussion concerning the origin and development of the Messianic concept in the history of Israel. But to understand the usage of it in John we must at least investigate and sketch the background.

#### The Old Testament Messiah

*Χριστός*, *Χρίεις*, *Χρίσις*, *Χρίσμα* are used in the Septuagint to translate words from the *מָשִׁיחַ* word family.<sup>1</sup> The Aramaic form *ܡܫܝܚܐ* is the basis for the Greek transliteration which appears in John 1:42 and 4:25.<sup>2</sup>

In the canonical Old Testament the terms from the

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<sup>1</sup>The Hebrew words these Greek words translate are *מָשִׁיחַ*, *מְשִׁיחַ*, *מְשִׁיחִים*, and *מְשִׁיחֵם*.

<sup>2</sup>Gustaf Dalman, The Words of Jesus, translated by D. M. Kay (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1902), p. 291.

πῶν word family appear primarily in the literature concerning the era immediately following the Exodus and during the establishment and early existence of the monarchy.<sup>3</sup> In general, the title "Messiah" or "The Anointed One" is used in the Old Testament before there is a profound desire for national deliverance.

πῶν or the Septuagint translation χρίεν refers historically to the action whereby anointing oil was poured on some person or object. The anointing indicated that from henceforth that person or object would have a special function in relation to God and His people.

According to the writings of the Pentateuch, anointing began at the command of the Lord while the children of Israel were in the wilderness after the Exodus. The Lord there gave them the instructions how to anoint and whom to anoint. The Lord even gave the directions for the ingredients to be used in making the χρίσμα (Exodus 30:23-25). Anyone who used a similar mixture as perfume was cut off from the people (Exodus 30:38).

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<sup>3</sup>Modern Form Critical scholars generally suggest that the kings were the first and only persons to be anointed. They contend that during and after the Babylonian captivity when the priests became political as well as spiritual leaders the theological anointing of Aaron and the priesthood arose. Roland deVaux, Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions, translated from the French by John McHugh (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1961), p. 105.

This conjecture does not greatly affect the general understanding of the title as employed by John. The anointing of the priests and kings is theologically very similar and therefore, for this study, it is unnecessary to date the literature in which it is found.

The purpose of the anointing was to consecrate or make holy the anointed one (Χριστός) (Exodus 30:29,30; 40:9, Leviticus 8:10,11,12; Numbers 7:1). The anointing took place to mark the beginning of priestly service by Aaron and his sons (Exodus 30:30). It marked the establishment of a perpetual relationship (Exodus 29:7; Sirach 45:15). The sacred objects connected with the worship life of the children of Israel, such as the Tabernacle (Tent of Meeting), Ark of Testimony, the furnishings of the Tabernacle and other utensils were also anointed (Exodus 30:26-30; 40:9; Leviticus 8:10). The purpose of this was simply to make them holy (Exodus 40:9).

Anointing has more theological implications in connection with the anointing of kings. The anointing of kings was not a practice confined to the Israelites. It had been practiced by the Canaanites and probably also by the Egyptians and Babylonians.<sup>4</sup>

The anointing established the king in a special relationship with both God and His people. Although the king was never worshipped, he was regarded by the people as the representative of the Lord. "The king became the channel through which blessing flowed from the deity to the people. He was the point of union between God and the congregation."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Sigmund Mowinckel, He that Cometh, translated from the Norwegian by G. W. Anderson (New York: Abingdon Press, n.d.), p. 74. See also deVaux, op. cit., p. 104.

<sup>5</sup>Mowinckel, op. cit., p. 72.

In Psalm 2 the king is designated both the Lord's Anointed and His son. "You are my son, today I have begotten you (Psalm 2:7)" was the formula for adoption used at that time.<sup>6</sup> The usage of this formula in Psalm 2 emphasized the close relationship between the Lord and the king.<sup>7</sup> The close relationship between the Lord and the king is also reflected by the fact that "The Anointed" is never used alone. It is always qualified as "The Anointed of the Lord" or as "His Anointed" referring to the Lord.

As the "Lord's Anointed" the king was able to perform religious functions. David set up the first altar for the Lord in Jerusalem (2 Samuel 24:25). He planned the temple (2 Samuel 7:2,3) and Solomon built it (1 Kings 5:8). Jeroboam founded the sanctuary at Bethel, recruited its clergy and arranged the calendar for its feasts (1 Kings 12:26-33). Sometimes the chief priests were appointed and dismissed by the king (2 Samuel 8:17; 20:25; 1 Kings 2:26,27; 4:2). The king could participate in worship and even offer sacrifices (1 Samuel 13:9,10; 2 Samuel 6:13,17,18; 24:25; 1 Kings 3:4,15; 8:5,62-64).

Usually God chose the person to be anointed (1 Samuel 10:1;

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<sup>6</sup> deVaux, *op. cit.*, p. 103. See also C. H. Dodd, The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel (Cambridge: University Press, 1960), p. 252.

<sup>7</sup> For a more detailed study and discussion of Psalm 2:7 see infra, p. 58.



16:3-13). In the case of Absalom (1 Samuel 19:10) this did not happen but the people who anointed him perhaps thought that this was God's will.

The anointing had continuous and permanent effect (1 Samuel 24:7; 26:9f.; 2 Samuel 1:14; 2:5). But David was anointed again by the elders when he was officially recognized as their king (2 Samuel 5:3; 2:4; 1 Chronicles 11:3).

King David is frequently called "The Anointed of the Lord" (e.g. Psalm 131:10,17; 88:38,51; 17:50; 27:8). Undoubtedly this had some effect on the Messianic concept in Rabbinic Judaism. As the Anointed of the Lord, David received the Spirit of the Lord in a mighty degree (1 Samuel 16:13). The Lord gave him triumphs and showed him  $\tau\delta\pi$  (Psalm 17:50). The Lord's hand always abode with David and His arm strengthened him (Psalm 89:20). The Lord's truth and steadfast love ( $\tau\delta\pi$   $\text{אֱמִנּוּת}$ ) were with David; therefore his enemies could not defeat him (Psalm 89:22-24). As the Lord's anointed, David expected a return to victorious conditions when he was in troubled times (cf. Psalm 89). This thought was certainly used and expanded after the exile in connection with Messianic hopes.

"The Anointed of the Lord" also applies to the people of God as a unit (Psalm 27:8, 83:10, 84:9, Habakkuk 3:13). This probably had influenced Rabbinic literature when it began to picture the Messiah as the representative of Israel or the true Israel.

We note the theological development apart from the strict historical usage of the term in passages where the Patriarchs and Cyrus are called "The Anointed of the Lord" (Psalm 104:15; Isaiah 45:11). The Patriarchs qualify as the Anointed of the Lord because He chose them (Psalm 104:6), had a covenant with them (Psalm 104:9,10), and protected them (Psalm 104:14). Cyrus could be called the Lord's Anointed because the Lord used him to subdue nations, humiliate kings and, in general, make known to men from east to west that there was no God other than the Lord (Isaiah 45:18). Cyrus was the Lord's *Χριστός* even though he himself never knew it (Isaiah 45:5). He was the Lord's Anointed because he was doing the Lord's work or because God's will was done through him.

Another pericope of importance is Isaiah 61:1. It is a passage such as this which undoubtedly contributed much to the conceiving of the Messiah as a deliverer or as the restorer. The Lord's Anointed, having the Spirit of the Lord, is to bring good tidings to the afflicted, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and to comfort all who mourn (Isaiah 61:1).

In summary we note that "The Messiah of Yahweh" or "The Anointed of the Lord" in the Old Testament always refers to historical characters. It is never used in an eschatological sense, although it has a future meaning in Daniel 9:26.

The following quotations serve well to summarize the Old Testament presentation of the concept of the Anointed of the Lord.

It must be specially observed that the "Messiah" of Old Testament prophecy was never at any time regarded as "Redeemer." In the Old Testament it is God who is for Israel <sup>גואל</sup> "redeemer," <sup>פודת</sup> "liberator," <sup>מושיע</sup> "Saviour," <sup>משיח</sup> "deliverer," and never the Messiah; and no similar agency is ever ascribed to the latter.<sup>8</sup>

Concerning the position of the Messiah in Old Testament theology, Mowinckel notes,

The Messiah is not the central and dominating figure in the future hope of later Judaism, and even less so in that of the Old Testament. The fact is that the Messiah as a concrete eschatological figure, the king of the final age, the founder of the glorious kingdom, is far less prominent in the Old Testament than in the New. The title "Messiah," "the Anointed One," as a title or technical term for the king of the final age, does not even occur in the Old Testament.<sup>9</sup>

These quotations do not mean that there was no Messianic prophecy in the Old Testament. Rather they show the perspective in which to view the term "Messiah." The usage of the title "Messiah" in the Old Testament had great significance and value only after the exile when approached with Rabbinic principles of exegesis.

#### The Messiah of Rabbinic Judaism

The Messianic expectations which existed at the time of

<sup>8</sup>Dalman, op. cit., p. 295.

<sup>9</sup>Op. cit., p. 4.

Jesus were primarily those developed by Rabbinic Judaism.

The Messianic expectations centered in the Israelites' hope of national restoration.

From the conviction that they were the chosen people of Jehovah and that He would be faithful to His covenant made with them, there arose in times of common distress and of exile the confidence taught by the prophets, and which sustained the most pious and best part of the nation, that their national life after it had been purified by the punishment of sinners and the discipline of the godly, would be restored, that they would obtain complete victory over their enemies, and that God would bestow upon them such glory and peace and well being as would surpass all that had been realized in the happiest preceding times, and would satisfy perfectly all the longings of their hearts.<sup>10</sup>

From such fertile soil the Messianic hopes sprang. These hopes of deliverance existed before the expectation that a unique Messiah would come as deliverer.

The Rabbinic principles of exegesis facilitated the development of Messianic concepts. Their commentary taught that all the miracles and deliverances of Israel's past would be re-enacted in the days of the Messiah. They firmly believed that "All the prophets prophesied only of the days of the Messiah," and that, "The world was created only for the Messiah."<sup>11</sup> According to this principle the whole past history of Israel was symbolic for the future and meticulous scholars could find many typological prophecies of the Messiah. In

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<sup>10</sup>Vincent Henry Stanton, "Messiah," A Dictionary of the Bible, edited by James Hastings (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1909), III, 352.

<sup>11</sup>Alfred Edersheim, The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1923), I, 163.

their comments on the Old Testament they refer to 436 passages as having Messianic implications. 73 of these are from the Pentateuch, 243 are from the Prophets and 138 are from the Hagiographa.<sup>12</sup> Modern scholars would consider few of these verbal predictions of the Messiah.<sup>13</sup>

Besides the Rabbinic commentaries, the Sibylline Oracles, portions of the Book of Enoch, the Psalms of Solomon, the Apocalypse of Baruch and IV Esdras provide the basis for determining the Messianic beliefs accepted or taught shortly before the time of Jesus. Although the last word has not been written on the Messianic expectations of the Qumran community, at least one prominent scholar thinks that its concept was much different from the Messianic concept fulfilled by Jesus.<sup>14</sup> Although the Qumran community was probably familiar with many of the current Messianic expectations, the sphere of influence of its own belief in the coming of an Aaronic Messiah and of a Davidic Messiah seems to have been rather limited.

Before we investigate the Messianic conceptions held in Rabbinic Judaism, we must remind ourselves that at Jesus'

<sup>12</sup>For a list of these passages see *ibid.*, II, 710-42.

<sup>13</sup>Mowinckel, *op. cit.*, p. 16. Mowinckel lists only 23 pericopes which he considers actual Messianic prophecies. They are: Isaiah 4:2; 7:10; 8:8b, 10b; 9:1-6; 10:23; 11:10; 16:5; 32:1-8; 60:3f.; Jeremiah 17:25; 23:5f.; 33:17f.; 30:9, 21; Ezekiel 17:22-24; 34:23f.; 37:22-25; Hosea 3:4f.; Amos 9:11; Micah 4:8; 5:1-3; Zechariah 9:9f.

<sup>14</sup>H. H. Rowley, "Comparison and Contrast: Qumran and the Early Church," *Interpretation*, XVI (July, 1962), 301.

time Judaism had no single fixed concept of a Messiah.<sup>15</sup> Because the concepts varied greatly, it is difficult to present a concise picture of Judaistic Messianic expectations. Varying teachings concerning the Messiah were often vague and even contradicted beliefs held by some other rabbi or by worshippers at some other synagogue.

In Rabbinic literature there is no indication that the Messiah would be a divine personality or that he would be both God and man. But the Messiah would be far superior to ordinary human beings. In fact, in Rabbinic comment on the birth of Seth and the crime of Lot's daughters there are "expressions which convey the idea, if not of superhuman origin, yet of some great mystery attaching to His [Messiah's] birth."<sup>16</sup> Rabbis generally agreed that the Messiah would be royal, prophetic, and even angelic in type. He would be greater than the Patriarchs, higher than Moses, and loftier than the ministering angels.<sup>17</sup>

It was taken for granted that the Messiah would have prophetic powers.<sup>18</sup> The Messiah had without instruction attained the knowledge of God. He had received directly from

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<sup>15</sup>Oscar Cullmann, The Christology of the New Testament, translated from the German by Shirley C. Guthrie and Charles A. M. Hall (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1959), p. 111.

<sup>16</sup>Edersheim, op. cit., I, 178.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 177.

<sup>18</sup>Mowinkel, op. cit., p. 321.

God all wisdom, knowledge, counsel, and grace. When God showed Moses his successors, He indicated that the spirit of wisdom and knowledge in the Messiah would equal all the others combined.<sup>19</sup> It was agreed that the Messiah would teach his people a right understanding of the Law, a right insight into the fear of God.<sup>20</sup> In fact, "in learned circles, among the rabbis, it was probably this aspect of the Messiah which was most emphasized."<sup>21</sup>

The Targum on Isaiah 9:6 and Micah 5:2 taught that the Messiah had eternal existence.<sup>22</sup> But the Midrash on Proverbs 8:9 stated that the Messiah was among the seven things created before the world.<sup>23</sup> Rabbinic scholars also explained Genesis 1:2, "The Spirit of the Lord moved upon the face of the deep," with "This is the Spirit of the King Messiah."<sup>24</sup>

There was no general agreement when the Messiah would come, though He was unanimously viewed as an eschatological figure. He would be the ideal king who would either restore Israel to its former glory or else reign as king after the

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<sup>19</sup>Edersheim, *op. cit.*, I, 177.

<sup>20</sup>Mowinckel, *op. cit.*, p. 311.

<sup>21</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup>Edersheim, *op. cit.*, I, 175.

<sup>23</sup>*Ibid.* The seven things created before the world were: the Throne of Glory, Messiah the King, the Torah, (ideal) Israel, the Temple, Repentance and Gehenna.

<sup>24</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 178.

Lord had restored Israel.<sup>25</sup> Some rabbis thought that the coming would be unexpected and mysterious.<sup>26</sup> Others believed that if Israel repented for but one day the Messiah would come. It was also held that Israel would not repent until Elijah came.<sup>27</sup>

It was generally accepted that the Messiah would be a descendant of David. God had made a covenant with David and his house and so following generations looked back to this act of God as offering hope for the future. They believed that the Messiah would come and restore all things to the status they had during the "Golden Era" of King David. They were confident that God would raise up a king from David's house to throw off the Gentile rule of destruction and lead God's holy people in righteousness (Psalms of Solomon 17: 21-29). When IV Esdras anticipates the arrival of the Messiah flying as a man in the clouds (IV Esdras 13f.), it is probably referring to a rabbinic tradition. According to that tradition, one of David's line had been caught away from earth and was being kept in heaven till the time for his Advent as the Messiah.<sup>28</sup>

The Rabbinic traditions often compared the Messiah

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<sup>25</sup>Mowinckel, op. cit., p. 175.

<sup>26</sup>Edersheim, op. cit., I, 170.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 169.

<sup>28</sup>Stanton, op. cit., p. 354.



with Moses. As Moses was the first deliverer, so the Messiah would be the last Deliverer. Moses had been educated in the court of Pharaoh and so the Messiah dwelt in Rome or Edon. All the marvels connected with Moses would be repeated and intensified by the Messiah. The ass on which the Messiah would ride would be the one on which Moses had returned to Egypt; it was the same beast which Abraham used when he went to offer up Isaac and which had been especially created on the eve of the world's first Sabbath.<sup>29</sup> Like Moses the Messiah would come, withdraw and then come again. As Moses had led the children of Israel out of Egypt and established them as a nation so the Messiah would deliver the nation out of the hands of the wicked and establish it as God's pure people.<sup>30</sup> Like Moses the Messiah would work deliverance but where Moses' deliverance was temporary and limited, the Messianic deliverance would be eternal and absolute. Like Moses the Messiah would bring down supernatural food and make a spring of water to rise.<sup>31</sup>

Rabbinic Judaism did not teach that the Messiah would

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<sup>29</sup> Edersheim, op. cit., I, 176.

<sup>30</sup> Joachim Jeremias, "Μωϋσῆς," Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament, vols. I-IV edited by Gerhard Kittel, vols. Vff. edited by Gerhard Friedrich (Stuttgart: Verlag von W. Kohlhammer, 1933), IV, 862. Hereafter these volumes shall be abbreviated TWNT.

<sup>31</sup> Edersheim, op. cit., I, 176.

vicariously suffer and die for the sins of God's people. The Messiah might suffer in the battle against evil, but it was not a vicarious suffering.<sup>32</sup> To many people the idea of a suffering and dying Messiah was incomprehensible and even offensive.<sup>33</sup> The work of redemption was assigned to the Messiah but this was limited to an overthrow of the evil oppressors of God's people (Sibylline Oracles iii, 625f.; Apocalypse of Baruch 39:7, 40:1f.; 70:9; 72:2-6; 2 Esdras 12:32ff.; 13:9-11, 37, 38).<sup>34</sup> But this did not make the Messiah merely a political figure. He was doing the work of God for God's people. Since the Messiah had miraculous power when He carried out the will of God, it became possible to transfer to the Messiah statements which the Old Testament applied specifically to the Lord. Matthew 1:21 illustrates this. Matthew 1:21 states, "He [Jesus] shall save His people from their sins," whereas Psalm 130:9 states, "And He [the Lord] shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities."

In summary, Rabbinic Judaism conceived of the Messiah as an eschatological figure who would come with miraculous powers given him by the Lord. This Messiah would come in fulfillment of many Old Testament prophecies. He would come to restore the glory of Israel to a people suffering because

<sup>32</sup>Mowinckel, op. cit., p. 329.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid.

<sup>34</sup>Dalman, op. cit., p. 297.

of their sins. He would not only deliver the people from oppression but he would also teach them the correct understanding of the Law. All of his actions would be performed by the power of and according to the will of the Lord.

#### The Messiah in John's Gospel and First Epistle

As in the Synoptic Gospels, the title  $\delta$  Χριστός is sparingly used in John's Gospel.  $\delta$  Χριστός appears only 17 times and Ἰησοῦς Χριστός appears only twice. Many of the Messianic concepts in John do not employ the term Χριστός. Therefore even though the title  $\delta$  Χριστός is used sparingly, John obviously wanted the readers of his literature to recognize and accept Jesus as the Messiah. This does not mean that that which since W. Wrede has been labeled the Messianic secret is absent in John. But it is found in a form different from that in Mark or the other Synoptic Gospels. In Mark the Messianic secret is present as an element of time in Jesus' ministry; in John it is presented as secret in relation to persons.<sup>35</sup> It is secret to the unbelievers; it is not secret to the believers.

The entire Gospel by John was written to make people recognize Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of God (John 20:31). For this reason it is difficult to speak of a purely Messianic teaching in Johannine literature. The Messianic

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<sup>35</sup>Charles Kingsley Barrett, The Gospel according to St. John (London: S. P. C. K., 1955), p. 59.

teaching of John is almost inextricably connected with the teaching concerning the Sonship of Jesus. In fact, it seems to be the goal of John to weave these two concepts into one. According to John, Jesus is continually set forth as the Messiah. But seldom does the thought stop there. Even in pericopes with great Messianic significance John usually points out that Jesus the Messiah is also Jesus the Son of God (e.g. John 6:41-59; 5:1-29; 8:12-19). Being the Son of God as well as the Messiah draws the disciples and repels the Jews. Jesus' claim to be the Son of God is where faith begins (John 6:68) or where rejection takes place (6:66).

Jesus did not reject the prophetic ideal of the Messiah, but He considered such a concept too limited to be applied to Him without reservation or amplification. Even though this title *ὁ Χριστός* was too limited to describe Jesus' person and work, it was to be expected that Jesus would present Himself in fulfillment of contemporary Messianic expectations. Oscar Cullmann believes that this title served to link together the Old Covenant and New Covenant believers. He states that Jesus did not completely reject the term or concept the Messiah because

despite all its inadequacies, . . . the idea of the Messiah is important to the extent that it established a continuity between the work of Jesus and the mission of the chosen people of God.<sup>36</sup>

But the character and functions of the Messiah as conceived

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<sup>36</sup>Op. cit., p. 126.

by Jesus in John's Gospel greatly transcended the type expected by Jesus' contemporaries. "For the Jews John is putting a new meaning in the title [The Messiah] because he is describing a Messiah who is the Son of God."<sup>37</sup>

The Jews wanted Jesus to perform *σημεῖα* or *ἔργα* to prove that He was the Messiah (John 2:18; 6:14,30; 7:7,31; 9:16). But Jesus performed a *σημεῖον* or *ἔργον* primarily to manifest His Sonship (John 2:11; 5:36; 10:25,32,38; 14:10,11; 15:24; 20:31). The Jews believed that the more miracles Jesus performed the more basis there would be for accepting Him as the Messiah. But when Jesus did perform a *σημεῖον* with messianic implications (e.g. John 6:6-14) He followed it with a discourse which showed that He was not only the Messiah but also the Son of God (e.g. John 6:41-51).

John's Gospel and First Epistle indicate that the early Church considered it a matter of faith to accept Jesus as the Messiah (John 1:41; 11:27; 20:31; 1 John 2:22; 5:1). Yet it is improbable that during His earthly life Jesus ever used the title "Messiah" or "Christ" as a surname.<sup>38</sup> But by contemporaries He was frequently called *ὁ Χριστός*.<sup>39</sup> Since the early Church considered it important to confess

<sup>37</sup>Vincent Taylor, The Person of Christ (London: MacMillan & Co. Ltd., 1958), p. 18.

<sup>38</sup>Dalman, op. cit., p. 303.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., p. 304.

that Jesus was the Messiah (John 11:27; 20:31; 1 John 2:22; 5:1) let us examine, on the basis of John's Gospel and First Epistle, what this confession meant for the first Christians.

According to John it was through Jesus Christ that ἡ χάρις καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια ἐγένετο (John 1:17). He was the Logos which had become flesh, tabernacled among men and manifested His δόξα. His δόξα consisted basically in His being the only Son of the Father (John 1:14). Jesus ranked higher than John the Baptist (John 1:15,27,30) even though Jesus followed John in the historical sequence of time. Jesus ranked higher because He existed from eternity (John 1:15,30). John the Baptist understood this and rejoiced that as he decreased, Jesus the Christ increased (John 3:25-30).

Jesus came that people might have eternal life (John 10:10). Jesus regarded Himself to be the Resurrection and the Life (John 11:25). Since Martha believed this, she at the same time recognized Him as the Christ, the Son of God and the ὁ εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἐρχόμενος (John 11:27). This indicates that although the life-giving power of Jesus is more closely connected with His Sonship than with His Messianic office, nevertheless it is connected with His Messianic character. But in John's Gospel Jesus' Messianic office is never divorced from His divine Sonship. The Jews were troubled because they knew that Jesus performed signs which proved that He was the Messiah (e.g. John 10:21). But they would not accept Jesus as the Christ because they did not know

His origin (John 9:29). On the other hand, other Jews rejected Jesus' Messianic claims because they did know His origin and according to some rabbinic teaching no one would know from where the Messiah came (John 7:27). Other Jews rejected Jesus' Messianic claims because He came from Galilee instead of Bethlehem (John 7:41). Primarily, however, the Jews refused to accept Jesus as the Messiah because He performed Messianic signs on the Sabbath (John 5:16; 9:16). Since Jesus did not keep the Sabbath they considered Him a sinner. Therefore Jesus, so they thought, could not be the Messiah.

In the Gospel of John three titles have noteworthy Messianic meaning. They are the appellations "King of Israel," "Lamb of God" and "Son of Man." We now note the Messianic significance of these titles.

Jesus is called the "King of Israel" by Nathanael (John 1:49) and by the crowd during Jesus' entry into Jerusalem (John 12:13). The triumphant entry into Jerusalem is of special importance because it has definite Messianic meaning. Zechariah 9:9, which is the Old Testament passage reflected in John 12:15, was repeatedly interpreted by the rabbis as having Messianic meaning.<sup>40</sup> Belief that the Messiah might come riding a donkey was generally accepted.

Um die Mitte des dritten Jahrhunderts sprach man davon, dass das Kommen des Messiah von zweifacher Art sein

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<sup>40</sup>Edersheim, op. cit., II, 736.

könne; wenn Israel dessen würdig sei, d.h. wenn es Verdienste vor Gott aufzuweisen habe, werde er in Herrlichkeit kommen mit den Wolken des Himmels; wenn Israel aber aller Verdienste bar sei, werde er in Niedrigkeit kommen reitend auf einem Esel.<sup>41</sup>

It must be noted that the reception accorded Jesus in John 12:13-15 was not a unique entry reserved for and enacted only once for the Messiah (cf. 1 Maccabees 13:50; 2 Maccabees 10:1-9).<sup>42</sup> John notes that the Messianic implications of Jesus' triumphant entry were not understood until after He had been glorified (John 12:16).

The title "King of Israel" has special meaning in contrast to the title "King of the Jews" (John 18:39; 19:3,19, 21). Israel refers to the people as a whole and expresses its relationship to God. Israel means God's people, people under the Law and the covenant.<sup>43</sup> Israel as such has dimensions which surpass the restrictions of time (überzeitliche Größe).<sup>44</sup> King of the Jews refers to being king of the ethnic group living in Palestine as contemporaries of Jesus.<sup>45</sup> In John, "the Jews" is a designation for the group which

<sup>41</sup>Hermann L. Strack and Paul Billerbeck, "Diese Welt, die Tage des Messias und die zukünftige Welt," Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch (München: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1954), IV. 2, 876.

<sup>42</sup>Edersheim, op. cit., II, 368.

<sup>43</sup>Gerhard von Rad, Karl Georg Kuhn and Walter Gutbrod, "Iσραήλ, et al.," TWNT, III, 388.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., p. 378.



consistently opposes Jesus. Jesus rejects the title "King of the Jews" (John 6:15; 18:36). Since Jesus was not the type king that the Jews wanted, they also rejected Him (John 19:15,21). But Jesus did not reject the title "King of Israel." This title was in congruity with His Messianic character. Jesus was the king of those people who had fellowship with God and their fellowship with God was possible only because Jesus was their king.

Twice in John's Gospel John the Baptist calls Jesus **ὁ ἀμνὸς τοῦ θεοῦ** (John 1:29,36). Jesus as the Lamb of God is the One **ὁ αἴρων τὴν ἁμαρτίαν τοῦ κόσμου** (John 1:29).

Jesus as the Lamb of God springs into great prominence when we remember that according to Johannine chronology the Crucifixion took place on the day of the killing of the Paschal lambs (John 19:14). Although the connection between Jesus' suffering and death and the death of the Passover lambs is not as explicit as in 1 Corinthians 5:7, John certainly intends that the reader will notice the relationship. The author of the Fourth Gospel takes special care to certify that no bones were broken in Jesus' corpse and that His body was pierced with a spear (John 19:35). This latter incident reflects a Messianic interpretation of Zechariah 12:10. Even in the Talmud this passage was interpreted Messianically.<sup>46</sup> The observation that none of Jesus' bones was

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<sup>46</sup>Edersheim, op. cit., II, 614.

broken has connection with Exodus 12:46 and Numbers 9:12.

The author of this paper discovered no material which suggests that the rabbis considered the Passover a Messianic or eschatological feast. But among the many rabbinic speculations concerning the time of the advent of the Messiah there existed the opinion that the future redemption of Israel would occur on the day of the Passover, the fifteenth of Nisan.<sup>47</sup> There is, however, little evidence that the Paschal lamb symbolized the Messiah. The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, Joseph 19 applies the figure of the Lamb to the Messiah. But J. Jeremias suggests that this passage is a Christian interpolation.<sup>48</sup> E. Lohmeyer, in his Kommentar zu Apokalypse and F. Spitta, in Streitfragen zur Geschichte Jesus, however, consider this passage a pre-Christian Judaistic tradition.<sup>49</sup> But even if this passage is pre-Christian, there is still little evidence to indicate that this passage reflects a widely held Messianic concept. It would remain the only pre-Christian passage relating the Paschal lamb to the Messiah. Therefore it is probable that the New Testament usage of the image originated in the teaching of Jesus Himself or, perhaps, in the teaching of John the Baptist. It probably arose from a typological interpretation

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., I, 171.

<sup>48</sup>Joachim Jeremias, "ἀμνός", et al., "TWNT", I, 342.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid.

of Isaiah 53. In any case, the usage of  $\delta \acute{\alpha}\gamma\nu\omicron\varsigma \tau\omicron\upsilon \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$  in John 1:29,36, 1 Peter 1:19 and Acts 8:32 presents Jesus as a sacrificial lamb bearing the sins of the world. The image of the Lamb ( $\acute{\alpha}\rho\nu\iota\omicron\nu$ ) in the Apocalypse has similar meaning (Apocalypse 5:6-14; 7:14; 12:11). As the Messianic Lamb of God Jesus dies on the Preparation Day for an annual Jewish Passover. As the Lamb of God He bears the sins of the world (John 1:29) because this Lamb of God is also the Son of God (John 1:34).

As in the Synoptic Gospels the title "Son of Man" appears as a Messianic appellation for Jesus. Although the many scholarly studies have not solved all the questions connected with this title, they have established several generally accepted conclusions. It is generally agreed that "Son of Man" was not a popular pre-Christian Messianic title, if indeed, it was a Messianic title even known in pre-Christian Judaism.<sup>50</sup> Most scholars think that Daniel 7:13 is the passage which gave rise to the title in Jesus' teaching. Thus  $\delta \nu\iota\omicron\varsigma \tau\omicron\upsilon \acute{\alpha}\nu\theta\rho\omega\pi\omicron\nu$  would be a translation of the Aramaic  $\omega\text{ן} \text{ן} \text{ן} - \text{ך} \text{ך}$ . But it is also possible that the frequent usage of  $\text{מ} \text{ן} \text{ן} - \text{ן} \text{ך}$  in the Hebrew Old Testament had some connection with the origin of the New Testament title. The title is also used in Ethiopic Enoch and the Apocalypse of Ezra. Scholars do not agree concerning the value of these

<sup>50</sup>Dodd, op. cit., p. 241.

documents because of language and dating difficulties. In the final analysis, the title "Son of Man" in these non-canonical documents is of dubious value because it is very difficult to determine through them the era and the extent of the area in which this title appears as Messianic title. Therefore the meaning of the title "Son of Man" must be determined primarily from the New Testament documents themselves.

Although most scholars believe that the usage of the title "Son of Man" with Messianic meaning originated with Jesus Himself, there is no unanimous agreement as to why He chose this title. The most plausible suggestion is that Jesus chose this title because it was relatively unknown and thus free from false Judaistic Messianic expectations. By using this title Jesus kept secret His unique Messianic claims from those unbelievers who would attempt to force upon Him false Messianic claims. Jesus also chose this term so that He could make known to His disciples how He was different from and superior to the contemporary Messianic ideal.

The Johannine usage of the title "Son of Man" agrees stylistically with its usage in the Synoptic Gospels. It is a title used only by Jesus and applied only to Himself. John 12:34 does not qualify as a real exception since the Jews are seeking information concerning a title which Jesus apparently used. A thorough analysis of John 12:34 constitutes a study in itself and is beyond the scope of this

paper. This passage and John 9:36 actually indicate that the Jews did not use the title "Son of Man." When Jesus used it, they did not know exactly what He meant.

Jesus used the title "Son of Man" in John to present Himself as the mediator between God and man. As the Son of Man He is also the Son of God on whom the Father had set His seal (John 6:27). He ascended to and descended from Heaven (John 6:23; 3:13) and thus could teach heavenly things (John 6:27). The angels or messengers of the Lord ascend and descend on Him (John 1:51).<sup>51</sup> Thus Jesus the Son of Man is the mediator between God and man.

The Son of Man in John is also the redeemer of mankind. The Son must be lifted up as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness (John 3:14; 8:28; 12:34). He is lifted up so that all who believe on Him may have eternal life (John 3:15; 6:53). This lifting up denotes both the crucifixion and the

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<sup>51</sup>The Johannine usage of Genesis 28:12 in John 1:51 reflects acquaintance with a current rabbinic problem. Genesis 28:12 **יבן ידו ויבן ידו** was rather ambiguous for the rabbis. The **יבן** could refer to either Jacob or to the ladder. The Septuagint translated this **'επ' αὐτῆς** referring to the **ἡ κλίμαξ**. But there were rabbis who also defended the interpretation that Jacob was the antecedent of **יבן**. Jesus apparently considered Jacob the antecedent and substituted the title Son of Man for Jacob. C. H. Dodd's excellent discussion of this verse is summarized thus:

"As Burney well puts it, 'Jacob, as the ancestor of the nation of Israel, summarizes in his person the ideal Israel in posse, just as our Lord, at the other end of the line, summarizes it in esse as the Son of Man (Aramaic Origin, p. 115).' For John of course, 'Israel' is not the Jewish nation, but the new humanity, reborn in Christ, the community of those who are 'of the truth,' and of whom Christ is king. In a deeper sense He is not only their king, He is their inclusive representative; they are in Him and He in them." Op. cit., p. 246.

glorification of the Son of Man (John 12:23). When the Son of Man is glorified God is also glorified (13:31).

By means of this title Jesus explained to people the purpose of His coming. As the Son of Man Who is the Son of God He reveals heavenly truth. It was His purpose to come and give eternal life. This takes place through His *ἵψαρις*.

Since John presents the Son of Man as both the redeemer and mediator for people, C. H. Dodd suggests that the "Son of Man" in John corresponds quite closely to the *ὁ παῖς Θεοῦ* concept of Isaiah (e.g. Isaiah 52:7-53:12).<sup>52</sup> Although there is a great similarity between these two concepts there is no direct evidence in John to necessitate this equation.

Besides noting the titles of Jesus which had Messianic meaning, John underlines Jesus' Messianic character by comparing Him with Moses. This comparison was congruent with current rabbinic theology.<sup>53</sup>

People at the time of Jesus generally accepted the belief that Moses had foretold the coming of the Messiah. The Samaritans who accepted only the Pentateuch as God's Word also knew of and waited for the coming Messiah (cf. John 4:25,29). Jesus recognized His relationship with Moses (John 5:45) but the Jews refused to do so (John 9:28).

John not only compares Jesus to Moses but he also takes care to point out the superiority of Jesus as the

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<sup>52</sup>Ibid., pp. 246f.

<sup>53</sup>Supra, pp. 27f.

Messiah over Moses. Moses merely pointed to the Messiah (John 1:45); Jesus was the Messiah (John 4:26). The Law was given through Moses (John 1:17) but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ (John 1:17). As Moses lifted up a serpent (John 3:14) so the Son of Man Himself would be lifted up (3:14). During the era of Moses the miracles of manna occurred (John 6:31) but the Father, in Jesus, had now sent the true bread from heaven (John 6:32). Circumcision on the Sabbath did not break the Law of Moses (John 7:23) and right judgment would determine that Jesus' healing of an entire body was also permitted (John 7:23). God spoke through Moses in the past (John 9:29) but God was at present listening to and working through Jesus (John 9:31,32). Moses had been able to provide water at Horeb (Genesis 17:1-7) but Jesus gave water to quench forever all thirst, water whose eschatological result was everlasting life (John 4:11-15; 6:35).

An important part of the Johannine comparison of Moses to Jesus is the comparison of the miracle of manna in the wilderness to Jesus' miracle of the loaves (John 6:4-14). Jesus' interpretation of this miracle which is presented in the Gospel as a discourse following the miracle will be discussed later in this chapter together with several *ἐγώ εἰμι* statements.<sup>54</sup> At this point we merely note

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<sup>54</sup>Infra, pp. 50f.

the messianic implications of the miracle per se.

The miracle of the loaves had messianic meaning for the people who witnessed this miracle or later heard reports of it. To Jesus' contemporaries this sign would be repetition of the manna miracle which occurred during the era of Moses. The popular Messianic beliefs of that time expected such a repetition.

Das Judentum erwartete ein zweites eschatologisches Mannawunder; s [yrische] Bar [uchapokalypse] 29:8 "Zu jener Zeit werden wieder die Mannavorräte von oben herabfallen"; Sib[ylinen Orakel] fr[agmenta] 3:49. . . . , Apk. 2:17, Joh[annesevangelium] r[abba] 1 zu 1,9, "Wie der erste Erlöser das Manna herabkommen liesz, so wird auch der letzte Erlöser das Manna herabkommen lassen."<sup>55</sup>

The people who witnessed Jesus' miracle of the loaves recognized it as a Messianic sign. But they recognized Jesus as the Messiah only according to rabbinic expectations. The people wanted to make Jesus their temporal king (John 6:15). The teaching of Jesus to His disciples showed how His Messianic office could not be limited in this manner (John 6:35-47). Two things the Jews had to realize. First, Moses did not give the people bread (John 6:32). Secondly, the Father of Jesus gives the real Bread from heaven, i.e. Jesus (John 6:32). Thus Jesus' teaching pointed the Jews away from Moses to the Father and away from the manna to the true Bread. The Jews and many disciples rejected this Messianic claim as set forth by Jesus because it was different Bread from that

<sup>55</sup>Johannes Behm, "ἀπτος", "TWNT", I, 476. See also Rudolf Meyer, "Μάρνα", "TWNT", IV, 466-70.



which the Fathers ate (John 6:58,66). Jesus spoke words of spirit and eternal life (John 6:63,68). These claims were rejected because they were different from and higher than the eschatological manna miracle which the Jews expected.

Closely connected with the Johannine comparison of Moses and Jesus as the Christ is John's comparison of the νόμος (  $\aleph \aleph \aleph$  ) to the Logos (John 1:14,17). It seems that especially in the Prologue John presents the antithesis between the Torah and the Logos. According to Rabbinic Judaism the Torah was ζωή φῶς and ἀλήθεια.<sup>56</sup> According to John, Jesus, the Logos, is ἀλήθεια (John 1:14,17; 14:6), ζωή (1 John 1:2; 5:12; John 1:4; 4:14; 5:26,39,40; 6:27f.; 11:25; 14:6), and φῶς (John 1:4,7,8,9; 3:19; 8:12; 9:5; 12:46). In Rabbinic literature the Torah was included in the group of heavenly advocates.<sup>57</sup> In Johannine literature Jesus also appears as the παράκλητος (1 John 2:1). Rabbinic thought regarded the Torah as the real bread from heaven.<sup>58</sup> Johannine theology considered Jesus the real bread from heaven (John 6:32,35). When John states that the Logos was with God, that He was God and that all things

<sup>56</sup>Albert Debrunner and Others, "λόγος", TWNT, IV, 139.

<sup>57</sup>Johannes Behm, "παράκλητος", TWNT, V, 809.

<sup>58</sup>Edersheim, op. cit., II, 30.

were made through Him (John 1:1-3), John is stating truths which the rabbis applied to the Torah.<sup>59</sup>

John compares the Logos to the Torah with the express purpose of showing the superiority of the Logos. The Logos had always existed (John 1:2). The Jews had to admit that the Torah came into existence through Moses (John 1:17; 7:19). Even if they held the rabbinic opinion that the Torah was one of the seven things created before the world, they had to concede that the Torah had been created. John does not put the Logos on a time scale with regard to pre-existence nor does he say that the Logos was created (John 1:1,30; 8:58). The Torah pointed to the Messiah (John 1:45; 12:34) and therefore to Jesus (John 1:45). This was not recognized by the unbelievers (John 12:34; 7:49), but, according to John, even this rejection was foretold in the Law (John 15:25).

As we have just noted, a very important part of the Johannine presentation of Jesus as the Messiah rests upon a comparison of the person and work of Jesus to the person and work of Moses. This comparison is made to show that Jesus as the Messiah is superior to Moses, to the miracles which occurred during the wilderness and to the Torah which came into existence through Moses. Thus the Johannine presentation of Jesus as the Messiah surpassed the hopes of the

<sup>59</sup>Gerhard Kittel, "λόγος," TWNT, IV, 139.

people who merely expected a Messiah comparable to a second Moses.

Another way in which John points to Jesus as the Messiah is through the miracles which John records. John calls special attention to the miracles of Jesus by sometimes calling them *σημεία*. The miracles were signs which pointed to Jesus as the Messiah and as the Son of God. The feeding of the five thousand (John 6:1-14), the healing at the pool at Bethzatha (John 5:2-9), the raising of Lazarus (John 11:1-44) and the healing of the blind man (John 9:1-12) all have Messianic meaning. Since John expressly states (John 20:30,31) that he selected some *σημεία* recorded in the Gospel with the intent to persuade his readers that Jesus was the Messiah and the Son of God we must carefully examine these signs.

The Messianic meaning of the healing of the blind man, the healing of the sick man at Bethzatha and the raising of Lazarus is in part determined by interpreting them in the light of the Synoptic Gospels. When John the Baptist wanted to know if Jesus was actually the Messiah (Matthew 11:2-5; Luke 7:18-23) Jesus told John's disciples to report what they had heard and seen (Matthew 11:4; Luke 7:22). They were to report that the blind received their sight, the lame walked, the lepers were cleansed, the deaf heard, the dead were raised and the poor had the Good News preached to them (Matthew 11:5; Luke 7:22). These New Testament

passages refer to Isaiah 35:5,6 which the rabbis repeatedly applied to the Messianic age.<sup>60</sup> The signs performed by Jesus recorded by John include making the blind see (John 9:1-12), the lame walk (John 5:1-9) and raising the dead (John 11:1-46).

John presents the σημεῖον of the blind man with great emphasis. This σημεῖον and the raising of Lazarus from the dead had a great impact on Jesus' contemporaries (John 9:16f.; 10:21; 11:37; 12:9,17,18; 11:45). The reason that this man was born blind was to provide the occasion for Jesus, the Light of the world, to make manifest the works of God (John 9:3,5). The miracle made men focus on the purpose of Jesus' incarnation. Though He came to save the world (John 3:17), He also came to pronounce a condemnatory judgment on such as refused to accept His salvation. He came for κρίμα (John 9:39). Therefore Jesus could say that the guilt remained with those who claimed that they could see (John 9:41). The guilt was removed from those who were blind; Jesus gave them the ability to see. That is, those who recognized that they were living sinful lives apart from the Light of the world and turned to that Light for salvation were drawn into fellowship with Jesus.

Jesus' contemporaries considered this miracle a sign with Messianic implications. The parents knew that to say

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<sup>60</sup>Edersheim, op. cit., II, 725.

that Jesus had given sight to their blind son was equivalent to saying that Jesus was the Christ (John 9:18-23). The Pharisees found this miracle unbelievable because it had Messianic meaning and was performed on the Sabbath. They could not conceive of a Messiah who would break the Sabbath. Breaking the Sabbath established Jesus as a sinner (John 9:16). The issue which faced the Pharisees was to determine if the Messiah superseded Sabbatical regulations. By performing this Messianic sign of the Sabbath Jesus proved that His Messianic powers superseded Sabbatical prohibitions.

The raising of Lazarus was also an important Messianic *σημεῖον*. Due to this sign many people came to faith in Jesus (John 11:45; 12:10,11) and the opposition became more determined to destroy Him (John 11:47-53; 12:10,11). Although Mark 5:35-42 and Luke 7:11-17 do not have the theological force of this Johannine pericope, they support the conviction that the Messiah would raise the dead. Perhaps there is a theological connection between John 11 and Matthew 27:52,53. Ultimately the raising of Lazarus was important because it pointed to Jesus as the Son of God (John 11:41,42).

The healing of the sick man at the pool of Bethzatha had Messianic meaning in the light of Isaiah 35:6. But this healing was most important for John because Jesus used it to point to Jesus' relationship with the Father (John 5:17,19-47). The Jews were offended not only because

Jesus broke the Sabbath but also because He called God His Father, thus making Himself equal with God (John 5:18).

The miraculous feeding of the five thousand also had Messianic meaning. It was commonly believed that as Moses had provided bread for God's people in the wilderness so the Messiah would provide bread in the Messianic kingdom. However, Jesus not only provided bread for people to eat but He provided this ordinary bread in a miraculous manner to make people realize that He was the true Bread which had come down from the Father (John 6:41-51). The discourse which followed this σημεῖον pointed to the greatness of Jesus the Messiah and not to the greatness of the σημεῖον.

As we have just noted, several σημεῖα recorded in John emphasize to his readers that Jesus was the Messiah. But these signs also emphasize that Jesus was the Son of God, therefore demonstrating how in Johannine literature we cannot divorce Jesus' Messianic office from His position as the Son of God.

Several of the ἐγώ εἰμι images in John's Gospel have Messianic meaning to some degree. This Messianic meaning is not found in the ἐγώ εἰμι formula but in the figure with which it is connected. Let us briefly note the Messianic significance of these pericopes.

Jesus' dialogue with the Pharisees in chapter eight was the result of Jesus' claim to be the Light of the world (John 8:12). This was a Messianic claim. According to

the Midrash, the windows of Solomon's temple were narrow within and wide without, exactly the opposite from the windows of ordinary buildings of that time. This was to symbolize that the light was not to shine into the Sanctuary but rather to lighten what was outside the temple. The light which was to burn continually in the Sanctuary was symbolic.

In Messianic times God would in fulfillment of the prophetic meaning of this rite, "kindle for them [The Children of Israel] a Great Light," and the nations of the world would point to them who had lit the light for Him who had lightened the whole world.<sup>61</sup>

This thought corresponds with the statement by Simeon that Jesus would be the light to lighten the Gentiles (Luke 2:32). The rabbis also wrote that the original light in which God had wrapped Himself as a garment was so bright that it would dim the light of the sun. This light was then reserved under the throne of God for the Messiah. In the Messianic age it would shine again. In another passage in the Midrash it is expressly stated that light dwelleth with the Messiah, the Enlightener.<sup>62</sup>

There is no doubt that the Pharisees understood Jesus' claim to be the Light of the world as a Messianic claim because they immediately attacked its veracity (John 8:13). The *σημείον* recorded in chapter nine underscored Jesus' Messianic claim as the Light of the world (John 9:5). As

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., p. 166.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

the Light of the world Jesus came for judgment (John 8:16; 9:39). In both these discourses (John 8:12-19; 9:1-41) John points beyond the mere Messianic similarities to the claim that as the Messiah Jesus is also the Son of God.

When Jesus claimed to be the Bread of Life He also made a Messianic claim. As God gave bread at Moses' time so now He has given the real Bread of life. This Bread which has come down from heaven is Jesus (John 6:32,35). Jesus is the Bread which gives life to believers in the Messianic age which He inaugurates (John 6:53f.). Jesus is superior to the manna which God gave the Children of Israel in the wilderness because Jesus bestows immortality. Therefore He provides the one essential quality which the manna lacked. The discourse of Jesus as the real Vine (John 15:1-11) is so filled with implications regarding Jesus' divine Sonship that it is possible to overlook the Messianic figure employed. In the Old Testament the vine is frequently used to signify the people of Israel (Hosea 10:1; Jeremiah 2:21; Ezekiel 15:1ff.; 19:10ff.; Psalm 80:9 et al.). Therefore this figure of the vine could suggest that Jesus is the true Israel. The figure of the vine representing Israel may have been well known at the time of Jesus since the vine was the emblem of the nation on the coins of the Maccabees.<sup>63</sup> The vine also served as a representation of the Messiah in Syriac Baruch.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>63</sup>C. E. B. Cranfield, "Vine," A Theological Word Book, edited by Alan Richardson (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1958), p. 275.

<sup>64</sup>Johannes Behm, "ἀμπελος," TWNT, I, 346.



As a Messianic figure the vine indicates that the people in the Messianic age can produce fruit only by remaining in Jesus, the Messiah (John 15:4,5). The purpose of bearing fruit is to glorify the Father (John 15:8). If John presents this as a Messianic figure, we see once again how he weaves together the concepts that Jesus is the Messiah and that Jesus is the Son of God.

Although there is no specific rabbinic tradition which compares the Messiah with a door for sheep, Jesus apparently uses this figure to show how He brings about the good things of the Messianic age. As Jeremias states,

Inhaltlich besagt das Bild "Ich bin die Tür (für die Schafe), dasz Jesus die Zugehörigkeit zur messianischen Heilsgemeinde und den Empfang der ihr verheissenen Heilsgüter . . . vermittelt.<sup>65</sup>

Since John connects the pericope presenting Jesus as the Door so closely with the pericope which presents Jesus as the Good Shepherd, it seems advisable to discuss these together. As the Door Jesus offers life (John 10:10) and as the Good Shepherd He gives His life for the sheep (John 10:15).

In Judaistic literature the Messiah was known as a shepherd.<sup>66</sup> Psalms of Solomon 17:40 speaks of the Messiah as being strong in His works and might in the fear of the Lord, shepherding the flock of the Lord in faith and righteousness.

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<sup>65</sup> Joachim Jeremias, "Θύρα," TWNT, III, 180.

<sup>66</sup> Joachim Jeremias, "ποιμήν," TWNT, VI, 488.

The Old Testament frequently refers to God's people as sheep (Ezekiel 34; Jeremiah 23; Zechariah 10:3; Psalm 79:13 et al.). This figure is also used with Messianic or eschatological meaning in the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew 9:36-38; 25:33; Mark 6:34; 14:27). In John, Jesus as the Messianic Good Shepherd is primarily concerned with the life of the sheep (John 10:10). He is to preserve their lives (10:12) and gives them eternal life (John 10:28). As the Good Shepherd He lays down His own life to enable the sheep to live (John 10:11,15,17). The sheep are given life as a result of the sacrifice of the Good Shepherd's life. Jesus gave His life for the sheep because it was the Father's will (John 10:18). The Messianic office of Jesus as the Good Shepherd receives its full meaning only when the Good Shepherd is recognized as the Son of God.

The preceding discussion presented some data which suggests that Jesus chose the *ἐγώ εἰμι* figures to express Messianic claims. As the Light of the world, the Bread of life, the Door for the sheep, the Good Shepherd and as the True Vine Jesus applied to Himself appellations which were currently used to describe Messianic hopes.

One other noteworthy pericope remains in which John in a very subtle manner presents Jesus as the Messiah. John is probably referring to a Rabbinic teaching when he notes that the Jews marvel at Jesus' teaching because Jesus has *μὴ μεμαθηκώς* (John 7:15). Among the rabbis it was emphasized that the

Messiah would teach his people correct understanding of the Law<sup>67</sup> and that the Messiah had, without instruction attained this knowledge.<sup>68</sup> This is precisely why the people marveled about Jesus' teaching (John 7:15). Extremely noteworthy is the fact that Jesus used their amazement not to emphasize His Messianic character but to point to His divine Sonship.

The preceding discussion has noted the various ways in which John presents Jesus as the Messiah. In summary, John compared Jesus to Moses as His contemporaries compared the expected Messiah to Moses. John selected several miracles which were signs that Jesus' contemporaries expected to take place in the Messianic age. Finally John recorded several figures which Jesus used which had Messianic implications for Jesus' contemporaries. But because Jesus, the Son of God, is the Messiah He completely surpasses contemporary Messianic expectations. Whenever John compares Jesus to anyone or anything the comparison is to show the superiority of Jesus the Messiah.

On the basis of the preceding study it is apparent that John made a determined effort to point out that Jesus was the Messiah. Because John uses so many methods and figures to present Jesus as the Messiah and because John connects Jesus'

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<sup>67</sup>Mowinckel, op. cit., p. 311.

<sup>68</sup>Edersheim, op. cit., I, 177. See also Karl Heinrich Rengstorf, "μὰνθῶν", TWNT, IV, 404.

Messianic character so closely with His divine Sonship it seems tenable that Jesus' Messianic character was an article of faith which the early Christians confessed. Perhaps this article of faith was under attack. John probably wrote this Gospel not only to teach people that Jesus was the Messiah (John 20:30) but also to defend Jesus' Messianic character. The Gospel of John leaves no room for a Christian faith which would not consider Jesus the Messiah. Those Christians who truly believed on Jesus would certainly confess that He was the Messiah.

## CHAPTER III

### THE SON OF GOD

The purpose of this chapter is to determine the meaning of the title "Son of God" as it is used in John's Gospel and First Epistle. Although these documents will serve as the ultimate basis for any conclusions, a thorough study of the title must include an attempt to determine whether its origin may be found in pre-Johannine literature and whether non-Johannine literature may have influenced the meaning of the title "Son of God" in John's writings.

#### The Title "Son of God" in Non-Johannine Literature

An investigation of non-Biblical literature reveals that the title "Son of God" was not a title which originated with Jesus or with John. It was a well-known title frequently used not only in pre-Johannine literature but also in writings that were recorded during and after the lifetime of John. But the title "Son of God" in John has a different and more developed meaning than in any literature recorded before or during the lifetime of John. Even the Synoptic Gospels do not attach to the title the importance which John gives it. The pregnant meaning of the term "Son of God" in John does not allow the interpreter to equate it with either the Rabbinic Judaistic or the Hellenistic understanding of this title.

In the following section we will briefly sketch the usage

and meaning of the title "Son of God" in Old Testament and non-canonical literature. The purpose of this preliminary study is to determine the similarities and the differences between the Johannine and the non-Johannine meaning of this title. This study will attempt to show whether the title "Son of God" as used in the Johannine literature may be traced to the Old Testament or to Hellenic sources.

In the Old Testament, Israel as a whole, the king of Israel and the angels are frequently called God's sons. In Judaism the Messiah was called the Son of God. But it is doubtful that this was a common appellation for the Messiah.

In the Old Testament, angels or supernatural beings are the first to be called "Sons of God" (Genesis 6:2,4; Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7; Psalm 29:1; 89:6; Daniel 3:25 et al.). It is difficult to determine exactly what the term when used in this manner means beyond the fact that it refers to beings which in some sense share God's nature.<sup>1</sup>

Israel as a whole is frequently called "God's Son" (Exodus 4:22; Hosea 11:1; Isaiah 1:2; 30:1; 63:16; Jeremiah 3:22 et al.). In none of these passages nor in any other passage in the Old Testament is it even remotely indicated that God is the progenitor of the nation of Israel. Israel as the Son of God does not express descent but rather indicates that

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<sup>1</sup>E. M. Sidebottom, The Christ of the Fourth Gospel in the Light of First Century Thought (London: S. P. C. K., 1961), p. 152.

God has chosen them to be His people. God chose them to be special objects of His care and discipline and as His people they owed Him absolute obedience and loyalty.

The king of Israel is also called "God's Son" (2 Samuel 7:14; Psalm 2:7; 89:26, et al.). This does not imply that God was the king's progenitor. It meant that the king had been chosen by God as the representative of the people.<sup>2</sup> Psalm 2 is especially noteworthy in this connection because the king, i. e. the Lord's anointed, is called the "Son of God" (Psalm 2:7). However Psalm 2:7 probably reflects a Babylonian formula of adoption.<sup>3</sup> This would indicate that God had chosen or elected the king and not procreated him.

The designation of the king as the "Son of God" and as the "Anointed of the Lord" (the Messiah of the Lord) raises the question whether or not the "Son of God" was a Messianic title. The general consensus in the scholarly world today is that there is not enough evidence to prove that it was a Messianic title.<sup>4</sup> Dalman states that the Christian inter-

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<sup>2</sup>C. H. Dodd, The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel (Cambridge: University Press, 1960), p. 252.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Rudolf Bultmann, Theology of the New Testament, translated from the German by Kendrick Grobel (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951), I, 50. See also Wilhelm Bousset, Kyrios Christos (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1921), p. 53; Ernest DeWitt Burton, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1920), p. 406; Gustaf Dalman, The Words of Jesus, translated from the German by D. W. Kay (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1902), p. 268.

pretation of Psalm 2 would discourage later Jewish usage but

even for the earlier period it must be recognized as certain that Psalm 2 was not of decisive importance in the Jewish conception of the Messiah and that "Son of God" was not a common Messianic title.<sup>5</sup>

It is noteworthy that Psalms of Solomon 17:23-51 interprets Psalm 2 Messianically but "Son of God" in Psalms of Solomon 17 never refers to the Messiah.<sup>6</sup> The Messianic usage of the title "Son of God" first appears in 4 Ezra (4 Ezra 7:28; 13:32, 37, 52; 14:9). The appearance of the title in Ethiopic Enoch 105:2 is probably due to a Christian interpolation; perhaps the entire verse is an interpolation.<sup>7</sup> After examining the data one must conclude that there is little evidence to prove that the term "Son of God" was ever a popular Messianic title.

Although the title "Son of God" was not a popular Messianic title in Judaism we need not conclude that the Christian usage of the title was not influenced by the Old Testament. Since the title "Son of God" was often applied to the king of Israel and since the Messiah was often regarded as the eschatological king of God's people, the title "Son of God" could easily have

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<sup>5</sup>Dalman, op. cit., p. 272.

<sup>6</sup>Ermine Huntress, "'Son of God' in Jewish Writings Prior to the Christian Era," Journal of Biblical Literature, LIV (1935), 117.

<sup>7</sup>Burton, op. cit., p. 405.



been transferred to the Messiah.<sup>8</sup> It is possible that the title "Son of God" in the Old Testament lent itself as a bridge between Jesus as the Messiah and Jesus' suffering and death as the  $\pi\alpha\iota\varsigma \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$ .<sup>9</sup> As Huntress notes, Jesus' suffering and death, regardless of how "inconsistent it might be with the prevalent picture of the Messiah, was the extreme expression of the obedience of a son of God."<sup>10</sup> Thus the obedience of a son of God would result in the suffering and death of the  $\pi\alpha\iota\varsigma \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$ . The existence of the possibility that the "Son of God" title in John is connected with the  $\pi\alpha\iota\varsigma \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$  concept of the Old Testament cannot be denied. But it implies that the Johannine title reflects a combination of Old Testament concepts and this is doubtful.

Cullmann's conclusion serves well as a summary to this brief outline of the title "Son of God" as used in the Old Testament and Jewish literature. He writes,

The Old Testament and Jewish concept of the Son of God is essentially characterized, . . . by the idea of election to a participation in divine work through the execution of a particular commission and by the idea of strict obedience to the God who elects.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>Oscar Cullmann, The Christology of the New Testament, translated from the German by Shirley C. Guthrie and Charles A. M. Hall (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1959), p. 274.

<sup>9</sup>Huntress, op. cit., p. 123.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

<sup>11</sup>Op. cit., p. 275.

The investigation into the usage of the title "Son of God" in John will show that these Old Testament characteristics are found in the Johannine usage. But the Old Testament and Jewish usage is restricted and limited when compared to the Johannine usage of the title "Son of God."

If the New Testament title "Son of God" was not taken directly from the Old Testament, we must examine the possibility that it originated in secular literature antedating John's writings or contemporary with them. In the following section we will note briefly the view that the Johannine literature took the title "Son of God" from contemporary political circles.

The ancient world readily gave kings and extraordinary human beings the title "Son of God." In Egypt "Son of God" meant that the king was an actual descendant of the god Ra.<sup>12</sup> In the Hellenistic world the expression was not only applied to the rulers but also to anyone who claimed to possess divine power.<sup>13</sup> For example, Alexander the Great was hailed as the Son of Ammon and many people believed that Alexander had been miraculously born.<sup>14</sup> The successors of Alexander the Great continued and often encouraged this practice of apotheosis for various reasons. In general, the dividing line between man

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<sup>12</sup>Burton, op. cit., p. 406.

<sup>13</sup>Gullmann, op. cit., p. 271.

<sup>14</sup>Dodd, op. cit., p. 250.

and god was very thin in Hellenic thought. The expression  $\nu\acute{\iota}\omicron\varsigma \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$  reflected on the one hand "a reduction of the idea of god and on the other an extravagant estimate of a great man."<sup>15</sup>

In Roman circles Julius Caesar was the first emperor to be listed among the gods. Perhaps at first this was simply flattery, but after his assassination many of the common people actually considered him a god.<sup>16</sup> Caesar Augustus was worshipped as a god in Asia Minor even before his death. The custom was that the emperor would be formally listed among the state deities only after death. This was done by a formal act of the Senate.

Although the plebians probably accepted the emperors as actual sons of a god, the educated Romans were probably more reserved in their judgment. Tiberius begged the Senate to remember that he was merely a man, and Vespasian on his death bed sarcastically remarked, "I suppose that I'm becoming a god."<sup>17</sup>

The preceding discussion has been a brief sketch of the usage of the title "Son of God" in the ancient world. The title was primarily connected with the heads of various na-

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 251.

<sup>16</sup> Burton, op. cit., p. 407.

<sup>17</sup> Charles Norris Cochrane, Christianity and Classical Culture: a Study of Thought and Action from Augustus to Augustine (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940), p. 129.

tions but it also included great leaders who were successful to an extraordinary degree. It was assumed that the ruler received his extraordinary ability from the god from whom the ruler was descended. The god or son of the god was thought to be an extraordinary ruler who could bring peace, prosperity and happiness to his people. There was never any idea that this ruler would suffer and die for his people. There was nothing to indicate dependence or obedience by the ruler to his father god. In conclusion, the concept "Son of God" in the Hellenic world is completely different from the usage in Johannine literature. It seems highly unlikely that the Hellenic world was the source for the title "Son of God" as it is used by John.

After this cursory examination of non-Biblical literature it seems that the title "Son of God" as used by John did not originate essentially in either the Graeco-Roman world or in the religious thought of the Jewish world. This consideration has relevance for this study. Most important, the unparalleled usage of the title in the New Testament requires New Testament scholars to conclude that Jesus Himself applied this title to Himself and gave it its unique meaning.<sup>18</sup> Cullmann thinks the decisive reason for this conclusion is the fact that the title as used in the Old Testament and Hellenistic literature, on which the early church would have

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<sup>18</sup>Cullmann, op. cit., p. 281.

had to depend if it was the source which first applied this title to Jesus, is so different from the usage of the title in the Gospels.<sup>19</sup>

Since there seems to be no non-Johannine literature which greatly elucidates the title "Son of God" as used by John, the author of this study concludes that the term "Son of God" in John's Gospel must be studied in the light of the Gospel and First Epistle alone. C. H. Dodd agrees with this conclusion. He states,

All this [the non-Johannine presentation of the title "Son of God"] is too vague to serve as more than a general starting point for our investigation of the usage in the gospel itself. We must examine closely what the evangelist actually says about the Son of God. Certainly there is no other writing known to me in which the idea of a divine sonship is treated with anything like such fulness and precision.<sup>20</sup>

Even though the title "Son of God" was widely used in connection with contemporary political leaders and even though it may have been a Messianic title, in John it has a unique and unparalleled meaning. This compels us to examine in detail the title "Son of God" as it is used in John.

#### The Johannine Usage of the Title "Son of God"

When approaching the Johannine presentation of Jesus as the Son of God we must recognize, in the first place, that the modern scholarly approach often does not do full justice to

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

<sup>20</sup>Dodd, op. cit., p. 253.

the Johannine presentation. John presents Jesus as the Son of God in such a way that people may believe on Him (John 20:31). Many scholars merely attempt to analyze, compartmentalize, and finally synthesize this Johannine presentation of Jesus as the Son of God. We must remember, as noted above, that John presents Jesus as the Son of God primarily so that people will believe on Him and have life in Him. Therefore the Johannine presentation of Jesus as the Son of God defies systematic presentation on many points. After this note of caution, we proceed to examine the title "Son of God" as used by John.

The Johannine choice of words sets forth Jesus as the unique Son of God. John uses the terms  $\acute{\omicron} \nu\acute{\iota}\acute{\omicron}\varsigma \tau\omicron\upsilon \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$  only when referring to Jesus. Thus John's usage of the title differs from that of Matthew and Mark where  $\nu\acute{\iota}\acute{\omicron}\varsigma \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$  is also used to designate believers. John refers to believers as  $\tau\acute{\epsilon}\kappa\upsilon\alpha \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$  (e.g. John 1:12; 11:52). Jesus is never referred to as  $\tau\acute{\epsilon}\kappa\upsilon\omicron\nu \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$ . This pattern is consistent in both John's Gospel and First Epistle. Scholarly opinion generally attributes this practice to an attempt by the author to distinguish sharply between Jesus and His followers in their relationship to God. There can be little doubt also that John consciously attempted to show that God was Jesus' Father in a sense which differed from the Old Testament idea that God was the creative Father of all people and the elective Father of the Israelites.

It has been suggested that John used *υἱός* and *τέκνον* differently for etymological reasons. Geerhardus Vos states that *τέκνον*

being derived from *τίκτείν*, lays stress upon the nature and subjective condition belonging to sonship, less than upon position and status, whereas *υἱός* is the richer, more pregnant term, which has room for both aspects, that of status and of inherent quality.<sup>21</sup>

This distinction may well hold. But it must also be noted that in John *ὁ υἱός* is applied not only to Jesus but also to Jacob's sons (John 4:12), the nobleman's son (John 4:47,50) and the blind man (John 9:19). Furthermore, Jesus, obviously referring to the disciple at the foot of the cross, says, "Woman, behold your son." It is doubtful therefore whether the bare vocable *υἱός* is a significantly rich and pregnant term in John. For this reason, Vos' etymological argument is weak. *ὁ υἱός τοῦ Θεοῦ* receives its rich full dimension because of the way in which John uses it, not because of its etymological background.

Another way in which John sets forth Jesus as the unique Son of God is John's usage of *πατήρ* when referring to God. Although God is spoken of as Father in John well over one hundred times, in only eleven instances the term does not appear in the words of Jesus. Seven times *πατήρ* appears in editorial comments of the author (John 1:14,18; 3:35; 5:18; 8:27; 13:1,3). In each of these cases *πατήρ* refers to

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<sup>21</sup>The Self-Disclosure of Jesus (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1926), p. 208.

Jesus' Father. Once Philip asks to see the Father (John 14:8) and once the disciples are confused about Jesus' going to the Father (John 16:17). In John 8:19 the Jews ask Jesus where His Father is and in John 8:41 they claim that God is their Father. Thus in every case except one (John 8:41) the term Father when not used by Jesus nevertheless refers to Jesus' Father. But even in the one exception (John 8:41) Jesus immediately attacks the claim made by the Jews and proves that it is false (John 8:42-47). Therefore, through John's usage of *πατήρ* it is apparent that John regarded God as uniquely the Father of Jesus. John is not concerned with showing that God is the creative Father who still preserves His creation. There are no passages in John comparable to Matthew 6:25-33. John is concerned with Jesus' unique Sonship and the mission of Jesus to make believers children of God. At this point it is important to note John 20:17. Here Jesus states that He and Mary Magdalene have the same God and the same Father. As a believer she had been given the authority by Jesus to become a child of God (John 1:12). Jesus' mission when complete enables believers to call God their Father. But these believers are still *τέκνα* and not *υἱοὶ* (John 1:12; 1 John 3:1).

John also points to Jesus as the unique Son of God through his use of the qualifying adjective *μονογενής* (John 1:14,18; 3:16,18; 1 John 4:9). The Revised Standard Version, which in the passages just noted translates *μονογενής*



with "only" and not with "only begotten," caused concern and discussion of this term. The studies of Dale Moody<sup>22</sup> and Frederick C. Grant<sup>23</sup> reflect the outcome of this debate. Today scholars generally agree that *μονογενής* does not have the same meaning as *μονογεντάς*. Instead, so they tell us, *μονογενής* means "unique" or "only," reflecting the Old Testament term  $\tau' \pi' \tau'$ . The translation difficulties of *μονογενής* probably extend back to the Vulgate. This translation has *unicus* in Luke 9:38; 7:12; 8:48 but it has *unigenitus* in John 1:14; 3:16,18 and 1 John 4:9. However the Vulgate translation was probably affected by the Christological controversies at the time of its translation.<sup>24</sup> In some Old Testament passages *μονογενής* could mean either "only" or "only-begotten" (Judges 11:34; Tobit 3:15) so Moody points to Luke 7:12 as a passage which indicates that *μονογενής* can not mean "only-begotten." He notes that no one would insist that this son was the only-begotten of his mother since begetting is a male function.<sup>25</sup> Moody also notes that the Phoenix bird in 1 Clement 25:2 is called *μονογενής*. The meaning here is

<sup>22</sup>Dale Moody, "God's Only Son: The Translation of John 3:16 in the Revised Standard Version," Journal of Biblical Literature, LXXII (December, 1953), 213-19.

<sup>23</sup>Frederick C. Grant, "'Only-Begotten'--A Footnote to the New Revision," Anglican Theological Review, XXXVI (October, 1954), 284-87.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 275.

<sup>25</sup>Moody, op. cit., p. 216.

that it was a unique bird, not an only-begotten bird.

*Μονογενής* meaning "only" in distinction from "only-begotten" comes into special focus in Hebrews 11:17. Here Isaac is called the *μονογενής* son of Abraham. Since Ishmael was born thirteen years before Isaac it was impossible for Isaac to be called the "only-begotten" son of Abraham (Genesis 16:3-5; 17:25; 18:10). But Isaac was a unique son; he was the only son of promise. Isaac was a unique son because God had said to Abraham, "Through Isaac shall your descendants be named" (Genesis 21:12; Hebrews 11:8). It must also be noted that the Septuagint translates Genesis 22:2 with τὸν υἱὸν σου τὸν ἀγαπητόν whereas Hebrews 11:17 has τὸν μονογενῆ. This is one reason why some scholars have concluded that ἀγαπητός and μονογενής are used as synonyms in the New Testament.<sup>26</sup> Their opinion is supported by the fact that the Synoptic Gospels use ἀγαπητός only in reference to Jesus. Matthew and Mark never use μονογενής and Luke never uses it in reference to Jesus. In John's Gospel ἀγαπητός is never used and μονογενής is used only in reference to Jesus. The First Epistle of John uses ἀγαπητός six times referring to believers in Christ but since this usage is not in a Gospel account of Jesus' life it is not, perhaps, an important exception.

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<sup>26</sup>Dalman, *op. cit.*, p. 281. See also Vos, *op. cit.*, p. 215. Wilbert Francis Howard, *Christianity according to St. John* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1946), p. 68.

From the preceding observations it is possible to conclude that the New Testament Gospels do use ἀγαπητός and μονογενής with a similar meaning. Vos suggests that

ἀγαπητός attracts to itself this idea of exceptional love on the basis of numerical uniqueness. . . . Jesus . . . figures not merely as the possessor of the love of God, but as the possessor of divine love in view of His being the only Son of God.<sup>27</sup>

Perhaps the reverse is also true. Perhaps μονογενής because of its numerical uniqueness attracts to itself the idea of exceptional love. The Old Testament background for μονογενής would support this. דָּוִדָּא has a poetic usage in the Psalms meaning, "My life, as the one unique and priceless possession which can never be replaced."<sup>28</sup> It is interesting to note that in Psalm 22:21 the Septuagint translates דָּוִדָּא with μονογενής and the Authorized Version has "My darling." John 3:16 and 1 John 4:9,10 indicate that the greatness of God's love is shown by the fact that God sent His only Son. These passages imply that this only Son is the object of special love. They indicate that the remarkable part of God's love for the world is the fact that He sent the Son, who was especially loved by God because of His uniqueness, to surrender His life for the benefit of the world and to impart His life to believers. In conclusion, it seems that as the μονογενής,

<sup>27</sup> Vos, op. cit., p. 215.

<sup>28</sup> Francis Brown, S. R. Driver and Charles A. Briggs, A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959), p. 402.

Jesus is the unique Son of God and the object of the Father's special love.

Jesus also stands in a unique relationship with the Father because Jesus is the unique revealer of the Father and the only redeemer of men. As the *μονογενὴς Θεός* Jesus has made known the Father (John 1:18). Jesus Himself is God (John 1:1). Jesus is the only Redeemer. He is the *ἰλασμός* for the sins of the world (1 John 4:10). He came that those who believe on Him might have eternal life (John 3:16). By fulfilling these functions Jesus manifested that He is the unique Son of the Father. He fulfills two functions which no one else could possibly execute.

Before we discuss, in general, the relationship between Jesus and the Father we must clarify the terminology which we will use. The Sonship of Jesus is usually discussed by means of such terms as "dynamic" or "ethical" or, on the other hand, "static" or "essential." Dynamic and ethical Sonship usually mean the same thing. These adjectives suggest that the relationship of Jesus to the Father is an active, dependent functional relationship. Jesus as the ethical or dynamic Son reveals the Father, obeys the Father and does the work of the Father. The adjectives "static" and "essential" are also synonymous terms when related to Jesus' Sonship. They indicate that Jesus was the Son of God in His very being or essence. Rather than use all these terms the author of this study will employ only the terms "ethical" and "essential."

First the ethical relationship of Jesus to the Father will be discussed and secondly the essential relationship.

The ethical Sonship of Jesus revolves primarily around Jesus' dependence on the Father and His obedience to the Father. The ethical relationship between the Father and the Son begins with the Father's concern for the world. The Father wants the world to have life and for this reason He sent the Son (John 3:16; 6:40). In the concern for the life of the world the Father wills that people who see Jesus believe that the Father sent Him (John 6:29). The Father Himself bears witness concerning the Son (John 8:18; 5:37). The Father has given the Son the commandment what to do and say, i.e. how to reveal the Father to the world (John 12:49). Of special importance is the fact that the Father gave the Son the full measure of the Spirit (John 3:34). All that Jesus does conforms to the Father's will and all that Jesus does, He does only because the Father enables Him to do it.

Throughout the Fourth Gospel the dependence of Jesus on the Father is noted.<sup>29</sup> Jesus' dependence upon the Father

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<sup>29</sup>Indispensable in a study of the dependence of Jesus on the Father is J. Ernest Davey, The Jesus of St. John: Historical and Christological Studies in the Fourth Gospel (London: Lutterworth Press, 1958), pp. 90-157. In the fifth chapter of this monograph Davey has drawn together all the material in John showing the dependence of Jesus. Davey has sections concerning Jesus' dependence on the Father for being, nature and destiny (p. 102), for power (p. 91), for knowledge (p. 96), for His mission and message (p. 100), for authority and office (p. 105), for love (p. 107), for glory and honor (p. 108), for disciples (p. 112), for testimony (p. 113), for the Spirit and other gifts (p. 115), and for

begins with His entrance into the world. Time and again Jesus states that the Father sent Him (e.g. John 3:16; 6:33; 7:28, et al.). Some form of either *πέμπειν* or *ἀποστέλλειν* is usually used to express this. There is probably no basic difference in meaning between these two verbs as used in John.<sup>30</sup> The sending of Jesus indicates that He is God's representative in the world. Being sent from the Father means that Jesus came to do the Father's will and accomplish His work (John 4:34; 5:30; 6:26; 8:29; 9:4; 5:35). Being sent means that Jesus' teaching is the Father's teaching (John 7:16) and that Jesus speaks the Father's commandments (John 12:49; 3:34; 14:24). It means that the Father bears witness to Jesus (John 5:37; 8:18) and that rejection of Jesus means rejection of the Father (John 5:38; 8:42; 5:23). In summary, being sent by the Father means that Jesus does the work of the Father according to the will of the Father. Whatever Jesus accomplishes He does because the Father who sent Him gave Him the ability and authority to accomplish it. Jesus is commissioned to do the work of the Father and to reveal His will.

Although we must beware of finding "profound theological significance in a preposition"<sup>31</sup> we must note a prepositional

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guidance (p. 116). The dependence of Jesus is illustrated by His obedience (p. 110), by His relationships with God and men (p. 132), by His prayers (p. 140) and by His titles (p. 145). Although the author of this study will depend heavily on Davey's monograph, no attempt will be made to summarize his material.

<sup>30</sup>Dodd, op. cit., p. 254.

<sup>31</sup>James Barr, The Semantics of Biblical Language (Oxford: University Press, 1961), p. 231.

phrase which does have theological meaning in connection with Jesus' Sonship. The preposition **ἀπὸ** frequently introduces phrases which underline the commission of Jesus from the Father. John notes that Jesus comes or is sent **ἀπὸ Θεοῦ** (John 3:2; 13:3 et al.) or **ἀπὸ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ** (e.g. John 6:38). In these passages **ἀπὸ** suggests source or origin.

John also frequently states that Jesus did not come **ἀπ' ἑμαυτοῦ** (John 8:28,42) and that Jesus says and does nothing **ἀπ' ἑμαυτοῦ** (John 5:19,30; 7:17,18). The Revised Standard Version translates this "of his own accord" (John 5:19; 8:42) or "of his own authority" (John 5:30; 7:17,18; 8:28). Perhaps the idea of ability should also be included in a translation of this phrase. John uses **ἀπὸ** with the genitive in several passages which clearly indicate that neither volition nor authority is intended but rather ability. John 15:4 strongly supports this suggestion for it states that the branch cannot bear fruit **ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ**. Obviously the phrase here deals with ability and not volition or authority. John 1:51 and 18:34 have a similar meaning. The three passages cited above indicate that the phrase **ἀπ' ἑμαυτοῦ** when referring to Jesus could also mean that Jesus' ability to act came from a source outside Him. Therefore the prepositional phrase **ἀπ' ἑμαυτοῦ** indicates that Jesus received from the Father the ability to do His work. This idea is indicated rather strongly in John 5:19,30. **ἀπ' ἑμαυτοῦ** may therefore indicate that Jesus could do nothing apart from the Father.

John also sets forth the dependence of the Son upon the Father by showing what the Father has given the Son. The gifts from the Father to Jesus reflect an ethical relationship, because whatever Jesus received is in some way connected with the concern of the Father for the world. That is, the Father never gave Jesus a certain competence or power merely for the reason that Jesus would have it. But whatever God gave to Jesus was to be communicated to people in the world. John shows very effectively that these gifts from the Father did not remain latent in Jesus. Jesus spoke the things which He heard from or had seen with the Father (John 8:27; 3:32; 16:25; 15:15; 8:38; 12:50; 14:10,24). Jesus teaches to the world the Father's teaching (John 16:25; 7:16; 17:14). In this way Jesus makes known the Father's name (John 17:6,26). Jesus came to save the world (John 3:17; 12:47; 10:10,15,28; 5:35; 1 John 1:38) and His coming, therefore, shows God's great love for the world (1 John 4:9). The Son bears the sins of the world because this is the ultimate reason that the Father sent Him (1 John 1:22; 3:5; 4:14,10). Jesus executes the works of the Father (John 5:30,36; 6:38; 10:25; 19:30). He does these works in the name of the Father (John 10:25) and the Father is glorified when the Son completes them (John 17:4).

John also sets forth the ethical Sonship of Jesus by stating how the actions of Jesus achieve a result in the relationship of people to God. When people accept or reject the Son, the relationship they have with the Father is deter-



mined. Those who believe on Jesus, love Him and keep His commandments are loved by the Father (John 14:21,23; 16:27; 1 John 2:23). People who reject Jesus reject the Father (John 8:19; 15:23; 1 John 2:23). Those who remain in Jesus produce the appropriate fruits which glorify the Father (John 15:5,8). Those who do not honor Jesus do not honor the Father (John 5:23). People who do not believe on Jesus are condemned and the wrath of God rests on them (John 3:36,19). Whatever the disciples ask of the Father in Jesus' name the Father will give to them (John 15:16). Above all, only those people who accept Jesus can become God's τέκνα (John 1:12; 1 John 5:10). Jesus as the Son of God establishes a favorable relationship between the Father and believers. It is the Father's will that this relationship be established and, accordingly, Jesus acts to carry out the Father's will.

Of prime importance for this study is the fact that the Father has given the Son the authority to make alive and to judge. *ἡ ἀποθνήσκουσι* and *κρίσις* were regarded by the Jews to be the two supreme prerogatives of God as Ruler and Creator.<sup>32</sup> In John's Gospel, however, Jesus makes alive and judges (John 11:25; 5:30; 9:39). For this reason the raising of Lazarus is of extreme importance for John. Here John saw the highest revelation of Jesus' divine Sonship.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup>Dodd, op. cit., p. 255.

<sup>33</sup>D. A. Schlatter, Der Evangelist Johannes: Wie Er Spricht, Denkt und Glaubte (Stuttgart: Calwer Vereinsbuchhandlung, 1930), p. 246.

After the raising of Lazarus all people could know that Jesus had been authorized to execute the greatest works of the Father, namely, resurrection and judgment.<sup>34</sup>

Concerning the judgment exercised by Jesus there seems, at first glance, to be a contradiction in John. On the one hand, Jesus claims to judge the world (John 5:30; 8:16; 9:39) while on the other hand, He states that He did not come to judge the world (John 3:17; 12:47). But there is actually no contradiction in the light of Jesus' mission from the Father. The reason the Son came was not to judge but to save the world (John 3:17). This He accomplished by revealing the will and doing the work of the Father. Jesus' mission was to bring the light of the knowledge of God to a world living in darkness. Accordingly those who accepted Jesus as the light from the Father were already in the kingdom of God's love and eternal life, and those who rejected Him stood self-condemned. Thus Jesus' primary task was not to judge but to save. And yet He is the crucial point in God's revelation at which judgment takes place. Jesus' coming in the flesh is indirectly a coming in judgment, because it, once for all, establishes the point where believers and non-believers are separated. Jesus does judge when people do not believe in Him.

The works of Jesus are important in a discussion of Jesus' Sonship because they manifest the Son's perfect obedience to the Father. In John Jesus' miracles are called

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<sup>34</sup>Bousset, op. cit., p. 157.

σημεῖα or ἔργα . The miracles are effected by the Father's power through Jesus (John 5:19,30; 8:28; 9:3; 10:32,37,38; 14:10). Ultimately these miracles bear witness to the relationship of the Father and the Son (John 5:36; 10:25; 14:11). As Sidebottom writes, "It is clear that the deepest purpose of Christ's mighty works themselves is to be signs, i.e. to have the value of words, revealing his relation to God."<sup>35</sup> The passages noted above do not indicate that Jesus' Sonship is dependent on His actions but rather that as the Son, Jesus acts.

A thorough study of John's Gospel and First Epistle en toto leaves no doubt that part of Jesus' Sonship in John is an ethical Sonship. The Son is dependent upon the Father and obedient to Him as is evident particularly in John 5:19-24. In this pericope Jesus argues with the express purpose of showing that He is dependent on and not independent of the Father. The Jews considered blasphemous the claim by Jesus that God was His Father. They sought to kill Jesus because ἴσον ἑαυτὸν ποιεῖν τῷ θεῷ (John 5:18). According to Odeberg the rabbis would have interpreted John 5:18 as though Jesus claimed to be independent of God. But the verses following John 5:19 show that Jesus considered this conclusion absolutely incorrect. Howard concisely presents both the problem and the solution when he writes,

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<sup>35</sup>Sidebottom, op. cit., p. 158.

Now it has been shown by Odeberg, Schlatter and others, that the formula, ἴσον ἑαυτὸν ποιῶν τῷ Θεῷ, ("he makes himself equal with God"), corresponds exactly to the rabbinic expression . . . "to make himself independent of God," in other words to rebel against divine government. To this Jesus replies in the paraphrase which Odeberg gives of verses 19ff. The Son does not make himself equal with the Father, he does not presume upon an independent authority. On the contrary, all his authority is derived from his Father. He is not a rebellious son, a blasphemer of the Divine Father; on the contrary, his peculiar opposition is justified by his being and acting in absolute unity of intention and thought with his Father. His continual activity is not independent of the Father's activity; on the contrary he does the Father's works, he executes what the Father shows him and commands him to do.<sup>36</sup>

Several passages in which the construction ἐγώ εἰμι is used reflect the ethical Sonship of Jesus. Although this construction is more important in regard to the essential Sonship of Jesus, several passages in which ἐγώ εἰμι is used do elucidate the ethical Sonship. Jesus says, "ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ἄρτος τῆς ζωῆς" (John 6:35,48), "τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου" (John 8:12), "ἡ ἀμπελος ἡ ἀληθινή" (John 15:1,5), "ἡ θύρα τῶν προβάτων" (John 10:7,9), "ὁ ποιμὴν ὁ καλός" (John 10:11,14), "ἡ ὁδὸς καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια καὶ ἡ ζωὴ" (John 14:6), "ἡ ἀνάστασις καὶ ἡ ζωὴ" (John 11:25). The claims that Jesus makes are directly related to the purpose of His incarnation. The Father sent Jesus, the Son, to bring life to the world (John 3:16). This Jesus claims to do. As the ὁ ἄρτος ὁ ζῶν Jesus offers life to people who eat of Him (John 6:51). As the τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου Jesus enables His followers to walk in

<sup>36</sup>Howard, op. cit., p. 71.

the light of life (John 8:12). As the Door for the sheep Jesus offers salvation to any who enter (John 10:9). As the Good Shepherd Jesus gives His life for the sheep (John 10:11, 15). As the Resurrection and the Life Jesus offers life to those who believe on Him and He promises to raise them on the Last Day (John 11:27; 5:25,26). As the Way, the Truth and the Life Jesus is the only way to the Father (John 14:6). As the Vine Jesus provides the only way that His followers can bear fruit (John 15:5). Bearing fruit is an essential part of the disciples' commission from Jesus; those who do not bear fruit will be destroyed (John 15:6). Surveying these claims we see that they convey the same thought, i.e. there can be no life for human beings apart from Jesus.

The preceding portion of this chapter has considered the ethical Sonship of Jesus and His relationship to the Father. We conclude that John emphatically presents Jesus as the ethical Son of God. Jesus is sent by the Father to reveal the Father and complete the work of the Father. Jesus actively carries out the will of God but in His action, Jesus is dependent on and obedient to the Father. Jesus' goal is to establish a relationship between people and God. When this is accomplished His work is finished. But the completion of His mission does not terminate Jesus' Sonship. For this reason we must also examine the essential Sonship of Jesus.

A discussion of the essential Sonship of Jesus compels us to study the person and work of Jesus from a different

angle than when we considered His ethical Sonship. When we considered the ethical Sonship of Jesus we dealt primarily with the actions of Jesus as the Son. In the essential Sonship we will deal primarily with the person, essence or being of Jesus. In regard to the essential Sonship the basic question is, "Was Jesus the Son of God in a manner which also made Him God?" According to John, the preceding question receives an affirmative answer. There is no doubt that John's Gospel presents Jesus as being divine in His very essence. If Jesus had been the Son of God only in an ethical manner we would have to conclude that His Sonship began with the incarnation and continued only until He had finished the works of God. But this is not congruent with the Johannine presentation of Jesus' Sonship. Jesus' Sonship did not begin with the incarnation. The non-temporal existence of the Son is assumed in John (John 1:1,2,18; 12:41; 8:58; 17:24). Even John 1:14 does not indicate that Jesus' glory or Sonship begins with the incarnation. It simply states that after the incarnation men saw His glory.

Since John assumes the non-temporal existence of Jesus as the Son of God, John never teaches that Jesus' Sonship approaches an end. When Jesus leaves this world He is returning to the Father (John 7:33; 13:4; 14:12,28; 16:5,19,28). He is clearly returning as the Son. As the Son, Jesus prepares a room in the Father's House for the disciples (John 14:2). Jesus' promise to send the *παράκλητος* from the Father

indicates that His Sonship has not ended (John 16:7). The passages cited in the preceding section indicate that Jesus' entrance into and exit from the world do not mark the extent of Jesus' Sonship. Essentially Jesus' Sonship surpasses temporal limitations.

In passing, it should also be noted that the gift of the Spirit from the Father did not make Jesus the Son of God. As Vos states, "No where, not even in the synoptics, is the possession of the Holy Spirit represented as constituting Jesus the Son of God."<sup>37</sup> The point that Vos is making is that Jesus did not become the Son of God because of the Spirit but that He received the Spirit because He was the Son.

A study of the essential Sonship of Jesus carries us to a higher plateau than the ethical Sonship of Jesus. As the ethical Son of God, Jesus could have been dependent on and obedient to God the Father without actually being divine. But if Jesus is essentially the Son of God He is divine: He is then God. The author of this study concludes that John does present Jesus as essentially the Son of God, i.e. as God. John does this by using the Logos concept, by stating that the Father and the Son are  $\acute{\epsilon}\nu$ , by presenting Jesus as the  $\nu\alpha\omicron\varsigma$  and through use of the phrase  $\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\acute{\omega}$   $\acute{\epsilon}\iota\mu\iota$ . We shall examine these factors in the following sections of this chapter.

The Logos teaching in John clearly presents the deity of

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<sup>37</sup>Op. cit., p. 203.

Jesus. The question of the origin of John's Logos teaching has been investigated by many competent scholars. Modern scholars generally agree that if John drew this Logos teaching from literature which is now extant he must have derived it from Heraclitus, Stoic literature, the works of Philo Judaeus, the Palestinian Targumim or from the Old and New Testaments. Although there are some general similarities in the usage of Logos in Heraclitus, the Stoic literature and John there seems to be little evidence to prove that John borrowed His Logos teaching from either of these sources. Modern scholars also generally agree that John did not borrow the Logos doctrine from Philo. Eric May says that although Philo and John do have similar terminology and agree on some general ideas there still are simply too many differences between them to derive John's Logos teaching from Philo.<sup>38</sup> In fact, it has been suggested that John was acquainted with Philo and John's presentation of the Logos is a deliberate protest against what he considered a false and misleading tendency in Philo or in Greek philosophy in general.<sup>39</sup> Alexander summarizes the result of a comparison between the usage of Logos in John and in Philo by stating, "From whatever

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<sup>38</sup>Eric May, "The Logos in the Old Testament," The Catholic Biblical Quarterly, VIII (October, 1946), 439.

<sup>39</sup>Archibald B. D. Alexander, "The Johannine Doctrine of the Logos," The Expository Times, XXXVI (October, 1924-September, 1925), 398.



point of view, . . . we compare them, our verdict must be, that Philo and St. John, while using the same term, attribute to it entirely different value."<sup>40</sup>

An investigation into the Old Testament and the Targumim also produces little to indicate that the Johannine Logos teaching was derived directly from them. May does believe that John derived his Logos teaching from the Old Testament and thus May traces the concept through Scripture. He states that sometimes in Genesis, Psalms and the Prophets  $\aleph \aleph \aleph$  seems to be a personification and this usage influenced the Wisdom literature where the concept changes to mean an essence distinct from God. The Wisdom literature, according to May, then influenced Paul. Under the influence of Paul's writings, John then developed his Logos doctrine.<sup>41</sup> This thesis by May has its merits but actually contributes very little toward helping one understand the Johannine presentation of the Logos. If anything, May's thesis fortifies the argument that no known literature had a direct effect on John's Logos doctrine. The author of this study believes that Phythian-Adams gives the best working hypothesis regarding the Logos when he writes, "Logos is an ambiguous term and the precise meaning which a particular writer attaches to it can only be discovered by examining what he says."<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>40</sup>Ibid., p. 399.

<sup>41</sup>May, op. cit., p. 447.

<sup>42</sup>W. J. Phythian-Adams, "The Logos-doctrine of the Fourth Gospel," The Church Quarterly Review, CXXXIX (October, 1944), 6.

Proceeding from the premise that the precise meaning of the Logos in John must be found in the Johannine literature itself, let us investigate John's usage of this term. The personified usage of ὁ λόγος by John in which we are especially interested is restricted to the Prologue of the Gospel.

Undoubtedly the first readers of John's Gospel must have had some understanding of the term ὁ λόγος even when they read the first verse of the Prologue. Since we must approach the Prologue regarding Logos as a rather ambiguous term, we begin to understand this concept only after reading John 1:14. καὶ ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο indicates that whatever the Logos might be, it entered the realm of history. Since this Logos was πλήρης χάριτος καὶ ἀληθείας (John 1:14) and since ἡ χάρις καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐγένετο (John 1:17) there is no doubt that John is referring to Jesus as the Logos through the Prologue. The investigation of the term Logos is an examination of Jesus' essential Sonship since the Logos and the incarnate Logos are presented in the Prologue as God (John 1:14,18).

In writing of the Logos John first deals with the relation of the Logos to God and then with the relation of the Logos to the world. We must examine both concerns.

The first consideration is the relationship of the Logos to the Father. John states that the Logos ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν . This means that the Logos was anterior to and independent of

time.<sup>43</sup> The Logos was *πρὸς τὸν Θεόν*. In this phrase *πρὸς* denotes position; that is, it indicates that the Logos was in the closest possible relationship with God.<sup>44</sup> The Logos, thus, was with God. The first verse of John's Gospel therefore asserts that the Logos was God before time began. The last clause of John 1:1 expresses the full implications of the preceding phrases when it states *καὶ Θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος*. This does not mean that the Logos was "a" God. The grammatical study on the definite noun without the article by E. C. Colwell indicates that *Θεός* in John 1:1 would be considered a definite noun even though it lacks the definite article. Colwell states that this would be definite because definite predicate nouns which precede the verb usually lack the definite article.<sup>45</sup> There can be little doubt that verse one of John's Gospel presents Jesus, identified as the Logos, as being with God and as God. The superlative translation by the New English Bible has captured the meaning of this verse. It translates John 1:1, "When all things began, the Word already was. The

<sup>43</sup>Alexander, *op. cit.*, p. 396. See also Gerhard Delling, "*ἄρχω, ἀρχή*," *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, edited by Gerhard Kittel (Stuttgart: Verlag von W. Kohlhammer, 1933), I, 476-83. Delling states on page 480, "*Ἐν ἀρχῇ* ist also hier das, was 'vor' aller Zeit liegt, richtiger: von dem die Zeitaussage überhaupt nicht gemacht werden kann. . . ."

<sup>44</sup>C. F. D. Moule, *An Idiom Book of New Testament Greek* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1960), p. 53.

<sup>45</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 115.

Word dwelt with God, and what God was the Word was." In the final analysis, there seems little doubt that the Prologue presents Jesus, the Logos, as deity equal with the Father. This is the essential deity of Jesus.

The Prologue of John's Gospel also sets forth the deity of Jesus by pointing out the relation of the divine Logos to the world. The Logos created everything (John 1:3). The Logos was ἡ Ἰωὴ καὶ τὸ φῶς of mankind (John 1:4). The incarnate Logos revealed God (John 1:18). When men saw the incarnate Logos the glory which they saw was characteristic of the Unique One from the Father (John 1:14). The Prologue notes that all the things of the world depend on the Logos. The areas in which the world is dependent upon the Logos are those areas in which the world is dependent on God. There is no creation, no life and no light apart from the Logos according to John. Is there ever any creation, life or light apart from God? Not according to John. Therefore we conclude the relationship of the Logos to the world indicates that Jesus, the incarnate Logos, was in His very essence God.

John presents the essential Sonship of Jesus also in the sayings of Jesus that He and the Father are one. This is directly stated by Jesus in John 10:30 and 17:22 and it is implied in John 17:11 and 17:22. It is noteworthy that the neuter singular is used in both John 10:30 and 17:22, and not the masculine, i.e. εἶ not εἶς. Already Tertullian noted the importance of this neuter. He writes,

He [Jesus] accordingly says "Unum" a neuter term which does not imply singularity of number, but unity of essence, likeness, conjunction, affection on the Father's part, who loves the Son and submission on the Son's part who obeys the Father's will.<sup>46</sup>

Perhaps the clue for a correct understanding of the precise meaning of  $\acute{\epsilon}\nu$  is found in Jesus' remark that the disciples are  $\acute{\epsilon}\nu$  as the Father and Jesus are one (John 17:11,22). No one would contend that the disciples evolved into one being and John does not indicate such a mystical unity. But what is meant is that the disciples become one group, i. e. one flock (John 10:16) or branches on one vine (John 15:5). They are united in common faith, common love and common purpose. They are one because of the glory which Jesus gave them (John 17:22) and because the Father keeps them in His name (John 17:11). Jesus gives no reason why the Father and the Son are one. He simply posits this truth. Therefore, it is not the manner in which the disciples became one which illustrates the unity of the Father and the Son. The unity of the disciples, in realization, is actually what is comparable to the oneness of the Father and the Son. Primarily this signifies a unity in the will and action of the Father and the Son. It is apparent that Jesus' saying that He and the Father are one has implications for both the ethical and the essential Sonship of Jesus. Being  $\acute{\epsilon}\nu$  with the Father implies that as the ethical

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<sup>46</sup>Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, "Tertullian versus Praxeas," The Ante-Nicene Fathers (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1908), III, 618.

Son of God Jesus does the work and will of the Father as the disciples, as a unit, carry out the will of Jesus. However, being *ἐν* with the Father also implies that as the essential Son of God Jesus is equal with the Father as the disciples are equal with one another.

John also points to the essential Sonship of Jesus by recording Jesus' *ἐγώ εἰμι* statements. It is probable that *ἐγώ εἰμι* in a number of passages in John reflects the "I AM" construction in Exodus (Exodus 3:14) or the "I am He" construction of Isaiah (Isaiah 41:4; 43:13; 48:12).<sup>47</sup> Not all scholars would agree with the preceding statement.

E. Schweizer in a very thorough study, concludes, "Für die Übersetzer der LXX ist *ἐγώ εἰμι* keine Formel gewesen, die für den sakralen (hymnischen usw.) Gebrauch reserviert bleibt."<sup>48</sup> Granting the validity of this conclusion does not obviate the fact that *ἐγώ εἰμι* appears to indicate special claims in key passages in Exodus and also in John. It seems probable that the first readers of John's Gospel would have noticed the similarity between the usage of *ἐγώ εἰμι* in several Johannine passages and in several Old Testament pericopes. Thus even though *ἐγώ εἰμι* was not a formula to indicate divinity in the Septuagint, as Schweizer states, John apparently

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<sup>47</sup>P. J. Beveridge, "I AM" in the Fourth Gospel," The Expositor, XXVI (December, 1923), 422.

<sup>48</sup>Eduard Schweizer, Ego Eimi (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1939), p. 24.

used it as a formula in several passages to note the divinity of Jesus. We need to note in the following study first those passages in John in which the *ἐγώ εἰμι* denotes no more than identification and secondly we will note those passages in which Jesus uses *ἐγώ εἰμι* to make special claims.

A passage such as John 9:9 indicates that *ἐγώ εἰμι* may denote no more than identification. In this passage the blind man merely identifies himself when he says, "*Ἐγώ εἰμι* ." We find a similar usage in several other passages in John (e.g. John 4:26; 6:20; 8:18,5,6,8). In John 4:26 Jesus says to the Samaritan woman *ἐγώ εἰμι* obviously meaning that He regarded Himself as the Messiah. In John 6:20 *ἐγώ εἰμι* must be understood as a word of identification. The *ἐγώ εἰμι* in John 8:18 also reflects simple identification though the context suggests a richer meaning for the construction. Whether *ἐγώ εἰμι* in John 18:5,6,8 serves only the purpose of identification is debatable since the members of the mob reacted by falling to the ground (*ἔπεσαν χαμί* ). Although some of the passages cited above hint, from their contexts, that *ἐγώ εἰμι* has special meaning, in general, these passages serve to show that *ἐγώ εἰμι* in John is used in some passages merely for identification.

There are passages in John where *ἐγώ εἰμι* is used which reflects the *אֲנִי הוּא אֲנִי הוּא* of Exodus or the

*אֲנִי הוּא אֲנִי הוּא* of Isaiah and thus, reflects special lofty claims by Jesus. John 8:24,58 and 13:19 serve best to

indicate that *ἐγὼ εἰμι* in John suggests that Jesus is the essential Son of God. The reaction of the Jews in John 8:59 indicates that Jesus made a lofty claim in John 8:58. When Jesus said *πρὶν Ἀβραὰμ γενέσθαι ἐγὼ εἰμι* the Jews did not laugh or mock Him even though they knew He was not even 50 years old. Instead they considered Jesus' statement blasphemy; they wanted to stone Him (John 8:59). The desire to kill Jesus arose on other occasions when Jesus claimed deity (John 5:18; 19:7).

Actually Jesus' reply itself as recorded in John 8:58 indicates that He is making a special claim. Jesus' response is not a precise answer to the question placed before Him. To answer the question which the Jews had asked Jesus could have said *πρὶν Ἀβραὰμ γενέσθαι ἐγὼ ἦμην*. Actually the answer Jesus gave is rather ambiguous unless it is understood as a divine claim.

John 8:24 is another passage which gives strong support to suggest that *ἐγὼ εἰμι* reflects a divine claim. The translators of the New English Bible apparently considered *ἐγὼ εἰμι* in this verse a reflection of the Old Testament name of God. They translate John 8:24, "If you do not believe that I am what I am, you will die in your sins." This translation probably reflects Exodus 3:14. The New English Bible interprets and translates John 13:19 in the way it interprets and translates John 8:24.

In conclusion, *ἐγὼ εἰμι* in John 8:24, 58 and 13:19 indicates lofty claims made by Jesus. These claims obviously



equate Jesus in some way with the God of the Old Testament, reflecting especially the  $\text{אֲנִי הוֹאִי אֱלֹהִים}$  found in Exodus and the  $\text{אֲנִי הוֹאִי הוֹאִי}$  of Isaiah. Since John 8:24, 58 and 13:19 definitely show that Jesus used  $\epsilon\gamma\omega\ \epsilon\iota\mu\iota$  to claim divinity, it is possible that other passages have the same meaning.<sup>49</sup>

Before we conclude this chapter, we must note several examples of other ways in which John calls attention to Jesus' essential Sonship. Jesus made a divine claim when He spoke of His body as the  $\acute{o}\ \nu\alpha\acute{o}\varsigma$  (John 2:19). Because the Hebrews considered the Temple the dwelling place of God, the comparison by Jesus of His body and the Temple indicates that God dwelt in this new Temple, i.e. Jesus' body.

Perhaps John 1:14 indicates that the presence of God was in Jesus. This verse states that Jesus  $\epsilon\sigma\kappa\eta\nu\omega\sigma\epsilon\nu$  among men. Perhaps this is a technical term intended to reflect the Old Testament belief that the Presence (Shekinah) of God was found in the Tabernacle ( $\acute{\eta}\ \sigma\kappa\eta\nu\acute{\eta}$ ) of the Exodus (Exodus 40:34-38).

It is possible that Jesus' reference to Himself as the Vine and the Light of the world was also an attempt to draw a connection between the Temple and Himself. When Jesus called Himself the True Vine (John 15:1), He may have reminded

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<sup>49</sup>Beveridge, *op. cit.*, pp. 422-23. Beveridge concludes that there are 23 instances where Jesus uses  $\epsilon\gamma\omega\ \epsilon\iota\mu\iota$  with a transcendental meaning. They are: John 4:26; 6:20, 35, 41, 48, 51; 8:12, 24, 26, 58; 13:19; 10:7, 9, 11, 14; 11:25; 14:6; 15:1; 18:5, 6, 8.

the people of the golden vine which was on the door of the Holy Place. The claim to be the True Light may have some connection with the seven branched lampstand in the Holy Place.<sup>50</sup>

The preceding examples indicate that Jesus tried to note a comparison between the Temple and Himself with the purpose of showing that although the people believed that God dwelt in the temple, actually God was present in the person of Jesus.

#### Conclusions Regarding Jesus as the Son of God

John presents the Sonship of Jesus in two ways. Jesus is the ethical Son of God and the essential Son of God. As the ethical Son of God Jesus does the will and work of the Father. Jesus is dependent on and obedient to the Father as He reveals Him to men. As the essential Son of God Jesus had pre-temporal existence. He is equal with the Father and has existed from the beginning with God. Jesus and the Father are one. Jesus is, in essence, God.

As far as the author of this study knows, no scholars reject the conclusion that Jesus is the ethical Son of God. But for some modern scholars the question remains, does John present Jesus as the Son of God in essence? To this question the author of this study is compelled to reply with a resounding,

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<sup>50</sup>W. O. E. Oesterley, "Temple," A Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels, edited by James Hastings (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1917), II, 711.

"Yes." C. H. Dodd would agree with such a conclusion. He notes that Jesus is the Son of God who belongs aboriginally and inseparably to the sphere τὰ ἄνω.<sup>51</sup>

Finally, in the words of Sanday, let us answer the question of prime theological importance. The question is whether the fourth century Fathers were correct in making Jesus God in essence. Sanday writes, "We may say with confidence that a Sonship such as is described in the Fourth Gospel would carry with it this conclusion."<sup>52</sup>

Before we terminate this chapter we note briefly if it is tenable to suggest that the Son of God clause in Martha's confession (John 11:27) could have served in the early Church as a creed.

After examining briefly in this chapter the Johannine presentation of Jesus as the ethical and essential Son of God, it is apparent how important this teaching about Jesus' Sonship is in the Fourth Gospel. Certainly, the Sonship of Jesus is one of the most important and most carefully developed teachings set forth in John's Gospel. Because John so carefully, emphatically and completely presents Jesus as the Son of God we may safely conclude that the readers of the Fourth Gospel had special need or desire to understand more fully Jesus'

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<sup>51</sup>Dodd, op. cit., p. 258.

<sup>52</sup>William Sanday, "Son of God," A Dictionary of the Bible, edited by James Hastings (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1909), IV, 577.

Sonship. The readers would have special need if the Sonship of Jesus was under attack. They would have a special desire if this attack was made by persons separated from the traditional Christian church, that is, from the church in their community which was influenced by John the Son of Zebedee. If the Sonship of Jesus was under attack, as the detailed presentation of this doctrine by John suggests, the Christians who followed John's leadership would quite probably consider it an article of faith to confess that Jesus was the Son of God. Thus the readers of John's Gospel probably confessed as a creedal statement that Jesus was the Son of God. This creed may very well be reflected in John 11:27. Of course, the First Epistle of John actually says that Christians considered it important to confess that Jesus was the Son of God (1 John 2:23; 4:15; 5:5,10).

#### CHAPTER IV

### ὁ εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἔρχόμενος

Following the word order of the passage which prompted this study (John 11:27) we now turn to the words ὁ εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἔρχόμενος . After examining such meaningful terms as ὁ Χριστός and ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ we may be tempted to regard, at first glance, ὁ ἔρχόμενος as rather insignificant and unimportant. Rudolf Bultmann, however, alerts us to the danger of lightly dismissing this phrase. He writes,

Die Namen, die ihr Bekenntnis ihm beilegt, sind eschatologische Titel; und von ihnen ist hier der dritte der Bedeutsamste, weil das ὁ εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἔρχόμενος den Einbruch des Jenseits in das Diesseits am deutlichsten ausspricht.<sup>1</sup>

ὁ ἔρχόμενος is the present active participle masculine nominative singular of the verb ἔρχομαι . As a present participle it could denote something that happened in past time<sup>2</sup> or something taking place in the future.<sup>3</sup> Grammarians seem generally agreed that ὁ ἔρχόμενος denotes future time.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>R. Bultmann, Das Evangelium des Johannes (11th edition; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1950), p. 309.

<sup>2</sup>F. Blass and A. DeBrunner, A Greek Grammar of the New Testament, translated from the German by Robert W. Funk (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1961), p. 175. See also C. F. D. Moule, An Idiom Book of New Testament Greek (Cambridge: The University Press, 1960), p. 101.

<sup>3</sup>Blass and DeBrunner, op. cit., p. 175. See also Moule, op. cit., p. 101.

<sup>4</sup>Blass and DeBrunner, op. cit., p. 168.

This view is supported by E. C. Colwell's observation that the present tense of verbs in John's Gospel denotes future time twenty-nine times and that twenty-six of these use a form of ἔρχομαι.<sup>5</sup>

If ὁ ἐρχόμενος refers to future time it must be understood either as a fixed Messianic title or as referring to future time from a point in past time. It would be absurd for Martha to say to a man standing in front of her, "You are the one who shall come." This would be a simple future interpretation. But interpreting ὁ ἐρχόμενος as a fixed Messianic title would eliminate all difficulties in understanding this participial construction. Then ὁ ἐρχόμενος would simply mean, "The Coming One." The author of this study, however, believes that ὁ ἐρχόμενος is not a fixed Messianic title in John. In the context of John 11:27 it has Messianic implications but these do not stem from the participle *per se*. For this reason ὁ ἐρχόμενος must be interpreted as referring to future time but from a vantage point in the past. According to this interpretation Martha meant to say, "You are the One we awaited or expected to come." In itself, this appellation is vague and indefinite, but in the immediate and total context of John's Gospel it seems very certain that it is applied to Jesus, the incarnate Son of God, the Messiah. We now proceed to examine the Biblical data to determine whether the

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<sup>5</sup>Ernest Cadman Colwell, The Greek of the Fourth Gospel (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1931), p. 61.

conclusions stated by the author in these introductory remarks are correct.

Johannes Schneider<sup>6</sup> and R. C. H. Lenski<sup>7</sup> frankly state that ὁ ἐρχόμενος must be understood as having the full meaning of a traditional Messianic title. Although other scholars do not make the statement in such a forthright manner they nevertheless suggest that they understand it in this way.<sup>8</sup>

The author of this study believes that there is not enough evidence to justify the conclusion that ὁ ἐρχόμενος was a fixed Messianic title. Scholars regard Psalm 117 (118);26; 39:8; Daniel 7:13 (Theodotion) and Habakkuk 2:3 as the basis for interpreting ὁ ἐρχόμενος as a Messianic title.<sup>9</sup> A careful study of these passages however shows that these passages actually do not provide very satisfactory evidence for such an

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<sup>6</sup>Johannes Schneider, "ἔρχομαι," Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament, Vols. I-IV edited by Gerhard Kittel, Vols. Vff. edited by Gerhard Friedrich (Stuttgart: Verlag von W. Kohlhammer, 1935), II, 669. Hereafter Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament shall be abbreviated TWNT.

<sup>7</sup>R. C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation of St. John's Gospel (Columbus: Lutheran Book Concern, 1931), pp. 84, 287, 783.

<sup>8</sup>Erich Klostermann and Walter Bauer, Die Evangelien in Handbuch zum Neuen Testament, edited by Hans Lietzmann (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1919), II, 2, 231. See also Kendrick Grobel, "He That Cometh after Me," Journal of Biblical Literature, LX (1941), 400. Walter Bauer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, translated and adapted by William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 310. Blass and DeBrunner, op. cit., p. 168.

<sup>9</sup>Klostermann and Bauer, op. cit., p. 231. See also Bauer, op. cit., p. 310.

interpretation.

There is no disputing the fact that Psalm 117 (118):26 is quoted Messianically in the New Testament (cf. Matthew 21:9; Mark 11:9,10; Luke 19:38; John 12:13). However, Psalm 117 (118):26 is a Messianic pericope and there is no evidence to indicate that ὁ ἐρχόμενος is a Messianic title apart from this pericope. In fact, Psalm 117 (118):26 is used eschatologically--not Messianically--in Matthew 23:39 and Luke 13:25 if we accept the chronological sequence of Matthew. Hebrews 10:37 also uses ὁ ἐρχόμενος, reflecting Habakkuk 2:3, eschatologically and not as a Messianic title. Psalm 39:8 uses ἦκω and not ὁ ἐρχόμενος. Therefore this passage does not support the conclusions that the latter was a fixed Messianic title. Daniel 7:13 (Theodotion) uses ἐρχόμενος but without the article and as part of a periphrastic construction. Therefore also this passage does not prove that ὁ ἐρχόμενος was a fixed Messianic title.

Just what does the preceding study prove? It does not prove that ὁ ἐρχόμενος may not have been a Messianic title. But it does raise the question whether there is enough evidence to prove the claim that it was a Messianic title. It seems that the burden of proof must lie with those who attempt to prove that it was a fixed Messianic title. The only pericope which perhaps supports this claim, as we have already indicated above, is Psalm 117 (118):26. This support is not strong since ὁ ἐρχόμενος may be merely a substantive parti-



ciple in a Messianic pericope. The Jewish world indeed expected a Messiah or Deliverer to come. But the author of this study believes that there is little evidence to prove that  $\acute{\omicron}$  ἔρχόμενος ever became a fixed Messianic title for the reason also that the Jews expected "The Prophet" and Elijah (cf. John 1:25).

This preliminary study is not complete unless we determine whether John uses  $\acute{\omicron}$  ἔρχόμενος as a fixed Messianic title. In several passages in John  $\acute{\omicron}$  ἔρχόμενος simply can not be a Messianic title (cf. John 1:47; 6:35,37; 10:12). At least two prominent scholars declare that  $\acute{\omicron}$  ἔρχόμενος in John 1:15,27 is not a title with Messianic significance. Heinrich Seesemann writes,

Auch die Bezeichnung Jesus durch den Täufer als der  $\acute{\omicron}$  ὀπίσω μου ἔρχόμενος (John 1:15,27,30: vgl. Mk. 1:7 u Mt. 3:11) ist, von ὀπίσω aus geurteilt, keine theologische Bezeichnung, sondern gibt nur den Zeitpunkt an, den Joh einnimmt.<sup>10</sup>

Kendrick Grobel, who thinks that  $\acute{\omicron}$  ὀπίσω μου ἔρχόμενος indicates that Jesus was a disciple of John the Baptist, thinks that there is a big difference between  $\acute{\omicron}$  ἔρχόμενος and  $\acute{\omicron}$  ὀπίσω μου ἔρχόμενος.<sup>11</sup> Although he considers  $\acute{\omicron}$  ἔρχόμενος a Messianic title, he thinks that  $\acute{\omicron}$  ὀπίσω μου ἔρχόμενος has no Messianic implication as a title per se.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup>"ὀπίσω," TWNT, V, 290.

<sup>11</sup>Grobel, op. cit., p. 399.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 400.

The general construction of the phrases in which ὁ ἔρχόμενος is applied to Jesus also indicates that it was not a fixed Messianic title. In every passage where Jesus is called ὁ ἔρχόμενος the substantive participle is modified or amplified in some way. Jesus is the one who comes after John the Baptist (1:15,27), from above (3:31), from heaven (3:31), and into the world (11:27). In every case a phrase is inserted between the article and the participle. This gives one the impression that the inserted phrase is at least as important as the substantive participle ὁ ἔρχόμενος if not more so. It might also be noted that none of these passages become more meaningful if ὁ ἔρχόμενος is understood as a Messianic title.

Two incidental observations may also be noted which call into question the conclusion that ὁ ἔρχόμενος was a popular Messianic title. In John 1:27 ἔρχόμενος is not preceded by the definite article in Codex Vaticanus and in the original reading of Codex Sinaiticus, nor does Hort include the article. If ὁ ἔρχόμενος was a fixed Messianic title would the scribes of two generally reliable manuscripts have accidentally failed to include the definite article?

John 1:15,27 interpreted in the light of John 1:30 also suggests that ὁ ἔρχόμενος was not a Messianic title. Apparently ὁ ὀπίσω μου ἔρχόμενος (1:15,27) has the same meaning as ὀπίσω μου ἔρχεται ἄνθρωπος (1:30).

Thus, it seems to the author of this study that ὁ ἔρχόμενος ought not to be interpreted as a definite Messianic

title in John's Gospel. If it has Messianic implications they stem from the context.<sup>13</sup>

In itself, *ὁ ἐρχόμενος* is a rather vague participial construction. But in the context of 11:27 and in the Johannine literature in general it becomes very definite. For example, John 1:15 and 27 merely refer, in general, to someone who is to come after John. But in this Johannine context *ὁ ἐρχόμενος* refers to a very definite person. It refers to Jesus, the Lamb of God who bears the sin of the world (John 1:29,30). In John 3:31 John the Baptist makes a very general statement; he speaks of one who comes from above or from heaven who is above all things. But the context of this statement leaves no doubt that Jesus is that One who came from above (John 3:32-36). John 6:33 has a similar phenomenon using the participial form *ὁ καταβάντων*. This passage states very generally that the bread of God which comes down from heaven gives life to the world. But in the context this statement has a very specific meaning. It refers to Jesus (6:35) who has already come from heaven (6:38,51,58).

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<sup>13</sup>At this point also we might note a similar conclusion arrived at by Adolf Harnack who made a thorough study of the "I have come" or "I was sent" passages in the Synoptic Gospels. Harnack writes, "Ob die Verba 'Gesandt sein,' 'Kommen' messianisch zu verstehen sind, darüber kann nur der Kontext entscheiden (auch der Prophet 'ist gesandt' und 'ist gekommen'); aber drücken sie in der religiösen Sprache eine Sendung von der Gottheit her bzw. ein Kommen in ihrem Auftrage aus." Adolf Harnack, "Ich bin gekommen," Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche, XXII (1912), 1.

Since ὁ ἔρχόμενος is not a fixed Messianic title, we must explore the possibility that this participle may refer to past time.

The participle ἔρχόμενος appears for the first time, although in the accusative case, in John 1:9. Because of the various problems connected with this verse, it has occupied the attention of every careful scholar who has studied John. These scholars have not, however, arrived at a unanimous solution for the various difficulties.<sup>14</sup>

Nor does the author of this dissertation claim to have solved the problems of John 1:9. He is, however, suggesting what might be considered in an independent study of this verse. This suggestion is made on the strength that one need not regard ἦν and ἔρχόμενον a periphrastic construction.

Paul Bretscher, in a course on John's Gospel taught by him at Concordia Seminary, 1961, suggested this possibility. He proposed that because of the emphatic position, the verb ἦν had a meaning similar to the other usages of ἦν in the Prologue (John 1:1,2,4,7,10,15). If this view is tenable, the first part of John 1:9 would here be translated, "The True light was, i.e. had, eternal existence" (cf. John 1:1a,2,15a). ἔρχόμενον is then not a part of a periphrastic construction. Could ἔρχόμενος refer to past time not indicating linear action, but an aorist-like punctiliar action? The author of this

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<sup>14</sup>John Francis Niermann, "John 1:9 in the Light of Historical Interpretation" (Unpublished B. D. thesis, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, 1961).

paper thinks that the context suggests and supports such an interpretation. He suggests the following as a possible translation of John 1:9. "The True Light--which enlightens every man and which came into the world--already (or always) was." This rather free translation attempts to render ἔρχόμενον as involving both past time and punctiliar action.<sup>15</sup>

Ἐρχόμενος as linear or progressive action might fit very well in the Gospel according to Mark but this thought seems out of place in John. John's Messianic secret is not presented in such a way that gradually the disciples began to realize that Jesus was the True Light. In John, from the very beginning Jesus is presented as the Son of God, as the Messiah, to everyone. The disciples accepted this, i.e. they recognized Him as the True Light. The Jews rejected this, i.e. they failed to recognize Jesus as the True Light. Therefore the general presentation by John makes one question whether ἔρχόμενον in John 1:9 would refer to linear action. On the other hand, there are several verbs in the immediate context which would suggest punctiliar action. Jesus came (ἦλθεν - aorist) to His own (John 1:11). The Word became (ἐγένετο - aorist) flesh and dwelt (ἐσκήνωσεν - aorist) among men (John 1:14).

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<sup>15</sup>As far as the author of this study knows, no one else has advocated such a translation. F. Godet, however, proposes something quite similar. He suggests that the last half of verse 9 might be translated, "Which lighteth every man by coming into the world." F. Godet, Commentary on the Gospel of St. John, translated by M. D. Cusin from the last French edition (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1892), I, 347.

The Son made the Father known (ἐξηγήσατο -aorist) (John 1:18).<sup>16</sup>

The purpose of the preceding suggestion was not to prove that John 1:9 must be interpreted in this way. The purpose was to show the possibility. Actually, John 1:9 has so many problems connected with its interpretation that this passage would be of doubtful value to prove anything. Let us proceed to examine the other usages of ἐρχόμενος in John's Gospel.

The usage of ὁ ἐρχόμενος in John 1:15 and 27 probably indicates future action, unless we follow Grobel's suggestion that ὁ ὀπίσω μου ἐρχόμενος is an idiom meaning that Jesus was a disciple of John the Baptist.<sup>17</sup> In this case it would be

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<sup>16</sup>The suggestion that ἐρχόμενος in John 1:9 does not indicate linear action but rather punctiliar action is rather untenable if based only on the evidence presented in the Prologue of John's Gospel. But there is some evidence in other New Testament documents to support this interpretation. Grammatically it is possible that the present participle may refer to action which took place before the action of the main verb, i.e. past time. Moule, *op. cit.*, p. 101. This grammatical construction is found in John 5:5 and 9:25. Revelation 20:10 and 14:4 have a similar construction. It is true that the four passages just cited use the present as the imperfect. Blass and DeBrüner, *op. cit.*, p. 175. But this does not mean that the present participle could not have a meaning comparable to the punctiliar action of an aorist tense. In fact, the present and aorist participles are used together in Luke 2:42,43, Acts 14:21 and 27:7 with no necessary difference in time or action. The present participle in Acts 10:33 does not express linear action. Most important, however, for this study is 2 John 7. Here ἐρχόμενος is used without the definite article. It is not a Messianic title but simply stands in connection with Jesus Christ. For Christians, the deceivers are those who deny that Jesus Christ ἐρχόμενον in the flesh. This certainly refers to past time and yet not to linear action. Compare this passage with 1 John 4:2 which gives a handy rule of thumb for testing whether a spirit is from God. πᾶν πνεῦμα ὁ ὁμολογεῖ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐν σαρκὶ ἐληλυθότα ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐστίν.

<sup>17</sup>*Op. cit.*, pp. 397-401.

present linear action. The plural participles τὰ ἐρχόμενα in John 18:4 refers to future action.

Ἐρχόμενος is used several times in John simply to indicate present linear action (cf. John 1:29,48; 10: [1,2],10; 12:13). John 6:35,37 could be either present or future.

John 16:13 uses the plural neuter participle τὰ ἐρχόμενα . Since it is used with the main verb in the future tense, the immediate tendency is to translate this as "the things which shall happen in the future." However, it is doubtful that this passage intends to convey the thought that the spirit of truth is some sort of "fortune teller." This passage probably should be interpreted in reference to past time. Then this passage would mean, "When the spirit of truth comes he will explain (cf. 4:25,29,39) to the disciples the things that happened to Jesus." The spirit will explain the many things which Jesus had to tell but which the disciples were unable to bear (John 6:14). The spirit is not going to speak from itself, but the things that he is hearing (ἀκούει) he shall speak and the things which have happened he'll explain (6:14; cf. Luke 24:27; Acts 2).

On the basis of the passages just examined we conclude that the participle ὁ ἐρχόμενος in John 11:27 could refer to action either past, present or future. The context must determine just how to interpret this substantive participle. We did not mention John 6:14 before because it is constructed so similarly to 11:27. The word order in John 6:14 is almost

the same as in John 11:27. In fact, several reliable manuscripts have almost the same word order. Grammatically, as in John 11:27, it is difficult to explain the usage of ὁ ἐρχόμενος in John 6:14. Yet it is immediately apparent what the people mean. They recognize Jesus as the Prophet. They had (in time past) expected the arrival of this prophet and now He is in their midst.

In the light of 6:14 we now discover what John 11:27 means. Here Martha states that Jesus is the one for whom people (in time past) had waited and now He was in their midst.

Many modern translations interpret it in this way. John 11:27 is translated, "Who was to come into the world," by Goodspeed, Moffatt, Weymouth, Phillips, The New English Bible, The New Testament in Basic English and The Amplified New Testament. Tyndale translates this, "Which should come into the world" and the Authorized Version similarly renders it, "Which should come into the world." The French translation reads, "Qui devait venir au monde." Strictly speaking, these translations use a past tense but it is the idiom of the translation which requires it. They apparently mean that Jesus is "the one--who in time past--expected in the future." The translation so constructed presents ὁ ἐρχόμενος as a Messianic reference (not a Messianic title). It avoids a strictly futuristic translation which would indicate hopes of the Parousia. It also avoids the ambiguity of the Revised Standard Version translation, "Who is coming into the world."



It seems that, on the basis of John 6:14, John 11:27 does reflect the past Messianic hopes even though it is not a fixed Messianic title. It is true that several translations simply interpret ὁ εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἔρχόμενος in reference to past time. Luther translates this, "Der in die Welt gekommen ist." The Vulgate renders it, "Qui in hunc mundum venisti," and therefore the Douay version has, "Who are come into this world." The Confraternity translation renders this, "Who has come into this world." These translations remove all Messianic implications from the ὁ εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἔρχόμενος phrase of 11:27. Perhaps they are correct, but, in the light of John 6:14, they have probably over-simplified the meaning of this verse. However, they have captured the primary thrust of this phrase. ὁ εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἔρχόμενος is primarily intended to state that Jesus has come into the world and secondarily is intended to state that Jesus had fulfilled Messianic expectations. The first two titles had already bestowed upon Jesus lofty claims concerning pre-Christian hopes.

Therefore, John 11:27 means that Jesus had come and His coming had been awaited. ὁ ἔρχόμενος is not a fixed Messianic title. It is a general participle which in the Johannine context has a very definite meaning. Its meaning is discovered in the definite theme regarding the incarnation in Johannine literature. One passage which serves very well to illustrate this theme is John 16:28. Jesus says, "ἔζηλον ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ ἔληλυθα εἰς τὸν κόσμον ." John repeatedly states that

Jesus entered the realm of history.

Ὁ εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἐρχόμενος serves to capstone this theme in John. Jesus is the Christ and also the Son of God but He is also the One who came to earth so that men might know Him (as the Son and the Messiah) and the Father.

At this point let us summarize the results of the preceding study. First, as a present participle ὁ ἐρχόμενος may be interpreted referring to either future or past time. Strictly speaking it cannot refer to future time since Jesus had already come into the world. Many competent scholars suggest that ὁ ἐρχόμενος is a fixed Messianic title. This is doubtful. Luther, the Vulgate and several translations simply interpret this participle in reference to past time. In the light of 2 John 7 and several other passages this is possible. However, in the light of John 6:14 this is probably an over-simplification. John 6:14 and 11:27 have such a similar construction that they probably have a similar interpretation. John 6:14 apparently means that a prophet who in time past was expected had now arrived on the scene of history. It seems that a similar interpretation of John 11:27 would also be correct. Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, the one for whom the people waited. Many modern translations interpret this passage in this manner. One might object that people did not await or expect the Messiah to be the Son of God. This is not the point in John 11:27. Ὁ ἐρχόμενος par se in the light of John 1:15,27; 3:31 is a rather general title. It becomes specific only

after it is noted in connection with Jesus. Ὁ εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἐρχόμενος per se simply notes that one whom people expected had arrived. However, it is of prime importance to John that having come, this One has revealed the full implications and the various ramifications of being the One who was to come. He is the Messiah. He is the Son of God. The main thrust in John's usage of Ὁ εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἐρχόμενος is not that Jesus was the expected one. The main thrust is rather that Jesus is the One who has come and as the One who has come He has fulfilled a mission and purpose. Thus this phrase covers the theme of the incarnation in John. Let us now examine this theme.

John does not have to prove that Jesus was in the world. He assumes that people knew that Jesus lived and, in general, was in this world. John very definitely tries to prove, however, that Jesus came into this world. John continually asserts that Jesus did not originate in this world and therefore he was not an ordinary human being. This Jesus was an Eternal Being men could see, hear and touch (1 John 1:1,2; John 1:14). He was not from this world. He came from above, i.e. from heaven (John 3:13,31; 6:42,50,51,58; 8:23; 17:14). He was sent by God, i.e. His Father (John 3:16,17,34; 5:36; 6:29,57; 8:42; 10:36; 11:42; 13:3; 17:8,18,21,23,25; 20:21). It is true that many of these passages emphasize the "from the Father" aspect of the sending. However, in every instance the being sent occurred in past time. Either a perfect or

an aorist form of ἀποτέλλω is used or else an aorist form of πέμπω. This sending in past time is explicitly noted as a sending into the world (cf. 3:17; 10:36; 16:38; 17:13). John isn't concerned with a detailed description of the scene in Bethlehem or even reference to the Virgin Birth. John will not permit his readers to be distracted from the theology of the incarnation. The Eternal Son who had existed beyond all realms of time had been sent by the Father into the world of man. The Son became incarnate because the Father had sent Him. When He became incarnate and how He became incarnate are not important in the light of the origin and mission of the One who became incarnate. This origin was in heaven with the Father but His mission was carried out in this world.

At this point we turn to the mission of the Incarnate. Jesus (as the Incarnate One) came in the name of the Father (5:43) to do the Father's will and complete His work (John 4:34; 6:38; 17:4; 18:11). He came to reveal God, i.e. His Father.

He spoke God's words and made known what He had heard and seen with the Father (John 1:14,18; 3:31,34; 7:16; 8:26, 28,38,40; 9:5; 12:35,46,49,50; 14:24; 15:15; 17:6; 18:20,37). Believing in Jesus was tantamount to believing in the Father (12:44,45). Knowing Jesus was tantamount to knowing the Father (14:7) and accepting Jesus meant acceptance of the Father (13:20).

As the Incarnate Son of God, Jesus brought God's grace and truth into the world (1:17). He manifested God's love

when He came to save the world (1 John 4:9,10). This is the precise reason that Jesus, the Son of God, entered the world. He came to save the world (John 3:17; 6:33,40,50; 11:24; 12:27,47; 17:3; 1 John 3:5,8,16; 4:10). This He did when He conquered the world (16:33). However, since men (or this world) did not accept the Incarnate One as the Son of God, the coming into the world was also a coming in judgment (John 3:19; 9:39; 15:22-24).

Since John emphatically notes that Jesus came into the world to save the world we must determine what is meant by "world." The author of this paper knows of no finer or more concise way of expressing this concept than by quoting from Hermann Sasse's article "κόσμος" in Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament.

Der κόσμος [in John] ist der Schauplatz, auf dem das Drama der Erlösung sich abspielt, von dem das Evangelium berichtet. Alle Bedeutungen, die κόσμος haben kann, fließen im Sprachgebrauch des vierten Evangeliums zusammen. Nicht nur der Prolog versteht unter κόσμος die Welt im Sinne des Universums. Vielmehr ist auch da das Weltall und nicht nur die Menschheit gemeint, wo Christus als τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου bezeichnet wird J 8:12; 9:5 vgl. 3:19; 12:46; 1:9 und wenn er selbst oder der Evangelist von seinem Kommen oder Gesandt-Werden εἰς τὸν κόσμον spricht; 3:17; 10:36; 11:27; 12:46f.; 16:28; 17:18; 18:37; 1 J 4:9. . . . Aus Liebe sendet der Vater den Sohn: . . . nicht um die Welt zu richten, sondern um die zu retten (3:16f.; 14:47). Christus kommt als das Lamm Gottes, αἴρων τὴν ἁμαρτίαν τοῦ κόσμου 1:29 vgl. 1 J 2:2 wo Jesus ἰλασμός περὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν, οὐ περὶ τῶν ἡμετέρων δὲ μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ περὶ ὅλου τοῦ κόσμου genannt wird; als σωτὴρ τοῦ κόσμου (4:42; 1 J 4:14); als Ἰωὴν δίδους τῷ κόσμῳ (6:33 vgl. 51); als φῶς τοῦ κόσμου (8:12; 9:5 vgl. 3:19; 12:46; 1:9).<sup>18</sup>

<sup>18</sup>Hermann Sasse, "κόσμος," TWNT, III, 894.

The presence of Jesus in this world was not a permanent arrangement. Jesus came to complete a mission and when that mission was completed He left the world to return to the Father who had sent Him (John 7:33; 8:14; 12:1,3,33; 14:12; 16:5,28; 17:11). But this departure is also not permanent. Jesus is preparing a place for His disciples and then He will return that they may be with Him (14:2,3,28).

The fact that Jesus came into the world, for John, takes Christian faith out of the area of noumenal speculation and inserts it into the realm of confident faith. John considers the incarnation of the Son of God extremely important. The purpose of John's Gospel is not to convince people that there is a Son of God. His purpose is to show that Jesus is that Son of God. John marks dates, times and places so there can be no doubt that the Son of God is the man that people saw, heard and touched. Jesus did so many signs in the earthly presence of His disciples that the world in which He did these things could not contain the books needed to record them (cf. John 20:30; 21:25). Those who accepted Jesus as the Son of God bore witness to this (John 1:34; 16:30). The fact that Jesus as the Son of God entered history was considered so important that it became an element of faith which one would confess (cf. 1 John 4:2,14; 5:20, 2 John 7; John 1:34). This coming and the activity of Jesus was all in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy (1:45; 2:18; 5:39; 19:24,36-39).

## CHAPTER V

### WAS MARTHA'S CONFESSION IN JOHN 11:27

#### USED AS A CREED?

At the beginning of this final chapter we must note that we cannot prove with finality and will not attempt to prove that John 11:27 served as a creed in the early Church. This would require special historical investigation. We are, however, suggesting the possibility that John 11:27 was used as a creed by the Church in a background such as is reflected in the First Epistle of John. Although the general importance in John's Gospel of the themes which ὁ Χριστός, ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ and ὁ εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἐρχόμενος signify indicates that John 11:27 would serve well as a creed among the readers of the Gospel, there are no specific passages in the Gospel to indicate that this verse was used as a creed. First John, however, does contain specific evidence which suggests that John 11:27 was used as a creed.

A careful reading of John's First Epistle suggests two things. First, the readers of this document were exposed to dangerous heretical influence. The multifarious elements in this heresy have been investigated and discussed by many competent scholars and the results usually characterize the heresy as some form of early Gnosticism.<sup>1</sup> We may summarize this emphasis in John's First Epistle by saying that some people

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<sup>1</sup>Supra, pp. 13f.

had fallen away from the correct understanding of Jesus or from the right faith in God. In the light of this paper's purpose, we might say that they had a creed different from that of the believers. Secondly, we note that in this situation there was a great deal of un-Christian living, i.e. walking in darkness, which was characterized by great lovelessness. The author of the First Epistle carefully points out that correct faith produces a life of fellowship and love. On the other hand, a life of lovelessness means either false faith or a hypocritical confession of faith.

These two observations draw into special focus the background against which John's First Epistle was written. Even a cursory reading of First John gives a reader the impression that this document was written in an atmosphere of claims and counter-claims (cf. 1 John 1:6,8,10; 2:4,9; 22:4; 26:7; 3:1,5,6,11; 4:1-3,5,6; 5:9). All these passages could be hypothetical statements; however, the First Epistle is hardly a document addressing itself to hypothetical problems. Many passages indicate that the author is concerned with pressing daily problems which, far from being hypothetical, cause tension in the individual's conscience and in the general life of the Church (1 John 2:18,26; 3:13,17; 4:1,20 et al.). Therefore the claims and counter-claims in the First Epistle may well reflect statements made by historical persons. In such a situation, it would be extremely important that the Christian Church had a concise, accurate and easily understandable



formula with which they could confess the correct Christian faith.<sup>2</sup>

We now proceed to examine the possibility that John 11:27 was or could have been used as a creed. It has been suggested that Christological creeds probably reflect the authentic confessions of the early Church.<sup>3</sup> The popular formula  $\text{ΙΧΘΥΣ}$  supports this observation. Probably the most popular and also the briefest of these creeds was  $\text{ΚΥΡΙΟΣ ΙΗΣΟΥΣ}$  (cf. 1 Corinthians 12:3).<sup>4</sup> Harnack suggests that the confession "Jesus is the Son of God" would become the most popular creed in the early church because Gentile Christians would not understand the full significance of the creed "Jesus is the Christ."<sup>5</sup> Modern scholars, in general, believe that we are

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<sup>2</sup>Oscar Cullmann, The Earliest Christian Confessions, translated by J. K. S. Reid (London: Lutterworth Press, 1949), p. 18. Cullmann finds five causes for the emergence of creeds in the early Church. They are: (1) Baptism and catechumenism, (2) regular worship, (3) exorcism, (4) persecution, (5) polemic against heretics. Possibly all five of these elements are in the background of First John. Because of the heresy to which First John addresses itself, it seems that the readers of this document would have a special need for a creed as a polemic against heretics. Cullmann however warns against assuming that there is only one external cause for a creed arising.

<sup>3</sup>J. N. D. Kelly, Early Christian Creeds (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1960), p. 16. See also Cullmann, op. cit., p. 38.

<sup>4</sup>Kelly, op. cit., p. 16.

<sup>5</sup>Adolf Harnack, "The Fundamental Confessions of the Church," The Constitution & Law of the Church in the First Two Centuries, translated by F. L. Pogson (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1910), p. 262.

quite justified in searching the New Testament for statements which served as creeds in the early Church. Cullmann notes that 1 John 2:22 (Ἰησοῦς ἔστιν ὁ Χριστός), 1 John 4:15 (Ἰησοῦς ἔστιν ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ), and 1 John 4:2 (Ἰησοῦν ἐν σαρκὶ ἐληλυθότα) were all early creeds.<sup>6</sup> J. N. D. Kelly maintains that both Ἰησοῦς ἔστιν ὁ Χριστός and Ἰησοῦς ἔστιν ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ are authentic creedal statements.<sup>7</sup> It seems that First John frankly states that the creedal statements "Jesus is the Christ" (1 John 2:22; 5:1) and "Jesus is the Son of God" (1 John 4:15; 5:5) are proper standards by which to measure a person's Christian beliefs. The importance of confessing that Jesus is the Son of God is suggested by several other passages in First John (1 John 2:23; 3:8,23; 4:3; 5:10). The author of this study thinks that there is little difficulty in defending the conclusion that Ἰησοῦς ἔστιν ὁ Χριστός and Ἰησοῦς ἔστιν ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ were used as creeds among those Christians who read the First Epistle of John.

The First Epistle also indicates that it was important to confess that Jesus had come in the flesh (1 John 4:2). If ἐν σαρκὶ ἐληλυθότα in 1 John 4:3 is an intentional interpolation in Codex Sinaiticus and the Byzantine texts, this interpolation suggests that the interpolators considered it very important to confess that Jesus had become incarnate. Although 2 John 7, Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν ἐρχόμενον ἐν σαρκὶ, is outside the self-set

<sup>6</sup>Cullmann, op. cit., p. 41.

<sup>7</sup>Kelly, op. cit., p. 16.

limitations of this paper, this verse indicates how important it was for the readers of the Second Epistle to make such a confession.

There is one problem which arises in determining if John 11:27 was used as a creed. It is debatable whether *ὁ εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἔρχόμενος* (John 11:27) means the same as *ἐν σαρκὶ ἐληλυθότα* (1 John 4:2) and *ἔρχόμενον ἐν σαρκὶ* (2 John 7). All these phrases, however, stress the historical existence of Jesus and the historicity of the Christian message. The basic difference in meaning is that *ὁ εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἔρχόμενος* emphasizes the fact that Jesus came, whereas *ἐν σαρκὶ ἐληλυθότα* emphasizes the fact that Jesus came as an incarnate being. *Ἐν σαρκὶ ἐληλυθότα* would therefore have a more precise meaning than *ὁ εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἔρχόμενος*. This difference in meaning does not mean that these two phrases could not be related to each other. If the First Epistle was written after the Gospel we might conjecture that *ὁ εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἔρχόμενος* served as a creed at the very beginnings of the docetic heresy but this formula was re-stated as *ἐν σαρκὶ ἐληλυθότα* when the docetic heresy became more developed and refined. On the other hand, if the First Epistle was written before the Gospel, perhaps the differences between the docetists and the Christians were so well known when the Gospel was composed that a more general creedal formula could be used. In the final analysis *ὁ εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἔρχόμενος* and *ἐν σαρκὶ ἐληλυθότα* both stress the historical existence

of Jesus. Although they do not mean exactly the same thing, the difference in meaning is slight enough to permit ὁ εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἔρχόμενος to evolve into εν σαρκι ἔληλυθότα and vice versa.

Although First John stresses Jesus' coming ἐν σαρκὶ this does not eliminate the importance, in First John, of the historical existence of Jesus and the historicity of the Christian message. John emphasizes the historicity of the Christian message by often changing from the past to present tense in the same sentence. For example, 1 John 1:2 states that what [i. e., Jesus] was manifested (ἐφανερώθη) and seen (εἶδόμεν) was being witnessed and proclaimed (μαρτυροῦμεν καὶ ἀπαγγέλλομεν). This passage and several others (1 John 1:3,5; 2:3,4,6; 3:1,6; 4:14) indicate that it was a matter of faith to accept and confess that the historical life and work of Jesus were the basis for the Christian religion.

In summary, John teaches that there are three great elements of faith concerning the person of Jesus which Christians must confess. The confessions that Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of God and that He had come into the world served as the basis for Christian fellowship and life. Since First John indicates that each appellation in John 11:27 was used separately in the early Church as a creed it is quite possible that the three appellations were combined and used as a creed. Therefore it is quite possible that John 11:27 reflects a creedal formula which was used in its entirety in the early Church.

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