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A THEOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION

OF JOHN 17:17

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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  
Bachelor of Divinity

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by

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June 1955

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

This study proposes primarily to determine as accurately as possible the meaning of the passage under consideration in its setting and context. In accord with this aim it endeavors to determine and reproduce the unique Johannine force of the main concepts and their particular connotations in this passage, and to describe as accurately as possible the implication that their interrelation has there. The attempt has not been made to apply this passage to systematic theology or to evaluate applications that have been made of it. The intention is only to understand the passage in its setting and to determine its primary force.

The method of procedure has been determined by the above-stated aim. Particular attention has been given to the three main concepts, ἀγιάζω, ἀλήθεια and λόγος. An exhaustive treatment of each concept in all areas has not been attempted. In the case of ἀλήθεια and λόγος the Johannine usage of the terms forms the major part of the study, and all Johannine occurrences were considered. Sufficient background material from classical Greek, Old Testament, and New Testament usage was adduced to set the Johannine concepts in their proper light. In the case of ἀγιάζω which occurs only four times in the Johannine corpus, particular attention was given to the Old and New Testament usages. The force of the proposi-

tion  $\epsilon\upsilon$  in the passage and the general and immediate contexts were also studied. The textual variants were considered, but because no significant alternate readings were probable, the matter is not treated in the thesis.

Throughout the course of the study, the author was aware that ultimate conclusions and exact exegesis of the passage could not be expected. The mind of St. John is of such a nature that one fears to define too precisely, lest he lose or overlook something inherent in the rich concepts which defies systematization. It was the author's desire to make a beginning toward an appreciation of the genius of the Johannine corpus, and to do this through the particular focus of a single verse which had long bewildered him. The conclusions arrived at represent an attempt to convey the deepening of insights experienced by the author as a result of his study, and to delineate as precisely as possible his present view as to the contents of the concepts and the meaning of the passage. No finality is assumed.

All quotations of the Scriptures in English are taken from the Revised Standard Version<sup>1</sup> unless otherwise noted.

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<sup>1</sup>Holy Bible, Revised Standard Version (New York: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1952).

## CHAPTER II

### THE CONCEPT OF HOLINESS AND THE MEANING OF ΑΓΙΑΣΜΟΣ

The verb ἀγιάζω is dependent for its meaning upon the meaning of the adjective ἅγιος, therefore it will be necessary to study the usage of ἅγιος before proceeding to a consideration of ἀγιάζω. The classical Greek, Old Testament, and New Testament usages of ἅγιος will be treated.

#### ἅγιος in Classical Greek

ἅγιος is a rare word in classical Greek. It is the least used of a group of five synonyms (ἱερός, ὅσιος, σεμνός, ἀγνός, ἅγιος) which were employed to express holiness.<sup>1</sup> ἱερός denotes fundamentally the outward manifestation of divine greatness. It is used of the gods, but it is so little defined that it often means no more than "divine" (θεῖος). It is never used as an epithet for the gods themselves.<sup>2</sup> ὅσιος "denotes that which, through divine or human law, custom, usage, is consecrated, . . . but it has by no means any distinctly religious import."<sup>3</sup> σεμνός has fundamentally the idea of reverential dread, awe-struck reverence,

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<sup>1</sup>Hermann Gromer, Biblico-Theological Lexicon of New Testament Greek, translated from the German of the 2nd edition by William Urwick (Edinburgh: F. & T. Clark, 1878), p. 34.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 37 f.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 37.

and it denotes what inspires reverence and awe. It belongs to the gods, yet its use does not denote any religious or even ethico-religious conception, but has more the force "honorable," "venerable." This is clear from its use of purely external things, such as are magnificent, tasteful, exciting attention (e.g., dress),<sup>4</sup> ἄγνος originally referred to that which deserved and claimed moral and religious reverence, but this meaning was obliterated by use.<sup>5</sup>

ἄγιος etymologically is connected with ἄγιος, ἄλομας, and their derivatives.<sup>6</sup> Similar to ἄγνος, it signifies what deserves and claims moral and religious reverence. In fact, it is the only word of the five synonyms which was still sufficiently unadulterated to denote a purely religious conception of holiness.<sup>7</sup> It is used neither as a predicate of the gods nor of men. It has something of an ethical character.<sup>8</sup> ἄγιος means the object of awe,<sup>9</sup> and is used also of "propitiatory sacrifice" by Sophocles, Fr. 703; Ant. 775, φορβῆς τοσοῦτον ὡς ἄγιος μόνον προθείς, ὅπως μίασμα πασ'

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 39.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 40.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 39.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

<sup>9</sup>Otto Procksch, "ἄγιος, ἀγιάζω, ἀγιασμός, ἀγιότης, ἀγιασύνη," Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament, edited by Gerhard Kittel (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1933), I, 87.

ὁπεκφύγη πόλις. Croner says, "The ideas of a sacrificial process, of religious reverence, were associated with and consequently with ἅγιος."<sup>10</sup> ἄζωμα, a rare word, denotes pious dread and awe of the gods and of parents, therefore piety.<sup>11</sup> Though none of the five synonyms adequately expresses the biblical concept of holiness, these connotations which attach themselves to ἅγιος make it the most suitable vessel of the five into which the biblical concept could be poured. It is exclusively an ethico-religious conception, and even if it does not necessarily attribute to its subject any moral quality, yet it demands for it not only a religious but an ethico-religious conduct. For this very reason it is the rarest of the five synonyms and the most suitable for taking into itself and conveying the biblical conception of holiness.<sup>12</sup>

It should be pointed out that nowhere in classical Greek literature do we find anything approximating the biblical concept of holiness. The only similar elements that can be found are those of the "sublime," the "consecrated," the "venerable." The main element, the moral, is utterly wanting.<sup>13</sup> The Greek conception of the gods made any real analogy impossible. Though Isocrates and Plato ascribe all

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<sup>10</sup>Croner, op. cit., p. 40.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 41.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 34.



moral and ontological perfection to the gods, immediately after Plato a new element is added which completely converts holiness into unholiness. The gods turn in jealousy against man because they see in man's happiness and moral accomplishments an injury to their own prerogatives. Then a satanic element is added: the gods seduce man into sin.<sup>14</sup> Thus no Greek word could adequately express the concept of holiness which is found in the Old Testament. ἁγρός seems to have been chosen because of its ethico-religious elements, and its relative lack of corruption as a result of its infrequent use.

#### ἁγρός in the Old Testament

The profane Greek usage offers little help toward understanding the New Testament concept of holiness. The Old Testament concept furnishes the full background for the New Testament concept. ἁγρός and its cognates almost always translate the derivatives of the root  $\psi\tau\pi$ . The etymology of  $\psi\tau\pi$  is not entirely certain. A minority of scholars, mostly older, derive it from the root  $\psi\tau$ , which means "to break forth shiningly," (thus Greener<sup>15</sup>). The majority of scholars derive it from the root  $\tau\pi$ , which means "to separate," (thus Procksch,<sup>16</sup> and Rankin<sup>17</sup>).<sup>18</sup> On the basis

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 35.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 42.

<sup>16</sup>Procksch, op. cit., p. 88.

of this authority, the latter view is here accepted.

Holiness is first and foremost an attribute of God. It describes Him as separate, transcendent, other than the world. The contrast between the holy God and unclean man is well illustrated in the account of Isaiah's inaugural vision (Is. 6). To the Lord, seated upon the throne, high and lifted up, the seraphim call, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory" (v. 3). In contrast to this are the words of Isaiah, "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!" (v. 5). Procksch comments on this passage that it is clearly an ethical uncleanness, and not merely a cultic, that separates Isaiah from Jahweh. What Isaiah needs is cleansing from sin, atonement.<sup>19</sup> Thus it is clear that the otherness of Jahweh includes moral perfection and transcendence. This passage also indicates that all holiness which exists among men is derived from the holiness of God.

The fulness of God's holiness as contrasted to the

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<sup>17</sup>0. S. Rankin, "Saint, Holy, Divine," A Theological Word Book of the Bible, edited by Alan Richardson (New York: The Macmillan Company, c.1950), p. 215.

<sup>18</sup>An extensive list of the scholars holding each view is given by P. Stanko, "The Concept of Holiness in Ezekiel" (Unpublished Bachelor's Thesis, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, 1946), pp. 1-6.

<sup>19</sup>Procksch, op. cit., p. 93.

uncleanness of man is well expressed by Hosea in 11:9, "I am God and not man, the Holy One in your midst." It is interesting that for Hosea the contrast between God and Israel appears in His love, of which human nature is wholly incapable. Hosea retains the contrast between God's holiness and man's sin, but he is caught up in the contrast between the holy love and the unholy nature. What God is capable of by the strength of His holiness, to love unholy nature, man is not capable of, and so there remains the contrast between God and man in His love.<sup>20</sup>

God's holiness is connected with His power and reign over all things. This thought is expressed in Ps. 99:1-3,

The Lord reigns; let the people tremble! He sits enthroned upon the cherubim; let the earth quake! The Lord is great in Zion; he is exalted over all the peoples. Let them praise thy great and terrible name! Holy is he!

God's holiness is manifested particularly in His judgment upon sin and His redemption of His people. This theme is found in the earliest express emphasis of God's holiness (Ex. 15:11.13.17). His holiness is shown in two great acts, the judgment of Egypt and the redemption of His chosen Israel.

Henceforth God in His holiness is present among His people, and the place of His presence is His sanctuary. . . . God's holiness, accordingly, must manifest itself in and upon Israel; Israel must participate in it. 'He shall be holy, for I am holy,' is henceforth the keynote and the norm of the union subsisting between God and His people; so that the 'I am holy' is explained,

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 92.

'I am holy, Jehovah, who sanctifieth you,' Lev. xxi.8;  
Ex. xxi.13.<sup>21</sup>

The theme of God manifesting His holiness in judgment and redemption is found particularly in Isaiah and Ezekiel. According to Procksch, in "first" Isaiah God appears as the Holy One of Israel in judgment upon the sins of Israel and in the salvation of the remnant. In "Deutero-Isaiah" the concept revolves mostly around the Holy One of Israel as Creator and Redeemer<sup>22</sup> (cf. 54:5; 41:14; 55:5). Ezekiel gives the fullest picture. God manifests His holiness by judgment upon Sidon (28:22), and upon Gog (38:23). His holiness is thereby set off against the iniquity of these peoples. God vindicates His holiness by leading Israel back from captivity and cleansing her from all her uncleanness (36:16-36). God's purpose is self-revelation to the nations of His power and rule over them, and of His complete separation from uncleanness.

And I will vindicate the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, and which you have profaned among them; and the nations will know that I am the Lord, says the Lord God, when through you I vindicate my holiness before their eyes (v. 23; cf. 39:7,25).

As God is separated from all sin, so He separates Israel from all the nations and makes them holy unto Himself. Thus He says, "You shall be holy to me; for I the Lord am holy, and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be

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<sup>21</sup>Greener, op. cit., p. 43.

<sup>22</sup>Procksch, op. cit., p. 93.

mine" (Lev. 20:26). Similarly, "The Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you" (Is. 49:7). These verses illustrate a basic principle of the Old Testament concept of holiness, namely, that God alone is the source of holiness. If anything else is holy it is in a sense derivative from Him and dependent upon His will. "It is not the cult or 'religion' that imparts holiness; on the contrary, the cult or religion has holiness imparted to it in virtue of its relation to God Himself."<sup>23</sup> Procksch does not fully agree. He asserts that from the first **WTP** had the closest relation to the cult worship.<sup>24</sup> Only in time did the fulness of the concept of the holiness of God develop. Though Procksch is no doubt right in affirming the importance of the cultic aspect of holiness, Reid's view seems preferable.<sup>25</sup> In Ex. 3:5,

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<sup>23</sup>J. K. S. Reid, "Sanctify, Sanctification," A Theological Word Book of the Bible, edited by Alan Richardson (New York: The Macmillan Company, c.1950), p. 216.

<sup>24</sup>Procksch, op. cit., p. 89.

<sup>25</sup>Modern scholars in general assume a gradual development of the idea of holiness in the history of the Israelite religion. In early times, so they say, holiness was entirely associated with the cult, and had no ethical implications at all. Priests, Nazarites, fixtures, prostitutes were holy quite apart from any consideration of their moral eminence. Only in later times, beginning with the eighth century prophets, did the idea of ethical purity enter in, along with the deepening of the concept of God's holiness. (Thus, for example, Procksch, op. cit.; Rankin, op. cit., p. 215; and G. H. Dodd, The Authority of the Bible (London: Nisbet & Co. Ltd., 1928), pp. 66 ff.) The present author does not accept their Higher Critical approach to the Old Testament, therefore cannot accept this view of development in toto. There is no question that holiness is often closely associated with the cult, but there is also sufficient evidence to support the view of Reid, that God is the author of all holiness (allowing for some perversions, e.g., sacred prostitutes, cf. p. 12).

the ground surrounding the burning bush is holy because Jahweh is present. There is no cultic contact. Holiness is acquired by nearness to God and use by Him. Josh. 5:15 expresses the same thing.

When persons and things other than God are spoken of as holy, it is either because God has appropriated them as His own, or because they have been dedicated to Him by men for sacred use.<sup>26</sup> Thus the High Priest stood at the head of the nation as  $\text{קֹהֵן אֱלֹהִים}$  (Ps. 106:16), and his forehead plate bore the inscription  $\text{קֹהֵן אֱלֹהִים}$  (Ex. 28:36). Not only he, but all the priests were holy (Lev. 21:6 f.), likewise also the Levites (11:14 f.; Num. 15:40).<sup>27</sup> Here holy means: set apart from the rest of the people and consecrated for unique service to Jahweh. Likewise the apparatus and observances that are connected with the worship are holy because they have been set apart for sacred use according to the command of God. They derive their holiness from their relation to Him. Thus the ark is holy (2 Chr. 35:3), the vessels (1 Kgs. 8:4), and the place where they rest (1 Kgs. 8:6). Similarly, sabbaths are holy (Ex. 20:8.11), the seventh day (Ex. 35:2), garments (Ex. 28:2), and God's house (passim).

The question arises whether "holy" in all cases has moral overtones. Cremer answers in the affirmative. He says,

<sup>26</sup>Cremer, op. cit., p. 42.

<sup>27</sup>Frocksch, op. cit., p. 94.

Though the attribute of holiness on the part of the creature does not in and for itself indicate any moral quality, still in issue it becomes so, because it is based upon sanctification, which cannot be conceived of without purification and cleansing.

He cites the following passages in support of his thesis,

Is. 4:3 f.; 2 Chr. 30:15,17; 29:5 f.; Num. 6:11; Lev. 11:

14 f.; 16:9; Ps. 15.<sup>28</sup> These passages clearly show that

holiness is often intimately associated with cleansing,

however that this is always the case must be questioned.

Sacred prostitutes, male and female, are  $\text{וִּטְר}$  and  $\text{טִוְטִר}$  (Deut. 23:18; 2 Kgs. 23:7). Clearly they are named from the

root  $\text{וִּטְר}$  because of their association with the cult and

not because of any moral cleanness. The use of the verb

form in Jer. 12:3, "set them apart for the day of slaughter,"

is another clear case where no thought of cleansing is present.

The following conclusion can be postulated as to the meaning of  $\text{וִּיִטְר}$  in the Old Testament. It means basically "separate," "set apart for divine use." In many cases it has definite connotations of "cleansing," "purification." Used of God it denotes basically His "otherness," His total separation from and contrast to man. This includes His moral perfection, therefore His judgment upon sin, His power, and His redeeming love.

<sup>28</sup> Cramer, op. cit., p. 47.

## ἀγιάζω in the Old Testament

ἀγιάζω and  $\text{W}\ddot{\text{T}}\text{P}$  assume the same general connotations as  $\text{W}\ddot{\text{I}}\text{T}\text{P}$  and its other cognates.  $\text{W}\ddot{\text{T}}\text{P}$  is used in its various states with different shades of meaning.  $\text{W}\ddot{\text{I}}\text{T}\text{P}$  in the Qal refers to the cultic holiness without the ethical element.<sup>29</sup> Thus Aaron, his garments, his sons, and their garments are made holy by the sprinkling of blood (Ex. 29:21). Similarly tabernacle fixtures are consecrated (Ex. 30:29). In the Niphal, God exclusively is the subject. The Niphal means "to be regarded as holy," "to show oneself as holy."<sup>30</sup> It indicates especially the self-representation or exhibition of God's holiness in Israel over against the heathen world. (Is. 5:16; Ex. 20:41; 28:22,25).<sup>31</sup> The Piel and Hiphil share the meanings "to declare holy" (Lev. 20:8; 1 Kgs. 9:3) and "to consecrate" (Ex. 28:41; Lev. 27:14).<sup>32</sup>

Of particular importance for the meaning of Jn. 17:17, are the passages where ἀγιάζω is used in the Septuagint for the consecrating of people, especially of those who are to serve God in a high office or an important capacity. The

<sup>29</sup> Procksch, op. cit., p. 90.

<sup>30</sup> Gesenius, Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament Scriptures, translated and edited by Samuel Prideaux Tregelles (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1950), p. 725.

<sup>31</sup> Procksch, loc. cit.

<sup>32</sup> Gesenius, loc. cit.



Lord's redemption and sanctifying of His people has been described.<sup>33</sup> The basic meaning of Israel's sanctification was that they were separated from the other nations, and consecrated to the worship of the true God, who is holy (Lev. 20:26). The same idea of consecration for divine service is predominant in the consecration of priests, "Now this is what you shall do to them to consecrate them, that they may serve me as priests" (Ex. 28:41; 29:1; cf. 1 Sam. 7:1; 2 Chr. 26:18).

In a similar respect, God consecrates Jeremiah for his prophetic mission, "Before I formed you in the womb I know you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nation" (Jer. 1:5). It is perhaps self-evident that the priests and Jeremiah are cleansed by God and equipped for their office, and these connotations cannot be completely denied the word ἀγιάζω. But the obvious primary force is that of setting apart for a divine work. The Apocrypha contain several examples of the same force of ἀγιάζω. Moses is spoken of as sanctified for his divine work (Ecclus. 45:4); likewise Jeremiah (49:7, alluding to Jer. 1:5), and the fathers of Israel (2 Macc. 1:26).

Another aspect of the Septuagint usage of ἀγιάζω that is important for the seventeenth chapter of St. John is the sacrificial consecration. This usage occurs in Deut. 15:19,

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<sup>33</sup>Supra, pp. 8 ff.

which contains a command to consecrate all the first born male animals to the Lord. That this is a dedication for sacrifice is clear from verse 21, "But if it has any blemish . . . you shall not sacrifice it to the Lord your God."

Referring to both the consecration of prophets, etc., and the consecration of sacrificial victims, Hoskyns<sup>34</sup> draws the following conclusion.

It must therefore be concluded that the word has a double meaning. It may denote the consecration of a prophet to the service of God, and so imply that he is thereby both separated and made righteous; but it may also denote the dedication to sacrifice of what is already without blemish.

#### ἁγός in the New Testament

The New Testament concept of holiness reproduces the same features as the Old Testament concept, except that it is divested of its limitations to Israel.<sup>35</sup> It will be helpful to present first briefly the New Testament usage of ἁγός, before proceeding to ἁγιάζω.

In contrast to the Old Testament usage, ἁγός is predicated of God very seldom in the New Testament. It is used thus only in the Johannine writings, except for a few passages which quote or allude to the Old Testament (Rev. 4:8; cf. Is. 6:3; 1 Pet. 1:15 f.; cf. Lev. 11:14; Ek. 1:49; cf.

<sup>34</sup> Edwin Clement Hoskyns, The Fourth Gospel, edited by Francis Noel Davey (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1947), p. 503.

<sup>35</sup> Greener, op. cit., p. 49.

Ps. 99:3; 111:9). It occurs in Rev. 6:10 (ὁ ἅγιος καὶ ἀληθινός); 1 Jn. 2:20 (an uncertain reference, simply τοῦ ἁγίου); and Jn. 17:11, where Jesus addresses God as πᾶτερ ἅγιε. The first passage stresses the sovereignty and righteousness of God which acts in judgment upon evil and in vindication of His servants. The context of the third passage stresses the total contrast between the κόσμος and the disciples of Christ, thus the thought of God as wholly separate from evil is especially appropriate.<sup>36</sup>

Only slightly more frequently is ἅγιος used of Jesus Christ, but this usage is very significant. Jesus appears as ὁ ἅγιος τοῦ θεοῦ, as the bringer of a new order of things in opposition to the reign of the demons, who recognize Him for what He is (Mk. 1:25; Lk. 4:34). The Messianic force of the designation ἅγιος is even stronger in Acts 3:14; 4:27,30, where Jesus is called ὁ ἅγιος παῖς, clearly based on Isaiah's יְהוָה יִבְרַח יְהוּדָה. Procksch says in this connection, "als der Gottesknecht ist Jesus das heilige Opfer, das, selbst unschuldig, für die Schuld des Gottesvolkes stellvertretend dargebracht ist. . . ." <sup>37</sup> The Messianic force is also evident in Peter's confession (Jn. 6:69). An even stronger force is found in Rev. 3:7 where Jesus is called ὁ ἅγιος καὶ ὁ ἀληθινός which is a predicate of God Himself in 6:10. Thus

<sup>36</sup> William Temple, Readings in St. John's Gospel (Second series; London: MacMillan and Co., c.1940), p. 318.

<sup>37</sup> Procksch, op. cit., p. 103.

the deity of Christ is here stressed by the use of ἅγιος.

From these uses of ἅγιος in reference to Christ the inference can be drawn that, as ἅγιος, He is the One whom God has chosen and consecrated for this special divine task. This inference is supported by Jn. 10:36, which will be fully discussed below.<sup>38</sup>

The term ἅγιος is predicated frequently of the Spirit of God. He is thus designated because, as the Spirit of God, He participates in and is characterized by the holiness of God. He is also designated ἅγιος because He is the divine agent who, together with the Father and Son, effects the sanctification (ἁγιάζειν) of men.

By very frequent usage, Christians are designated in the New Testament as ἅγιοι. The New Testament church shares the same holiness as the Old Testament people of God. 1 Pet. 2:9 (quoting Ex. 19:6) clearly illustrates this, where the New Testament Christians are called ἔθνος ἅγιον.<sup>39</sup> As the Old Testament Israel, so the New Testament church is in two respects. First, they are the elect people of God, separated from the world as God is separate. The 1 Peter text shows this in the words, γένος ἐκλεκτόν . . . λαὸς εἰς περιποίησιν . . . ἐκ σκότους ὑμᾶς καλέσαντος. Secondly, they are changed from uncleanness to righteousness, they are cleansed and purified, so that they might glorify God before the heathen,

<sup>38</sup> Infra, p. 23.

<sup>39</sup> Frocksch, op. cit., p. 107.

ὅπως τὰς ἀρετὰς ἐξαγγείλητε.<sup>40</sup>

As the holiness of the Old Testament Israel was solely the work of the holy God, so the New Testament church is holy only by virtue of Christ's holiness. Christ as ὁ ἅγιος παῖς becomes the midpoint of a new Holy Place, in which He Himself is the Priest, Offering, and Temple of God.<sup>41</sup> The ἅγιοι of the ἐκκλησία are κλητοὶ ἅγιοι (Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:2).

Denn nicht von Natur, sondern durch Gottes Berufung sind die Christen ἅγιοι; ihre Zugehörigkeit zur heiligen Kultgemeinschaft verdanken sie dem Ruf der göttlichen Gnade in Christus (Phil 1:1: τοῖς ἁγίοις ἐν Χριστῷ).<sup>42</sup>

ἅγιος is once used of a special group in the New Testament church, the apostles and New Testament prophets (Eph. 3:5). The usage is too unique to draw any definite conclusions, but it would seem that ἅγιος here means set apart and consecrated for a special divine task, namely, the task of announcing the revelation of the divine mystery. This passage, therefore, is somewhat parallel to Jn. 17:17.

#### ἀγιάζω in the New Testament

God is properly the only subject of the verb ἀγιάζω in the New Testament.<sup>43</sup> Mt. 6:9, Lk. 11:2 are the starting

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., p. 108.

<sup>43</sup> 1 Pet. 3:15, where Christians are exhorted, Χριστὸν ἀγιάσατε ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ὑμῶν; and Rev. 22:11, where ἀγιάζω

point, ἀγιάσθητω τὸ ὄνομά σου. The analogy of the following petitions of the prayer bears out very strongly that God alone ἀγιάζει. As little as man can bring God's reign or see to it that His will is done, so little can man hallow God's name.<sup>44</sup> The sole agency of God is also clearly shown from the Old Testament background of this petition (Ezek. 20:40-44; 28:22-26; 36:16-36; 38:14-23; 39:21-29). Ezek. 36:16-24 will suffice to show what is involved. Because of Israel's sins, God scattered the nation in the captivity. But as a result the other nations questioned Jahweh's existence and His power. Jahweh determined to act in judgment upon evil and in redemption of His people, for the sake of His name. ἀγιάσω τὸ ὄνομά μου τὸ μέγα . . . "and the nations will know that I am the Lord" (v. 23).

In the New Testament, God sanctifies His people through Christ in the act of redemption. He cleanses them from all the impurity of their sin and consecrates them to serve Him. ἀγιάζω is associated with the acts of justification and cleansing in 1 Cor. 6:11. As the cap-stone of a series of exhortations to shun evil deeds, St. Paul says, ἀλλὰ ἀπελούσασθε, ἀλλὰ ἡγιασθητε, ἀλλὰ ἐδικαιώθητε ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ ἐν τῷ πνεύματι τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν. Here it is clear that holiness is a condition that has been

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<sup>43</sup>(Contd.) seems to mean simply "to be holy," or "to pursue holiness" (ὁ ἅγιος ἀγιάσθητω ἕτι), are exceptional usages and are not pertinent to the present discussion.

<sup>44</sup>Procksch, op. cit., p. 113.

created by God. The relationship of the three verbs to each other is not entirely certain, but from the context it can be postulated that ἡγιάσθητε refers to that renewal of the Holy Ghost (Tit. 3:5) and separation from anything worldly (Rom. 12:1 f.) which is concurrent with the washing of regeneration and the imputation of righteousness. As a result of this working of God, the Christian is a temple of the Holy Spirit, consecrated to glorify God (1 Cor. 6:19 f.).

Eph. 5:26 moves in a similar vein. Here Christ is the One who sanctifies His church by His self-sacrifice. He gave Himself for it, ἵνα αὐτὴν ἀγιάσῃ καθαρίσας τῷ λουτρῷ τοῦ ὕδατος ἐν ῥήματι, "that the church might be presented before him in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish." ἀγιάζω here seems to refer to the whole process of transformation which was noted in 1 Cor. 6:11. The verse has sacrificial overtones, and calls to mind the presentation of the spotless animal for sacrifice. It quite certainly includes both the ideas of cleansing and of consecration for divine use.

Rom. 15:16 is another Pauline example where the sacrificial idea is connected with ἀγιάζω,

. . . the grace given me by God to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in the priestly service of the gospel of God, so that the offering of the Gentiles may be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit (ἡγιασμένη ἐν πνεύματι ἀγίῳ).

The sense is this, that Paul as a priest offers up the Gentiles as an offering to God, Gentiles who have been saved and transformed by the Spirit through the Gospel. ἀγιάζειν

again is the work of God, and seems to refer to the entire process of conversion, justification, and renewal, with a note again of consecration for the use of God. 2 Thess. 2:13 uses the actual words σωτηρίαν ἐν ἀγιασμῷ πνεύματος showing again the broad force of ἀγιάζω here in the noun form. 1 Thess. 5:23 stresses again that sanctification is solely the work of God, Αὐτὸς δὲ ὁ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης ἀγιάσαι ὑμᾶς ὀλοτελεῖς. Here the emphasis seems to be on the continuation and perfection of the transformation already accomplished.

In the occurrences of ἀγιάζω in Hebrews, Christ appears as the High Priest and Offering, who through His death enters the Holy of Holies (heaven) for the justification and sanctification of His people.<sup>45</sup> His atoning sacrifice is clearly the means of sanctification.<sup>46</sup> This is borne out already in 2:11, ὁ . . . ἀγιάζων καὶ οἱ ἀγιαζόμενοι ἐξ ἑνὸς πάντες. The idea is that Christ became truly a son of Adam to be in every way a brother of sinful men. Compare with this verse 17,

Therefore he had to be made like his brethren in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make expiation for the sins of the people.

The same point is stressed in Heb. 10:10, ". . . we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid., p. 103.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., p. 113.



once for all" of. v. 14). The idea that Christ's blood is the means of atonement is added in Heb. 10:29, ". . . profaned the blood of the covenant ἐν ᾧ ἡγιασθη." Heb. 13:12 states the same more directly, Jesus suffered ἵνα ἡγιασθῆ διὰ τοῦ ἰδίου αἵματος τὸν λαόν. In all these passages Christ is the sanctifier, and He sanctifies His people by the offering of Himself as a sacrifice. ἡγιαζω again seems to refer to the entire work of salvation and renovation, here especially in the terms of cleansing from the defilement of sin. Heb. 9:13 shows clearly the connection to the Old Testament rites of purification, which Christ's sacrifice both resembles and vastly transcends.

Because of their sanctification by Christ, Christians are called ἡγιασμένοις ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ (1 Cor. 1:2), or simply ἡγιασμένοι (Acts 20:32; 26:18). This is a general term for those who have experienced the entire process of God's converting, justifying, cleansing, and consecrating activity.

A few passages of minor importance show the meaning of ἡγιαζω as "consecrate for divine use" predominating. Thus the temple consecrates the gold that is in it (Mt. 23:17); the altar consecrates the gift which is placed upon it (Mt. 23:19). In 1 Tim. 4:5, all food is spoken of as being good and usable, because if it is received with thanksgiving it is consecrated by the word of God and by prayer. The idea is that the saying of the blessing (actually the attitude of the one who eats) makes the food suitable for use by a

Christian. Similarly St. Paul says that if anyone purifies himself from what is ignoble he will be a vessel fit for noble use, consecrated and useful, i.e., fit for use by God in His work (2 Tim. 2:20 f.).

#### ἀγιάζω in Johannine Usage

The Johannine usage of ἀγιάζω seems to move on a plane slightly different from the rest of the New Testament. John uses the word only four times. In 10:36 Jesus speaks of Himself as ὃν ὁ πατήρ ἡγίασεν καὶ ἀπέστειλεν εἰς τὸν κόσμον. Here obviously there can be no connotations of justification or renovation, for the Son is sinless. ἀγιάζειν is therefore clearly a consecrating by God for a special commission into the world. Procksch notes that the consecration of Christ by the Father takes place before the Incarnation, as also Jeremiah was consecrated to his prophetic calling before birth (Jer. 1:5).<sup>47</sup> Christ's consecration is a unique consecration for a unique office as ὁ ἅγιος τοῦ θεοῦ (6:69). He here appeals to His divine consecration and mission as the work which His Father has given Him to do. This mission is to reveal God as He really is to men, a God merciful and loving, and finally to offer Himself as a sacrifice to reveal this love of God in its fullest, that men might believe and have ζωὴν αἰώνιον.

In Jn. 17:17.19 Jesus stands at the threshold of that

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

final work of His mission. At this point He says, ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν [ἐγὼ] ἀγιάζω ἑμαυτόν, ἵνα ὤσιν καὶ αὐτοὶ ἡγιασμένοι ἐν ἀληθείᾳ. Bernard's comment here is excellent,

The Father 'consecrated' Jesus for His mission to the world; and now that His mission is about to be consummated in death, Jesus 'consecrates' Himself, as He enters upon the Passion. So He had said before of His life, 'I lay it down of myself' (10<sup>10</sup>). In His death He was both Priest and Victim.<sup>48</sup>

Verse 19a recalls the dedication of sacrificial victims in the Old Testament, but this is a unique and totally new sacrificial consecration, for it is a self-consecration to death.

The self-consecration of Christ is for the purpose of the consecration of the disciples. The use of ἀγιάζω in verse 19a and in verse 19b is not completely equal. The basic idea in both is dedication for divine use. But the consecration of Jesus is self-consecration, whereas that of the disciples is consecration by God which is possible only as a result of Christ's consecration. Jesus consecrates Himself as a sinless, spotless sacrifice; the disciples' consecration must include both cleansing from defilement and dedication to divine service.<sup>49</sup> The emphasis seems to be on the latter, dedication of the disciples for their divine task. However, the idea of sanctification in the common New Testa-

<sup>48</sup> J. H. Bernard, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. John, edited by A. H. McNeill (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929), II, 575.

<sup>49</sup> Hoskyns, op. cit., p. 504.

ment sense, as the complete transformation and continued growth through the Spirit, is also present here.

Jn. 17:17 is closely associated with verse 19b. Jesus prays, ἀγιάσον αὐτοὺς ἐν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ. From the analogy of verse 19 we must see here also the thought of the total sanctification of the disciples, referring especially to the continuation and increase of the life of the Spirit in them. Thus Westcott<sup>50</sup> comments,

The prayer is that the consecration which is represented by admission into the Christian society may be completely realised in fact; that every power and faculty, offered once for all, may in due course be effectually rendered to God.

It is true that Jesus had already spoken of His disciples as καθαροί (Jn. 15:3), and ἀγιάζω in 17:17 cannot refer to the initial elements of conversion and regeneration. Temple<sup>51</sup> and Bernard<sup>52</sup> seem to conclude from this that ἀγιάζω in 17:17 connotes only consecration for their divine task, as men already qualified. But verse 19 and the strength of New Testament usage force us to see at least an element of the process of continued spiritual growth in the background in verse 17.

However there is little doubt that the element of consecration for a divine work is predominant. The primary

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<sup>50</sup>B. F. Westcott, The Gospel According to St. John (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1951), pp. 244 f.

<sup>51</sup>Temple, op. cit., p. 324.

<sup>52</sup>Bernard, op. cit., p. 574.

background is, no doubt, the consecration of the priests, Jeremiah, etc.,<sup>53</sup> an electing activity of God, and a setting apart for the performance of a special divine commission. The disciples are to be set apart from the world in which they labor (17:15 f.), and set apart for the task of preaching the word which they have received (17:14). This work is a divine commission, which is closely parallel to the mission of Christ Himself (v. 18), "As Thou didst send me (*ἀπέστειλας*) into the world, so I have sent them (*ἀπέστειλα*) into the world." Their mission is to continue in some respects the mission of Christ (v. 11); they are to testify to the revelation which they have received, so that men might believe in Christ through them (v. 20 f.).

Conclusion: *ἁγιάζω* in Jn. 17:17 means primarily "consecrate by setting apart for a special divine task"; but it also includes in the background the element of cleansing from all defilement so that the consecrated servant is fit for divine service.

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<sup>53</sup>Supra, pp. 13 f.

## CHAPTER III

### THE MEANING OF ALHΘEIA

The New Testament concept of ἀλήθεια is determined partly by the classical Greek usage of the word and partly by the Old Testament usage of אֱמֻנָה; therefore these two backgrounds will be examined first.

#### The Classical Greek Background

Etymologically ἀλήθεια means that which is not hidden, concealed, kept secret. It originally signifies a content of fact, or a state of affairs, as far as they are seen or expressed, and is completely manifested in such seeing or expression. Therefore ἀλήθεια is the complete or real state of affairs.

As in forensic language ἀλήθεια is the state of affairs to be proved, over against the various assertions of the parties, so in the historians it is the historical state of affairs over against myth, and in the philosophers that which really is, in the absolute sense.<sup>1</sup>

Dodd<sup>2</sup> quotes an illustration of ἀλήθεια as "reality" as opposed to appearance.

Thuc. II, 41, καὶ ὡς οὐ λόγων ἐν τῷ παρόντι κόσμος τάδε μᾶλλον ἢ ἔργων ἐστὶν ἀλήθεια αὐτῇ ἢ δυνάμεις τῆς πόλεως ἣν ὑπὸ τῶνδε τῶν τρόπων ἐκτησάμεθα σημαίνει, "that this

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<sup>1</sup>Rudolf Bultmann, "ἀλήθεια, ἀληθής, ἀληθινός, ἀληθεύω," Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament, edited by Gerhard Kittel (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1933), I, 239.

<sup>2</sup>C. H. Dodd, The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel (Cambridge: The University Press, 1953), p. 171.

is not mere verbal bombast for the occasion, but actual reality, is proved by the very power of our state, which we have acquired through this way of life.<sup>1</sup>

The characteristic Greek concept of ἀλήθεια can best be illustrated by citing a few passages from Plato. For Plato, ἀλήθεια relates only to the world of Ideas and not to the sensible world. In the Republic, K, 596-605, this is clearly expressed. The argument is that the painter and the poet do not imitate reality, the Ideas, ἀλήθεια in their work, but only the material counterparts of the Ideas. Thus their imitations are thrice removed from the truth, τρίτος ἀπὸ τῆς ἀληθείας.<sup>3</sup>

To which is painting directed in every case, to the imitation of reality as it is or of appearance as it appears? Is it an imitation of a phantasm or of the truth (φαντάσματος ἢ ἀληθείας οὐσα μίμησις). . . . Then the mimetic art is far removed from the truth. . . .<sup>4</sup>

Truth pertains to the intellect, the mimetic art appeals rather to the worst part of man, not his better part, namely his reason, which can know truth, ". . . the mimetic art produces a product that is far removed from truth in the accomplishment of its task, and associates with the part in us that is remote from intelligence."<sup>5</sup>

. . . for he [i.e., the poet] resembles him [i.e., the painter] in that his creations are inferior in respect

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<sup>3</sup>Plato, "The Republic," The Loeb Classical Library, translated by Paul Shorey (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1937), II, 446 f.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., pp. 430 f.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., pp. 450 f.

of reality (πρὸς ἀλήθειαν); and the fact that his appeal is to the inferior part of the soul and not to the best is another point of resemblance.<sup>6</sup>

The contrast between appearance and reality is especially clear in the following passage, where a mirror is spoken of as producing objects, "Yes . . . the appearance of them, but not the reality and the truth (οὐ μέντοι ὄντα γέ που τῆ ἀληθείᾳ)."<sup>7</sup>

According to Dodd,<sup>8</sup> the locus classicus is the Republic, X, 508D-509A. Socrates is using the image of the sun and its light in illustration of the Idea of the Good.

Similarly then conceive the action of the soul: when it inclines to that upon which ἀλήθεια τε καὶ τὸ ὄν shines it rationally apprehends and knows (ἐνόησέν τε καὶ ἔγνω), and appears to be rational: but when it inclines to that which is mixed with darkness, that which comes into being and perishes, it forms opinions (δοξάζει). . . . How this thing that affords ἀλήθεια to the objects of knowledge, and gives the power of knowing to the known, you must call the Idea of the Good.

ἀλήθεια corresponds to the world of reality, and is apprehended by reason. It is in sharp contrast to the world of phenomena, which only forms opinions. In summarizing Plato's concept, Dodd<sup>9</sup> says that for Plato there is a realm of ultimate reality which is distinguished from the realm of phenomena, which are only shadows and representations of the real. "Ἀλήθεια may accordingly be 'reality' itself, or the knowledge of reality, or the expression of such knowledge of

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., pp. 424 f.

<sup>8</sup> Dodd, loc. cit.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.



reality in a philosophical doctrine, which is the 'truth.'"  
 Bultmann<sup>10</sup> says in this connection that through Plato's  
 doctrine of the world of the ideas, ἀλήθεια won more and more  
 the meaning "echter, eigentlicher Wirklichkeit" in opposition  
 to "Abbild, Scheinbild," referring thereby to the "Seiende"  
 as opposed to the "Weltphänomene."

### The Old Testament Background

The Hebrew word which the Septuagint often translates  
 ἀλήθεια is אֱמֻנָה. Its connotations are considerably  
 different from those associated with ἀλήθεια in the Greek  
 world. אֱמֻנָה comes from the root אָמַן which means "fix,"  
 "confirm," "establish." Thus אֱמֻנָה is primarily the quali-  
 ty of firmness or stability; of persons it means "steadfast-  
 ness," "trustworthiness," and is used especially as an  
 attribute of God, as the One who is absolutely trustworthy.<sup>11</sup>

In its usage, אֱמֻנָה can refer in forensic terminology  
 to the actual truth of an event or a circumstance.<sup>12</sup> For  
 example, Deut. 22:20, "But if this thing [the absence of  
 virginity, according to the accusation] is true. . ."  
 Also Deut. 17:4, ". . . if it is true and certain that such  
 an abominable thing [idolatry] has been done in Israel . . ."

<sup>10</sup>Bultmann, *op. cit.*, p. 240.

<sup>11</sup>Dodd, *op. cit.*, p. 173.

<sup>12</sup>Gottfried Quell, "ἀλήθεια, ἀληθής, ἀληθινός, ἀληθεύω,"  
*Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, edited by  
 Gerhard Kittel (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1933), I, 234.

(cf. Josh. 2:12; Est. 9:30; Deut. 13:15; 1 Kgs. 10:6). The force in these passages is "logically authentic or authenticated," "according to the facts," "valid and reliable."

This forensic force leads over naturally to an association of the quality of reliability and integrity with the character of the judges and witnesses. For example "Render true judgment,"  $\cdot\{ \text{טב} \text{ וְ} \text{צִדִּיק} \text{ וְ} \text{שֹׁמֵר} \text{ וְ} \text{שֹׁמֵר}$  (Zech. 7:9); "Speak every man truth to his neighbor, execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates" (Zech. 8:16, AV). These passages call upon the authorities to decide cases according to their facts, and they also call for the character of integrity and truthfulness on their part. Other passages illustrate the same thought with respect to the witnesses. "A truthful witness saves lives, but one who utters lies is a betrayer" (Prov. 14:25; cf. Jer. 42:5). These passages stress primarily the thought of the actual facts being truthfully presented, but also indicate the character of the witness. An especially clear example of this is Gen. 42:16; ". . . that your words may be tested, whether there is truth in you." This can mean either, "we will test whether you have spoken the actual circumstances to us," or, "we will test whether you have  $\text{אֱמוּנָה}$  as the norm of your character."<sup>13</sup>

$\text{אֱמוּנָה}$  develops, in this same stream, a stronger force in some passages, that of "reliability," "eternal validity

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

and endurance," "certainty of fulfillment." A revelation to Daniel is spoken of as being sure to be fulfilled, ". . . a thing was revealed unto Daniel . . . and the thing was true, but the time appointed was long" (Dan. 10:1, AV). אֱמֶנֶת occurs in close parallel with the idea of eternal endurance, "The sum of thy word is truth; and every one of thy righteous ordinances endures for ever" (Ps. 119:160; cf. v. 142).

אֱמֶנֶת can mean both "not a lie" and "effectually powerful and certain of fulfillment" when the widow says to Elijah, ". . . the word of the Lord in your mouth is truth" (1 Kgs. 17:24).

The Old Testament אֱמֶנֶת-concept perhaps reaches its height when used to mean "faithfulness."<sup>14</sup> In this sense it is first and foremost an attribute of God. In a redemptive context God is called אֱמֶנֶת לֵאלֹהִים (Ps. 31:5; cf. Jer. 10:10). Similarly,

The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin (Ex. 34:6 f.).

God is further described as faithful in keeping His covenant (Dout. 7:9), and as He "who keeps faith (אֱמֶנֶת) for ever," that is, is faithful in preserving His creation and protecting those who are oppressed and poor (Ps. 146:6). אֱמֶנֶת is associated with the idea of mercy also in Gen. 32:10; Ps. 25:10; 108:4. The conclusion is inescapable that אֱמֶנֶת as

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 237.

God's faithfulness is closely allied to His grace and mercy (cf. Jn. 1:17).

God desires truth as faithfulness and integrity on the part of men. He desires it in the inward parts (Ps. 51:6); men must speak it (Ps. 15:2); and seek it (Jer. 5:1); and walk in it (2 Egs. 20:3).<sup>15</sup> This response of man is closely connected with God's revelation of His will to men in His word. "Make me to know thy ways, O Lord; teach me thy paths. Lead me in thy truth . . ." (Ps. 25:14 f.). "Teach me thy way, O Lord, that I may walk in thy truth" (Ps. 86:11).

#### New Testament Usage

As was stated at the outset, the New Testament usage of ἀλήθεια is determined partly by the Semitic usage of אֱמֻנָה and partly by the Greek usage of ἀλήθεια. As has been seen, the Greek force is "truth" as opposed to falsehood, or "reality" as opposed to mere appearance. The Semitic force is "validity," "trustworthiness," "sureness," "permanence," "faithfulness."

In discussing the New Testament usage of ἀλήθεια outside of the Johannine literature, the analysis of Bultmann<sup>16</sup> will be followed. He distinguishes five New Testament meanings outside of the Johannine writings. His analysis

<sup>15</sup>E. C. Blackman, "Truth," A Theological Word Book of the Bible, edited by Alan Richardson (New York: The Macmillan Company, c.1950), p. 269.

<sup>16</sup>Bultmann, op. cit., pp. 242-5.

shows how the Greek and Old Testament connotations both occur and sometimes merge.

1. "ἀλήθεια als das, was Bestand hat und gilt" (in the Old Testament sense).<sup>17</sup> ἀλήθεια is used in the sense of certainty, validity in Gal. 2:5, "So that the truth of the Gospel might be preserved for you" (cf. 2:14). Bultmann also places Eph. 4:21 in this category, but this seems questionable. He translates καθὼς ἐστὶν ἀλήθεια ἐν τῷ Ἰησοῦ, "wie es in Jesus Giltigkeit hat." God's demands, by virtue of their permanent validity, are ἀλήθεια (Rom. 2:8; 2:20). ἀλήθεια is used in the sense of integrity, honesty, uprightness, in conformity with ποιεῖν ἀλήθειαν in Tob. 4:6; 13:6.<sup>18</sup> Into this category Bultmann places Jn. 3:21; 1 Jn. 1:6, which speak of ποιῶν τὴν ἀλήθειαν, etc. This is possible, but can be questioned because of the normally unique force of ἀλήθεια in John.<sup>19</sup> 1 Cor. 13:6 shows a clearer instance of the usage. ἀλήθεια is set over against ἀδικία, love does not rejoice in ἀδικία but in ἀλήθεια (cf. also Rom. 2:8). Rom. 1:18 (τῶν τὴν ἀλήθειαν ἐν ἀδικίᾳ κατεχόντων) may be put in this category, according to Bultmann, but ἀλήθεια may also refer to "that which may be known about God" (v. 19). ἀλήθεια occurs in combination with δικαιοσύνη (Eph. 4:24; 5:9; 6:14; cf. Tob. 14:7). 5:9 amply illustrates the sense of integrity and

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 242.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> infra, pp. 50-52.

uprightness, ὁ γὰρ καρπὸς τοῦ φωτὸς ἐν πάσῃ ἀγαθωσύνῃ καὶ δικαιοσύνῃ καὶ ἀληθείᾳ.

2. "ἀλήθεια als das, worauf man sich verlassen kann" (in the Old Testament sense). This can be divided into two categories. The first, "reliability," "trustworthiness," "faithfulness."<sup>20</sup> Rom. 3:3-7 shows how closely this force adheres to the previously discussed one. God's ἀλήθεια which is contrasted to man's ψεῦσμα (v. 7; cf. v. 4), is none other than His πίστις-faithfulness (v. 3). In this same context God's δικαιοσύνη is set over against man's ἀδικία. The words γενέσθω δὲ ὁ θεὸς ἀληθής are equivalent to ὅπως ἀνδικιωθῆς (v. 4). This can only be understood on the basis of the אֱלֹהִים concept.

The second category is uprightness, sincerity; honesty, honest dealing.<sup>21</sup> 2 Cor. 7:14 is a good example, πάντα ἐν ἀληθείᾳ ἐλάλησαμεν ὑμῖν, "we spoke all things to you truthfully." ἀλήθεια is joined with εἰλικρινία, "sincerity" (1 Cor. 5:8), and is contrasted with προφάσει, "pretense," "insincerity" (Phil. 1:18). Through this usage the form ἐν ἀλήθειᾳ seems in some cases to mean simply, "sincerely," "honestly," "truly" (e.g., 1 Tim. 2:7). 2 Jn. 1 and 3 Jn. 1 also fit in well here, though they perhaps are somewhat more meaningful.

3. "ἀλήθεια als der (erschlossene) wirkliche Tatbestand"

<sup>20</sup>Bultmann, op. cit., p. 243.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

(in the Greek sense).<sup>22</sup> Rom. 1:18 comes into consideration here again. One can possibly understand ἀλήθεια as the divine demands or the righteousness of God, but in the light of verso 19, διότι τὸ γνωστὸν τοῦ θεοῦ φανερόν ἐστιν ἐν αὐτοῖς, the "truth of God" means the revealed reality ("Wirklichkeit") of God. Rom. 1:25 is to be understood in the same way, μετήλλαξαν τὴν ἀλήθειαν τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν τῷ ψεύδει. ἀλήθεια here means the reality of God over against the false, substitute gods of men.<sup>23</sup> ἐν ἀληθείᾳ means "wirklich" in some passages (e.g., Col. 1:6); as does also ἐπ' ἀληθείᾳ (Acts 4:27; 10:34). 1 Jn. 3:18 (ἀγαπῶμεν . . . ἔργῳ καὶ ἀληθείᾳ) probably has the same force, "in reality," "genuinely," though it perhaps also means "sincerely." Under the present category also falls the expression, "to speak the truth," i.e., the true facts and circumstances (cf. Mr. 5:33; Rom. 9:1; 2 Cor. 12:6). This usage occurs also in John's Gospel, λέγειν τὴν ἀλήθειαν (8:40.45 f.; 16:7), and μαρτυρεῖν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ (5:33). But there is little doubt that 8:40.45; 5:33 have a double meaning,<sup>24</sup> in which the truth should be understood as the divine revelation.<sup>25</sup>

4. "ἀλήθεια als Wahrheit der Aussage."<sup>26</sup> This usage

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 244.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Infra, pp. 43 f.

<sup>25</sup> Bultmann, loc. cit.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

adheres closely to the immediately preceding. The expression ἐπ' ἀληθείας indicates that what was said is in accordance with the matter as it in reality is, especially in references to statements about God and His revelation. For example, ". . . you do not regard the position of men, but truly teach the way of God" (Mk. 12:14). "You are right, Teacher, you have truly said that he [God] is one. . . ." (Mk. 12:32).

5. "ἀλήθεια als die rechte Lehre, der rechte Glaube."<sup>27</sup>

Examples of this usage can be found outside the New Testament. For example, ΩϞΞϞ can equal the true belief, the Jewish religion (Dan. 8:12). In Philo, Spec. Leg. IV, 178, the proselyte to Judaism is characterized as μεταναστὰς εἰς ἀληθείας (cf. also 1 Esdr. 4:36-40). In 2 Cor. 13:8 (οὐ γὰρ δυνάμεθα τι κατὰ τῆς ἀληθείας ἀλλὰ ὑπὲρ τῆς ἀληθείας) ἀλήθεια appears as the correct teaching in contrast to a ἕτερον εὐαγγέλιον (11:4). ἀλήθεια as the correct teaching is spoken of as being obeyed, "Having purified your souls ἐν τῇ ὑποκοῆ τῆς ἀληθείας . . ." (1 Pet. 1:22; cf. Rom. 10:16).<sup>28</sup>

In the Pastoral Letters in particular, the usage of ἀλήθεια as the correct teaching and belief is common. It is often thus contrasted to false and wrong teaching.<sup>29</sup> For example, errorists are "bereft of the truth" (1 Tim. 6:5). Hymenaeus and Philetus have swerved from the truth by holding

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 245.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.



that the resurrection is already past (2 Tim. 2:18). False teachers are such as ". . . oppose the truth, men of corrupt mind and counterfeit faith" (2 Tim. 3:8). ἀλήθεια is contrasted to μύθος (2 Tim. 4:4; Tit. 1:14).

There are several passages which Bultmann places under this category, which seem to approach the Johannine concept of ἀλήθεια more closely than any others. Eph. 1:13 is a good example, ἀκούσαντες τὸν λόγον τῆς ἀληθείας, τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς σωτηρίας ὑμῶν. Col. 1:5 can be considered in the same connection, ἣν προηκούσατε ἐν τῷ λόγῳ τῆς ἀληθείας τοῦ εὐαγγελίου. In both passages the equation of "the word of truth" with "the gospel" is obvious. It is true that τὸ εὐαγγέλιον is the correct teaching, but it seems to be more. It seems to suggest, at least, the idea of revelation. Paul's own testimony was that he received his Gospel by revelation from God and not from men (Gal. 1:11 f.). The Gospel is the good news of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus and its significance (1 Cor. 15:1-10); this approaches the Johannine concept of ἀλήθεια.

Another group of passages resembles the Johannine usage in its terminology, namely, those passages which describe the process of becoming a Christian as εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν ἀληθείας ἐλθεῖν (1 Tim. 2:4; 3:7; 4:3; Heb. 10:26). These are to be compared with Jn. 8:31 f.; 2 Jn. 1. Perhaps the similarity is primarily on the verbal level, but there is at least some preparation for the pregnant Johannine idea of "knowing God" and "knowing the truth."

## ἀληθής, ἀληθινός in Johannine Usage

Before proceeding to the Johannine usage of ἀλήθεια, it will be helpful to study briefly the usage of ἀληθής and particularly ἀληθινός.

ἀληθής is well reproduced by the Latin verax. God is ἀληθής (Jn. 3:33; Rom. 3:4) inasmuch as He cannot lie, and is truth-loving.<sup>30</sup> The word is applied most frequently to statements which correspond to the facts. Its opposite is ψευδής. It is used in this common sense in Jn. 4:18; 10:41; 19:35. In other passages, it has the stronger force of "reliable" (Jn. 5:31 f.; 8:13; 21:24; 3 Jn. 12). By easy transference, it is applied to persons who make such true statements, and means "veracious," or "sincere." In that sense God is spoken of as ἀληθής (Jn. 8:26). In limited cases ἀληθής approaches the meaning of ἀληθινός, and indicates that things are in fact what they appear to be, thus "real," "genuine." For example, ἡ γὰρ σὰρξ μου ἀληθής ἐστὶ βρωσίς, καὶ τὸ αἷμα μου ἀληθής ἐστὶ πόσις (Jn. 6:55).<sup>31</sup>

ἀληθινός is well reproduced by the Latin verus.<sup>32</sup> It is generally applied to objects of experience that are in fact what they appear to be, thus "genuine," "real." Thus

<sup>30</sup> Richard Chenevix Trench, Synonyms of the New Testament, reproduction of the ninth edition, 1860 (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1948), p. 25.

<sup>31</sup> Dodd, op. cit., p. 170.

<sup>32</sup> Trench, loc. cit.

Aristotle (Pol. III. 1281 b12) speaks of τὰ ἀληθινά, real objects, as opposed to τὰ γεγραμμένα, their pictured copies.<sup>33</sup> In Johannine usage it is often used of God, as the genuine God, over against all false gods. 1 Jn. 5:20 is very expressive, οἴδαμεν δὲ ὅτι ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ ἦκει, καὶ δέδωκεν ἡμῖν διάνοιαν ἵνα γινώσκωμεν τὸν ἀληθινόν· καὶ ἐσμὲν ἐν τῷ ἀληθινῷ, ἐν τῷ υἱῷ αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ. Verse 21 emphasizes that God is genuine over against all idols, ". . . keep yourselves from idols." God is here the Reality itself, but it is significant that He can be known, and that only through the understanding that the Son gives us. From here it is an easy step, to call the Son Himself φῶς, ἀλήθεια, λόγος. ἀληθινός is also very forceful in Jn. 17:3, where Jesus defines eternal life as knowing τὸν μόνον ἀληθινὸν θεὸν καὶ ὃν ἀπέστειλας Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν. This passage emphasizes the uniqueness and genuineness of God, and stresses again implicitly the importance of Jesus as the Revealer of the true God (cf. Jn. 7:26).

In the same manner, ἀληθινός is used of the Son in metaphorical expressions. Thus the λόγος is τὸ φῶς τὸ ἀληθινόν, who enlightens every man with His revelation of God (Jn. 1:9). τὸν ἄρτον . . . τὸν ἀληθινόν is contrasted to the manna which Moses gave the people in the wilderness (Jn. 6:32). The latter was good only for the body, but the former gives ζωὴν to the world, and thus is the genuine

<sup>33</sup>Dodd, loc. cit.

bread. Verse 35 makes clear that the bread is Jesus Himself. Jn. 15:1 strengthens the peculiar force of ἀληθινός when Christ speaks of Himself as ἡ ἀμπελος ἡ ἀληθινή. The genuine vine is not the physical, tangible, growing vine, but what is spiritual is actually the real. Similarly, ἀληθινός is used of the genuine worshippers who will worship the genuine God as He really is, i.e., πνεῦμα (Jn. 4:23).

In the Apocalypse, ἀληθινός is used in a somewhat different sense. Rev. 3:14 speaks of ὁ ἀμὴν, ὁ μάρτυς ὁ πιστός καὶ ἀληθινός. The association with πιστός strongly suggests the Old Testament concept of אֱמֻנָה as faithfulness (cf. 19:11; 21:5; 22:6). The Old Testament force is likewise present in 15:3, where God's ways are δίκαια καὶ ἀληθινὰ (cf. 19:2).

#### ἀλήθεια in Johannine Usage

The Johannine concept of ἀλήθεια is unique: it has no adequate parallels in either classical Greek, Septuagint or New Testament usage. It combines various elements of these usages into a new concept.

It is a much debated question whether John's concept is more influenced by Greek or by Hebrew ideas, a debate which concerns the entire Gospel.<sup>31</sup> A thorough discussion of the

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<sup>31</sup>Dodd (*op. cit.*, pp. 74 f.) gives a brief account of the debate. He points out that in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries it was generally held that the Fourth Gospel was to be understood almost entirely from a Hellenistic standpoint. In recent years the balance has been

question is beyond the scope of this study. Here the issue will only be approached and a tentative conclusion postulated with regard to ἀλήθεια.

Cremer leans toward the Semitic side, as is evident from the following statement,

In John's usage also, which would seem, according to John 1. 14, 17, to have been suggested by the Heb. firmness, reliableness, ἀλήθ. is the designation of the salvation revealed in Christ, marking it as the realization or reality of that which ought to be. . . .<sup>35</sup>

Dodd, on the other hand, sees a stronger influence from the Hellenistic side. He admits that several passages (Jn. 3:21; 16:13; 4:24; 17:17) show unmistakable Old Testament influence, yet he concludes that while the mould of expression in these passages is determined by Hebrew usage, the actual sense of the words must be determined by Greek usage. Thus "it is 'truth,' i.e., knowledge of reality, that comes through Jesus Christ" (Jn. 1:17).<sup>36</sup> The approach of Dodd is better substantiated by the usage, for the Old Testament concept, even at its heights ("eternal validity," "faithfulness") does not

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<sup>34</sup>(Contd.) redressed and the Hebraic elements have been recognized, primarily because of two factors. First, the Semitic element in the language has been recognized and studied. Burney and Torrey have advanced the view of an Aramaic original of the Gospel. Few scholars agree with this, but in any case the evidence for an underlying Semitic idiom is irresistible. The second factor has been a fresh study of Judaism and its application to the problems of the New Testament.

<sup>35</sup>Hermann Cremer, Biblico-Theological Lexicon of New Testament Greek, translated from the German of the 2nd edition by William Urwick (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1878), p. 88.

<sup>36</sup>Dodd, op. cit., p. 176.

do justice to the Johannine concept. ἀλήθεια in John is the divine, ultimate reality and knowledge of reality, as in Greek usage. But it cannot be overlooked, that it is the God of the Old Testament, a faithful and graciously acting God, whom John describes as truth, and not the Greek τὸ ὄν. This matter will be more fully treated as the individual passages are discussed below.

ἀλήθεια has two main senses in Johannine usage. First, it means "truth" as that which is in accord with the facts, corresponding to ἀληθής. Secondly, it means "genuineness," "the divine Reality," "revelation of the Reality,"<sup>37</sup> corresponding to ἀληθινός. The second meaning is by far the most predominant and the most typically Johannine.

An example of ἀλήθεια as "that which is true to the facts" is Jn. 16:7. Jesus tells His disciples a true and reliable fact, namely, that it is to their advantage that He leaves them. But even here this fact is part of the unfolding of God's revelation.

In some passages ἀλήθεια seems to have a dual force, implying both of the main senses noted above. Thus Jesus speaks of Himself as ἄνθρωπον ὃς τὴν ἀλήθειαν ὑμῖν λελάληκα, ἣν ἤκουσα παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ (8:26), and in the same connection He says, ἐγὼ δὲ ὅτι τὴν ἀλήθειαν λέγω (8:45). These passages have the force, "to say what is true, factual," and they

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<sup>37</sup>Bultmann, loc. cit.

also mean "to bring the revelation of God in words."<sup>38</sup> However, inasmuch as the true facts about God which Jesus speaks represent the revelation of God, the two senses of ἀλήθεια practically flow together.<sup>39</sup> Similarly Jesus says of John the Baptist μεμαρτύρηκεν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ (Jn. 5:33).

In the majority of passages, ἀλήθεια refers to "the eternal reality as revealed to man--either the reality itself or the revelation of it." ἀλήθεια ". . . hovers between the meanings of 'reality,' or 'the ultimately real,' and 'the knowledge of the real.'<sup>40</sup>

ἀλήθεια, the revelation of the eternal Reality, describes God in His true nature, God as He really is. In form this adheres more to the Greek concept of ἀλήθεια. But there is no similarity between John's concept and Plato's. For John, God is not the absolute reality and essence, the abstract being, but God is Creator, Redeemer, Spirit.<sup>41</sup> God is a God who acts in grace for the deliverance of man. Thus the essence of God's self-revelation through His Logos is the revelation of His grace (χάρις). ὅτι ὁ νόμος διὰ Μωϋσέως ἐδόθη, ἡ χάρις καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐγένετο (Jn. 1:17). Grace and Truth are bound together with the

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., p. 246.

<sup>39</sup> Geerhardus Vos, "'True' and 'Truth' in the Johannine Writings," The Biblical Review, XII (October, 1927), 516.

<sup>40</sup> Dodd, op. cit., p. 177.

<sup>41</sup> Theodore Hockel, Wahrheit im Johannesevangelium und bei Luther (Helsinki: Akademische Buchhandlung, 1944), p. 34.

event of the Incarnation of Jesus. They are not to be understood ideologically or philosophically, but are grounded in an act of God.<sup>42</sup> Grace, as the groundless love of God, is not a substance, but rather the creative acts of God. The acts of God, which constitute grace, give Truth its reality content.<sup>43</sup> Thus that God is ἀλήθεια means that the reality of God's nature is gracious.<sup>44</sup> Similarly, all the predicates which John uses of God can be included in this one all-inclusive term, ἀλήθεια. The ἀληθινὸς θεὸς ἰσ πνεῦμα (Jn. 4:24). God is ἀγάπη (1 Jn. 4:8.16). God is φῶς (1 Jn. 1:6).

The true God reveals His ἀλήθεια through His Son, in His person, His work, and His word. As early as his prologue, John makes this clear. After describing the eternal Logos, who is face-to-face with God and shares fully in His nature and activity (Jn. 1:1-3), he continues, καὶ ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο . . . καὶ ἐθεασάμεθα τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ, δόξαν ὡς μονογενοῦς παρὰ πατρός, πλήρης χάριτος καὶ ἀληθείας (1:14). It is only through the λόγος ἐνσαρκός that men are able to receive the revelation of the grace of God, for the in His person is πλήρης χάριτος καὶ ἀληθείας. John's comment in verse 18 emphasizes this, θεὸν οὐδεὶς ἑώρακεν πώποτε· μονογενὴς θεὸς ὁ ὢν εἰς τὸν κόλπον τοῦ πατρὸς,

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., p. 26.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., p. 35.

<sup>44</sup> W. F. Howard, Christianity According to St. John (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, c.1940), p. 185.



ἐκεῖνος ἐξηγήσατο. Jesus unfolds for men the real nature of the true God, but He is not merely an organ of the revelation, as the prophets of the past. He is the content of the revelation. He is in His person the Truth of God.<sup>45</sup> Jesus makes this claim for Himself when He says, ἐγώ εἰμι ἡ ὁδὸς καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια καὶ ἡ ζωὴ· οὐδεὶς ἔρχεται πρὸς τὸν πατέρα εἰ μὴ δι' ἐμοῦ. Jesus is the only way by which men can come to the Father, because He alone is the Revelation and the Revealer of the Father's nature and His acts for the deliverance of men. He alone "has life in himself" (Jn. 5:26) and He alone can impart this life to men who receive Him as God's Revelation.

As Jesus reveals God in His person, so He reveals Him in His work. God is a God who acts in grace, and this is His great act, that He sent His Son into the world, so that men might have life (Jn. 3:16). His σημεῖα, His ἔργα, and especially His death and resurrection, constitute the gracious nature of God active in history. He is the incarnation of the χάρις and ἀλήθεια of God (Jn. 1:17), for through His work God reveals Himself acting for the salvation of men.

In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love . . . that He loved us and sent his Son to be the expiation for our sins (1 Jn. 4:9 f.).

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<sup>45</sup>Heckel, op. cit., p. 28.

Finally, Jesus reveals τὴν ἀλήθειαν through His words. This is well illustrated in Jn. 8:38-47. Jesus claims here, as on many occasions, that the words He speaks are words He has received from God. "I speak of what I have seen with my Father . . ." (v. 38). He calls these words of His

which He heard from God (v. 40). He equates the truth which He speaks (v. 45), with τὰ ῥήματα τοῦ θεοῦ (v. 47). He is not only speaking true facts about God; He is revealing the true nature of God through the words He speaks, for they are from God. It is clear here that only those who believe (v. 45 f.) can receive the revelation and benefit from it. Jesus' revelation of God through His words is stressed also when He says, ἐγὼ . . . εἰς τοῦτο ἐλήλυθα εἰς τὸν κόσμον, ἵνα μαρτυρήσω τῇ ἀληθείᾳ (18:37). In its context this passage emphasizes that the purpose of Jesus' coming was not earthly rule, but testimony to the truth. His is a spiritual mission: to make God known to men as a God who reigns over all in glorious transcendence, yet wills to act in history for man's good. This is the essential point, that God reveals Himself for the sake of men.

The truth, which is the divine reality revealed, becomes the possession of man and the determining factor of his existence through the act of God. "From his fulness (χάρις καὶ ἀλήθεια) we have all received . . ." (Jn. 1:16). This receiving of the truth is described in Johannine literature

as "knowing the truth." Howard<sup>46</sup> well describes this process,

From that life of God which alone has reality and permanence an activity of love has entered into the plane of history and brought the gift of eternal life into the present. Truth is not a correct concept of God to be apprehended by the intellect so much as a revelation of reality to be received in a personal relationship.

Jn. 8:31 f. is the locus classicus. Jesus says to beginners in faith, ἐὰν ὑμεῖς μένητε ἐν τῷ λόγῳ τῷ ἐμῷ, ἀληθῶς μαθηταί μου ἐστέ, καὶ γνώσεσθε τὴν ἀλήθειαν, καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια ἐλευθερώσει ὑμᾶς. The way to come to possess the truth is by abiding in the revelation of the Father which Jesus brings (cf. v. 26). Knowing the truth is not grasping anything intellectually, but coming into a personal relationship with Him who is the Truth. γινώσκω (γῆν) has the pregnant force of God's covenant relationship with His people (Nos. 13:5; Am. 3:2) and the intimate personal relationship between man and wife (Gen. 4:1; Mt. 1:25). To know the truth means to know God as a gracious God on your behalf, to experience personally the new relationship with Him by virtue of the incarnation, life, death, and resurrection of the Revolution. This is to be free from the slavery of sin; this is ζωή.

Knowledge of the truth is the determining factor of human existence. When the truth confronts man, he either rejects it and remains in his hopeless slavery to sin, or he receives it through the rebirth which God accomplishes in him. The contrast comes to the fore in Jn. 8:44, where the unbelieving

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<sup>46</sup>Howard, op. cit.

Jews are described as children of the devil. *εκεῖνος* ἀνθρωποκτόνος ἦν ἀπ' ἀρχῆς, καὶ ἐν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ οὐκ ἔστηκεν, ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν ἀλήθεια ἐν αὐτῷ. Though Bultmann attributes this statement to gnostic mythology, which is unacceptable, his comments are helpful. He points out that by implication this verse shows the contrast between ἀλήθεια, which gives life, and the devil, who is a murderer, and that either the divine or the satanic reality is the determining principle in any man's existence.<sup>47</sup> ἀλήθεια, as God's reality, is set over against and is inaccessible to human existence, as it has constituted itself through the fall from God and through sin; and the revelation is a wonderful event, which opens up the real possibility of being to man, who can receive it only by faith.<sup>48</sup> In contrast to verse 44 is verse 47, "He who is of God hears the words of God." The statement of Jesus to Pilate equals the same thing, *πᾶς ὁ ὢν ἐκ τῆς ἀληθείας ἀκούει μου τῆς φωνῆς* (18:37).

*ἐκ τῆς ἀληθείας* is a phrase in John which describes those who are characterized by ἡ ἀλήθεια (cf. John's usage of *ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου* et. al.). It designates a person as one who has been marked and stamped in his basic essence by the revealed reality of God. This act of characterization has been the work of God alone and it determines how the person will react

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<sup>47</sup>Bultmann, op. cit., p. 246.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., p. 245.

to the word of Jesus. Those who are of the truth hear God's word (18:37) and love others (1 Jn. 3:19).

From man's side, knowledge of the truth is both active and passive. It is passive in that God reveals, while man simply receives this revelation through God's grace. It is active in that a man who is ἐκ τῆς ἀληθείας puts into practice what is revealed.<sup>49</sup> The freedom which knowledge of the truth brings (Jn. 8:32) is freedom to worship and serve God in accordance with His true nature. Knowing the truth and having the truth dwelling in one, produces the response which corresponds to God's true nature, ἀγάπη. Thus the elder writes to the "elect lady" and her children, οὐς ἐγὼ ἀγαπῶ ἐν ἀληθείᾳ, καὶ οὐκ ἐγὼ μόνος ἀλλὰ καὶ πάντες οἱ ἐγνωκότες τὴν ἀλήθειαν, διὰ τὴν ἀλήθειαν τὴν μένουσαν ἐν ἡμῖν, καὶ μεθ' ἡμῶν ἔσται εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα (2 Jn. 1 f.). Negatively, those who say that they have no sin do not have the truth abiding in them, as is evident from the ψεῦδος character of their self-estimation (1 Jn. 1:8). Similarly those who merely profess to know God, but do not live in accord with His true nature by keeping His commands, do not have the truth dwelling in them, but are ψεῦστα like their father (1 Jn. 2:4).

It is in this connection that the difficult expressions ποιεῖν τὴν ἀλήθειαν (Jn. 3:21; 1 Jn. 1:6) and περιπατεῖν ἐν ἀληθείᾳ (2 Jn. 4; 3 Jn. 3 f.) can be understood. Many

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<sup>49</sup>Howard, op. cit., p. 186.

scholars (e.g., Blackman<sup>50</sup>) think that in these expressions the characteristic Johannine concept steps aside for the Old Testament concept (cf. Gen. 32:10; 47:29; 2 Esdr. 19:33, where  $\text{אֱמֶנֶת אֱמֶנֶת}$  means to practice fidelity or to act honorably). This would make good sense in the passages in John, but in the light of his usage, it seems inadequate.<sup>51</sup> The context of Jn. 3:21, which stresses the necessity of rebirth from above, makes clear that those who do the truth are those whom God has regenerated and who believe in His Son, i.e., those who are characterized by the truth. That such a one does the truth serves to make manifest that it is because of or through God that his deeds are worked. His deeds are consistent with the true nature of God. This man is contrasted to the evil doer, who is already condemned by his rejection (v. 18), and hates the light because it exposes his deeds for what they are (v. 20). 1 Jn. 1:6 f. contrasts "not doing the truth" with "if we walk in the light, as he is in the light. . . ." This emphasizes again that the real Christian activity is to live in accordance with God's true nature, here using the figure  $\varphi\omega\varsigma$ .

$\text{περιπατεῖν ἐν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ}$  (2 Jn. 4; 3 Jn. 3 f.) appears to be a rather general expression for the entire life and conduct of those who know the truth and have the truth abiding

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<sup>50</sup>Blackman, op. cit., p. 270.

<sup>51</sup>Dodd, op. cit., p. 174.

in them (2 Jn. 1 f.). Nothing gives John greater joy than to know that his spiritual children are conducting their whole life in harmony with the revelation of God's true nature which they have received and which has remade their nature (3 Jn. 4). That this is ἀγάπη is clearly expressed (2 Jn. 5 f.).

The expression προσκυνεῖν ἐν ἀληθείᾳ (Jn. 4:23 f.) fits into this same context of a life being lived in ἀλήθεια. In contrast to the nationalistic and geographically confined worship practised by the Jews and Samaritans (4:20) Jesus says, ἀλλὰ ἔρχεται ὥρα καὶ νῦν ἐστίν, ὅτε οἱ ἀληθινοὶ προσκυνηταὶ προσκυνήσουσιν τῷ πατρὶ ἐν πνεύματι καὶ ἀληθείᾳ . . . πνεῦμα ὁ θεὸς . . . (4:23 f.). The use of ἀλήθεια here indicates that genuine worshippers in the new age will recognize God in His true nature as πνεῦμα and worship Him as such because they will be characterized by this same reality of God. Bultmann<sup>52</sup> points out that in John both ἀλήθεια and πνεῦμα denote the sphere of divine being and activity in contrast to the human (cf. 3:6-8). The sense is therefore not that the correct worship occurs in spirituality and pure knowledge, but that it occurs by virtue of the determination of the worshipper through God's being itself: through the πνεῦμα. When ἀλήθεια is added, it is therewith said that such worship takes place only by virtue of the

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<sup>52</sup>Bultmann, op. cit., p. 247.

determination of the worshipper through the revelation, which ensues through Jesus (v. 25 f.), therefore in the determination through the Revealer, who is the only approach to God (1:18; 14:6).

In this entire experience of the ἀλήθεια of God working as the source and context of the new life, the activity of τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας is vital. The Spirit is another παράκλητος (Jn. 14:16), whom Jesus sends to continue His own activity as the Revealer. He, like Jesus, proceeds from the Father (15:26) and speaks only what He has heard from the Father (16:13). His coming, however, is not a new revelation; He will bear witness to Christ (15:26), who is the one, final revelation of the gracious nature of God. He is called τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας because He bears witness to the Son, who is the Truth (1 Jn. 5:6), and glorifies the Son (Jn. 16:13). His work is to dwell in those who know the truth (14:16), and lead them into all truth, i.e., He will continue, clarify, and recall to the disciples the divine revelation which came to them in Jesus (16:31). Through Him the revelation continues to work in the church.<sup>53</sup>

Thus the entire Christian experience of the gracious God acting through Christ for and in Christians moves in the context of ἀλήθεια. ἀλήθεια is a primary characteristic of the life of the children of God. Its character-determining

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid., p. 248.



power distinguishes the church from the world, which is the domain of the ψεύστης. ἀλήθεια is also the source of the inner life of the church, in accordance with the promise of Jesus in Jn. 8:31 f. and through the activity of the Spirit. This ἀλήθεια-context in which the regenerate live seems to underlie the repeated and varied use of the word in the Johannine epistles. The following quotation is sufficient to illustrate this.

The elder to the elect lady and her children, whom I love in truth, and not only I but also all who know the truth, because of the truth which abides in us and will be with us forever: Grace, mercy and peace will be with us, from God the Father and from Jesus Christ the Father's Son, in truth and love. I rejoiced greatly to find some of your children following the truth. . . (2 Jn. 1-4; cf. 3 Jn. 1-4.8.12; 1 Jn. 1:6.8; 2:4.21; 3:18; passim).

In the light of this total context of life created, motivated, and sustained by the divine reality revealed, Jn. 17:17 must be understood, ἀγιάσον αὐτοὺς ἐν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ· ὁ λόγος ὁ σὸς ἀλήθεια ἐστίν. Jesus is here praying for men who have already come to recognize in Him the revelation of God, and who have begun to experience the life which knowledge of that revelation brings. Though they do not understand everything, they have received Christ's word (17:8) and they are changed men, no longer ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου (v. 16), but characterized by ἀλήθεια (cf. 18:37). As Jesus now prays for their special consecration for a holy office and divine commission, He does not seek this by any strange, mysterious method, but He prays for their consecration through the same

means which is already the determining power in their lives. The same divine revelation which they have received and to which they are to bear witness (cf. 17:20; 20:31) is the medium and atmosphere of their consecration for this mission.<sup>54</sup>

It must be remembered that this revelation is not a complex of sentences or thoughts, nor is it cosmological or soteriological speculation, but a revelation that cannot be detached from the person and work of Jesus, nor from the impact He has made upon the individuals in a personal encounter. He brings the ἀλήθεια not simply as communication mediated through the word, but in that He sanctifies Himself for His disciples (v. 19), so that He can truly say, ἐγὼ εἰμι ἡ ὁδὸς καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια καὶ ἡ ζωὴ (14:6).<sup>55</sup> It is ἀλήθεια in this sense that is the means and sphere of the disciples' rebirth, growth, and consecration for witness-bearing.

This ἀλήθεια in and through which the disciples are consecrated is the word of God. The emphasis here is on ὁ λόγος ὁ σὸς. It is as if Jesus had said, "Consecrate them in the truth." Before proceeding to a full exposition of the latter clause, it will be necessary to consider the Johannine concept of λόγος which will also serve to unfold more completely the force of ἀλήθεια in this passage.

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<sup>54</sup>William Temple, Readings in St. John's Gospel (Second series; London: MacMillan and Co., c.1940), p. 324.

<sup>55</sup>Bultmann, op. cit., p. 247.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE JOHANNINE ΛΟΓΟΣ-CONCEPT AND ITS MEANING IN JOHN 17:17

#### λόγος in Greek Literature

Etymologically, the basic meaning of the root λεγ- is "collect," "assemble." From the idea of assembling things in a row, the additional concepts of repetition and critical examination attached themselves to this root. Thus λέγω developed various meanings, whose relation is best shown by their German equivalents: zählen (count, reckon), aufzählen (enumerate, reckon), erzählen (tell, relate).<sup>1</sup> The development of the meaning of λόγος follows in the same main stream as λέγω, but eventually reaches a much more pregnant concept. λόγος shows the meanings "counting," "reckoning," "calculation," the latter two occurring rather often throughout the entire classical period.<sup>2</sup> In this stream of thought it develops the meanings "reflection," "deliberation," "cause," "stipulation."<sup>3</sup> As a technical term of mathematics it comes to mean "proportion," "ratio," "relation," "connection." Through the channel of mathematics and philosophy it develops the meanings "Sinn," "Ordnung,"

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<sup>1</sup>Albert Debrunner, "λόγος," Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament, edited by Gerhard Kittel (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1942), IV, 71 f.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 73.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

"Mass."<sup>4</sup> Since the second half of the fifth century, λόγος could mean: "die ratio des Menschen, das Denkvermögen (as a synonym of νοῦς), die Vernunft, der menschliche Geist und Gedanke."<sup>5</sup>

From the basic sense of λόγος as "Erzählung," "word," "saying," "speech," its meaning develops to comote a message from a god or an oracle, the word of a soothsayer, or the spoken words in a philosophical dialogue. λόγος refers more to the content of the saying than to accidental features such as sound or beauty.<sup>6</sup>

The λόγος-concept, from Heraclitus on, develops two sides that lie next to each other. First, λόγος as "word," "speech," "saying," "revelation," not so much in the sense that something is announced to be listened to, as that something is exhibited and made clear, which one should recognize, know, and understand. λόγος is the rational power, by which man can understand himself and his place in the world. It is the exhibition of the state of things as meaningful and understandable; likewise it is the state of things itself, its basis and its structure. Secondly, λόγος as the metaphysical reality, a strong concept in Greek philosophy and theology which, toward the end of the period of antiquity,

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<sup>4</sup>Hermann Kleinmecht, "λόγος," Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament, edited by Gerhard Kittel (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1942), IV, 77.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 78.

becomes finally, under foreign influences, a cosmological, world-creating "Grösze und Hypostase" of the Deity, a δεύτερος θεός.<sup>7</sup> It is self-evident to the Greek that in the world and its on-going process, a λόγος a law that can be discovered and understood, holds sway, a λόγος which above all makes the knowledge and understanding in the human λόγος possible.<sup>8</sup>

The development of the unique λόγος-concept will now be briefly traced, beginning with Heraclitus. Heraclitus' system was a reaction against the materialism of Ionian philosophy. His system was symbolic and mythical, a form of pantheism, which found the divine principle in everything. This divine principle is described by various terms, among which is λόγος. Inge describes this as follows, "The divine soul is 'Nature,' the cosmic process; it is God; it is ψυχή, the life-principle; 'it is Logos, the divine law, or will of God.'"<sup>9</sup>

Plato attempts to define λόγος in his Theaetetus, 206D ff. Socrates speaks of three possible meanings. First, λόγος is the making of one's thoughts clear through speech (206D). Secondly, λόγος is the orderly approach to the whole

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., pp. 79 f.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 80.

<sup>9</sup> W. R. Inge, "Logos," Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, edited by James Hastings, with the assistance of John A. Selbie and Louis H. Gray (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928), p. 134.

through its elements (206E-208B). Thirdly, λόγος is the ability to tell some characteristic by which the object differs from all others (208B-210A), therefore it is the determining quality of the object, which is very close to the meaning "Reason."<sup>10</sup>

The λόγος-concept achieved its full classical expansion in Stoicism. λόγος became a generative principle of reason (λόγος σπερματικός) which manifests itself in the universe, and especially in the minds of human beings as members of a universal community.<sup>11</sup>

The Stoics distinguished between the λόγος ἐνδιάθετος, the potential, unmanifested Reason, and the λόγος προφορικός, the thought of God expressed in action. . . . Words and thoughts, according to the Stoics, were the very same things regarded under different aspects. The same λόγος which is Thought as long as it resides in the breast is Word as soon as it comes forth.<sup>12</sup>

It is a difficult question whether Stoicism identified God with the Logos, but it is most likely that Stoicism was rigidly pantheistic. The world was the supreme God; the Logos was universal reason and universal law in the universe.<sup>13 14</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>Kleinmecht, op. cit., p. 77.

<sup>11</sup>Inge, op. cit., p. 135.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 134.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>The later developments of the λόγος-concept in Hellenistic thought will be discussed in relation to the λόγος-concept of the prologue of the Gospel of St. John, infra, pp. 67 f.

The Old Testament Concept of  $\text{דְּבָרִים}$ 

$\text{דְּבָרִים}$  is the most common Hebrew word which  $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$  translates in the Septuagint. Etymologically,  $\text{דְּבָרִים}$  is the basic nature and content of a thing.  $\text{דְּבַר}$  is the speaking and expression, whereas  $\text{דְּבָרִים}$  is the sense of the word, that which determines the word's content.<sup>15</sup>

An analysis of the concept of  $\text{דְּבָרִים}$  shows that there are two primary elements, the "diagnostic" and the "dynamic."<sup>16</sup> In the former,  $\text{דְּבָרִים}$  contains a  $\nu\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$ , a thought content. It refers to the basic sense of a thing. Through its  $\text{דְּבַר}$  everything becomes knowable. Whoever grasps the  $\text{דְּבָרִים}$  of a thing has grasped the thing itself.<sup>17</sup> The sense content of the thing is so much a part of  $\text{דְּבָרִים}$ , that word and fact are often identified, and thus the strongest and most weighty attribute of  $\text{דְּבָרִים}$  is  $\text{דְּבַר}$  (2 Sam. 7:28; Gen. 42:16; 1 Egs. 17:24; Ps. 119:43.160; et.al.).<sup>18</sup> The dynamic element is not always as clear, but is none-the-less found. Every  $\text{דְּבָרִים}$  is filled with power, which can show itself in various ways. This power is experienced by the one who hears

<sup>15</sup> Otto Procksch, " $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ ," Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament, edited by Gerhard Kittel (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1942), IV, 90.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 92.

the word and receives it into himself. However, the power is not confined to the self-reception by the recipient. The power has an objective reality. Both of these elements are found especially in God's word.<sup>19</sup> Thus God says,

. . . so shall my word be that goes forth from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and prosper in the thing for which I sent it (Is. 55:11; cf. Ps. 107:20; 147:15).

This dynamic force is the new element which Semitic thought adds to the word λόγος.<sup>20</sup>

The most potent force of  $\overline{\overline{\Gamma}}\overline{\overline{\Gamma}}$  in the Old Testament is its use as the revelation which God speaks to men through His prophets. The prophetic word comes to the prophets in two primary ways, either in a vision or by way of a voice (either heard audibly or not). In the earlier instances in particular (Balamm, Num. 24:14, 16; David, 2 Sam. 23:1 ff.), the prophets, through the Spirit of the Lord, receive the λόγος of the prophesy in a vision, which lies behind the words which the prophet speaks. The later prophets also receive the revelation of God's word in visions, but these are rarer instances (e.g., Is. 6; Ezek. 1; Am. 7, 8).<sup>21</sup> In these later times the visionary revelations recede to the background and most revelations come by way of words. The prophets receive the divine sense of the revelation and speak

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 90.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 91.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 92.



it in human language.<sup>22</sup> The  $\text{אֵלֹהִים} - \text{אָמַר}$  which comes to the prophets (  $\text{אֵלֹהִים}$  ) makes them the bearers of the revelation of the plan and will of God which appears and operates in history (Jer. 1:4.11; 2:1; 13:8; Ezek. 3:16; 6:1; et.al.).<sup>23</sup>

The  $\text{אֵלֹהִים} - \text{אָמַר}$  which the prophets receive includes both indictment for evil and promise of forgiveness and restoration to those who receive and keep it (passim, e.g., Is. 1:18-20.27.28; 6:9-13). Thus Cremer<sup>24</sup> notes that the  $\text{אֵלֹהִים} - \text{אָמַר}$  is primarily the word of grace, though it works often by means of punishment. The Torah is also, in a sense, the Word of God, but it does not have the dynamic, creating or destroying element which the prophetic word has.<sup>25</sup> This dynamic element is the main contribution of Old Testament usage to the Johannine concept of  $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ .<sup>26</sup>

#### The New Testament Usage of $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$

The New Testament usage of  $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$  is far too rich for

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 93.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 94.

<sup>24</sup>Hermann Cremer, Biblico-Theological Lexicon of New Testament Greek, translated from the German of the 2nd edition by William Urwick (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1878), p. 393.

<sup>25</sup>Procksch, op. cit., p. 95.

<sup>26</sup>The later Jewish ideas which attach themselves to the concept of "word" will be treated in reference to the  $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$  concept of the prologue of the Gospel of St. John, infra, pp. 68 f.

complete treatment in this study.<sup>27</sup> Here only the main elements which have bearing on the Johannine concept will be considered.

λόγος is used quite commonly in the New Testament as ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ. In essential meaning this phrase is the same as the Old Testament phrase, "the word of the Lord," but its application is now, naturally, wider, and it often denotes the Christian message, the Gospel.<sup>28</sup> It is the word of gracious announcement, denoting all that God says or has caused to be said to men.<sup>29</sup> Thus Peter, quoting Is. 40:6 ff., equates the word of the Lord given in the Old Testament with the Christian Gospel (1 Pet. 1:23-5).

The preaching of Jesus is sometimes equated with the word of God, both by the evangelists and by Christ Himself. The people crowd Jesus to hear "the word of God" (Lk. 5:1); the seed of the sower is "the word of God" (Lk. 8:11). In Acts, ὁ λόγος τοῦ κυρίου is used in the same sense, as the word which Jesus preached, as now proclaimed by the apostles (e.g., 15:36; cf. also 1 Thess. 1:6; 2 Thess. 3:1). In the epistles, ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ likewise occurs as the Christian

<sup>27</sup>The treatment of the New Testament usage by Gerhard Kittel, "λόγος," Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament, edited by same (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1942), IV, 100-110, is thorough and exhaustive.

<sup>28</sup>J. Y. Campbell, "Word," A Theological Word Book of the Bible, edited by Alan Richardson (New York: The Macmillan Company, c.1950), p. 284.

<sup>29</sup>Greener, op. cit., p. 392.

message which the apostles preach (e.g., 1 Cor. 11:36; Col. 1:25). Frequently the simple ὁ λόγος has the same meaning (Mk. 2:2; Acts 8:4; 1 Thess. 1:6; Jas. 1:21). The Johannine usage ties in at this point, for some eight times in the Gospel, Jesus speaks of "my word" in the same sense.

λόγος is further described in the New Testament as ὁ λόγος τῆς σωτηρίας, τῆς χάριτος, τοῦ εὐαγγελίου, τῆς βασιλείας, τοῦ σταυροῦ, τῆς ἀληθείας.<sup>30</sup> Of these usages, two passages are especially meaningful in relation to the Johannine concept. In Eph. 1:13, Paul writes, "In whom you also, who have heard τὸν λόγον τῆς ἀληθείας, τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς σωτηρίας ὑμῶν, and have believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit." The word, which is the message of God's revelation, characterized by truth, is equated with the Gospel message which the Apostle preached and through which his hearers received salvation by faith in Him whose life, death, and resurrection represent the content of that proclamation. Col. 1:5 is similar, "Of this your hope you have heard before ἐν τῷ λόγῳ τῆς ἀληθείας τοῦ εὐαγγελίου, τοῦ παρόντος εἰς ὑμᾶς." Here again λόγος, ἀλήθεια, εὐαγγέλιον all mean the same thing, though they stress different aspects. They refer to the revelation of God as He speaks to men (λόγος), a revelation which represents the true

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<sup>30</sup> Alfred Schmoller, Handkonkordanz zum griechischen Neuen Testament, 9th edition (Stuttgart: Privilegierte Württembergische Bibelanstalt, 1951), p. 314.

and genuine faith (ἀλήθεια), the content of which is the good news of the work of Christ for men's salvation (εὐαγγέλιον). This message has dynamic force; it is here spoken of as bearing fruit and growing throughout the world (v. 6).

#### The Johannine Concept of λόγος

λόγος is used in five senses in the Johannine corpus. First, it is used in the plural of simple "words," spoken by Jesus or by others. Secondly, it is a single statement, a saying, or a discourse. Thirdly, it is used collectively for the whole of what Jesus said to His disciples, His message conceived of as a revelation and as a command to be obeyed. Fourthly, λόγος is used as the "word of God," His self-revelation to men. Fifthly, λόγος is used of the person of God's μονόγενής υἱός.<sup>31</sup>

The last mentioned meaning of λόγος will be discussed first, because it is the most Johannine, it shows most clearly the relation of Greek and Hebrew influence, and it underlies much of the rest of Johannine usage.

In the prologue (Jn. 1:1-18), the Logos is discussed in two aspects, prior to and in His incarnation. As the Logos asarkos He is eternal. ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος (v. 1). ἐν ἀρχῇ no doubt refers to the creation (Gen. 1:1), and ἦν asserts that He was in existence prior to that. The Logos

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<sup>31</sup>C. H. Dodd, The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel (Cambridge: The University Press, 1953), pp. 205-8.

stands in the closest possible relationship to God. He is πρὸς τὸν θεόν (v. 1); μονογενοῦς παρὰ πατρός (v. 14); μονογενῆς θεός ὁ ὢν εἰς τὸν κόλπον τοῦ πατρός (v. 18). In fact, He is θεός (v. 1). He shares in the creative activity of God (v. 3.10). He shares the attributes of God; thus He is, for instance, τὸ φῶς (v. 9; cf. 1 Jn. 1:6).

The central teaching of the prologue is the incarnation of the Logos. St. John uses numerous devices to stress the reality of this incarnation. He says, ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο (v. 14), leaving no room for Docetism. The Logos was truly ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ (v. 10); and as a brother Israelite, He εἰς τὰ ἔθνη ἦλθεν (v. 11). His real presence on earth is reemphasized in the words ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν and again, ἐθεασάμεθα τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ (v. 14). The purpose of the Logos' incarnation was to reveal to men the God who could not be seen.

θεὸν οὐδεὶς ἑώρακεν πώποτε· μονογενῆς θεός . . . ἐκεῖνος ἐξηγήσατο (v. 18) is the best commentary on the force of ὁ λόγος in the prologue. He was God's speaking to men, stressing the essential content of the revelation and its dynamic power, ἐξουσία τέχνα θεοῦ γενέσθαι (v. 12), ἐγεννήθησαν (v. 13).

The nature of this revelation through the Logos is made clear when He is described as πλήρης χάριτος καὶ ἀληθείας (v. 14).<sup>32</sup> In His person, work, and word He reveals

<sup>32</sup>cf. supra, pp. 45 f.

God as favorably inclined toward the rebellious world and as the only true and genuine God. As such the Logos is more than the bringer of a corpus of true facts about God. He is God acting for the deliverance of men, acting to give them life in the knowledge of Him. (cf. 17:1-3).

The question of Hellenistic and Jewish influence on this concept must now be broached. The issue cannot be fully explored here, but the main considerations will be outlined. In spite of the verbal similarity of some Hellenistic λόγος-speculation to the Johannine prologue, the following sharp distinctions must be noted. First, for Hellenism, λόγος can be conceived of as revelation only in the sense that the inner law or principle of a matter or of one's own self is revealed through insight. For John the λόγος comes from God to man and dwells among us. Secondly, though the λόγος in Hellenistic thought was an expression for the bond that held all the world together, and though the λόγος were mediating emanations, still the λόγος was not at all a mediator between God and man in the New Testament sense. Thirdly, the λόγος in Hellenistic thought did not appear in a single historical event, but continually emanated in unbroken creating activity, as a part of the on-going process of the world. Fourthly, Hellenistic thought had no room for the incarnation of the λόγος as a single historical man, as σάρξ. <sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup>Kleinmecht, op. cit., pp. 38 f.

The Logos-speculation of Philo moves along similar lines and shows similar sharp distinctions from the Johannine doctrine. It is true that Philo at times seems to personify the Logos, calling him *πρωτόγονος υἱός*, but even Dodd<sup>34</sup> contends that the personification must not be taken seriously and is only symbolic. He says,

. . . by Logos Philo means the Platonic world of ideas, conceived not as self-existent, but as expressing the mind of the One God. It is this that mediates between God and our world.<sup>35</sup>

Likewise Philo, because of his metaphysical dualism, could not conceive of a truly incarnate *λόγος*, who partook of the base nature of matter.<sup>36</sup>

In the light of these basic divergences of Hellenistic thought from Johannine concepts, the conclusion can be postulated that though John may have used terms which were meaningful to his Hellenistic readers and would help him to reach them with the Gospel, he was not noticeably influenced by the Hellenistic speculation.

On the other hand, the predominant Old Testament orientation of the Evangelist necessitates giving primary consideration to that background. Two main lines of thought offer parallels for the distinctive use of *ὁ λόγος* in the prologue.

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<sup>34</sup>Dodd, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

<sup>35</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 68.

<sup>36</sup>George B. Stevens, The Johannine Theology: A Study of the Doctrinal Contents of the Gospel and Epistles of the Apostle John (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, c.1894), p. 98.

First, the creation account of Gen. 1, where the creative word of God called the universe into being. This is in accord with the common Old Testament usage of  $\text{דְבַר}$  which has been noted, where the "Word of God" describes either the exercise of divine power, or the revelation of divine character, will, or purpose (Ps. 33:6,9; Is. 55:11). Secondly, the personification of Wisdom, which begins in the Old Testament (Prov. 8:22 ff.), and expands in intertestamental Judaism.<sup>37</sup> Thus Wisdom was identified with the Torah which also was personified (Eccles. 15:1; 21:11; 34:8; 19:20; et.al.).

In accord with the Old Testament background, the personification of the Logos in the Johannine prologue would seem to stress two main ideas. First, the Son reveals the true content of God's nature and gracious activity. Secondly, He reveals it in a dynamic way, through an actual life and death, and this revelation has dynamic power to recreate the hearts of men. These two elements are vital throughout the Johannine usage of  $\text{λόγος}$ .

$\text{λόγος}$  is used by John of single statements, sayings, or discourses of Jesus. In all these uses there is the element of revelation. In some of these passages,  $\text{λόγος}$  refers to a single prophecy of Jesus concerning Himself, which is part of the unfolding of His entire revelatory message. It is used

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<sup>37</sup>W. F. Howard, Christianity According to St. John (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, c.1946), pp. 47-9.



thus of His prophesy concerning the raising up of the temple of His body after three days, where it is put on the same level as a statement from the Old Testament which Jesus quotes, both of which are objects of faith (2:22). λόγος is used of the somewhat cryptic statement of Jesus, "You will seek me and you will not find me" (7:36). It is used similarly of prophecies of Jesus at the time of their fulfillment (18:9,32).

In other passages in this same category, λόγος is used of an entire discourse of Jesus which reveals the Father through the revelation of the Son and His mission. It is used thus in the plural of a discourse, to which, when the people heard it, some responded with the confession, "This is the Christ." At the same time others rejected the words of Jesus, and denied His Messiahship (7:40-44). Revelatory discourses of Jesus, designated by the term λόγος meet with rejection also in 6:60; 10:19.

λόγος is used by John with greater frequency and force of the entire message of Jesus. Various aspects of the full Johannine concept are brought out by this usage. First, it is made clear that the λόγος of Jesus is a revelation which He has received from the Father. Jesus confesses this Himself, ὁ λόγος ὃν ἀκούετε οὐκ ἔστιν ἐμὸς ἀλλὰ τοῦ πέμψαντος με πατρὸς (14:24). On another occasion Jesus says, "I do nothing on my own authority but speak thus as the Father taught" (8:28) and shortly thereafter (v. 31) speaks of "my

word" (cf. also 8:37 f.; 12:48 f.).

Secondly, the λόγος of Jesus reveals Him as the Christ, who was sent by the Father. Thus the Samaritans who have believed because of Jesus' λόγος (4:41) say to the woman who first told them about Him, "It is no longer because of your words that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Savior of the world" (v. 42; cf. vv. 25 f.). Similarly Peter confesses, "You have the words here ῥήματα, referring to all the sayings of Jesus of eternal life, and we have believed . . . that you are the Holy One of God" (6:68 f.).

Both of the previously cited passages stress also a third element of the full Johannine concept of λόγος, namely, that the revelation creates faith and has life-giving power. Thus many of the Samaritans ἐπίστευσαν διὰ τὸν λόγον αὐτοῦ (4:41); and it is the words of eternal life that have resulted in the faith of the disciples (6:68 f.). The following passage draws together some of the thoughts already discussed and adds the new element of life-giving power, ". . . he who hears my word and believes him who sent me, has eternal life; he does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life" (5:24). Here the dynamic element of the Old Testament concept is coming to the fore. The actual giving of life is more strongly expressed in these words of Jesus, "It is the spirit that gives life . . . the words (ῥήματα) that I have spoken to you are spirit and life" (6:63). The

transforming power of the λόγος of Jesus is most clearly brought out in 8:31 f., ἐὰν ὑμεῖς μείνητε ἐν τῷ λόγῳ τῷ ἐμῷ . . . , γνώσεσθε τὴν ἀλήθειαν, καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια ἐλευθερώσει ὑμᾶς. Here the λόγος of Christ empowers men to come into a personal relationship with God, in which they know and experience Him in His true nature, a relationship which results in their being freed from the bondage of sin (cf. 1 Jn. 5:18). The λόγος of Jesus is also spoken of as having cleansing power, such as makes fruit-bearing possible (Jn. 15:3). The dynamic element of the word is further emphasized where Jesus predicates judging power to it (12:48).

A fourth element of the Johannine concept is this, that the revelation which Jesus brings is to be kept (τηρέω). It is not entirely clear how broadly τηρέω is to be taken here. In some passages it seems to include much more than simply obeying the commands which are part and parcel of the revelation. For example, in the Consecratory Prayer Jesus says of His disciples, "I have manifested thy name to the men which thou gavest me . . . and they have kept thy word" (17:6). This lies in close connection to the statement, ". . . I have given them the words which thou gavest me, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me." τηρεῖν seems to include the entire response of the disciples to the word of God which Jesus revealed to them, i.e., receiving, believing, holding steadfastly to, and obeying. In a similar

sense, keeping the *λόγος* is equivalent to keeping Christ's *ἐντολή* (1 Jn. 2:7), *ἐντολάς* (1 Jn. 2:3-5). The *ἐντολή* is defined by John as follows, ". . . that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another" (1 Jn. 3:23), again describing the entire response to the word. Jesus' statement that He keeps the Father's word also argues for taking *τηρέω* in a broad sense (Jn. 8:55). The result, also, is the same result as comes from faith, namely, that he who keeps His word will never see death (8:51; cf. 11:25 f.). In many of these passages a note of decisiveness is present. Just like *ἀλήθεια*, *λόγος* represents that sine qua non revelation, which divides all men into two classes, those with God and those without Him (cf. 1 Jn. 2:4 f.; Jn. 14:24).

*λόγος* occurs in Johannine usage for the word of God. Basically, there is no difference in content between this and the *λόγος* of Christ. The former expression emphasizes Jesus as the bringer of the revelation. This equation is very explicit in Jesus' statement, "I have given them thy word." *τὸν λόγον σου* here is exactly equal to *ὁ λόγος ὁ σός* in verse 17. *λόγος* is God's self-revelation, conveyed to the disciples through the person, work, and speech of Jesus. Likewise, in the opening paragraphs of the Apocalypse *τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τὴν μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ* twice stand together as the content of the preaching of John (Rev. 1:2,9).

ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ is twice used for the revelation of God contained in the Old Testament (10:34 f.; 5:37-39). In the latter passage, though, the emphasis again is on the fact that also this Old Testament revelation is a witness to Christ who is the culmination of God's address to men.

The word of God, as also the word of Christ, is several times equated with ἡ ἀλήθεια, a most important usage for throwing light on Jn. 17:17, where the equation is complete. Jn. 8:31 f. has already been discussed.<sup>38</sup> In the same context ὁ λόγος ὁ ἐμὸς . . . ἃ ἐγὼ ἐώρακα παρὰ τῷ πατρὶ λαλῶ (8:37 f.) is parallel to τὴν ἀλήθειαν ὑμῶν λελάληκα, ἣ ἤκουσα παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ (v. 40). Similarly Jesus uses λόγος in the same sense in verse 43; ἀλήθεια again in verses 45 f.; and τοῦ θεοῦ τὰ ῥήματα in verse 47. Some differences of emphasis between these terms can be noted here. λόγος (ῥήματα) stresses the speaking activity of Jesus as bringing the content of the revelation through words. ἀλήθεια stresses that it is the reality of the genuine God that is being revealed, in contrast to all that is false and lying (v. 44).

In Jn. 17:17, λόγος and ἀλήθεια stand in perfect parallel. ὁ λόγος ὁ σὸς defines what is meant by τῇ ἀληθείᾳ in the first half of the verse. Both terms stress the idea of revelation, λόγος giving more fully the elements of address and power, ἀλήθεια conveying the idea that the content of the

<sup>38</sup> Supra, p. 72.

revelation is the true nature of God. Thus in 17:17 God's word is all that He has spoken concerning Himself in order to reveal His true character as a gracious God, active in history for the salvation of undeserving humans. This has culminated in the revelation through Christ, who so completely is the true character of God incarnate, and so completely explicates the Father (1:18), that He can be called  $\delta$   $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ . The word of God in 17:17 has the dynamic power to transform men and give them His life, a process already under way in the case of the disciples. By its equation with  $\eta$   $\acute{\alpha}\lambda\theta\epsilon\iota\alpha$ ,  $\delta$   $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$  is here likewise the dynamic medium, through which the disciples are further sanctified and consecrated for their mission, which is, in short, to preach this same  $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ , which will effect faith in their hearers as it has in them (v. 20).

## CHAPTER V

### THE FORCE OF EN IN JOHN 17:17

The preposition *ἐν* is perhaps the most versatile and flexible preposition in the Greek language. Its New Testament forces may be divided into three primary categories: local, temporal, and causal (denoting means, instrument, agency, etc.).<sup>1</sup> A full discussion of these passages is beyond the scope of this study. Only those forces will be treated which are possible in Jn. 17:17.

The instrumental force of *ἐν* is the most obvious possibility. It occurs frequently throughout the New Testament, using as its objects persons (e.g., Mt. 9:24; 1 Cor. 14:21; Rom. 3:24), inanimate things (e.g., Lk. 22:49; Mt. 26:52; Rev. 2:27), and nouns expressing verbal action (e.g., *ἐν ἀγιασμῷ πνεύματος*, 2 Thess. 2:13; 1 Pet. 1:2; *ἐν τῇ παρακλήσει*, 2 Cor. 7:7). The idiom is not especially frequent in the Johannine corpus, but it does occur several times. Thus John is sent βαπτίζεσθαι ἐν ὕδατι and witnesses to the Greater One, ὁ βαπτίζων ἐν πνεύματι ἀγίῳ (Jn. 1:33; cf. 1:26, 31). ἐν τούτῳ, indicating the activity of keeping Christ's com-

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<sup>1</sup>Thus Walter Bauer, Griechisch-Deutsches Wörterbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments und der übrigen urchristlichen Literatur, 4th edition (Berlin: Alfred Töpelmann, c.1952), cols. 467-71; and G. F. D. Moule, An Idiom Book of New Testament Greek (Cambridge: The University Press, 1953), pp. 75-7.

hands, expresses the means by which γινώσκωμεν (1 Jn. 2:3; cf. Jn. 16:30).

ἀγιάζω, the verb preceding ἐν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ in Jn. 17:17, often uses an ἐν construction to express agency. It is used thus with the Holy Spirit as the Agent, ἡγιασμένη ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ (Rom. 15:16). It is used with a personal agent also in 1 Cor. 7:14, where Paul speaks of the unbelieving spouse being sanctified by the believing spouse. In Heb. 10:10, the personal agent is expressed by ἐν (ἐν ᾧ θελήματι, which refers to God), and an instrumental participial action is expressed by διὰ with the genitive. In all these passages ἀγιάζω is passive, and the personal agent expressed by ἐν is equivalent to the subject if the verb were in the active voice. Hence these do not parallel the construction in Jn. 17:17. Heb. 13:12 illustrates this, using the personal agent as the subject of ἀγιάζω in the active voice, followed by διὰ with the genitive expressing instrumentality, Ἰησοῦς, ἵνα ἀγιάσῃ διὰ τοῦ ἰδίου αἵματος τὸν λαόν. . . . The only clear case of an impersonal instrument being expressed by the ἐν construction is Heb. 10:29, ἐν ᾧ [the blood of the covenant] ἡγιασθη, where the personal agent, God, is probably presupposed. Thus though the New Testament usage of ἀγιάζω followed by ἐν expressing instrumentality shows no exact equivalent to Jn. 17:17, and though its impersonal means is more frequently expressed by διὰ, there is none-the-less sufficient evidence to make instrumentality a possible choice in that passage.



Another possibility in Jn. 17:17 is to take ἐν in a quasi-local sense, as expressing the sphere, atmosphere, or area of the consecration. An example is the passage, λατρεύω ἐν τῷ πνεύματί μου ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ (Rom. 1:9), where the second ἐν suggests "in the sphere of" (cf. Eph. 4:16, ἐν ἀγάπῃ; 1 Tim. 4:15; Rom. 2:12).<sup>2</sup> In Johannine usage ἀλήθεια occurs twice in this sense. Jesus says of the devil, ἐν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ οὐκ ἔστηκεν (Jn. 8:44), indicating that he stands in no relation to the truth and does not live and operate in its sphere. John describes his hearers as περιπατοῦντας ἐν ἀληθείᾳ (2 Jn. 4; cf. 3 Jn. 3, 4), which expresses the atmosphere and framework within which they live.

Some passages seem to show a dual force or an ambiguity between the instrumental and local ideas. In the Apocalypse, the angel speaks of those who ". . . have washed their robes and made them white ἐν τῷ αἵματι τοῦ ἀρνίου" (Rev. 7:14). Likewise, God set Christ forth as ἰλαστήριον . . . ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ αἵματι (Rom. 3:25). In both passages it is difficult to decide which force of ἐν predominates, and it seems most natural to leave the question undecided and see both ideas expressed as one. ἁγιάζω with ἐν shows this ambiguous force in at least two passages. Paul says, . . . ἁγιάσθητε . . . ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ ἐν τῷ πνεύματι

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<sup>2</sup>A. T. Robinson, A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research, second edition (New York: George H. Doran Company, c.1914), p. 539.

τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν (1 Cor. 6:11). Agency would seem to be the most natural force, were it not for the common usage of ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι in different senses. Especially noteworthy is the salutation of the same epistle, where Paul addresses his readers as ἡγιασμένοις ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ. Again, agency would seem most natural, were it not for the very frequent use of ἐν Χριστῷ to indicate a mystical union and personal relationship, in which Christians are conceived of as living, moving, and having their being in Christ, in a quasi-local sense.<sup>3</sup>

On the basis of the previous discussion it would seem that ἐν in Jn. 17:17 could express either primarily means, primarily sphere, or a combination of the two. The standard philological authorities offer little assistance toward making the decision in this specific passage. Neither Blass-Debrunner,<sup>4</sup> Robertson,<sup>5</sup> Moule,<sup>6</sup> Bauer,<sup>7</sup> Oepke,<sup>8</sup> nor

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<sup>3</sup>Though ἀλήθεια in Jn. 17:17 refers to God's revelation in Christ and not to Christ Himself, the equation of Christ with ἀλήθεια elsewhere (Jn. 14:6) would permit some conceptual analogy between Jn. 17:17 and this Pauline usage of ἐν Χριστῷ expressing the idea of personal union with Christ as the source and atmosphere of the life of Christians (cf. 2 Cor. 5:17; *passim*). This is paralleled by Johannine ideas of union with Christ (cf. Jn. 15:1-6; 17:21,23). This, however, is by no means the primary force of ἐν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ in Jn. 17:17.

<sup>4</sup>Friedrich Blass, Grammatik des Neutestamentlichen Griechisch, revised by Albert Debrunner, 8th edition (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1949), *passim*.

<sup>5</sup>Robertson, *op. cit.*, pp. 584-91.

<sup>6</sup>Moule, *op. cit.*, pp. 75-81.

<sup>7</sup>Bauer, *op. cit.*, cols. 467-73.

Thayer<sup>9</sup> discuss or classify this particular passage. The comment of Robertson<sup>10</sup> on the usage of *ἐν* in general seems especially apt here, "In simple truth the only way to know the resultant meaning of *ἐν* is to note carefully the context. It is so simple in idea that it appears in every variety of connection."

In accord with that principle and in the light of the Johannine usage of *ἀλήθεια* as both the source and sphere of the life of the regenerate,<sup>11</sup> it would seem best to see in Jn. 17:17 a combination of the instrumental and local ideas. Perhaps the idea of means slightly predominates. Bernard<sup>12</sup> seems to take this view when he says, "Truth would be the medium of their consecration, as . . . the 'Spirit of Truth' would be the Agent (cf. 16<sup>13</sup>)." Westcott's<sup>13</sup> pregnant comment shows his acceptance of the dual force, "The 'truth' is

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<sup>8</sup> Albrecht Oepke, "*ἐν*," Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament, edited by Gerhard Kittel (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1935), II, 535-9.

<sup>9</sup> Joseph Henry Thayer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, corrected edition (New York: American Book Company, c.1886), pp. 209-13.

<sup>10</sup> Robertson, op. cit., p. 589.

<sup>11</sup> Suora, pp. 53 ff.

<sup>12</sup> J. H. Bernard, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. John, edited by A. H. McNeile (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929), II, 574.

<sup>13</sup> B. F. Westcott, The Gospel According to St. John (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1951), p. 245.

not only a power within him [the believer] by which he is moved; it is an atmosphere in which he lives." This conclusion seems to take all the factors into account most adequately, and inasmuch as nothing more specific can be concluded with certainty from the evidence, a dual force of *év* expressing both means and sphere, with a possible emphasis on the former, is here accepted.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE CONTEXT

In spite of its extreme importance for a complete appreciation of the Prayer of Consecration, a fully adequate treatment of the wider context, especially the Farewell Discourses (ch. 13-16), is not possible in this study. Here only an outline of the general context will be given, and close parallels which it affords to chapter seventeen will be noted in the discussion of that chapter.

The Farewell Discourses are preceded in the Gospel by what Dodd<sup>1</sup> has called, "The Book of Signs" (ch. 2-12). This section illustrates the predominant rejection of Jesus by His own people (cf. 1:11). The Farewell Discourses deal with the few who received Him and were given the authority to become children of God (1:12).

The Farewell Discourses begin with a dramatic action of Jesus which introduces and to a great extent epitomizes the discourses that follow, namely, the act of Jesus washing His disciples' feet (13:1-11).<sup>2</sup> The defection of Judas likewise forms a dramatic setting for much that follows (13:21-30). The first section of the discourses themselves is a dialogue

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<sup>1</sup>C. H. Dodd, The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel (Cambridge: The University Press, 1953), p. 402.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 401 f.

between Christ and His disciples, the theme of which is His departure and return (13:31-14:31).<sup>3</sup> This is conceived of as the "glorifying" of the Son (13:31 f; cf. 17:1-5). The next section is a discourse of Christ and His Church (ch. 15, 16). It begins with a discussion of the mutual indwelling which exists between Christ and His disciples, under the metaphor of the vine, the fundamental motif of which is *ἀγάπη* (15:1-17). This is followed by a discussion of the church and the world, where Jesus stresses the certainty of the world's hostility (cf. 17:14 ff.) and the equally certain presence of the Paraclete, who will fortify them against their opposition (15:18-16:11).<sup>4</sup> The final section represents a return to and expansion of the starting point of the discourses, the death and resurrection of Christ, without which there would be no assurance of divine *ἀγάπη*, no abiding in Christ, no power in the church to overcome the world.<sup>5</sup> These thoughts are dramatically summed up in the final verse, which likewise forms a fitting transition to the prayer of Jesus, "I have said this to you, that in me you might have peace. In the world you have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world" (16:33). The central theme of these discourses may be stated thus: "What it means to be

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 403-9.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., pp. 409 f.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 416.

united with Christ."<sup>6</sup> Jesus now prays that the unity of His disciples with each other and with Him in the Father might reach its ultimate perfection.

The Prayer of Consecration may be outlined as follows:

1. The completed work of the Son (1-8).
  - a. Christ's commission and His full discharge of it to the mutual glory of Father and Son, stated in general terms (1-5).
  - b. The ministry of Jesus described and its results shown (6-8).
2. The prayer for the disciples (9-19).
  - a. For their preservation in unity (9-13).
  - b. For their protection from the Evil One (14-16).
  - c. For their consecration for their mission (17-19).
3. The prayer for the church (20-26).
  - a. The prayer for the church militant (20-23).
  - b. The prayer for the church triumphant (24-26).

Hoskyns:<sup>7</sup> summary of the chapter is excellent,

The prayer is the solemn consecration of Himself in the presence of His disciples as their effective sacrifice; it is His prayer for glorification in and through His death; it is His irrevocable dedication of His disciples to their mission in the world, and His prayer that both they and those who believe through their teaching may be consecrated to the service of God; and finally, it concludes with the prayer that the Church thus consecrated

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 418.

<sup>7</sup> Edwyn Clement Hoskyns, The Fourth Gospel, edited by Francis Noel Davey (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1947), pp. 494 f.

may at the End behold the glory of the Son and dwell in the perfect love of the Father and the Son.

The chapter will now be treated in greater detail. The hour (ἡ ὥρα) has now arrived in which the culmination of Christ's mission, his death for the salvation of men and His consequent glorification, must be completed. This is an hour of mutual glory for the Father and the Son, for the Father is glorified in that the Son completes His work (17:4; cf. 5:36), namely, that of giving ζωὴν αἰώνιον to those whom the Father has given Him (17:2; cf. 6:28). The Father is glorified in this, that men recognize Him as the true God and as a result bear fruit, thereby giving good repute to His name in the world (15:8; 17:21,23). That this process is equivalent to ζωὴ αἰώνιος is clear from these key words, αὕτη δὲ ἐστὶν ἡ αἰώνιος ζωὴ, ἵνα γινώσκωσιν σε τὸν μόνον ἀληθινὸν θεὸν καὶ ὃν ἀπέστειλας Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν (17:3). To reveal God in His real nature (χάρις, ἀγάπη) by His life, death, and resurrection and to give to His disciples union with God and Himself (γινώσκω) was the purpose of Jesus' coming (1:17) and His self-consecration for this hour (17:19). As will become clear, the disciples' consecration (v. 17) is for the same mission (v. 20).

Jesus now views His work from the viewpoint of its completion (17:4 f.) and prays that the divine glory which He had before His humiliation (cf. 1:1-3) might be restored (cf. Phil. 2:5-11). It appears that both His victory on the cross and His glorified return to the Father are included.



Jesus then describes in detail what His mission was and how it has been accomplished, this being a definition of His statement, "I have glorified thee on earth . . ." (v. 4). He has manifested God's name (i.e., His character) to the disciples; He has explicated the unseen God (1:18; cf. 15:15). Hoskyns<sup>8</sup> comments,

The work of Jesus on the earth had been perfected . . . precisely because He had manifested this faith, which is both the glory and the name of God, to those especial men who had been called out of the world by the Father and dedicated to the Son as instruments of His extended mission to the world.

In response to the revelation ( $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ , v. 14) of the Father which He brought, they received it in the midst of almost unanimous rejection by the Jews (1:11-13). Their reception consisted in this, that they came to "know" and "believe" that Jesus was the Apostle of God He claimed to be (cf. 16:30). This faith-knowledge (the terms are almost synonymous) was the sole work of God through the power in His word (1:13).

Such were the results of Jesus' work. The little band that was to carry the  $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$  of salvation to the ends of the earth was prepared, though many imperfections and weaknesses still persisted among its members. Jesus now contemplates them in their situation in the world after His departure, armed with His commission and facing a hostile world.<sup>9</sup> He prays for them, and the object of all His petitions is that

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., pp. 498 f.

<sup>9</sup> Dodd, op. cit., p. 417.

they might be protected from the onslaught of the world and its prince so that they may indeed accomplish their mission as He had accomplished His. Up until this time Christ has preserved them Himself (v. 12). But now He is leaving them, as to His physical presence in the world, (v. 11) and He is going to the Father (v. 13; cf. 14:4, 12, 28; 16:28). Of course, He will by no means lose all association with them; the contrary will be the case: the union will be even closer (cf. 21-23). But they will need extra strength and protection because of the trials which will confront them as they carry out their commission, and therefore, Jesus prays for them. He prays first that they might be one, even as the Son and Father are one. Westcott<sup>10</sup> comments, "This unity is not only of will but of nature, perfectly realized in absolute harmony in Christ." It is self-evident that the content and motif of that unity is ἀγάπη (v. 26). Only by a unity of effort born out of ἀγάπη can their mission be successfully achieved.

Jesus prays next for the protection of the disciples from all the power of evil concentrated in the Evil One (v. 15). They need such protection because they stand in the κόσμος with the λόγος received from Christ which incurs for them the hatred of the κόσμος. This is the case because

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<sup>10</sup>B. F. Westcott, The Gospel According to St. John (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1951), p. 243.

this λόγος repudiates all the wickedness of the κόσμος, and because its dynamic power has recreated the disciples, making their character and witness a light which shows up all the pretense and filth of the κόσμος. Just as Christ faced rejection and opposition, so will they (v. 14; cf. 15:18 ff.). But they must remain in the world for the sake of their mission. To that end ἀγάπη motivates them, as it did Christ. As the λόγος was the power which regenerated them, so it is the medium of their consecration for their mission (v. 17) and also the content of the message they are commissioned to preach (v. 20; cf. 2 Cor. 5:19 f.).

With His disciples thus prepared to remain in the world, protected by the Father and armed with the λόγος, Jesus prays for their dedication to that mission (v. 17). As the Father consecrated the Son and sent Him into the world (10:36), so the Son sends His disciples into the world and prays that to that end they may be consecrated by the Father.<sup>11</sup> Though the κόσμος hates and opposes them, it is none-the-less their field. The λόγος which has been committed to them has the power to change worldly hearts, so that they believe and glorify God (v. 20 f.). Thus the importance of the disciples' consecration through and in the truth, i.e., the λόγος of God (v. 17).<sup>12</sup> That their consecration might be accomplished

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<sup>11</sup>Hoskyns, op. cit. p. 501.

<sup>12</sup>Verse 17 is purposely left without thorough discussion at this point to avoid repetition of other sections of the thesis.

Jesus solemnly consecrates Himself to the work yet before Him, to die a sacrificial death for His friends (v. 19; cf. 15:13).<sup>13</sup>

In these latter verses (vv. 14-19) a remarkable correspondence between Christ and His disciples can be noted. They are alike in essential nature (οὐκ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου, v. 14). They alike meet the opposition of the world (v. 14). Their mission is the same, namely, to reveal the λόγος of God, thereby to glorify Him. They are both consecrated by the Father and sent into the world (10:36; 17:17-19). This idea of unity is broadened and expanded to completeness in the last section of the prayer (vv. 20-26), where Jesus prays for the entire future church.

The mission of the disciples is vital to the growth of the church. As Hoskyns<sup>14</sup> says,

What the incarnate Son of God had once been to the Jews, the Church is now to the world--the incarnate charity and glory of God. . . . But the power of the Church to declare the word and manifest the glory and love of God depends upon its union with the Father and the Son. . . .

Therefore Jesus prays for the unity of the church and its union with Himself and the Father, a union created and contextualized in ἀγάπη (cf. 15:1-6). Yet the unity of the church has a further end, namely, the glory of God, which consists in this, that the world believes that the Father sent the

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<sup>13</sup>Cf. discussion of this passage in reference to ἀγαζω *supra*, pp. 23-5.

<sup>14</sup>Hoskyns, *op. cit.*, p. 505.

Son (v. 21) and knows His ἀγάπη (v. 23). This is the mission of the church, to witness to the λόγος it has received and thereby to increase its ranks from the world.

Jesus finally views the church in its union with God in the full eschatological setting, at the consummation of the age (v. 23). There all His disciples will be with Him in perfect unity, they will see Christ in the fulness of His glory. Words fail to describe the picture Jesus paints. Sufficient to note that again ἀγάπη is the ruling motif of the life and union here described.

In the entire prayer, where the self-consecration of Jesus, and His prayer for the preparation and consecration of the disciples is the dominant theme, verse 17, along with 18 and 19, seems to occupy a central position. These verses describe the dramatic moment when the solemn dedication takes place. This passage may be described as the ordination of the first ministry, which underlies the entire ministry and witness of the church throughout history.

## CHAPTER VII

### CONCLUSION

The study of the concepts of Jn. 17:17 has yielded the following conclusions.

ἀγιάζω, with the basic force "to separate," in Jn. 17:17 means primarily "to consecrate by setting apart for a divine commission." However, it also contains in the background, the element of cleansing from all sin and the continually increasing dedication of every power and faculty to God through spiritual growth, as the tenor of New Testament usage shows. The disciples are separated from the world and consecrated to the mission of testifying to the revelation of God.

ἀλήθεια in the Johannine corpus connotes the revelation of the Reality, that is, of the true character of God, or the knowledge of that revelation. In form the concept is Greek, but the Johannine Reality is the Old Testament God, who is merciful and faithful. God's true nature is χάρις and ἀγάπη, and these not as static qualities, for the God whom ἡ ἀλήθεια describes is a God who has acted in history for the salvation of undeserving men. This act was the sending of Christ, who so completely reveals in His person, work, and words the true character of God, that He is ἡ ἀλήθεια. ἀλήθεια determines the character of every Christian, and all Christian life is lived by the power and in the atmosphere of this revelation of

the true nature of God in Christ. It is very appropriately the medium of the consecration in Jn. 17:17.

λόγος, likewise indicating primarily the revelation of God, stresses two factors which are not prominent in the concept of ἀλήθεια. First, it is a spoken word, and connotes the speaking of God to man throughout history, culminating in His supreme expression of Himself in His Son's incarnation. Secondly, λόγος, from its Old Testament background, contains a strong dynamic element, connoting the power to transform men and give them the life of God. This element is quite prominent in Jn. 17.

No decisive conclusion can be reached on the force of the preposition ἐν, but it appears to contain two ideas side by side. It describes ἀλήθεια as both the means and the atmosphere of the consecration of the disciples.

The context shows that the idea of consecration is predominant in the prayer of Jesus. Jesus consecrates Himself for the climax of His divine commission, which is the climax of His revelation of the Father, His sacrificial death, wherein the χάρις of God reaches its ultimate expression. Likewise, He consecrates His disciples to continue the work of revealing God by preaching the λόγος they have received, that the church might exist in eternal unity with the Father and the Son, and that therein God might be glorified.

With this background the following can be concluded as to the interpretation of Jn. 17:17. Jesus here prays that

the Father will consecrate the disciples for their divine commission, a consecration which includes at the same time the continued increase of the power of His life in them over the remnants of sin and weakness. The means and atmosphere of this consecration is to be the truth, i.e., the revelation of God which unfolds Him in His true character as Grace and Love. This ἀλήθεια is the word of God which they have received through Jesus which has the dynamic power to accomplish this consecration as it has already accomplished their rebirth. This revelation is also to be the instrument with which they will carry out their mission, in that the same dynamic power will regenerate sons of God from the world as they preach its content, Jesus Christ, who is Himself, ὁ λόγος, ἡ ἀλήθεια, ὁ ἄγιος τοῦ θεοῦ.



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