

B:1-4 ◦ *The Life of 'The Word' is the Light Shining in Men's Darkness*

1 Ἐν αὐτῷ ζωὴ ἦν, [Jn 5:26; 11:25; 14:6; 1Jn 1:1-2; 5:11

^{-1:4} {All that} 'life' {was} was present [was existing] **in 'Him'**,

2 καὶ ἡ ζωὴ ἦν τὸ φῶς τῶν ἀνθρώπων, [Jn 8:12; 9:5; 12:46

moreover this 'life' was the 'light' of mankind [the (whole family of) men].

3 καὶ τὸ φῶς ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ φαίνει, [Jn 3:19

^{-1:5} furthermore this 'light' is {continually} shining **in the 'darkness,'**

4 καὶ ἡ σκοτία αὐτὸ οὐ κατέλαβεν. [Jn 12:35 cf. Ep 3:18

and never [and after all ... not //for ... not] **has this 'darkness' overtaken** [/overcome /apprehended /comprehended] **'it'**.

- 1 ▪ *The common translation "in Him was life" leaves out the nuance of the structure. The word "Life" is here enclosed with single quotes in order to show that the emphasis is upon the qualities which define or characterize all that 'life' was. "All that 'life' was" means something very different from "all that was life." The former points to quality, the latter points to identity. (Compare line A:3 above.)*
- 2 ▪ *Without any other context, ὁ ἄνθρωποι "the men" would mean "the family of men considered as a whole," "man – generically considered," or simply "mankind." His 'life' was not light to every single man without exception, but to every kind of man without distinction, such that if any man ever received genuine light, then that light ultimately derived from nowhere except from His 'life'. In other words, the light is not distributive – apportioned among the whole, so that each individual has at least some portion of this light; but rather the light is collective – considered as a whole, so that the light is out there among men and if anyone ever has any genuine light, then it comes from the 'life' of 'The Word'.*
- 3-4 ▪ *Darkness is the absence of light. Darkness never shines, only light shines; there can be no such thing as a dark bulb, but only a light bulb; darkness spreads only by removing the light. The life of God in Christ Himself is the light of revealed truth which shines into men who would otherwise have only darkness in themselves. His life of continual interaction with men in history – with Adam, with Abraham, with Moses, with David, with John – is recorded in Scripture. His life reveals truth. Men of darkness have always attempted to overtake and extinguish the light – particularly and especially when the light became incarnate in Jesus – but the Word always prevails and continues to shine the light of His life. Only those given eyes to see will see the light in His life.*
- 2-4 ▪ *The repetition of the καὶ is best understood as displaying developmental links, hence the graduated translation "moreover ... furthermore ... and never [after all ... not]."*
- 1-4 ▪ *'Life', light, and darkness are spiritual metaphors introduced here, and used throughout this Gospel. Life is elsewhere identified as eternal life (3:15; 4:36; 5:39; 6:54, 68; 10:28; 12:25; 17:2, 3); the light is the glory of eternal life shining from the Word, revealed truth incarnate, as the remainder of this prologue explains. The darkness is mankind without the light, separated from the life of God, spiritually dead, always falling short of the glory of God. When the light of life shines into the darkness of a man's spiritually dead soul, the dead come to life.*