

D:1-6 • The True Light Has Come into the World

1 Ἦν τὸ φῶς τὸ ἀληθινόν, Is 49:6; Jn 3:19; 8:12; 9:5; 12:46; 1Jn 2:8

^{-1:9} The genuine [/true /real /authentic /ultimate] 'Light' | ... |

2 – ὁ φωτίζει πάντα ἄνθρωπον –

– which {'Light'} is {continually} enlightening [/illuminating /giving light to /shedding light upon] every {sort of [/]} man –

3 ἐρχόμενον εἰς τὸν κόσμον. Jn 3:19; 12:46

| was | {at that very time} coming into the world.

LINE 1 • Jesus is the genuine or ultimate 'Light', and all other lights, such as John, are lesser reflective lights. Jesus is also the genuine or ultimate bread from heaven (John 6:32), and vine (John 15:2) – He is the antitype of these figures.

LINE 2 • Light is a metaphor for revelation; enlightening is a metaphor for instructing by word or example.

"Every" is limited by the previous context. The subtle difference here is between the plural number (line B:2 "this 'Life' was the 'Light' of mankind"; line C:5 "that {men of} all {sorts} should {come to} believe"), and the singular number (line D:2 "enlightening every {sort of} man").

The plural refers to all men collectively and generically, the singular refers to every man individually and generically. The sense is not that the 'Light' actually enlightens every single person, but that any genuine enlightening which may happen to any person anywhere anytime ultimately derives from this 'Light' – This 'Light' enlightens every man who is ever enlightened (John 8:12). This would fulfill the purpose of John bearing witness to the 'Light' in order that men might believe.

Another possible sense is that the 'Light' sheds light upon every sort of man, exposing his thoughts and deeds for what they truly are, dividing the world between those who come to the 'Light' and those who hide from the 'Light' (John 3:19-21; 9:39-41).

LINES 1-3 • The genuine 'Light' of the Word is the only thing which can genuinely enlighten men. So whatever true light any man may ever have must necessarily come from the Word. Without this 'Light', any so-called "light" in men actually amounts to darkness (Matthew 6:23; Luke 11:35; Proverbs 26:12; Isaiah 5:20-21). Men suppress this 'Light' in moral unrighteousness (Romans 1:18). They pervert revealed truth into lies, deceit, and fraud.

The result of this enlightening of every sort of man is described in lines 4-6 and E:1-9 and later in John 3:19-21.

Alternate translations:

This was the genuine 'Light' which, coming into the world, continually enlightens every sort of man.

There was the genuine 'Light' which continually enlightens every sort of man {as he is} coming into the world.

4 Ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ἦν, Hb 1:2

^{-1:10} 'He' was {already} present [/was existing] in the world,

5 καὶ ὁ κόσμος δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο,

and indeed [/moreover] the world had come into existence through 'Him',

6 καὶ ὁ κόσμος αὐτὸν οὐκ ἔγνω. Jn 12:37-43

and yet the world did not acknowledge [/know /recognize] 'Him'.

LINES 3-4 • There may appear to be a contradiction between line D:3 and D:4, and E:1 below.

D:3 "The genuine 'Light' ... was {at that very time} coming into the world" may refer to His beginning in ministry.

D:4 "He' was {already} present in the world" may refer to His omnipresence as Creator (D:5).

E:1 (below) "He came into {His} own {possessions}" may refer to His incarnation.

He was coming, He was already present, and He came.

LINES 4-5 • These two lines mimic A:1-7.

LINES 4-6 • Either the grammatically neutral 'Light' of lines B:2-4; C:4, 6-7; D:1-2 becomes the personal masculine "He" on this line, or the subject reverts back to the personal 'Word,' or else the two identities are here merged into one Person.

LINES 4-6 • The word "world" may be used here in three different senses:

D:4 "He' was {already} present in the world" may refer to the inhabitable portion of the earth with all of its living inhabitants.

D:5 "the world had come into existence through 'Him'" may refer to the entire creation, including the original progenitors of every human being.

D:6 "the world did not acknowledge 'Him'" may refer to mankind in the fallen state of darkness (B:3-4) without spiritual regeneration.

LINES 5-6 • The repetition of the καὶ is best understood as displaying an ironic climax, hence the graduated translation "and indeed [moreover] ... and yet."

LINE 6 • This world did not acknowledge Him as its Maker and Master.