



## JOHN 1:15 | JOHN, THE WITNESS (PART 2)

- Verse 15 –
  - It is interesting that the Greek has **bare witness** in the present tense (present, active, indicative).
    - This was done often in Greek to take the reader back in time and is often translated to the past tense in English. However, in this case, the verb translated **cried** is in the perfect tense (an action that is completed but has effect to this day).
    - The Young's Literal translates as *John doth testify concerning him, and hath cried...*
    - Since the Gospel was written after the ministry of John, it seems that the author is saying, "John still speaks," metaphorically, not physically (as in Heb. 11:4).
  - John's testimony was that **He that cometh after me** (i.e. *Jesus, chronologically speaking*) **is preferred before me**.
    - The word **preferred** is a translation of γίνομαι [ginomai], which is a "to be" word of existence.
    - The Oxford English Dictionary gives an obsolete definition of *preferred* as "To put or set in front or before."
    - The translators have all struggled to translate the phrase because it is followed by the truth that **he was before me** (where before is πρῶτος [protos], *first*).
      - Rather than say, "he was before me for he was before me," KJV translators chose another word that meant before, thus **preferred**.
      - Note that NASB and ESV chose *higher rank* and *ranks before me*, respectively, though the word *ginomai* has nothing to do with rank. The NASB and ESV translators likely erred by adapting the KJV without taking into account the obsolete meaning of the word.
  - These words will come from John's mouth in John 1:30.

## JOHN 1:16-18 | THE WORD, DECLARED

- Verse 16 –
  - While no Bible translations (of which I am aware) do so, it is *possible* that these words continue the quote of John. It is also possible that they return to the commentary of the author.
  - The pronoun **we** must refer to the Jewish nation (as in v. 14), which received His **fulness** more than any other nation or people, for He **dwelt among us...**(v. 14).
  - Furthermore, the Jewish nation received **grace for grace**, or *one grace in place of another grace*.
    - The Greek word translated **for** is ἀντί [anti], which means *in the place of*. It is used in Matthew 5:38, an **eye for an eye**....
    - This is to say that, with the arrival of Jesus, a *new grace* had arrived. This should not be taken as the grace that was later revealed to Paul (made clear by v. 17).
- Verse 17 –
  - This should not imply that **grace and truth** was not present in the law.
    - The word **by** (used twice in this verse) is διά [dia], which means *through*.

- Indeed, the law **was given through Moses** (see Dt. 4:44), but that law was itself gracious in that it gave a clear path to rightness with God and was from a gracious God (see Ex. 34:6-7) and the law was itself truth (Ps. 119:142).
    - From whom did this **grace and truth** of the law come *through*? Through **Jesus Christ!**
  - While we normally read this verse to say, “God gave the law with Moses and He gave grace and truth with Jesus,” that is not what the verse *actually* says.
- Verse 18 –
  - Considering Exodus 24:10-11, how can it be said that **No man hath seen God at any time?**
    - In light of the full revelation of Scripture, it must have been the pre-incarnate Christ which appeared before Moses.
    - This preincarnate Christ **was with God, and...was God** (Jn. 1:1).
  - This **only begotten Son** now **hath declared him**. This truth is the *point and purpose* of the Gospel of John: to show that Jesus was *in the Father* and has declared the Father (see Jn. 20:30-31).

### JOHN 1:19-28 | JOHN, THE WITNESS (PART 3)

- Verses 19-20 –
  - The **priests and Levites from Jerusalem** were **of the Pharisees** (v. 24).
  - Their interest was to know **Who art thou?**
    - Verses 10-23 ask *who?*, followed by verses 24-28 which as *why?*
    - John’s answer went straight to the *agenda* rather than the *question*.
    - The author gives added emphasis to the answer by saying that John **confessed, and denied not; but confessed** that he was **not the Christ**.
      - The Greek Χριστός [Christos] is *anointed one*, thus the Greek equivalent of *Messiah*.
    - All of this implies that John was preaching a Kingdom message and that the religious rulers wanted to know if he was the Messiah or presenting himself as such.
      - What is not known from this is whether they were *open to the idea* of John being the Messiah (though if these are the same Pharisees of Matthew 3:6-9, one would presume they came with a negative view).
- Verse 21 –
  - The representatives give two options in their questions, **Elias** or **that prophet**.
  - **Elias** (the Greek spelling of *Elijah*) because of Malachi 4:4. John the Baptist would answer in the negative. While he was the messenger of Malachi 3:1, he was not Elijah, the messenger of the tribulation.
  - Who is **that prophet**? Here the definite article is used and the reference is to a particular prophet, almost certainly the one Moses referred to in Deuteronomy 18:18. Note the capitalization of Mark 8:28 (KJV), a reference to the same Prophet.
- Verses 22-23 –
  - John gives them a clear answer: **I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness....** John quotes from Isaiah 40:3 (Isaiah’s being transliterated in the KJV as **Esaias**).
- Verse 24 –
  - The Pharisees were a sect of Judaism which strictly adhered to the oral law (i.e.: rabbinical tradition).