

John 1:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

Analysis

This verse represents the theological apex of the Incarnation: the eternal Logos (Word) became sarx (flesh). The Greek word logos encompasses reason, divine expression, and creative power, while sarx emphasizes the full humanity assumed - not merely appearance but actual embodiment. The phrase 'dwelt among us' uses eskenosen, literally 'tabernacled,' evoking the Old Testament Tabernacle where God's glory dwelt. John declares that the disciples beheld His glory - doxa, the manifest presence of God. The description 'full of grace and truth' (charis kai aletheia) echoes Exodus 34:6, where God reveals Himself as abundant in chesed and emet (covenant love and faithfulness). The Incarnation bridges the infinite-finite gap: God becomes accessible without ceasing to be God.

Historical Context

Written circa 90-100 AD, John's Gospel addresses both Jewish readers familiar with Wisdom Literature (where Logos appears as divine agent in creation) and Hellenistic audiences influenced by Stoic philosophy (which conceived Logos as cosmic principle). The prologue's assertion that the Logos became flesh confronted Greek dualism that considered matter inferior to spirit. For Jewish readers, the claim that God 'tabernacled' among them recalled the wilderness wanderings and Solomon's Temple - but now God's presence inhabits human flesh rather than architectural space. This verse established Christian orthodoxy against early heresies like Docetism, which denied Christ's true humanity. The testimony 'we

beheld his glory' reflects eyewitness apostolic tradition, grounding theology in historical reality.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does the Incarnation resolve the philosophical problem of the infinite God becoming knowable to finite humans?
2. What is significant about John choosing sarx (flesh) rather than soma (body) or anthropos (man) to describe the Incarnation?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	ό	λόγος	σὰρξ	έγένετο	καὶ	ἐσκήνωσεν	ἐν	ἡμῖν
(and	G3588	the Word	flesh	was made	(and	dwelt	among	us
G2532		G3056	G4561	G1096	G2532	G4637	G1722	G2254
καὶ	έθεασάμεθα	τὴν	δόξαν	αὐτοῦ	δόξαν	ώς		
(and	we beheld	G3588	glory	his	glory	as		
G2532	G2300		G1391	G846	G1391	G5613		
μονογενοῦς	παρὰ	πατρός	πλήρης	χάριτος	καὶ			
of the only begotten	of	the Father	full	of grace	(and			
G3439	G3844	G3962	G4134	G5485	G2532			
ἀληθείας								
truth								
G225								

Additional Cross-References

1 John 4:9 (Parallel theme): In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

1 Timothy 3:16 (Glory): And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

John 1:1 (Word): In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Isaiah 40:5 (Glory): And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.

Galatians 4:4 (Word): But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,

Hebrews 1:3 (Glory): Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

John 6:51 (Parallel theme): I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

Colossians 1:19 (Parallel theme): For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell;

Romans 8:3 (Word): For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

1 Corinthians 15:47 (Parallel theme): The first man is of the earth, earthly: the second man is the Lord from heaven.