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Paul's attitude to these is very much the same as that of the Jewish prophets to sacrifice; they are only of help to those who come with a humble and sincere heart. Jesus, who discarded all the elaborate ritual of the Jews, seems deliberately to have based these two Christian symbols on the commonest acts of daily life—washing and feeding; but to the early Christians the prime significance of each sacrament resided in the fact that the Lord is actually present. Does the sacrament effect what it symbolizes for those who come conscious of His presence? As much perhaps as a mother kissing her child as a sign and symbol of affection feeds its love for her. The very simplicity of these sacraments, indeed, is a proof that we are meant to raise all the common acts of life to their level and potentiality. All things uncontaminated by sin are God's sacraments to man. There is nothing more than this in Paul's view of the Sacraments.

The final point in Paul's religious belief is his eschatology. Here he showed his originality, for while much of the eschatology of the early Church

was still confined to the swaddling clothes of Jewish belief, he came to the great conclusion that to die means to go and be with Christ immediately, and he formulated the great conception of the spiritual body. The Christian would enjoy eternal life because he was 'in Christ' and had received God's life into himself. As to the fate of the wicked, the early Christians had no more knowledge than we have. There would be a hell, but whether that would be retributive and everlasting or redemptive and temporary, they had no clear opinion. Paul, however, came in the end to the great hope of the ultimate redemption of all mankind.

Paul's message to our own age may be said to be this above all, the reality of a religious experience based on fellowship with Christ. The attempt to discredit this as the fruit of auto-suggestion is 'nothing but a gigantic bluff.' Such an attack on religion is a counsel of despair. We have an anointing from the anointed Christ, or an 'earnest,' a first instalment of God's Holy Spirit. Nothing can shake or alter that fact.

The Johannine Doctrine of the Logos.

BY THE REVEREND ARCHIBALD B. D. ALEXANDER, D.D., LANGBANK.

THE ideas which centre in the doctrine of the 'Logos' are among the formative factors of human thought. The very word has its roots in the mental constitution of man from which it can hardly be detached. Few terms occupy a larger place in philosophical speculation, or have exerted a more decisive influence upon Christian truth. The evolution of the ideas it involves constitutes a history of the gradual unfolding of the conception of the Divine Being and His relation to the finite world.

In classical Greek 'Logos' signifies both *Word* and *Reason*—(*Oratio* and *Ratio*). Nothing better discloses the philosophic grasp of the Greek mind than this double significance. Though in N.T. language the term is usually employed in the sense of 'word' merely, we cannot quite dissociate the

two significations. Every word has a thought behind it. It is almost impossible to refer to the word of God without thinking of the mind or thought of God. The term 'Logos' denotes, on the one hand, the idea inwardly conceived in the mind; and on the other, the idea outwardly expressed by the vehicle of language. Thought and speech are indissolubly blended, and in the use of the term, whether by the Greek philosophers, Philo and the Alexandrian Fathers, or the author of the Fourth Gospel, both notions of Thought and its Expression are intimately connected.

I.

In order to deal adequately with the subject it would be desirable to trace the evolution of the

Logos-Doctrine from its earliest appearance in Greek Philosophy, through its Jewish and Alexandrian phases, until it attained its fullest expression in the Fourth Gospel. The limits of space, however, do not permit of more than a mere reference to the speculations of Heraclitus and Plato, to the theories of Stoic Philosophy, or to the parallel movement in Hebrew thought represented by the Theophanies and Personifications of the Wisdom literature. A brief account of the doctrine as it took shape in the hands of Philo will be all the more necessary to a proper appreciation of the Johannine Logos.

According to Greek thought, the Logos was conceived as a rational principle or impersonal energy—'the regal principle of intelligence,' as Plato calls it—by means of which the world of order was fashioned. According to Jewish thought the Logos was regarded merely as the mediating agent or personal organ of the Divine Being. In the philosophy of Alexandria, of which Philo was the earliest and not the least illustrious exponent, the two phases of thought were combined. Hellenic speculation was united with Hebrew teaching for the purpose of showing that the Old Testament contained the true philosophy of God and the world, and at the same time embodied all that was highest and most worthy in Greek reflection. In Philo, the two streams, hitherto running parallel, meet and henceforth flow in a common bed. The all-pervading 'Fire' of Heraclitus, the 'Archetypal Ideas' of Plato, the 'Teleological Reason' of Aristotle, the 'Immanent Order' of Stoicism—are taken up and fused with the Jewish conception of the all-transcending and all-compassing Jehovah; with the result that an entirely new idea of God as the Architect and Maker of the world is formulated.

Philo separates the energy of God from its manifestation in the world, and therefore finds it necessary to connect the one with the other by the interposition of a subordinate power. The double meaning of Logos, as thought and speech, is made use of by Philo to explain the relation subsisting between the ideal world as it is in the mind of God and the sensible universe which is its visible embodiment. He distinguishes therefore between the Logos inherent in God (*λόγος ἐνδιάθετος*) and the Logos emanating from God (*λόγος προφορικός*). Though in His inner essence God is incomprehensible, He has created the intelligible cosmos by

His self-activity. According to Philo, therefore, the Logos is the self-active energy manifested in the rational order of the visible world. It is, however, to be distinguished from God, as instrument from cause. As the instrument by which the Deity has made the world, the Logos is intermediate between the Divine and the human; 'neither unbegotten as God, nor begotten as man.' Again, viewed as the expressed thought or word, and therefore as the rational principle of the sensible world, the Logos is called 'the Eldest' or 'First-Born Son of God.' It is also sometimes named 'the Man of God,' as the father of all noble men; or 'the Heavenly Man,' in contrast to Adam—'the earthly man.' It is still further styled 'the Second God,' as that part of the Deity which is alone visible. From this it follows that the Logos must be regarded as the 'Mediator' between God and man. He is named the 'Bond' (*δέσμος*) of all things, which holds together all parts of the universe; the 'Law' which determines the harmony of the world and presides over the affairs and destinies of man. More than once Philo speaks of the Logos as the 'Intercessor,' or 'High Priest' of humanity; and sometimes even, using Biblical language, he calls it the 'Manna from Heaven,' 'the living Stream,' 'the Rock,' 'the Cloud.'

When we read these various expressions which bear a striking resemblance to N.T. descriptions of the Christ, we are naturally led to ask: Is Philo's Logos a personal being or a pure abstraction? The author himself is silent on that point. The Greek and the Jew within him are hopelessly at issue. That he personifies the Logos is implied in some of the titles he uses. But it is one thing to present the Logos under these figures; another, to maintain that the Logos is a real person. After all has been said, I incline to agree with those who believe that the Philonic Logos resolves itself into little more than a group of Divine ideas, and is to be interpreted not as a distinct person, but simply as the thought of God which is expressed in the rational order of the visible world.

In these speculations of Philo, whose thought is so frequently couched in Biblical language, we have the gropings of a sincere mind after a truth which was only disclosed in its fullness by the revelation of Pentecost. In this pious thinker 'Greek Philosophy,' as it has been finely said, 'almost stood at the door of the Christian Church,' and if the Alexandrian Jew did not create the Christian

doctrine, he did not a little to prepare the soil for its acceptance.

II.

Without dwelling upon the Logos-idea in other parts of the New Testament,¹ I proceed now to discuss the conception and its implications as it appears in the Fourth Gospel. The Evangelist's peculiar use of the term occurs six times: viz. in the Gospel three times (Prologue, 1¹, etc.); in 1 Jn 1¹, where we read 'the Word of life'; and in Rev 19¹³, 'the Word of God.' The reference to the 'Logos' in the Epistle is disputed by some; while, in Rev 19¹³, the term naturally associates itself with the doctrine of the Logos, since it is applied to Christ as the Divine agent of Revelation.

In discussing the doctrine of the Logos as disclosed in the Gospel of St. John, I shall confine myself to three main topics: *Contents*, *Source*, and *Purpose*. The first and second are dealt with in this paper, while the third—the Purpose and its relations to modern thought—must be reserved for a second paper.

Contents.—A brief analysis of the Prologue shows that it may be broadly divided into two parts: viz. the Relation of the Logos to God, on the one side; and the Relation of the Logos to the World, on the other.

In the *first* part the author makes three distinct affirmations.

(1) 'In the beginning was the Word.' The Evangelist carries back the history of our Lord to a point at which it has not entered the sphere of time and sense. Nothing is said of the origin of the world. It is implied that the Logos was actually existent when the world began to be. When as yet nothing was, the Logos was. He was anterior to, and independent of, time. It is an emphatic affirmation of the pre-existence, involving even the eternity, of the Word.

(2) 'The Word was with God.' Here the personal existence is more specifically defined. He stands distinct from God, yet in eternal fellowship with Him. The preposition *πρός*, like the German *bei*, expresses, beyond the fact of co-existence, the more significant fact of perpetual inter-communion. The Evangelist would seem to

¹ The conception is implicit in expressions used by Paul in his later Epistles, and by the author of Hebrews; but the word 'Logos' is never actually used by them.

guard against the idea of mere self-contemplation, not less than utter independence. It is a union of distinct beings, not a fusion.

(3) 'The Word was God' (Θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος). The author does not say ὁ Θεός. He is not merely related eternally to God, but shares the Divine Essence. No notion of inferiority must be entertained. The Deity of the Word is here boldly asserted.

There is no mistaking the desire of the writer of the Prologue to ascend by ever clearer and more concrete expressions from the eternal existence to the co-equal personality and substantial God-head of the Logos. May it not be said that, in the mind of this thinker, Identity, Difference, Communion are the three 'moments' in the Divine relationship?

The *second* part treats of the Relation of the Logos to the world. In the first part the Logos is regarded as the 'Thought' of God, rather than the utterance of God. But in this section it is the Logos as 'Word' or 'expression' that is specially stressed; not only the idea of Communion, but the further idea of *communication* is implied. The Deity goes out of Himself and utters Himself in the world of Nature and life. The mind of God expresses itself in the Word of God, unveiling and revealing His thought in the material universe and in the souls of men. Of this Self-communication the Evangelist denotes three phases or stages—*Creation*, *Inspiration*, and *Manifestation* (see Prologue, vv. 3-5, 9-14).

(1) He is the *creator* of the universe of being. 'All things were made by him.' These words imply that the Logos is the organ or agent of the entire activity of the Godhead, and exclude the idea presupposed by Plato and, indeed, by nearly all the early Greek philosophers, and followed by Philo, that God was merely the architect or builder who shaped and moulded into a cosmos of beauty and order the chaos of already existent material. The word *ἐγένετο* (*werden*) suggests the progressive stages in the evolution of a world of potential being into a world of spiritual life, not inconsistent with the teachings of modern science. But it suggests also (and this is the profoundly significant idea which not only animates the Prologue, but pervades this entire book) *the primacy and priority of Thought*. God is first, and His creative mind is the spring and fountain-head of all that is. All being originates in Divine thought. And in all

the purposes and achievements of man he can create nothing, originate nothing, save as he thinks God's thoughts after Him.

(2) The Logos is the *Inspiration* of the intellectual, moral, and spiritual life of man. 'In him was life, and the life was the light of men.' He is the author, not of all material things and animal existences only, but of the manifold forms of the human spirit. The Logos is the life and light of the world, the vital energy by which all created things subsist and from which all derive illumination. But inasmuch as the higher phases of intelligent life involve freedom, a tragedy has taken place upon the stage of history. The Divine light, though perfect and undiminished in itself, has met with opposition. The light was not comprehended by a world which, in virtue of that very rational life imparted to it, chose darkness rather than light. The very gifts which were designed to exalt our nature have been used to debase human life. 'What makes our heaven, that also makes our hell.' This writer's reading of history is summed up in these few pregnant sentences. It is at once an experience and a forecast. 'Welt-Geschicht ist Welt-Gericht.' But the picture is not wholly one of shadows. The splendid idealism of the author which finds utterance already in the Prologue comes to finer and fuller expression as the story of Him who is the Light of the world unfolds itself. Nothing can extinguish the 'true light' of heaven—'the light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.' Here and there, through the ages, one soul after another catches the gleam and sheds it forth like the Baptist, the witnesses and fore-runners of the Truth:

The Lord's lone sentinels
Dotted down the years,

who prepare the way and point to Him who came in the fullness of the time as the true Logos—the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person.

(3) The Logos is the fullest *Manifestation* of God. The climax of Divine Revelation is expressed in the statement—'The Word became flesh,' which implies, on the one hand, the reality of the humanity of the Logos, and, on the other, the Voluntariness of the Incarnation, but excludes the notion that in becoming man the Logos ceased to be Divine. Though clothed in flesh and dwell-

ing among men, subject to human conditions, the Logos continues to be the self-manifesting God and retains, even in the form of man, the character of the Eternal. This third phase of Revelation, inasmuch as it unveils the inmost essence of the Deity, is the highest and most perfect manifestation of the Godhead. In physical creation the *power* of God is mainly displayed. In the bestowal of life and light to man His *wisdom* is chiefly disclosed. But in the gift of His Son His Fatherly love is unveiled. All the perfections of the Divine Being are focussed and made visible in the Christ who is now declared to be 'the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.' Thus the Logos may be regarded as concentrating in Himself the eternal values of the Deity and manifesting on the arena of human life the ultimate attributes of the Divine—Truth, Beauty, Holiness. The Incarnation makes the Life, the Light, the Love, which are eternally present in the Absolute Being, available to man. As these meet in God so they meet in Christ. They are the glory of the Word Incarnate which the disciples beheld, the Truth to which the Baptist bore witness, the entire body of Grace and Truth by means of which the Word gives to men Power to become the sons of God.

Throughout the Prologue it is clearly implied that the Word or Logos is the 'Son of God.' In virtue of His Sonship He is a partaker of the Father's essence. The expressions 'Word' and 'Son' if taken separately might lead to, and have led to, error. Their union protects us from regarding the Logos as a mere abstraction; it saves us also from imputing a lower and more recent origin to the Son than to the Father. Each supplements and protects the other. Taken together, they present Christ before His Incarnation as at once personally distinct from, yet equal with, the Father the personal and eternal life who is with God, even—when He is made flesh and dwells upon the earth with men.

III.

Sources.—We have now to inquire whence the writer of the Fourth Gospel derived the peculiar phraseology which he employs to set forth his Christology. What led him to adopt the term 'Logos,' a word which had not been previously used by N.T. writers in this connexion, but which was prevalent in the philosophical vocabulary of

the past. It is inconceivable that the author lighted upon this word by chance or that he selected it without any previous knowledge of its history. It may be assumed that when the Apostle speaks of the Logos in relation to God and the world he adopts a mode of diction which he knew was familiar to those for whom he wrote. A new teacher necessarily uses the linguistic heritage which he has received from the past in order to make his message intelligible to others who have grown up under similar conditions.

We have already seen that the term 'Logos' had undergone a twofold and nearly parallel evolution. It had both a Hebrew and a Hellenic history. In which direction are we to look for the immediate source of the Johannine terminology?

It is beyond my purpose to discuss the authorship of the Fourth Gospel; but assuming that the writer is the Apostle John (a view now held by many scholars), as a Palestine Jew, familiar with current Hebrew ideas, it would be only natural for him to adopt the Jewish use of the word; and not a few students consider that here we have the probable origin of the Apostle's language. In the O.T., and particularly in the 'Targums,' or early Jewish Paraphrases, the 'Word' is constantly spoken of as the efficient instrument of Divine action, and the 'Word of God' had come to be used personally as almost equivalent to God Himself. Throughout St. John's Gospel there is apparent a marked loyalty to O.T. teaching. Some expressions, indeed, would seem to indicate that Jesus is regarded as the fulfilment of Jewish expectation (1¹⁴, 2⁹, 3¹, 2¹⁹, 3¹⁴, 6³², 4⁸⁻⁵¹); and the living embodiment of Divine revelation (1¹⁶, 8¹², 11²⁵, 14⁶). But against this, it has been pointed out by Weizsäcker and others, that the 'Word of God' is not conceived as an independent being in the O.T. Though it is sometimes personified, it is never treated as a separate person; and still less as an equivalent of the Messiah. Moreover, the Rabbinical doctrine of the *Memra* of God is of later date than the Gospel, and therefore could not be the source of its diction. At the same time, the Hebrew cast of thought cannot be denied, and the many affinities of the Johannine Gospel with Jewish modes of expression must not be overlooked. It may be fairly argued, therefore, that though St. John's knowledge of, and sympathy with, Palestinian thought may not be the actual source of his terminology, it accounts, possibly in no small measure, for his special appli-

cation of it. For, as Neander observes, that name (Logos) may have been put forward at Ephesus in order to lead those Jews, who were busying themselves with speculations of the Logos as the centre of all Theophanies, to recognize in Christ the supreme manifestation of Jehovah and the true fulfilment of their Messianic hopes.

Other writers, however, and I venture to think with more plausibility, trace the Johannine ideas and terms to Hellenic philosophy, and specially to Alexandrian influences. No one can compare the Fourth Gospel with the writings of Philo without noting a remarkable similarity in diction, particularly in the use of the word 'Logos.' It would be absurd indeed, on this ground alone, to impute conscious borrowing or slavish dependence to the Apostle. It is quite conceivable that both the Alexandrian thinker and the N.T. writer were subject to common influences of thought and expression. Hellenism largely colours the views of the early Church. 'There is not a single N.T. writing,' says Harnack (*Dogmengeschichte*, i. 47 n.), 'which does not betray the influence of the mode of thought and general culture which resulted from the Hellenizing of the East.' But while that is true, it must not be forgotten, as Harnack also affirms, 'that while the writers of the N.T. breathe an atmosphere created by Greek culture, the religious ideas in which they live and move come to them from the O.T.' It is possible, nay, more than probable, that St. John was acquainted with the writings of Philo, or at least with the general tenor of his teaching, and may have discovered in his language a suitable vehicle for the utterance of his own beliefs, all the more welcome because intelligible to those who were familiar with Alexandrian modes of thought.

But whatever superficial resemblances there may be between Philo and St. John, it must be at once evident that the whole spirit and view of life is fundamentally different. So far from the Apostle being a disciple of the Alexandrian or a borrower of his ideas, it would be more correct to say that there is clearly a conscious rejection of the Philonic conception, and that the Logos of the Gospel is a deliberate protest against what the writer must have considered to be the misleading tendency of Greek Philosophy.

The contrast between the two writers is even more striking than the resemblance. The difference is not due merely to the acceptance by the

Christian writer of Jesus as the Christ, but extends to the entire conception of God in relation to the world which made Christianity a new power among men. The Logos of Philo is purely metaphysical ; that of John is theological. Philo moves entirely in the region of abstract thought and pure being ; the thought of John is concrete and active, moving in a realm of life and history. In Philo, the Logos is intermediate, the instrument which God employs in fashioning the world. In John, the Logos is not conceived as a subsidiary or secondary being, but as the sharer of the Divine life ; and as such is not simply an organ, but the prime agent with God Himself in the creation of the world and all Divine activity. In Philo, the Logos hovers between personality and impersonality, and if it is sometimes personified it can hardly be regarded as an actual person. In John the personality of the Logos is affirmed from the first and is the very essence of his doctrine. The idea of an Incarnation is alien to the whole mode of Philo's thinking, and is impossible in his scheme of the universe. That 'the Word has become flesh' is the crux of Johannine teaching. The truth is, that Philo strives, but with little success, to overcome the dualism which was latent both in Hebrew and Greek thought. A living synthesis cannot be reached by a merely external amalgam of Jewish and Hellenic traditions. He holds, on the one hand, to the idea of an absolute, self-subsistent Deity ; yet, on the other, he is forced to conceive of a God who has some kind of relation with the universe, and who binds all things to each other in binding them to Himself. These two aspects he brings externally together as 'two different Gods' who yet must in some way be reduced to unity. But it is not possible for Philo to explain this unity without either surrendering the conception of the absolute God, or reducing the relative independence of the principle that manifests itself in the universe to an illusion. The only way he can escape the difficulty is by making one of the Gods subordinate to the other. The Logos, he

declares, is neither uncreated like the Deity, nor created like human beings ; he is intermediate, 'at an equal distance between the extremes, serving as the keeper of the boundaries and as a means of communication between the two.' But this 'second' or inferior being can never reveal God as He is, seeing that, by His very nature, He is incapable of revelation. Philo again and again lays stress upon the absolute incomprehensibility and inaccessibility of the First God, who is, by the supposed conditions of His being, beyond, and out of relation to, the whole created universe.

But here the cleavage between the teaching of the Alexandrian Jew and Christian writer becomes most sharply accentuated. It is impossible for the unprejudiced reader to evade the conclusion that, both in the Prologue and the body of the Gospel, the supreme and primary object of the Evangelist is to declare that God *is revealed in Christ*, and that the Logos, who has entered the world of human relations, is the manifestation, under human conditions, of the Fatherhood of God and the unveiling to us men of the mind and will of the Eternal.

From whatever point of view, therefore, we compare them, our verdict must be, that Philo and St. John, while using the same term, attribute to it entirely different values. The essential purport of the Johannine Logos is to declare and commend to the cultured—Greeks as well as Jews—Jesus Christ, the divinely appointed Redeemer of mankind. 'He is our Logos,' in effect, says St. John. But the adoption of the term involves its complete transformation. It is baptized with a new spirit and stands henceforth for a new conception. From whatever source it was originally derived, on Christian soil it is a new product. The philosophical abstraction becomes a religious idea ; and the impersonal quality is translated into a living individuality who is declared to be the creative power of God and the eternal hope of man.
