

John 1:1 In the Beginning Was the Word. When Was That Beginning?

- “In the beginning was the Word, **and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.**” John 1:1-2,14

In the original Greek language, we see that at the end of the text “and the Word was God”, instead of the noun God, the adjective divine, which is not how it is most commonly found in our Bibles. Here we find the same principle, that the Father is God, and Jesus is confirmed as a divine Being with a divine nature, meaning that He is the literal Son of that one and only God.

In	εν	(1722)
the beginning	αρχη	(746)
was	ην	(2258)
the	ο	(3588)
Word	λογοζ	(3056)
and	και	(2532)
the	ο	(3588)
Word	λογοζ	(3056)
was	ην	(2258)
with	προζ	(4314)
the	τον	(3588)
God (Father)	θεον	(2316)
and	και	(2532)
God (Divine)	θεοζ	(2316)
was	ην	(2258)
the	ο	(3588)
Word (Jesus)	λογοζ	(3056)

Therefore, this verse has a completely different meaning in the original than it is normally translated and its meaning does not support a trinity. We can see that in the original, there are two different words for “God”. The first is the noun God which is used for the Father, and the second is the adjective divine which is used for Jesus. This text tells us that Jesus has the same divine nature as His Father, since He proceeds from the Father, and that He is not created, but is rather a divine Being. Yet the God of heaven and earth, the one true God, is the Father and not the trinity. Below we read the translation accurate to the original text:

- “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word (Jesus) was **WITH** (“πρός”) **the** (“τὸν”) **God** (“θεον”) (Father), **and the Word was divine** (“θεοζ”).“ John 1:1

According to the New Testament and Spirit of Prophecy, does Jesus’ begetting happen prior to the creation of the universe?

- “Who is the image of the invisible God, the **firstborn of every creature.**“ Colossians 1:15
- “**The dedication of the first-born** had its origin in the **earliest times**. God had promised to give the First-born of heaven to save the sinner.” Ellen White, Desire of Ages, p. 51

The next verse is often used by trinitarians to say that Jesus never had a beginning, in the form of a literal begetting, and that the expression “In the beginning” merely signifies the beginning of creation. The true meaning of the concept of “beginning” entails both aspects. In the beginning in an objective sense, means that in eternity past, Jesus was brought forth. This was prior to the beginning of any created being. The Father then brought the whole universe to exist (the second beginning) through His Son.

- “In the beginning was the Word, and the **Word** (Jesus) was **with** (“πρός”) **God** (the Father), **and God** (Jesus) **was the Word**. He was in the beginning **with** (“πρός”) the (“τὸν”) God... And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten (Monogenes) of the Father,) full of grace and truth.” John 1:1-2, 14

Here we read that the Son was with the Father and not that the Father was with the Son. This fully strengthens the truth of the position of the Father and the Son.

- “But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.” 1 Corinthians 8:6

What does God’s prophet say about the beginning in John 1:1-2? It is very clear that these verses refer to the literal birth of Christ by the Heavenly Father, and that He was always the Son, before He received His human nature upon coming to earth as we see in the 14th verse.

Another evidence that Jesus, although divine, is subordinate to the Father is the following: In the Aramaic-Hebrew Bible, we read “the Word was with the God (Father) and the Word was Divine/ God (Jesus)”. The preposition “the” makes the difference between God the Father, that is, the One God, and Jesus, a Divine Being, Who, through the words “In the Beginning” proceeds forth from God the Father. John 1:1 indicates that beside God the Father, the God of the Universe, Jesus is also divine and not created. But according to the original Bible text, Jesus is not “the” God, but He carries the name of the divine Word. But there is a distinction between “the (one) God”, the Father, and Jesus.

- “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God.” John 1:1, 2. **Christ, the Word, the only begotten of God**, was one with the eternal Father—one in nature, in character, in purpose—the **only being that could enter into all the counsels and purposes of God**. “His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.” Isaiah 9:6. His “goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.” Micah 5,2.” Ellen White, Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 34

Ellen White, in the very context of John 1:1,2 states that Jesus is the only begotten (monogenês) Son, and that He has an eternal Father, and the only He knows all the Father’s purposes and plans.

This does not include any third being! It says “only He”, meaning only Jesus! Only means nobody else. She clarifies this further with the verse from Micah 5:2 where it states that Jesus’ **goings forth**, i.e. begetting is from of old, from everlasting. On earth, we saw Jesus’ glory which He already had, and which always belonged to Him as a Son. There is no trinity here!

Our pioneers, whose works Ellen White considered true and important, understood this fact very clearly:

- “The Word was “in the beginning.” The mind of man cannot grasp the ages that are spanned in this phrase. **It is not given to men to know when or how** the Son was begotten; **but we know that He was the Divine Word, not simply before He came to this earth to die, but even before the world was created**. Just before His crucifixion He prayed, “And now, O Father, glorify thou Me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was.” John 17,5. And more than seven hundred years before His first advent, His coming was thus foretold by the word of inspiration: “But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from the days of eternity.” Micah 5,2, margin. **We know that Christ “proceeded forth and came from God” (John 8:42), but it was so far back in the ages of eternity as to be far beyond the grasp of the mind of man.**” E.J. Waggoner, Christ And His Righteousness, p. 9.

- **“God [the Father] alone is without beginning. At the earliest epoch when a beginning could be, -- a period so remote that to finite minds it is essentially eternity, -- appeared the Word, John 1,1.** This uncreated Word was the Being, who, in the fulness of time, was made flesh, and dwelt among us. His beginning was not like that of any other being in the universe. [...] **And then the Holy Spirit (by an infirmity of translation called .. the Holy Ghost”), the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, the divine afflatus and medium of their power, representative of them both (Ps. 139,7), was in existence also.”** Uriah Smith, Looking Unto Jesus, p. 10. **1898**
- “Again and again during my experience in the Lord’s work, I have been called upon to meet these erroneous sentiments. In every case, clear, powerful light has been given that God is the eternal, self-existent One. From my girlhood I have been given plain instruction that **God is a person, and that Christ is “the express image of His person.” God always has been. That which concerns us is not the how or the wherefore.**” Ellen White, Manuscript 137, November 12 **1903.**

In this statement we see that Jesus has a beginning, and that only God (always referred to as the Father) does not have a beginning. This is also how E.J. Waggoner understood the matter, whose book on Righteousness by Faith, cited above, she especially lifted up. In 1905, Ellen White wrote that Uriah Smith, besides herself, is the most important channel of the truth that God to relay His message! She confirms that there was a time when Jesus was begotten in heaven and that He has a beginning.

- “Angels of God looked with amazement upon Christ, who took upon Himself the form of man and humbly united His divinity with humanity in order that He might minister to fallen man. It is a marvel among the heavenly angels. God has told us that He did do it, and we are to accept the Word of God just as it reads. And although we may try to reason **in regard to our Creator, how long He has had existence**, where evil first entered into our world, and all these things, we may reason about them until we fall down faint and exhausted with the research when there is yet an infinity beyond.” Ellen White, 7BC, 1888 p. 919,

In the same way, the Old Testament confirms that Jesus, the Word, came forth from the Father, calling Him the Word of God. Does the Word of God ever say that the Father (God) is from or of the Word? It does not, because the hierarchy is clear. If Anyone belongs to Anyone, then He stands under Him to Whom He belongs. The Word, here, is referring to Jesus, just as in John 1:1.

- “Then came the word of the Lord (Jesus) unto Jeremiah, saying (in His and His Father’s name), Send to all them of the captivity, saying, Thus saith the Lord...” Jeremiah 29:30-31
- “And it came to pass in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, that this word came unto Jeremiah from the Lord, saying, Take thee a roll of a book, and write therein all the words that I have spoken unto thee against Israel, and against Judah, and against all the nations, from the day I spake unto thee, from the days of Josiah, even unto this day. It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the evil which I purpose to do unto them; that they may return every man from his evil way; that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin.” Jeremiah 36:1-3

One literal word of itself does not come and speak in the name of God the Father and in His own name. Rather, the One whose name is the Word does this. A literal word does not think about what it will do and it does not forgive sins. Only One Being does that. Jesus personally appeared at that place and spoke!

- “Who is Christ?—He is the **only begotten Son of the living God. He is to the Father as a word that expresses the thought,—as a thought made audible. Christ is the word of God.**” Ellen White, Youth Instructor, June 28, 1894, par. 9
- “And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: **and his name is called The Word of God.** And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.” Revelation 19:13-14