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The Light of Men
Pt. 1, In the Beginning

Happy Friday, and welcome to a new month... and a new year. Our theme for the month of January is “The Light of Men”, taken from John’s introduction to his Gospel. John 1:1-4 reads,

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. 4 **In him was life; and the life was the light of men.***

John explains that the Word’s “*life*” (both physical and spiritual) provided “*light*” (both physical and spiritual) for mankind.

When we read these wonderful scriptures we understand that the use of the word *light* in this scripture is primarily metaphorical. Light in verse 4 is being used to picture Truth, Salvation, and the conviction produced by the Holy Spirit (i.e., mankind’s realization of his need for Christ’s salvation). When the Holy Spirit convicts us of our depravity and sin, and the eternal separation from God that such depravity brings, this is the “light bulb” being turned on! This is a sin-darkened mind being illuminated with Gospel **light**, i.e., with Truth, with Good News!

But amazingly, our Tripartite God, Who identifies Himself as YHWH, the Self-Existant One, is not just metaphorical light. He is also literal light! In his first general epistle, John records, ...*God is light, and in him is no darkness at all* (1John 1:5). This statement is emphatic, and we are meant to understand it literally as written. Paul explains that King Jesus is that immortal God-Man, ...*dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto...* (1Timothy 6:16). King Jesus, who IS God, dwells in and co-radiates that eternal, unapproachable brightness of the Godhead.

Jesus as The Literal Light is revealed *In the beginning* of Creation, in the first verses of Genesis. The Son of God—the second person of the Godhead—was The Literal Creator. He was “hands on” so to speak. John plainly teaches the Creator-ship of Jesus Christ in John 1:3 and Paul corroborates in Colossians 1:16 and Hebrews 1:2. Psalm 33:9 reads, *For he spake, and it was*

done; he commanded, and it stood fast. In the literal six, 24-hour days of Creation, recorded by inspiration through the Moses, we discover that the end result of Day 1 was the creation of angels (Job 38:6, 7), space-time (not stated but logically assumed), a primordial planet Earth covered with water, ... and LIGHT! *And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. 4 And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness* (Genesis 1:3, 4).

The point I want to make is that this physical light that suddenly burst forth and emanated into space-time, even before the stars were created, was a supernatural light. It was the physical manifestation of God's glory! The Hebrews had a word for this brightness: Shekinah! The stars, and specifically the Sun, which is the source of our physical light, were not created until Day 4 (Genesis 1:14-19).

This Divinely-determined order of Creation is an enigma to the wise of this world, and probably purposefully so! The skeptic sneers, and asks with a haughty tone, "How can there be light without stars?" God's answer is that Jesus, the First Cause, is THE "LIGHT" (just as John proclaimed in 1John 1:5). On Day 1 Jesus revealed His glory to His primordial physical creation. Jesus Christ the God-Man is literally Light, and He is the metaphorical Light of this world!

Now... the theology in the first four verses of John's Gospel is deep enough to warrant its own college course, but we will concentrate on just one amazing aspect of Jesus being the metaphorical *Light of the world*. John 8:12 reads, *Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.* In this context "light" represents Truth and spiritual understanding. *Darkness* represents the spiritual confusion and spiritual darkness that pervades this fallen world.

And so here is the picture: when Adam and Eve rebelled against their Creator, when they chose to go their own way (Isaiah 53:6), they changed!

- They changed **physically** — Their once perfect bodies started to slowly decay. That amazing process of self-repair and renewal that our biological bodies were designed to perform, gradually decayed and became ineffective as physical entropy entered the equation. The end result was that their biological machines foundered resulting in eventual physical death. And so, because of sin, mankind lost eternal physical life.
- But Adam and Eve also changed **spiritually** — Humanity is unique in God's biological creation. We are created in God's tripartite image. We are body, soul, AND spirit. The body is the biological machine. The soul is the sentient part of man, the seat of our emotions and rationality. But the spirit, ah the spirit, it is unique. No other creature was given an eternal spirit! The spirit is that part of our creation that lives eternally; human beings are eternal creatures; we will never go out of existence! When Adam and Eve sinned, their spirits became alienated from God; their spirits became literally dead (Ephesians 2:1), and metaphorically **darkened** (i.e., without hope, without Truth, and without understanding of their deadly plight).

Consequently, as a tragic result of sin, God pictures this world system being plagued with an overwhelming spiritual “darkness”, i.e., the inability of mankind to understand their lost and undone condition. Men and women live in self-imposed darkness, self-imposed blindness, and because it is all they know, they even love that darkness (John 3:19). But God was not content or willing to leave mankind in that eternally-hopeless, self-darkened state! He chose to reveal Himself to humankind, through His Divine Son, through the Incarnated God-Man, by Whom He would make redemption possible for all of mankind.

Consequently friends, by God’s grace,

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined (Isaiah 9:2).

Paul says it like this in 2Corinthians 4:6,

For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Just as the physical light burst forth into the primordial darkness of the newly-created space-time, The Light (i.e., the Personified Truth) of God’s glory is shining forth from the face of Jesus Christ! As Pontius Pilate so prophetically proclaimed, *Behold the man!* (John 19:5).

What will YOU do with Jesus, The Light and The Only Hope of this darkened, lost, and dying World?

God bless and consider!