

“Logos” in John’s Prologue

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John 1:1-18 (LGV) In the beginning was Logos, and Logos was with God, and Logos was God. 2 This one was in the beginning with God. 3 Everything originated through Him, and without Him nothing originated. 4 What has originated in Him was life, and the Life was the Light of men, 5 and the Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not take hold of it. 6 A man originated having been commissioned from beside God whose name was John. This one arrived for a witness so that he should testify concerning the Light 7 so that all may believe through Him. 8 He was not the Light, but [came] so that he should testify concerning the Light. 9 The true Light, which enlightens each man, was coming into the world) 10 He was in the world, and the world originated through Him, and the world did not know Him. 11 He came into His own [things], and His own [people] did not receive Him. 12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those believing unto the name of Him 13 who was Begotten, not out of bloods, nor out of the will of the flesh, nor out of the will of a male, but out of God. 14 And Logos became flesh, and sojourned among us, and we gazed upon His glory, glory as of the Only-Begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. 15 John testifies concerning Him, and has exclaimed, saying, “This was the one whom I said, ‘The one coming after me has out-ranked me because He was before me’.” 16 And out of the fullness of Him we have received, and grace for grace 17 (because the Law was given through Moses; [but] grace and truth originated through Jesus the Anointed). 18 Never before has anyone seen God. The Only-Begotten Son, the one being unto the Father’s bosom, that one declared Him.

In the earliest days of Christianity, the “Word” (Λόγος - Logos) in the prologue of John’s Gospel has been understood as a proper name or title for the Son of God prior to His becoming Son of Man. John’s prologue was understood as proving the pre-human origin and existence of God’s Son, Logos, who was His agent in the creation of all things, but who became flesh for our redemption. John’s own disciple, Ignatius,¹ explained what John meant by his prologue and by the term Logos.

“[Y]our bishop presides in the place of God, and your presbyters in the place of the assembly of the apostles, along with your deacons, who are most dear to me, and are

¹ Ignatius was pastor of the assembly in Antioch, from which Paul had previously been sent out on his mission to the Gentiles. Ignatius himself was personally taught by John, the author of the Gospel of John. His genuine Epistles exist in a short and long version. The original was the shorter version, yet the longer version contains edits and additions from a time close to the original author.

entrusted with the ministry of Jesus Christ, who was with the Father before the beginning of time, and in the end was revealed².”³

“[T]here is one God, who has manifested Himself by Jesus Christ His Son, who is His eternal⁴ Word, not proceeding forth from silence, and who in all things pleased Him that sent Him.”⁵

“... Jesus Christ, the Son of God who became afterwards of the seed of David and Abraham.”⁶

“Look for Him who is above all time, eternal⁷ and invisible, yet who became visible for our sakes; impalpable and impassible, yet who became passible on our account; and who in every kind of way suffered for our sakes.”⁸

Justin Martyr, born shortly after John’s death, elaborates further concerning John’s prologue:

“But so much is written for the sake of proving that Jesus the Christ is the Son of God and His Apostle, being of old the Word, and appearing sometimes in the form of fire, and sometimes in the likeness of angels; but now, by the will of God, having become man for the human race, He endured all the sufferings which the devils instigated the senseless Jews to inflict upon Him; who, though they have it expressly affirmed in the writings of Moses, ‘And the Angel [Messenger] of God spake to Moses in a flame of fire in a bush, and said, I am that I am, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob,’ yet maintain that He who said this was the Father and Creator of the universe. Whence also the Spirit of prophecy rebukes them, and says, ‘Israel doth not know Me, my people have not understood Me.’ And again, Jesus, as we have already shown, while He was with them, said, ‘No one knoweth the Father, but the Son; nor the Son but the Father, and those to whom the Son will reveal Him.’ The Jews, accordingly,

² This statement appears to be an interpretation of 1 Pet. 1:20.

³ Ignatius, Epistle to the Magnesians, ch. vi (short {original} version).

⁴ Lit. “age-enduring,” a temporal term that does not include eternity past

⁵ Ignatius, Epistle to the Magnesians, ch. viii (short {original} version). The longer version of this passage explains what was meant by the clause “not proceeding forth from silence.” It reads: “[T]here is one God, the Almighty, who has manifested Himself by Jesus Christ His Son, who is His Word, not spoken, but essential. For He is not the voice of an articulate utterance, but a substance begotten by divine power, who has in all things pleased Him that sent Him.”

⁶ Ignatius, Epistle to the Romans, ch. vii (short {original} version)

⁷ Lit. “age-enduring” without reference to eternity prior to the 6 days of creation

⁸ Ignatius, Epistle to Polycarp, ch. iii

*being throughout of opinion that it was the Father of the universe who spake to Moses, **though He who spake to him was indeed the Son of God, who is called both Angel and Apostle**, are justly charged, both by the Spirit of prophecy and by Christ Himself, with knowing neither the Father nor the Son.”⁹*

Scores of similar examples can be produced from writers beginning shortly after John’s death showing that “Word” (Λόγος - Logos) of John’s prologue was taken as a personal name or title for a divine, conscious Person who was begotten out of God at the beginning of creation, and afterwards became flesh. There are no examples of any Christian writers contiguous with the time of the Apostles that portrayed “Logos” in John’s prologue in any other way. Thus, the pre-human origin and existence of the Son was held by the earliest Christians, and was even attested by at least one pastor (Ignatius) who was personally discipled by the Apostle John who wrote the prologue.

Unitarians who wish to deny the pre-human origin and existence of the Son of God argue that “Word” refers to something abstract, a spoken word or a divine Plan, something with no concrete existence. Anthony Buzzard, in his book, *“The Doctrine of the Trinity, Christianity’s Self-Inflicted Wound,”* claims that “Logos” was an abstract “plan” in the mind of God.

*“Recent commentaries on John admit that despite long-standing tradition to the contrary, the term “word” in the famous prologue of John need not apply to the Son of God before He was born. Our translations imply belief in the traditional doctrine of incarnation by capitalizing “Word.” But what it was that became flesh in John 1:14? Was it a preexisting person? Or was it the self-expressive activity of God, the Father, **His eternal plan**? A plan may take flesh, for example, when the design in the architect’s mind finally takes shape as a house. What preexisted the visible bricks and mortar was the intention in the mind of the architect. Thus it is quite in order to read John 1:1-3a: “In the beginning was **the creative purpose of God**”; (just as wisdom was with God before creation, Prov. 8:30). “All things came into being through it.”¹⁰*

⁹ Justin Martyr, First Apology, ch. lxiii

¹⁰ Buzzard, Anthony F., *The Doctrine of the Trinity*, pp. 190-191. Mr. Buzzard has a footnote (19) attached to this passage that says, “... Theophilus of Antioch’s understanding of the ‘logos’ as God’s plan, purpose, reason, and vision suggests as the translation of John 1:1, ‘The Vision was with God and the Vision was God.’” However, Mr. Buzzard has misunderstood Theophilus and misrepresented him in an attempt to place his Unitarian view within the purview of early Christianity. Here is the passage that Mr. Buzzard referenced. “God, then, **having His own Word internal within His own bowels, begat Him, emitting Him along with His own wisdom before all things**. He had this Word as a helper in the things that were created by Him, and by Him He made all things. He is called “governing principle,” **because He rules, and is Lord of all things fashioned by Him**. He, then, being Spirit of God, and **governing principle**, and Wisdom, and power of the highest, **came**

Mr. Buzzard’s reasoning here is flawed simply because the Greek word λόγος (logos) does not mean merely a “plan.” While it is true that this Greek noun includes the idea of something well thought out or reasoned, the core meaning is “message,” **a concept articulated and communicated in a logical way by one person to another**. The noun λόγος is derived from the root verb, λέγω, which means to “tell,” to “communicate.” Mr. Buzzard’s interpretation completely removes the concept of “communication” on which this word was based. There is a related Greek noun λογισμός¹¹ (logismos), meaning a computation, a reasoning, a devising. This noun refers exclusively to the cognitive aspect of a devised plan. The Greek noun that refers to a finished plan or pattern (the sense Mr. Buzzard apparently supposes) is the neuter noun – λόγιον (logion).¹² If John intended to point to reasoning or planning in the mind of God he would have used λογισμός. If he intended to portray a completed “plan” he would have used λόγιον. It is virtually impossible that John would have used the masculine noun λόγος since there was no one “in the beginning” to communicate such a plan to in the Unitarian model. The point is that John’s Greek-speaking readers would not understand λόγος in this context the way that Mr. Buzzard claims, as a non-personal “plan.” It would either require a hearer of the alleged communication of such a plan (if John meant a spoken word), or else it must be a proper name for a Person.

Mr. Buzzard’s claim that “it is quite in order to read John 1:1-3a: ‘In the beginning was the creative purpose of God ... All things came into being through it,’” is incorrect for another reason. Note the ellipsis (...) in his statement above. He left out what comes between these statements, “and Logos was **God**.” The masculine noun θεός (God) is a title. The word “God/god” is a personal noun which means a sole Sovereign, the ultimate ruler of

*down upon the prophets, and through them **spoke** of the creation of the world and of all other things.”* (Theophilus of Antioch, To Autolycus, Bk. I, ch. x). Since the one called “Word” and “Wisdom” was “begotten” by God, He is thereafter spoken of as a person who “spoke” and acted of His own volition. In Bk. II, ch. xxii of the same work, Theophilus wrote: “... **His Word**, through whom He made all things, being His Power and His Wisdom, assuming the person of the Father and Lord of all, **went to the garden in the person of God, and conversed with Adam**. For the divine writing itself teaches us that Adam said that he had heard the voice. But what else is this voice but **the Word of God, who is also His Son?** ... But when God wished to make all that He determined on, He begot this Word, uttered, the first-born of all creation, not Himself being emptied of the Word [Reason], but having begotten Reason, and always conversing with His Reason. And hence the holy writings teach us, and all the spirit-hearing [inspired] men, one of whom, John, says, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God,” showing that at first God was alone, and the Word in Him. Then he says, “The Word was God; all things came into existence through Him; and apart from Him not one thing came into existence.” The Word, then, being God, and being naturally produced from God, whenever the Father of the universe wills, He sends Him to any place; and **He, coming, is both heard and seen, being sent by Him, and is found in a place.**” This is not an inanimate or abstract thing, but a conscious being.

¹¹ Examples in the LXX are: Psalm 32:10-11; Prov. 6:18; Prov. 15:22,26; Jer. 11:19; Ezek. 38:10; Dan. 11:24

¹² Examples in the LXX are: Psalm 119:41,50,123; Isa. 28:13. It is often rendered “oracle”

a dominion, and **always refers to a person in Scripture.** This is true whether it is used of the one true God, false gods who allegedly exercise dominion over certain aspects of nature, or human rulers.¹³ If the Word was God, then the Word must be a person with the core quality of what the word means, a sovereign ruler over a dominion. This sense is made crystal clear in the following quote from Psalm 45:6-7.

*Heb. 1:8-9 (NKJV) 8 But to **the Son** He says: “**Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your Kingdom.** 9 You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You With the oil of gladness more than Your companions.”*

4. The appeal by Mr. Buzzard to Proverbs 8:30 where “Wisdom” was “begotten” by God and spoken of as a real Person in communion with God, His assistant in creation, is assumed to be an example of something abstract that was described by Solomon using personal language. However, both Jesus and Paul portrayed “Wisdom” in this passage as the Son of God. See: http://www.4windsfellowships.net/articles/Proverbs_8.pdf

Mr. Buzzard needs to show why the term “Logos” must be a “plan” within this context, or at least show that “Logos” is used in other contexts (particularly by John) to mean this alleged “plan,” neither of which can be done. Just the opposite is the case, since John clearly used “Logos” as a proper name for the Son of God. “*He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and **His name is called Logos of God.***”¹⁴

Mr. Buzzard also has a footnote (#19) attached to the previous quotation that says, “... Theophilus of Antioch’s understanding of the ‘logos’ as God’s plan, purpose, reason, and vision suggests as the translation of John 1:1, ‘The Vision was with God and the Vision was God.’” Here is the very passage from Theophilus which Mr. Buzzard referenced in his footnote which he claims suggests that Logos was “God’s plan, purpose, reason, and vision.”

*“God, then, having His own Word internal within His own bowels, **begat Him, emitting Him along with His own Wisdom before all things.** He had this Word as a helper in the things that were created by Him, and by Him He made all things. He is called “**governing principle,**” because **He rules, and is Lord of all things fashioned by Him.** He, then, being Spirit of God, and governing principle, and Wisdom, and power of the highest, came down upon the prophets, and through them spoke of the creation of the world and of all other things.”¹⁵*

¹³ Jn. 10:34

¹⁴ Rev. 19:13

¹⁵ Theophilus of Antioch, To Autolycus, Bk. I, ch. x

Since the one called “Word” and “Wisdom” was “begotten” by God and was His companion in creation, He is thereafter spoken of as a person who spoke and acted. In the same work, Theophilus wrote:

“... His Word, through whom He made all things, being His Power and His Wisdom, assuming the person of the Father and Lord of all, went to the garden in the person of God, and conversed with Adam. For the divine writing itself teaches us that Adam said that he had heard the voice. But what else is this voice but the Word of God, who is also His Son? ... But when God wished to make all that He determined on, He begot this Word, uttered, the first-born of all creation, not Himself being emptied of the Word [Reason], but having begotten Reason, and always conversing with His Reason. And hence the holy writings teach us, and all the spirit-hearing [inspired] men, one of whom, John, says, ‘In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God,’ showing that at first God was alone, and the Word in Him. Then he says, ‘The Word was God; all things came into existence through Him; and apart from Him not one thing came into existence.’ The Word, then, being God, and being naturally produced from God, whenever the Father of the universe wills, He sends Him to any place; and He, coming, is both heard and seen, being sent by Him, and is found in a place.”¹⁶

Theophilus did not describe Logos as an inanimate or abstract thing, but a conscious Person begotten out of God as “the Beginning.” His use of the term “begotten” means that Logos/Wisdom was brought forth out of God’s being, originating as a second Person. This is exactly what John indicated when he wrote in vs. 4, “*What has originated in Him was life, and the Life was the Light of men.*” This Life originating Logos is the begetting of the Son referenced by Theophilus, called both Logos and Wisdom. Nearly the same was said of Wisdom in Proverbs 8:22,25: “*The Lord made me the Beginning of His ways for His works. ... before the mountains were settled, and before all hills, he begets me.*”¹⁷

A Closer Look at the Grammar and Syntax

That Logos must be understood as a person and not an abstract “plan” is required by the Greek text itself. John wrote that Logos was both with God, and Logos was God. The first clause, “*Logos was with God*” shows that Logos existed externally to God, not merely something in His mind. His being “with God” implies a tangible existence. The word translated “with” is the Greek preposition “πρὸς,”¹⁸ which means “in company

¹⁶ Bk. II, ch. xxii

¹⁷ Prov. 8:22,25 (LXX)

¹⁸ This preposition is usually used of persons.

with” when used with stative verbs¹⁹ rather than action verbs.²⁰ For example, 1 John 2:1 reads: “And if anyone sins, we **have** an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” The underlined clause is πρὸς τὸν πατέρα, and the verb ἔχομεν (have) is stative (a state-of-being verb). John meant that Jesus is now in the presence of the Father as our Advocate, obviously as a distinct Person. In John 1:1, the clause “and the Word was with God” is καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν, where ἦν (was) is the stative verb. John 1:1 and 1 John 2:1 have exactly the same sense. Thus, Logos was not merely in the mind or plan of God, but was a real entity which was external to God yet in His presence.

The second clause, “and Logos was God,” is a predicate nominative construction (both nouns are in the nominative case separated by a stative verb of being). In this kind of construction, the predicate noun says something about subject. The subject is identified by the use of the definite article. In this clause, “Logos” has the definite article but “God” does not. Consequently, the predicate noun (God) says something about Logos, that He was whatever is essential to the meaning of the word “God.”

In order to understand this clause properly one must first have a proper understanding of the meaning of the word “god” (θεὸς theos) in order to apply that meaning to Logos. Words are defined by their range of usage. **In the Bible, without exception, “God” is a personal, masculine noun which refers to a personal being who holds the ultimate sovereignty over his dominion.** It is a relational term, defining the relationship of a sovereign to his subjects. It never refers to a specific ontological nature or essence. Otherwise, its use for demon-gods and human rulers would mean that they share the same divine essence and nature as God Himself. This definition (God = Sole Sovereign) applies equally to the creator God, to the Son reigning in His Kingdom,²¹ to false gods who pagans believed each held sole sovereignty over a certain aspect of nature, or (rarely) to human rulers.²² In this predicate nominative construction (where the predicate preceding the verb lacks the definite article) the sense is qualitative.²³ The expression, “Logos was God,” means that Logos had the primary qualities and characteristics of what the word “God” always indicates.²⁴ Being a concrete, personal

¹⁹ The verb here is “ἦν” (was) which is a stative verb.

²⁰ Wallace, Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics, p. 380

²¹ Psalm 45:6-7; Heb. 1:8-9

²² John 10:34 quoting from Psalm 82:1,6. In that Psalm God is figuratively portrayed as having assembled the kings of the gentile nations (whom He calls “gods”) in order to rebuke them for not upholding justice in their particular dominions. The last verse indicates that God will destroy them and take over their kingdoms.

²³ Wallace, Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics, pp. 256-270

²⁴ Trinitarians misunderstand this passage also because of their false presupposition that the word “God” can refer to ontological nature. They claim that the “one God” statements refer to a single ontological

noun, “God” cannot mean that Logos was a divine Plan because a “plan” is not concrete, but abstract and non-personal, and a plan cannot exercise sovereignty over a dominion.

Mr. Buzzard tried very hard to skirt the problem, writing:

*“The Word is not identical with God. It is distinguished from God in some sense by being ‘with Him.’ **The Word was not a second God.** If then, the Word is neither identical with God (how can it be if it is also ‘with God’?) nor an independent God, the phrase, ‘the Word was with God’ can only mean, as A. E. Harvey points out, ‘that the word was an expression or reflection of God (cf. Wisdom 7:25-6), that it was in some sense divine, ie, of God.”²⁵*

But if John meant that Logos was “of God” he would have used the possessive form, the genitive case – θεοῦ, “of God.” Or if John meant that Logos was God-like in some non-personal and abstract way he would have written κατὰ θεόν (lit. “in accord with God”), an expression elsewhere translated “godly.”²⁶ But neither of these are what John actually wrote! **He used the personal, masculine noun “God”** in the nominative case! Logos was God, a Person, acting as Sovereign. There is no escaping this without violating either the grammar or the consistent meaning of the word “God.”

Mr. Buzzard’s conclusion in the above quote is not driven by a proper handling of the Greek grammar and syntax, or even by considering the context. Rather, it is forced because of his own Unitarian presuppositions imposed upon John’s Gospel – **that there cannot be two distinct individuals referred to by the title “God,” who can be in the company of one another.** His reasoning is as follows:

1. Logos cannot be identical to God because Logos is said to be distinct from God by the words “with God.” (This is true.)

nature and essence, which is shared by three Persons. However, this incorrect understanding of the word “God” is forced upon the Scriptures by their Trinitarian presuppositions in an attempt to make three equal one. It is not derived from the Scriptures, and it is contradicted by the use of the word “god” for demon-gods and human rulers. This passage does not say that Logos was divine in ontological nature. It says that Logos was in some way Sovereign over a particular dominion. That is, He was “God” to Adam and his descendants, the one who appeared as “the Angel [Messenger] of the Yahweh” yet referred to Himself as Yahweh and God, simply because He was “*the image of the invisible God.*”

²⁵ Buzzard, pp. 191-200

²⁶ Cf. 2 Cor. 7:9,10,11

2. Logos cannot be a distinct Person called “God” because that would make Him a “second God.” (This is a false presupposition that there cannot be two individuals both called “God” in the same passage.)
3. By eliminating #2, Mr. Buzzard is forced to take John’s statement **in a way that is grammatically incorrect**, interpreting the word “God” as an adjective or possessive instead of the personal noun and title that it is.

The problems with Mr. Buzzard’s interpretation are his incorrect understanding of the personal noun “God” and his unwillingness to acknowledge the concept that another, besides the God who is Sovereign over all, can be properly called “God” even within the same contextual statement. Yet this underlying presupposition is demonstrably false as the following well-known Messianic Psalm proves.

Psalm 45:1-7

*1 My heart is overflowing with a good theme; I recite my composition concerning the King; My tongue is the pen of a ready writer. 2 You are fairer than the sons of men; Grace is poured upon Your lips; Therefore God has blessed You forever. 3 Gird Your sword upon Your thigh, O Mighty One, With Your glory and Your majesty. 4 And in Your majesty ride prosperously because of truth, humility, and righteousness; And Your right hand shall teach You awesome things. 5 Your arrows are sharp in the heart of the King’s enemies; The peoples fall under You. 6 Your throne, **O God**, is forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom. 7 You love righteousness and hate wickedness; **Therefore God, Your God**, has anointed You With the oil of gladness more than Your companions.*

This passage was quoted by Paul in Hebrews 1:8-9 and attributed to David’s speaking to the Son of God! David referred to two distinct individuals in this Psalm, both called “God” (θεός LXX). David called the Son “God” while at the same time distinguishing Him from “God, Your God” (the Son’s own God who is Sovereign over Him). John’s readers were intimately familiar with this Psalm. Furthermore, this Messianic Psalm begins in the LXX as follows: ἐξηρέυξατο ἡ καρδιά μου **λόγον** ἀγαθόν, lit. “My heart has emitted excellent **Logos**.” The entire Psalm is about the Messiah, whom Paul identified as the “Son,” and is identified as a second Person also called “God.” This verse was repeatedly used by the earliest Christian writers as an example of the Son of God called “Logos” in the Old Testament, even identifying the second “God” in Psalm 45:6 with “Logos” who is also called “God” in John 1:1! For example, Victorinus writes:

*“But the author of the whole creation is Jesus. His name is the Word; for thus His Father says: ‘My heart hath emitted **a good Word**’ [Psalm 45:1 LXX]. John the evangelist thus says: ‘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. All things were made by Him, and without Him was nothing made that was made [John 1:1-3].”²⁷

All this was considered part of the “mystery” or enigma which God had concealed in the Old Testament Scriptures specifically to hide it from Israel’s wicked rulers.²⁸

What Unitarians like Mr. Buzzard (and Trinitarians) fail to understand is that the term “God” is always a personal and relational term, just like “king,” “governor,” “ruler,” “master,” “father.” Relational terms define a personal relationship between persons, and are meaningless without such a relationship. Such terms do not indicate “kind” or species, ontological essence, nature, or qualities. By calling Yahweh, “God,” we should understand that this term means that He is the Sovereign over all of His subjects and creation. Thus, referring to someone by the term “God” requires that they have complete sovereignty over a dominion. In Psalm 45, David referred to the Son as “God” simply because He was alluding to His promised position of sovereignty in the Kingdom when the Son of God will be the sole Sovereign over the whole earth including nature.²⁹ This is clearly expressed in the very next clause: “A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your Kingdom.” It is because the Father has declared that He will delegate the reins of sole Sovereignty to His Son in the coming Kingdom³⁰ that David referred to Him as “God.” David knew this well, because he recorded this eventual transfer of sovereignty from Father to Son which was promised from the very beginning, when the Son was “begotten” on day one of creation as indicated in Psalm 2.

Psalm 2:7-9 LXX (My Translation)

*6 But I have been made King by Him on Zion His holy mountain, 7 declaring the ordinance of the Lord: the Lord said to me, “**You are my Son, today have I begotten You.** 8 Ask of Me and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance, and the ends of the land for Your possession. 9 You will shepherd them with a rod of iron. You will dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.*

When the Father transfers full dominion of the whole earth to His Son, the Son will literally be “God” of all the earth, the sole Sovereign over all mankind.

²⁷ Victorinus of Pettau (circa AD270), On the Creation of the World

²⁸ God has kept the identity of His Son concealed in Old Testament times because it was necessary to His purpose for the crucifixion (1 Cor. 2:6-8; Col. 2:2-3).

²⁹ Heb. 2:5-9

³⁰ See 1 Cor. 15:24-28

Paul called God’s Son “*the first-produced of all creation*”³¹ and “*The Beginning*.”³² Jesus referred to Himself as “*the Beginning of the creation of God*.”³³ This is precisely what Psalm 2 teaches. On the very day that God “begat” His “only-begotten Son,” He communicated to Him His future role on Mount Zion in His future Kingdom.

Mr. Buzzard’s mistake was eliminating the very thing that the Bible plainly states in the above Psalm. There are two Persons rightly called “God” in the Old Testament Scriptures, something well-known to John’s readers, both from the Psalm itself and from Paul’s quote of it in Hebrews! The One who spoke face to face with the patriarchs **was “God” to them** because He was the representative of the invisible “God”³⁴ who gave Him that authority and role.³⁵

In addition, John wrote in verse 18 that no man has seen God at any time, and that the Son has always been His intermediary and spokesman. Thus, when Moses wrote that “God” walked in Eden and communicated face to face with Adam, it was not “God” the Sovereign of all creation, but the one who was known to Adam face to face as “God.” Since John wrote that “Logos **was** God,” he meant that Logos appeared as “God” whenever the Scriptures say that “God” appeared to someone face to face. Yet He was the Agent of His own God.

Anthony Buzzard, by imposing his own presupposition (that two distinct Persons cannot both be called “God”), has eliminated what is plainly true and demonstrable. After eliminating the truth, he was forced to adopt an interpretation that is grammatically impossible – making “God” in John 1:1 an abstract noun instead of a concrete, personal noun.

Much of the debate concerning John 1 centers on the masculine personal pronouns (He, Him). Unitarians make much of the fact that these pronouns are masculine simply because the noun “logos” is grammatically masculine. In Greek, a pronoun must match the number and gender of its referent. Therefore, if “logos” is not a proper noun (the name or title of a person), but is actually a non-personal, abstract thing, the required masculine pronouns should be understood in English as “it” rather than “Him.” While this is technically true, the opposite is also true. That is, if Logos was intended to be a proper noun, understood as a name or title of a Person (as the clause “*and Logos was*

³¹ Col. 1:15 LGV

³² Col. 1:18 LGV

³³ Rev. 3:14 LGV

³⁴ Col. 1:15; 1 Tim. 1:17; 1 Tim. 6:16; Heb. 11:27

³⁵ Judges 2:1-4 is a perfect example of the Angel [Messenger] of Yahweh (a second Person) being “God” to Israel.

God” absolutely demands), then the masculine personal pronouns should properly be understood in English as “He / Him / His” and be translated that way. Therefore, the Unitarian argument regarding how to translate the pronouns is a logical fallacy, a red herring, because the clause “*and Logos was God*” requires that He is a Person.

To settle this issue further, we need only consider verses 10-12.

John 1:10-12

10 He was in the world, and **the world was made through Him**, and the world did not know **Him**.

11 He came to **His own** [things], and **His own** [people] did not receive Him.

12 But as many as received **Him**, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in **His name**:

There can be no doubt that all of the underlined pronouns (or third person verbs) refer to the same antecedent. Secondly, the same entity called “Logos” in verses 1-3 **must be the referent**. This is necessary because what was attributed to Logos in verse 3 (being the Agent through whom all was created) is here attributed to the one referred to by the masculine personal pronouns (He / Him / His). The clause, ὁ κόσμος δι’ αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο (*the world was made **through** Him – vs. 10*), uses the third person masculine pronoun αὐτοῦ (Him). John wrote in verse 3 “All things were made **through** Him (Logos), and without Him nothing was made that was made.” The word “through” in both passages is the preposition διὰ (dia) in Greek. When this preposition takes an object in the genitive case it points to something accomplished through employing another as an agent.³⁶ Here is the following illustration of this, which has the same preposition, Jesus as the object of the preposition, and God as the source.

Acts 2:22 NKJV

22 “Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which **God did through Him** in your midst, as you yourselves also know

The words translated “through Him” are δι’ αὐτοῦ, exactly the same as in the statement, “All things were made **through Him**” (Jn. 1:3) and “the world was made **through Him**” (Jn. 1:10) and He is the same one in whose name we must believe (vs. 10-12). Was Jesus Himself present when God did all those miracles “*through Him*” as Peter declared? Of course! So also was the Word (Logos) present with God, who is called “God” because He has always been the “face of God” and the “image of God” to mankind.

³⁶ Wallace, p. 368

Therefore, since nothing was made without “Logos” being present as God’s personal agent (vs. 3), and since verse 10 says that the world was made through “*through Him,*” the masculine personal pronoun αὐτοῦ (Him) in verse 10 **must refer to Logos** since He is the one previously said to be the agent of all created things in verse 3. Notice that the masculine personal pronouns (and third person verbs) continue to refer to the same referent (antecedent) throughout verses 10-12.

If we were to replace the pronouns that absolutely refer back to Logos with the name “Logos,” this is how the text would read. This is the correct sense.

John 1:1-3,10-12

1 In the beginning was Logos, and Logos was with God, and Logos was God.

2 Logos was in the beginning with God.

*3 **All things originated through Logos**, and without Logos, nothing originated which has originated. ...*

*10 Logos was in the world, and **the world originated through Logos** [see vs. 3], and the world did not know Logos.*

11 Logos came to Logos’ own [things – neuter], and Logos’ own [people – masculine] did not receive Logos.

*12 But as many as received Logos, to them Logos gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in **the name of Logos**.*

The creation of “all things” is said to have **originated** through “Logos” (vs. 3) as God’s agent. The same language is used of the Person referenced in verse 10 who is clearly the Son.

Verse 3: All things δι’ αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο (through Him originated)

Verse 10: The world δι’ αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο (through Him originated)

Now, consider the difficulties that emerge if we take the personal pronouns to refer to God’s master “Plan,” an abstract thing, as in Mr. Buzzard’s interpretation.

John 1:10-12

10 The Plan was in the world, and the world was made through the Plan, and the world did not know the Plan.

11 The Plan came to the Plan’s own [things – neuter], and the Plan’s own [people – masculine] did not receive the Plan.

*12 But as many as received the Plan, to them the Plan gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe **in the Plan’s name**:*

So if Mr. Buzzard is correct, then people can only be saved by believing in the name of the “Plan.” Yet this is impossible for the following reasons: The term ἴδια (“own {things}”) indicates the things that are owned by this “Plan.” But can an abstract thing own anything? His “own things” refers to what was created through, and promised to, the “only-begotten Son” as His inheritance.³⁷ An abstract “plan” cannot have ownership of anything. Only actual persons can have ownership. “*He came to His own things*” is the correct translation and refers to what Psalm 2 states about the only-begotten Son of God, “*I will give You the nations as Your inheritance and the ends of the earth as Your possession.*” How can a “plan” own anything, never-mind own a class of people? Likewise, οἱ ἴδιοι αὐτὸν (His “own people”) indicates a people that were His by ownership, the nation of Israel. Finally, the children of God are said to be those who “*believe in the Plan’s name!*” What **name** would that be? According to Peter, “*there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.*”³⁸ That is what the good confession is all about, that “*Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God!*”

John the Baptist’s Testimony to Jesus’ Origin before John was Born

In writing his Gospel, John often called witnesses to confirm the points he intended to make, especially quoting John the Baptist and Jesus Himself. Immediately after introducing Logos and His role in creation in John 1:1-5, John then introduced John the Baptist as **a witness** to the Son’s pre-human origin and role in creation which he had just described. In verse 15, John actually quoted John the Baptist in order to support his point about the pre-human origin and existence of the Son, the agent of creation who “became flesh.”

John 1:15 (NASB) 15 *John bore witness of Him, and cried out, saying, “This was He of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me.’”*

Yet the synoptic Gospels record that John the Baptist’s mother was in her sixth month when Mary conceived.³⁹ Thus, John was six months older than Jesus in reference to His human existence.

Finally, consider verse 18 which declares that no man has ever seen God. The words “at any time” cannot be limited to after Jesus’ birth in Bethlehem, but must go back to “*in the beginning.*” Consequently, the declaration that “*the only-begotten Son*” is the one who has made God known is set in juxtaposition to his preceding statement, that no one has

³⁷ Psalm 2:7-8

³⁸ Acts 4:12

³⁹ Luke 1:26,36

seen God **at any time** (from “the beginning”). Consequently, the Son is the one who has made God known “*at any time*” (thus all time) which requires that we extend the Son’s activity in making God known all the way back to “*in the beginning.*” The Son, the “*only-begotten of the Father,*”⁴⁰ who is “*the first-produced of all creation,*”⁴¹ and “*who is The Beginning,*”⁴² and “*The Beginning of the creation of God,*”⁴³ is Logos who was “*in the beginning with God*” through whom all things were created.⁴⁴ The following points are therefore established:

1. “Logos was God” requires that He was a Person.
2. Logos was a name or title for the Son of God (Rev. 19:13)
3. The one in whose name we trust, who gives us the right to be called children of God, can grammatically only refer “Logos” who was later named Jesus.
4. John the Baptist claimed that Jesus originated before him.
5. No one has ever seen the Father. The Son has been the personal Mediator between God and mankind from “the beginning.”

Thus, all who are said to have seen God in the Old Testament have actually seen the Son as “God,” who is also called “*the Messenger of His Face*” (Isa. 63:9), “*the image of the invisible God,*” (Col. 1:15), and “*the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person*” (Heb. 1:3). This does not require two “Gods” in contradiction to all of the “one God” statements. Rather it recognizes one supreme Sovereign who has delegated certain spheres of dominion to His Son who then acts as “God” within the limits of those assigned dominions.

⁴⁰ v. 14

⁴¹ Col. 1:15 LGV

⁴² Col. 1:18 LGV

⁴³ Rev. 3:14 LGV

⁴⁴ Col. 1:15-18 LGV