

Bite Size Bible Study

John 1: 1-5 #116

By Pastor Lee

In the beginning was the word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. John 1:1

I had always been taught to insert the word “Jesus” in place of the word “Word”.

In modern Western philosophy the focus is on the individual – the me, myself and I. In contrast to this the ancient Hebrew or Eastern philosophy always focuses on the whole of the community – the us, our and we.

When we read the Bible we need to interpret in the culture of the ancient Hebrews in their Hebrew-Eastern philosophy and not from our own modern Greco-Roman Western philosophy. In the Hebrew philosophy the goal is the diminishing of the self and avoiding the ego centrism. If we can see that this is true, then why when we read Yeshua words do we always see a Yeshua centered on Himself, which is in complete opposition to Hebrew philosophy.

An example of this is John 14:6 *I am the way the truth and the life no one comes to the Father but through me.*

The answer is we are reading the text from our own western philosophical point of view. We are not interpreting it from the Hebrew philosophy. To understand this we need to take a closer look at John 1:1. This verse has led to a lot of controversy, and possibly has been misunderstood by many.

In the Old Testament we are repeatedly told that the words of God are his teachings, which is the Hebrew word Torah. God's teachings are his word. If we place the word teachings within this verse we have: *In the beginning was the teaching and the teaching was with God and the teaching was God.* Then in verse 14 we have: *and the teachings became flesh.* Yeshua not only took on human flesh but also the persona of God's teachings.

That is exactly what Yeshua did. He came to teach the teachings of God (i.e. the Torah). Yeshua didn't take on the human attributes of self-aggrandizement but and instead took on the attributes of God's teachings.

The gospels speak to this fact that whenever Yeshua speaks he is speaking of God's teachings that were given in the Torah. When Yeshua says I, he is not speaking of Himself but the teachings of God.

When we look at John 14:6 again but with this understanding we can read this as: *the teachings of God are the way the truth and the life.*

Interestingly this is exactly what God teaches in Exodus 18:20, *teach them the teachings and make known to them the way they are to go.*

Also in the Psalms 119:142 *your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness and your teaching is truth.*

And again in Deuteronomy 32:47 *through the teachings you may live long in the land.*

According to these passages the teachings of God are the way the truth and the life. Yeshua didn't teach about Himself but of teachings and character of God that had been given to Israel many times before.

In the beginning was the Word (Dvar Hashem), and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. I think we can see that the “Word” here is the teaching and character of God. It should not be difficult to see that since God doesn't change, neither would His teaching or character change.

Now, since Jesus took on the persona of God's teachings and character, we can read the following 4 verses with the understanding that Jesus is the “He”, speaking not of Himself but of the Unity (the Us, Our and We) of God.

He was with God in the beginning. All things came to be through him, and without him nothing made had being. In him was life, and the life was the light of mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not suppressed it.

Excerpts edited from YouTube video by Jeff Benner
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hNr50riW6uM>

Cornerstone Community Church

PO Box 654 Lemon Grove, CA 91945-0654 – www.cornerstonecommunityonline.org