

The third of these three key words in John 1:14 (and the one which is perhaps the most critical), *ginomai*, is used 648 times in the Greek New Testament. This verb has a number of meanings, but chiefly two major categories. *Ginomai* means "to be" and "to become." Usage in context usually enables us to decide which of these meanings is intended. Given that the form of the verb indicates punctiliar action and past time (a 2nd aorist indicative), *ginomai* in this context means "became" rather than "was." The Logos was not always a human being; rather, at some point in the past, the *Logos became* a human being!

This point may be supported by reference to other Scriptures. For example, Hebrews 2:14 states, "Since the children [the sons of God] share in flesh and blood, He Himself [Jesus] also likewise *partook* of the same." Philippians 2:7c speaks of Christ Jesus "being *made* in the likeness of men." John 17:18 quotes our Lord as saying, "As Thou didst *send me into the world*, I also have sent them into the world." And 1 Timothy 1:15 asserts, "It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus *came into the world* to save sinners, among who I am foremost of all."

Putting all this together, we arrive at the doctrine: the God whom no human being has seen at any time manifested Himself in the world by becoming a human being. The *Logos* became *sarx*! However, since this leaves much to be desired and said, we must hasten on to our second major consideration.

The Implications of the Doctrine of the Incarnation

For some centuries conservative theology -- that theology which adheres heartily to the full and sole authority of Scripture as an infallible guide in all that it affirms -- has held tenaciously to two concepts which have sweeping implications for the doctrine of the Incarnation (as well as for other doctrines). Both concepts are denials of certain categories to God.

The first concept is a denial of the category of *becoming* to God. The category of *being* alone is applicable to God; the category of *becoming* is not. In this concept, God's nature is viewed as being completely actualized, with nothing of potentiality in Him. Since He already *is* everything He can be, He cannot *become* anything.