Dr. David Turner, Gospel of John, Session 21, Genesis 1 and John 1

This is Dr. David Turner in his teaching on the Gospel of John. This is session 21, Genesis 1 and John 1.

Hello, we now have completed our videos on John chapter by chapter and we're going to have at the end here of the set of videos a couple of sessions on the biblical theology of the Gospel of John. The first one we've entitled Genesis 1 and John 1. We're attempting to explore the intertextuality between John 1 as it alludes back to Genesis 1 and to understand the nature of the logos in John 1 and just the doctrine of creation as it is taught there.

It is apparent to me that when John refers to Genesis chapter 1, he's not simply attempting to tell us that Jesus, the word of God in the New Testament is the creator of the Old Testament. He's attempting to build on that doctrine of creation to teach us that Jesus is renewing the original world as it was created. He is recreating the world so to speak by shedding not only the light originally upon it but by renewing the world through the light of the Gospel which centers on him.

So, I'll be reading this paper from the computer so I apologize for the lack of constant eye contact. I hope that the content will suffice to overcome the lack of good presentation. To study John chapter 1 in light of Genesis chapter 1 requires us to think about all the historic, linguistic, cultural, and theological aspects that are involved in the discipline of exegesis.

The recent rise of theological exegesis as an alternative to strictly historical exegesis challenges any approach to biblical texts that purport to handle them from a strictly objective method and to arrive at conclusions with neutral values apart from any contribution of the history of exegesis of the canon as a whole, both Old Testament and New Testament. For me personally, it's impossible and inadvisable as well to read the Old Testament without awareness of and influenced by the New Testament use of those seminal scriptures. So, I attempt to acknowledge my predispositions and to apply them self-consciously during the exegetical process.

I'm seeking to understand the effects of the Old Testament on the New, viewing the New Testament as the authoritative part of the history of the interpretation of the Old Testament. The aspect of exegesis most important for this study may well be the genre of biblical narrative in general and of Genesis and the fourth Gospel in particular. Concerning biblical narrative in general, one must consider how narratives portray history for theological purposes.

Concerning John's Gospel in particular, one must engage a text which, in Luke Timothy Johnson's words, is stylistically simple yet symbolically dense. We may have some reservations about Clement's description of John as a spiritual gospel, but its distinctiveness cannot be gainsaid. Don Carson's suggestion that spiritual may mean allegorical or even symbol-laden seems to be a good point.

This understanding of John is decisive for determining one question to be addressed here. To what extent does John intend a theology of new creation or of creation renewal? Another important issue, especially in the area of the exegesis of biblical text related to creation, is what John Walton calls concordism. Concordism is Walton's term for an ill-advised approach that tends to read modern scientific theories, whatever they are, back into ancient biblical texts on the assumption that the Bible itself intends to speak directly to current scientific questions and that it will agree with the current scientific theory.

The double problem of concordism is that it tends to downplay the historicity of scripture in its attempt to match up scriptural teaching with current scientific theory, whose own historicity and ephemeral nature are underestimated in the process. This study will develop the allusions to Genesis 1 found in John 1 through intertextual details and thematic connections leading toward a preliminary Johannine theology of creation and new creation. A study such as this cannot hope to be complete in any sense of the word due to the density of the biblical text itself, not to mention the plethora of secondary literature on the text.

I'm assuming that whatever compositional processes were in play, the prologue to the Gospel of John was ultimately intended to be read with the rest of the fourth gospel in a mutually informing way as a canonical whole. I'm also assuming the view of many recent scholars that the primary milieu of the New Testament Johannine corpus in general and the Johannine prologue, in particular, is Jewish and biblical rather than Gnostic and philosophical. More specifically, the primeval seminal texts lying behind the Johannine prologue are Genesis 1 and Exodus 33 and 34, whatever one may say about the influence of other Jewish texts that existed in the first century of the common era.

It seems to me that the Johannine prologue is a sort of implicit midrash on these two major texts, Genesis 1 and Exodus 33 and 34. A brief comment on whether other Jewish texts constitute plausible literary intermediaries between John 1 and Genesis 1 is warranted. It's clear that the fourth gospel was not written from a vacuum but from an ancient socio-historical milieu.

This milieu likely included texts that had reflected on Genesis 1 in a fashion that the author of the fourth gospel deemed helpful. Such plausible literary intermediaries whose ideas were somewhat compatible with the teaching of John would include Jewish wisdom texts akin to Proverbs 8, such texts as Sirach, Chapter 24, Wisdom,

Chapters 7 through 10, Baruch, Chapters 3 and 4. Philo's understanding of logos and of the targumic notion of God's memra, not to mention other Jewish ideas, would also be important to understand this text. Despite noteworthy and enlightening similarities, it's clear that the Johannine logos transcends these anticipatory entries.

So now having introduced the topic, we move on to our first main part of the body of the paper, a survey of key intertextual issues. A biblically literate person who reads John 1 will certainly notice echoes of or allusions to Genesis 1. The more obvious ones are in the beginning, the description of pre-existent Jesus as the word, the act of creation itself, the word as life, and the juxtaposed words light and darkness. So, we'll take these categories we've just mentioned one by one.

First of all, the phrase in the beginning. It's commonly noted that John 1:1 is modeled after Genesis 1 and understands Jesus, the word become flesh, as the agent of creation. Thus, in the beginning language of John 1.1 and 2, en arche in Greek, echoes Genesis 1:1 in the Septuagint en arche as in John 1 and in Hebrew, bereshit.

So first, the phrase, in the beginning, bereshit, in the Old Testament. The word bereshit, beginning, occurs 51 times in the Old Testament in reference to beginnings or firsts of many different kinds, including that of Nimrod's kingdom in Genesis 10, the beginning of the year in Deuteronomy 11, the reign of kings, Jeremiah 26 and 27 and 28, the beginning of sin, Micah chapter 1, the beginning of strife, Proverbs 1:7, the beginning of wisdom, Psalm 111, the beginning of knowledge, Proverbs chapter 1. Firstborn sons are the beginning of their father's male vigor, according to Genesis 49 and other Old Testament texts. The first fruits of crops are the beginning of the harvest, according to Exodus 34 and other passages.

Metaphorically, Israel is the first, the arche in Greek, of God's harvest, Jeremiah chapter 2, verse 3, and other texts. Eli was censured for consuming the choice part of the offerings, that would be the first part. The Levites allotment is the first or the choice part of the land, in Ezekiel 48, compared to Deuteronomy 33, verse 21.

Wisdom is the reshit, the first, the chief, or the principal activity of life, according to Proverbs chapter 4, verse 7. And the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, of course, in Proverbs chapter 1, verse 7, Proverbs 9, verse 10, and Psalm 111, verse 10. In Genesis 1:1, the word beginning, reshit, in Hebrew and in the Septuagint arche in Greek, refers to the beginning of the world as God created it. Proverbs 8.22 is another instance where these two words refer to the beginning of the world, reshit in Hebrew, arche in the Septuagint, the Greek translation.

This text will be engaged later in more detail since its reference to God's hokmah, or wisdom, looms large in the discussion of Lagos in John 1:1. These two texts are the only indisputable uses of reshit in the Old Testament for the created beginning of the world, although this meaning is also plausible, at least in Isaiah 46, verse 10. Now we

turn to in the beginning in the New Testament. The 55 occurrences of the word arche, beginning, in the New Testament carry a number of nuances related to temporal or governmental priority.

Paul uses the word for human rulers in Titus 3:1, but more often to describe hierarchical angelic authorities in several texts, including Romans 8:38 and Ephesians 1, Colossians 1. Arche most commonly refers to the temporal beginning of an action, a process, or a state of being. There has been much discussion of its use in Mark 1:1 for the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Arche is often frequently used to describe the early days of the gospel.

Texts like Luke 1:2, John 8:25, and 15:27. In Matthew 19:4, Jesus speaks of the creation of humans as male and female as something that happened ap' arches, from the beginning. In Matthew 24:21, Jesus speaks of eschatological troubles such have never happened since the world began, or since the creation of the world, ap' arches kosmou in Greek. In John 8:44, Jesus speaks of the devil as a murderer ap' arches, from the beginning.

Hebrews 1:10 reads Psalm 102, verse 25, Christologically, as a description of Jesus laying the foundation of the world, kath' arkas, according to the beginning or at the beginning. 2 Peter 3:4 speaks of skeptics who believe that everything continues since it has, ever since the creation or the beginning of the creation, ap' arches ktiseos. Jude 6 evidently describes the created statuses of angels who later rebelled as leaving their first state or their own beginning.

Jude 6. Arche also describes Jesus in at least two significant passages, Colossians 1:18 and Revelation 3:14. Colossians 1:18 is the part of a series of predications extolling Jesus as God's beloved son who defends his people, who also images God, creates and holds everything together, and heads up the church. In this connection, Jesus is arche, the beginning, the one through whom all creative and redemptive processes begin. Similarly, in Revelation 3:14, just as arche ktiseos to theu, the beginning of the creation of God, describes Jesus as the originating cause of God's creation, perhaps even stressing Jesus as the beginning cause of God's new creation as well as the original creation.

Another key intertextual term here would be the idea of the word or God's speech. So, this is our second term. The word in John 1, o logos, alludes to God's creation by word at the outset of each of the six days.

Genesis 1:3, 6, 9, 14, 20, and 24. In the Septuagint Greek translation of the Old Testament, kai eipen ho theos genetheto, and God said let there be. Or in Hebrew, vayomer elohim yehi. God said let there be.

This type of speech language recurs in the context of day three, day five, day six, and also in chapter two, verse 18. In this last text, God's creation of the woman follows his speech, kai eipen kreos ha theos, Septuagint, and God said, vayomer adonai elohim in Hebrew, and God said that it is not good for the man to be alone. An additional reference to God's speech occurs in chapter one, verse five, when on day one God calls, using the Greek verb kaleo, in Hebrew, aqara, he calls the light day and the darkness night.

The same language is used for the created entities on days two and three. Later, Adam calls the names of the animals in chapter one, verse 19. He names the woman in verse 23, and then Eve in chapter three, verse 20.

God also speaks a blessing on his creatures on the fourth day and on humans by using the Greek term eulogaisin. So, we have several different terms for God's speech there. In the Old Testament, God's word is spoken of in many relevant texts beyond the verbal connections that may be directly drawn between Logos and John and the language of God's speech acts in Genesis 1. For example, creation by word is emphasized in Psalm 33, verses six and nine.

In 33.6, God's word and breath are synonymously parallel agents of creation. In 33.9, there is a synonymously parallel relationship between God's speech and God's command as the immediate causes of creation. Frequently, debar adonai, word of the Lord, comes as a revelation to the prophets, promising deliverance or warning of judgment upon Israel.

Texts such as Psalm 107, verse 20, Jeremiah chapter one, verse four, Isaiah chapter nine, verse eight, Ezekiel 33:7, and Amos 3:1. God's word also uniquely governs the course of Israel's affairs. Psalm 107, verse 20, Psalm 147, verses 15 through 20. Perhaps more interestingly, Isaiah 55, 10, and 11, a text occasionally cited in connection with John 1, portrays God's word as God's agent, which will without fail accomplish all that he intends it to accomplish.

The semantic overlap and theological continuity of God's debar, God's word, and God's Torah, his law, and God's hokmah, his wisdom, is not difficult to grasp. Second Temple literature and later rabbinic tradition made much of this continuity and reflection on such biblical texts as Proverbs 3.19 and Proverbs 8.22-31. Such texts extol wisdom as existing prior to creation in close relationship to God and as having an active role in creation. Yet wisdom itself was established according to Proverbs 8.23. The Greek word there in the Septuagint is ethelemiosin, God laid the foundation, God founded wisdom, and a similar term in Hebrew as well.

Wisdom is also brought forth, given birth, Proverbs 8:25, evidently as God's first creation. In this respect, the logos in John, which created everything, not just everything else, again alluding to the phraseology in John 1:3, panta dealtu agenata,

everything occurred through him, kai koris autou ageneto oude hen, apart from him nothing happened, nothing was created. This greatly transcends the doctrine of personified wisdom as God's creative agent.

Returning to the New Testament, in the New Testament logos is used for various sorts of divine or human communication or reckoning, whether oral utterances, teachings, promises, or written messages. Arguably the Johannine use of logos for preexisting Jesus is also found in 1 John 1:1 and in Revelation 19:13. Also, an early variant reading in 1 John 5:7 links the Father and the Spirit with the Word, not suggesting this is a canonical text in the original manuscripts, just an interesting early allusion to this understanding of Jesus as the word. The dynamically active semi-personified ha logos tou theou in Hebrews 4:12, that is to say the word of God which is living and active and penetrating into human hearts, may also be relevant for this conversation and discussion.

The allusion to Isaiah 40:8 and 1 Peter 1:25, which emphasizes the everlasting potency of God's word, is also relevant and interesting. In John 1:1, the ho logos as the preexistent and ultimate personification of God's self-expression transcends all previous references to God's communicative word. Compare Hebrews 1:1 and 2. As developed in the fourth gospel, the word become flesh, exegetes, the Greek word exegesato, reveals, explains the Father so adequately that the one who has seen Jesus according to 14:8 and 9 has seen the Father.

Jesus has descended from heaven, John 3:14, and does the Father's work even on the Sabbath according to chapter 5 verses 16-19. Moses wrote of Jesus and Jesus' words are placed alongside those of Moses as God's law in John 5:45-47, but Jesus the word existed before Abraham was even born and Abraham rejoiced to see Jesus' day as the word become flesh according to John 8 verses 56-58. As the word becomes flesh who was loved by the Father before the foundation of the world, Jesus anticipates his return to the Father and prays for those who have followed him.

He describes them as those who have been given God's word, who have kept it, and who need its sanctifying power, John 17:6, 14, and 17. Such a spiritual gospel as John could even be described as the word becoming flesh. These references also refer to Jesus' words as the word becomes flesh.

In any event, a post-resurrection appearance of Jesus leads one doubter to conclude that the word become flesh is himself Lord and God, namely Thomas in John 20.28. Moving on from logos to the act of creation itself. The description of the act of creation in John 1:3, panta dei autou egeneto, everything was created or happened through him, likely alludes to Genesis 1:1. In the Septuagint translation of this, it reads, epoiesen ho theos to ouranon, God made the heaven and the earth, a similar expression in the Hebrew Bible. In John 1:3, egenetheto echoes the Septuagint's let there be language on days 1, 2, and 3. The word genetheto, let there be, or thetosan,

let there be placed, chapter 1, verses 3, 6, and 14, and there was light language of Genesis 1:3, egenatheto phos.

Additional references to God's creation of Adam and Eve occur in Genesis 1:26, 27, 31, as well as in chapter 5:1-2 and chapter 6:7. So, first let's think about the act of creation in the Old Testament. As noted above, the Hebrew word bara is used several times in Genesis 1 for the original creation of the world. Bara is also used to describe the creation of subsequent individuals, conditions, and circumstances in other texts.

All in all, the word occurs 54 times in the Hebrew Bible. Of special interest to this study is the use of bara in contexts related to the transformation of individuals, texts such as Psalm 51, verse 7, and of creation itself, Isaiah 4, verse 5, 41:20, 45:8, and 65:17, and 18. This creation of new heavens and new earth in the latter text also involves the future creation of Israel itself, according to Isaiah 43, verse 1, verse 7, and verse 15.

Another word is used in the Hebrew Bible to describe God's creative activity, namely the word asah. This extremely common word, well over 2,500 times in the Hebrew Bible, describes many kinds of making and doing. In Genesis 1:7, 11, 12, 16, 25, and 26, asah occurs after initial divine speech acts, vayomer elohim, and God said, following that God did this, God made that.

This occurs on days 2, 3, 4, and 6. Many other biblical texts use the word asah in reference to God's activity, in reference either to the original creation or God's ongoing providential activity. Asah also refers to God making Israel, texts such as Deuteronomy 26, verse 9, 32:6, Isaiah 17:7, and additional texts. It also refers to God doing a personal transformation in the case of Ezekiel 18:31.

Perhaps the most relevant aspect of Genesis 1 for John 1 is the prevalence of the language sequence of speech leading to existence.

Six times God speaks, vayomer elohim, yehi or, etc., God said let there be light, septuagena eipen ho theos … ageneto phos. Each time existence existence results from this speech of God. After God says in Hebrew, Yehi or, the text says Vayehi or.

God said, let there be light and there was light. In Greek, in the Septuagint, God says, egeneto Tathos, and then we have Kai egenato theos, it happened. The transition which marks the end of the first five days repeats the existence language and makes it all the more noteworthy, chapter 1, verses 5, 8, 13, 19, and 23.

Now we look at the act of creation in the New Testament. In the New Testament, the word poieo, commonly used in the Septuagint to translate both barah and asah in

Hebrew, is also used for creation. This occurs most often in New Testament texts that cite the Old Testament, such as Matthew chapter 19, verse 4, and similar texts.

Another common word in the New Testament for creation is Ktidzo. This word is important for the New Testament theology of salvation as new creation in texts like Galatians chapter 6, verse 15, comparing the noun form of the verb ktisis in 2 Corinthians 5:17. Also in Ephesians 2:10, Ephesians 2:15, 4:24, and Colossians 3:10. However, this terminology using ktisis is not used in the Gospel or letters of John.

For the purpose of this study, the use of ginomai in John 1:3 and 1:10 to describe God's creative activity is most relevant. The use of ginomai for creation seems to be almost unique in the New Testament and arguably intends an allusion to the frequent use of haya, ginomai, haya in the Hebrew, ginomai in the Septuagint, in Genesis 1:1 to describe the creative act. In this regard, it's interesting to compare John 1:1 with John 8:58, where the pre-existence of Jesus is contrasted with the past origin of Abraham.

Prin abraam genesthai, before Abraham happened to be, before Abraham was born, ego eimi, I am. Another specific aspect of intertextuality between the Old and New Testament in John 1 and Genesis 1 are the allusions to the word life. John's mention of Jesus as the source of life in chapter 1, verse 3, en auto zoe en, in him was life, is itself an allusion to Genesis 1, where of course life is central.

In Genesis 1:20 and 21, God creates swarming things of the water, birds of the air, and other aquatic creatures, all described as living creatures, psukon zoson in the Greek, and nephesh heya in Hebrew. The same language is used in chapter 1, verse 24 for cattle and other land creatures. In chapter 1, verse 28, God's plan for humans to rule over every living thing is described.

In chapter 1, verse 30, God gives green plants for food for every creature which has life. Again, the word nephesh heya is used. Humans themselves receive the breath of life, compare John chapter 20, verse 22, and they become living creatures in Genesis chapter 2, verse 7. So, let's turn to think about how life is used in the Old Testament.

In many Old Testament texts, such as Psalm 89, verse 47, and Psalm 90, verse 10, life is spoken of simply in a physical sense. But many other texts portray the God of Israel as the living God. Deuteronomy 5:26, Joshua 3:10, 1 Samuel 17:26, and additional passages.

This living God calls on Israel to live life in covenant relationship with him, Deuteronomy chapter 4, verse 10; 12:1, and Deuteronomy 31:13. In this covenantal context, God offers Israel the blessing of life and prosperity if they obey him, and he warns them of the curse of death and adversity if they disobey him, Deuteronomy 31, verses 15 through 20. Life, then, is not simply a matter of a span of years during

which a person lives, but life is also a qualitative and relational matter. Israel does not live by bread alone, but by everything that proceeds from the mouth of God, according to Deuteronomy chapter 8, verse 3. God offers to Israel an inner transformation, circumcision of the heart, that can enable them to love him and thus live for him, Deuteronomy chapter 30, verse 6. God's covenantal word to Israel is nothing less than Israel's life, according to Deuteronomy chapter 30, verse 20, and 32, verse 47.

The one who finds wisdom finds life, according to Proverbs chapter 8, verse 35, and many other texts in Proverbs. In this respect, God is the fountain of Israel's life, in whose light they see light, Psalm 36, verse 9, compared to Genesis 2:10, Jeremiah 2:13. No doubt this refers to physical earthly life, but it is physical earthly life that's lived in right relationship to God. Now we turn to life in the New Testament.

As with the Old Testament, many New Testament texts speak of simple physical life, Acts 17:25. 20, verse 10, James 4:14. Many other texts speak of a transcendent sort of life made possible by God in Christ, Acts 11:18, 13:48, Romans 6:4. Those not related to God in Christ are estranged from God's life, according to 2 Corinthians 2:15 and 16, and Ephesians 4:18. Life in Christ is possible because God raised him from the dead and sent the Spirit to believers, Acts 3:15, Romans 6:8 and following and other texts. This kind of life is everlasting because it holds promise for the world to come, Matthew 19:16. Johannine texts also speak at times of life in a mere physical sense. Such texts as John chapter 10, verse 11, 10:15, .17, John 12:25, and others seem to speak just of physical or material life.

But it's clear that John's use of this sort of language is much more than about a qualitatively different kind of life lived in relationship with God and lasting into the eschaton. This eternal life is a present experience of believers, but it may be likened to being raised from the dead already, John chapter 5:21 and verses 24 and 25. Three of Jesus' I am statements, ego eimi, relate to life.

He is the bread of life who comes down from heaven, 6:41, 48, and 51. He is the resurrection in the life, John 11:25. He is the way, the truth, and the life, John 14:6. Perhaps the most important text in John relative to John chapter 1, verses 4 and 5, and thus looking back to Genesis chapter 1, is John chapter 8, verse 12, which juxtaposes life and light, albeit in reverse order. In John 1:4, Jesus as life enlivens and thereby enlightens people.

In 8:12, Jesus as the light of the world provides those who follow him with life. In 1 John chapter 1, verses 1 through 7, there is also an association of life and light with darkness and sin as incompatible with life and light in a manner that's comparable or similar to the gospel of John chapter 1, verses 4 and 5, and to John 8:12. Another topic of intertextuality between John 1 and Genesis 1 is the idea of light and

darkness. For John, the word as life is symbolized by the word as light, chapter 1, verse 4. Kai he zoe en to phos ton anthropon, the life was the light of humans.

The reference to light and darkness in John chapter 1, verse 5, light shines in darkness, alludes to Genesis chapter 1, verses 2 and 3, which says in the Septuagint, kai skatos eponotes abusu, kai eipen ha theos genetheito phos, kai egenetho phos. In other words, darkness was on the face of the abyss, the deep, and God said, let there be light, and so there was light. So, when we look at light and darkness in the Hebrew Bible in Genesis 1, verses 3 to 5, we have a description of the creative work of the first day as the creation of light, replacing the darkness of chapter 1, verse 2, and beginning the sequence of evenings and mornings which mark each of the first five days in chapter 1, verses 15 through 18.

Other biblical texts associate light with God's creating and sustaining the world, Job 38:19, Psalm 74, verses 16 and 17, as well as Psalm 104, verse 2. God's care for Israel is often expressed through the giving of light. The penultimate plague on Egypt was darkness, while the Israelites alone had light, according to Exodus chapter 10, verse 23. God led the Israelites through the wilderness day and night with the pillars of cloud and of fire, Exodus 13:21, 14:20, and other texts that refer back to those events.

The tabernacle furniture included the menorah, and the candlestick for light. In Job, light is a metaphor of a God-given understanding for difficult matters, in texts like Job 12, verse 22, verse 25, Job 30, verse 26, and 38:15. It also seems to refer to God's providence in Job chapter 26 and verse 10. In the prophets, the Psalms, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes, light and darkness are frequently metaphors of good and evil, prosperity and adversity, blessing and judgment, and we won't go into the detail of citing texts for that.

You can find them if you're interested. We turn to light and darkness in the New Testament. Light and darkness are frequently used metaphorically in the New Testament also.

In the Synoptic Gospels, the teaching of Jesus enlightens his followers, Matthew 4:16, citing Isaiah 9:2. Also, Matthew 5:14-16, Matthew 6:22-23, Luke 2:32, alluding to Isaiah 42:6 and 49:6, as does Acts 13:47. In Acts 26:18, Paul styles his ministry as one which turns people from darkness to light, from Satan to God, and the New Testament and the first nine epistles frequently have similar imagery. Even Peter uses this imagery in 1 Peter 2:.9. The meaning of light and darkness in John 1:4-5 is complicated by the well-known punctuation disagreement over ho-gegonen and it happened, which can be read with what precedes or with what follows, as a relative clause which describes hen at the end of chapter 1, verse 3. So, we could read it, kai korei autou egeneto oude hen ha-gegonen, without him nothing was made that has been made, as does the NIV. Or we could read it as en auto, as the subject of the

linking verb en at the beginning of chapter 1, verse 4, ha-gegonen en auto zoe hein, what happened in him was life, and then take the rest of it with the following verse.

The certainty of an allusion to Genesis 1:3 is not impacted by this debate, although the nuance of the allusion is. In the former approach, reading the text, without him nothing was made that was made, the universal scope of the word's creation is stressed in a way that clearly distinguishes the word from anything that was created. In the latter approach, nothing was made apart from him, and what happened in him was life, verse 4. It's still clear that the word made every single thing, but the stress is more on the life that occurred through the word than on the universality of the word's creation.

Perhaps the latter view is more supportive of the new creation implications in John, as we shall see later in this study. All in all, a decision depends on whether ha-gegonen should be viewed as related to creation or to incarnation. The Johannine corpus as a whole then uses light and darkness frequently in a manner similar to its use in 1.1.4.5. There can be no doubt that John uses the imagery of the first creative act in Genesis 1.3 as a central metaphor for the mission of Jesus.

It's clear by 1:5.5, if not in 1:4, that the word is presented as the incarnation of light which is not understood or overcome by the darkness of a fallen world. John the Baptist is not the light itself, but he is a witness to the authentic enlightenment found through the word. From here on, light and darkness occur regularly as ethical dualism metaphors, beginning with chapter 3, verses 19 through 21, which links light with faith leading to life and darkness with unbelief leading to judgment.

The association of the reality of life and the word with the metaphor of light in John 8:12 is especially significant for the understanding of John 1:4-5 as a new creation text. Moving on now from this study of the details of the intertextuality between John 1 and Genesis 1, we begin to attempt something of a synthesis, a Johannine biblical theology of how the word, the logos, is related to creation. First, the logos and original creation.

There is no doubt that John intentionally began his gospel with several allusions to Genesis chapter 1. In doing so, he affirmed that the word is not only existing at creation, but also is the creator. Apart from him, nothing was made, and without him, nothing, not one thing happened. This repetitive statement posits the word as creator in both a positive and a negative fashion, leaving no doubt whatsoever about the matter.

Nothing came into existence apart from the word. The prepositional phrases dealt to, through him, and quodius altu, apart from him, express the word's activity in relationship to creation. All that was through him and none of it was without him.

Through, in this context, refers to the personal agency of the word as creator. If everything was created through the word who was with God and who was God, the word who was God and who was with God created everything. Nothing came into existence independently apart from the word's activity.

The word was not an inferior deity to whom the task of creation was delegated by a superior deity, nor was the word's creative work done apart from the Father and the Holy Spirit. The text thus speaks unambiguously about the word's direct role as creator, as do such texts as 1 Corinthians 8:6, Colossians 1:18, and Hebrews 1:2. We've spoken of the word in the original creation. Now we think about the word and the renewal of creation.

The magnificent prologue to the fourth gospel presents the logos, the word, not only as the asarchos creator, but also as the ensarchos revealer of God. As asarchos, that is to say, apart from flesh creator in his preexisting state, Jesus created the world. As the ensarchos revealer of God as the one in flesh, the incarnate one, Jesus came to reveal God.

If it's clear that John 1 through 3 posits the word as the original creator of everything, it is just as clear that John 1 verses 4 and 5 posits the word as revealer in a fashion that validates a latent Johannine new creation theology. Although this latter point has not been frequently recognized by evangelicals as the former one, that is to say, evangelicals have not as regularly noticed a doctrine of the renewal of creation as they have a doctrine of original creation in this text, the portrayal of the logos as life and light legitimizes the notion of a Johannine theology of salvation as renewal of creation. What's commonly understood to be communicated explicitly by Paul in the epistolary genre and argument in texts such as Romans 5:12-21, Romans 8:18-23, 2 Corinthians 4:3-7, 2 Corinthians 5:17, along with perhaps the interesting use of Paul in Genesia, the renewal of the world in Matthew 19.28. This sort of teaching is also communicated by the author of the fourth gospel, albeit more implicitly through narrative artistry, not in a simple prose language.

Commentaries tend to make isolated observations about the creation overtones of various details of John 1, but extended treatments of the theme are relatively uncommon. Certain commentaries and studies find seven days in John 1:19 and following, and these are viewed as echoing the seven days of creation in Genesis 1. Other studies find emphasis of a paradise motif in the gospel, in such texts as chapter 20, where Mary Magdalene is greeted by the gardener, thinking Jesus is the gardener, I should say, on Easter Sunday morning at the empty tomb. Kostenberger's summary of creation overtones depends on a study done by Brown.

Here I'm speaking of Andreas Kostenberger's New Testimony of John's Gospel and Letters, published by Zondrevan in 2009, as well as Janine Brown's article, Creation's Renewal in the Gospel of John, in the Catholic Biblical Quarterly in 2010.

Kostenberger's treatment emphasizes the motif of light and life as well in the prologue, but there are also brief treatments of new creation theology in the Book of Signs, chapter 1, verses 19 through 12:50, and in the Passion Narrative, and even in the Resurrection Account. Professor Brown focuses on the phrase, in the beginning, in John 1:1, also on life as a motif in John, and the climax of John, chapters 20 and 21, where she finds several allusions to Genesis chapters 1 and 2. Finally, she also speaks of Jesus' resurrection, which is taken to imply the beginning of a new creation week.

Although Brown argues otherwise, a rigorous application of Hay's criteria for determining valid echoes, that is to say, intertextual echoes of the Old Testament and the New, may result in excluding some of these suggested allusions. Not all of them are equally convincing at first blush. At first glance, after the clear imagery in common between Genesis 1 and John 1, the proposed allusion to Genesis 2:7 and John 20:22, where Jesus breathes on the disciples and his breath is involved in their reception of the Spirit, in likely reminiscence of Genesis 2.7, this may be the most likely and most significant intertextual allusion in the passage.

Finally, to draw some conclusions on the relationship between Genesis 1 and John 1, there can be no doubt that the fourth gospel portrays the Word as the creator of everything that came into existence in Genesis 1. This is shown by the numerous allusions in John 1 to Genesis 1 that have been surveyed above. The Word's direct agency and creation should give great pause to any who would propose a Christian theory of origins that posits an impersonal or mechanical process that diminishes the Word's agency. Be that as it may, John 1 does not allude to Genesis 1 in order to provide arguments for any current theory of origins.

Genesis 1 is not cited in John 1 to debate how long it took God to create the world. Rather, John 1 alludes to Genesis 1 in order to provide the fundamental setting from which the fourth gospel must be understood, tracing the story of Jesus back to its primeval roots. The ethical dualism of light and darkness which is portrayed in John's narrative cannot be understood fully apart from the creation account of Genesis 1 and 2. Just as the darkness of the original world was illumined by God's Word according to Genesis 1:3, let there be light, so the darkness that came to that world in Genesis 3 is being illumined by the light of the world, John 1:4-5 and 8:12. Canonically speaking, John 1:1-5 takes its place in a conceptual trajectory that begins at Genesis 1 and 2. It moves on through Isaiah 65 and 66, John 1, 2 Peter 3, and reaches its ultimate denouement in Revelation 21 and 22.

The Word without flesh, the eternal Word created in the beginning, John 1:1, and the Word in sarkos, the incarnate one, is the exalted beginning of the renewed creation. Jesus is the agent both of the original and of the new creation.

This is Dr. David Turner in his teaching on the Gospel of John. This is session 21, Genesis 1 and John 1.