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The Lord Jesus Christ: A Series of Ten Studies
Study 5: The Eternal Word – Part 1

taken from
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Readings: John 1:1-14

Memory Verse: John 8:58

Jesus Christ is the eternal Word who became incarnate. In these two studies we focus on him as the incarnate Word. In Islamic and Middle Eastern cultures a tremendous importance is attached to language, especially Arabic, and to speech. It is extremely important for believers to make known "the unsearchable riches of Christ" in good and appropriate language both spoken and written.

Jesus Christ – The Eternal Word of God
He is eternal:

- In his work as creator – He, together with God the Father and the Holy Spirit, created the universe (John 1:2-3,10). Also read Colossians 1:15-16; Hebrews 1:2,10; Hebrews 11:3.

- In his pre-existence – He was nova created being but was eternally present (John 1:1-2). Read John 8:58 and compare it with Exodus 3:14; John 17:5 & Colossians 1:17.

- In his capacity as the eternal Word – He sustains the world as Hebrews 1:3 states. 1 Corinthians 8:6 makes the same point but also proclaims the unity of God.

Jesus Christ – The Wisdom of God
Words are a vehicle of wisdom. In Proverbs 8 we find a personification of wisdom which reminds us of Jesus Christ (Proverbs 8:22-31). Old Testament wisdom books contain many pointers to Jesus Christ, the wisdom of God, "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Colossians 2:3). In Proverbs 8:27 we note that wisdom was present at the beginning of the world. Look up Genesis 1:1 and Proverbs 8:25,30 and compare them with Proverbs 8:27. All these references give hints of the eternity of Jesus Christ, of his work in creation and of his sustaining of the universe. He is the wisdom of God (1 Corinthians 1:24,30).

Jesus Christ – The Incarnate Word
Read John 1:1,14. The kernel of the Christian message is that "the word became flesh and dwelt among us". The eternal God chose to reveal himself in time by becoming man. John takes the term '*logos*' meaning '*word*' from two cultural backgrounds – the Jewish and the Greek. To the Jew '*word*' meant '*the law*'. '*Word*', that is, what God said, had a meaning

even apart from its source. For the Jew it had power in and of itself. A blessing spoken cannot be recalled (Genesis 27:33). A '*targum*' or Jewish paraphrase of Isaiah 48:13 says "My word laid the foundation of the earth". To the Greek '*logos*', or '*the reason or thinking of God*', is the oldest thing in the world, the thing through which God made the world. For the followers of Stoic philosophy '*logos*' pervades all things, brings order out of chaos and controls all things. Some philosophers were convinced that there was a pattern in the physical world, a purpose and a scheme or design of events, a controlling power which could be called '*logos*' – the reason of God. The apostle John uses both the Jewish and the Greek cultural understandings of '*logos*' to convey the deepest meanings.