



## The Word Dwelt among Us ✨

📖 John 1:14–18

The third Advent candle symbolises joy. Let us welcome Christmas wholeheartedly, for the Son of God was born to an earthly mother.

This morning's passage (John 1:14–18) is closely linked to v1: "The Word was God," and that God became flesh (sarx) and dwelt among human beings. This is known as the Incarnation. "Flesh" belongs to this world and in complete contrast to holiness. Yet this is God's will. When we consider the situation in Palestine at the time, John chapter 1 is indeed a bold proclamation. In a Jewish society where it was said that anyone who saw God would die, the declaration that Jesus was God was completely unacceptable. Yet although v18 states, "No one has ever seen God," the Incarnation is, as v14 declares, "His glory". The glory John speaks of refers to Jesus' death on the cross and His resurrection. In the Gospels of Mark and Matthew the tragic element is strongly emphasised; yet here, glory is "full of grace and truth".

Two words strongly stressed in the Old Testament resound here: *hesed* and *'emet*. *Hesed* means grace (God's love), and *'emet* is bound up with truth (Amen). The verb "to dwell" also shares the same root as "tabernacle" or "tent" in the Old Testament book of Exodus. In other words, the old gift of the Law

was given through Moses, but the new gift of grace and truth is given through Jesus. This does not mean that the old gift is belittled. Rather, John boldly proclaims the birth of Jesus, God's only Son, while building firmly upon the Old Testament.

Christians do not merely worship Jesus as the Almighty God. Because He is God who became flesh, they feel close to Him, and approach Him with the intimacy of a friend. "From His fullness" and "grace upon grace" were given with joy at Christmas some two thousand years ago.