the usage in Ps. xxi. 20. But obviously in  
the midst of ideas reaching so far deeper  
than that of regard, or love, of the Father  
for the Son, the word cannot be interpreted  
except in accordance with them. It refers  
to, and contrasts with, the children of God  
in vv. 12,13. *They* receive their divine  
birth by faith in Him, and through  
Him; but HE is the Only-begotten of  
the Father in the higher sense, in which  
He is begotten the Son of God.

The words **full of grace and truth** (see the  
note in my Gr. Test.) belong probably to  
the last words, **the only-begotten of the  
Father**, and there is no need of a parenthesis, as in A. V.

**grace and truth]**not equivalent to “*true grace*,” which  
destroys the precision of the expression,  
and itself conveys no sense whatever ; but  
*setting out the two sides* of the divine  
manifestation in Christ, **—grace**, as the  
result of Love to mankind, **—truth** (see ch.  
xiv. 6), as the unity, purity, and light of  
His own Character.

**15.]** The testimony   
of John, so important as being the  
fulfilment of the very object for which he  
was *sent from God*, is in this prologue  
ranged, so to speak, parallel with the  
assertions and testimony of the Evangelist  
himself. So that this verse does not interrupt   
the train of thought, but confirms  
by this important testimony the assertion  
“*the Word became flesh*,” shewing that  
John *bore witness to His pre-existence*.  
Then (ver. 16) the “*full of grace and  
truth*” is again taken up. Euthymius  
paraphrases: “Even if I,” says the Evangelist,  
“may perhaps seem to some not  
worthy of credit, yet before me John witnesseth   
to His Godhead, that John, whose  
name is great and celebrated among all  
the Jews.”

**beareth witness**, *present*,  
for solemnity—as part of the testimony to  
Him, not only once given, but still sub-  
sisting.

**crieth** (in the original,  
*perfect*, being, in sense, *present*, *‘hath  
cried,’* so that the voice is still sounding),  
see ch. vii. 37: “John crieth out with  
confidence and joy, as becometh a great  
herald.” Bengel.

**This was he of whom I spake . . .**] This reference to a  
former saying seems to shew,as indeed would  
appear from the announcement of his own  
office by the Baptist, that he had uttered these words in the power of the  
Spirit concerning Him whose forerunner  
he was *before he saw and recognized  
Him in the flesh.* Then, *on doing so*, he  
exclaimed, **This was He of whom I spake**,  
&c. This view seems to be borne out.  
by his own statement, ver. 33, and by  
the order of the narrative in Matt. iii. 11,  
12, 13.

**cometh after me]** In point  
of *time*; not of *birth*, merely or principally,  
nor of *commencement of official life*: but,  
inasmuch as John was His *Forerunner*,  
on account of official *position*.

**taketh place before me]** This expression,  
**taketh place**, represents one, in the original,  
very difficult to render in English. It  
is the same word as that rendered *“hath  
been made”* in ver. 8: *hath come to be,  
is constituted.* The A.V., *“is preferred,”*would be very suitable, setting forth the  
advancement to official dignity before which  
John’s office waned and decreased (ch. iii.  
30), which took place even while John’s  
course was being fulfilled: but the objection   
to *‘preferred’* is, its possible ambiguity:  
the word to *prefer* meaning to  
*esteem more highly*, as well as to *advance  
or promote*, which is the sense required  
here. Even Dr. Johnson has fallen into  
the mistake of quoting this very passage, in  
his Dictionary, as an instance of the sense  
“to love more than another.”

**because** (or, **for**, but better because) **He***was* (not *“became”* or *“was made,”* but  
as in ver. 1) before me; i.e. ‘He *existed*,  
was in being, before me.’ The question  
raised by some, whether it is probable  
that the Baptist had, or expressed such  
views of the pre-existence of Christ, is not  
one for us to deal with, in the face of so  
direct a testimony as is given to the *fact*,  
here and in ch. iii, 27 ff. In all probability,  
the Evangelist was himself a disciple   
of the Baptist: and if he has given  
us, as compared with the other Evangelists,  
a fuller and somewhat differing  
account of his testimony to Christ, it is  
because his means of information were  
ampler than those of the other Evangelists.   
The questioners seem to forget  
that the Baptist was divinely raised up  
and commissioned, *and full of the Holy  
Ghost, and spoke in that power;* his declarations   
were not therefore merely conclusions