

**THE MYSTERY OF GOD  
SHALL BE FINISHED**

**THE  
LAODICEA  
CHURCH AGE**

**THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS  
THROUGH THE AGES**

**A STUDY IN THE RESTORATION OF THE CHURCH**

# THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS THROUGH THE AGES

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1.  
**INTRODUCTION:  
THE MYSTERIES OF SCRIPTURE**

**The Hidden Wisdom in a Mystery Ordained unto Our Glory**

***The mystery hidden in God from the beginning***

From the beginning of the world there has been a mystery hid in God (Eph 3.9), a hidden purpose which has been progressively unfolding right down to the present day.

What is this hidden mystery?

There are several mysteries mentioned in the New Testament. At first sight they may seem disparate and unrelated. But closer examination reveals two distinct groupings.

The first may be summed up under the general heading of the mystery of God (Rev 10.7). This reveals His eternal purpose (Eph 3.11) at work all through history. A key player in this grouping is the mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh (1 Tim 3.16).

The second grouping is the mystery of iniquity (2 Th 2.7). This reveals the satanic purpose running parallel to, and antagonistic to, the divine purpose. It incorporates Mystery Babylon the Great (Rev 17.5) and the mysteries of the woman and the beast (Rev 17.7).

It is the mystery of God I wish to focus on, particularly (but not solely) its associated mystery, the mystery of godliness.

***The need of the Spirit of wisdom and revelation for understanding***

Although foreshadowed in the Old Testament, the mystery was kept secret and not made known at that time (Ro 16.25; Eph 3.9). But in the New Testament dispensation it was revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit (Eph 3.5).

Although revealed, however, the supernatural element still remains. *"The things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God"* (1 Cor 2.11). To fully understand the mysteries, the Spirit of wisdom and revelation is essential.

Paul certainly had it. His preaching was not with man's wisdom (1 Cor 2.4), but by revelation from Jesus Christ (Gal 1.11-12).

And he prayed for that same Spirit for the first believers.

- Eph 1.16-17 making mention of you in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ... ***may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation***
- Col 1.9 we... do not cease to pray for you... ***that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding***

***The hidden wisdom in a mystery for our glory***

The wisdom Paul was praying for was far more than to know whether it be the will of God to be a missionary, a housewife or a factory worker. It was to have the eyes opened to the mystery of His will, to the mystery hidden since the world began, of His plan and purpose.

- Eph 1.8-9 he hath abounded toward us ***in all wisdom***... having made known unto us ***the mystery of His will***

The link between wisdom and an understanding of the hidden mystery is found elsewhere.

- 1 Cor 2.7 we speak ***the wisdom of God in a mystery***, even ***the hidden wisdom***

But what ***is*** the mystery of His will, the hidden wisdom in a mystery?

The answer is found by looking more closely at Paul's prayer for the Spirit of wisdom and revelation for the Ephesians.

Why did he pray for wisdom for the Ephesians? What did he want them to know? Two things.

- Eph 1.17-18 that... the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation... the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; ***that ye may know the hope of your calling, and what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in His saints***

Firstly, the hope of our calling. What exactly is that hope?

- It certainly includes ***what we will see***, i.e., the appearing of the Glory of our great God and Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ (Ti 2.13).
- But it is far more. It is also ***what happens to us*** at that time. When we see Him, we shall be changed to be like Him (1 Jn 3.2). So, since He is coming in glory, we also shall appear in glory (Col 3.4), with a body like the body of His glory (Phil 3.21, literal translation). We shall be like Moses and Elijah with Jesus on the holy mount (Lk 9.31).

So, then, what ***is*** the blessed hope? What is the hope of our calling? It is ***the hope of glory*** (Col 1.27). No wonder Paul said that we rejoice in ***hope of the glory of God*** (Ro 5.2).

And what exactly ***is*** the glory that we rejoice in hope of?

It is the original glory lost at the fall (Ro 3.23; 1 Cor 11.7; 1 P 1.24).

In addition to the glory of our inheritance in Him, the second thing Paul prayed was for the Ephesians to see the riches of ***the glory of His inheritance in us***.

Finally, the connection between the Spirit of wisdom and our understanding of our future appearing with Him in glory is further underlined by the fact that Paul addressed his prayer to ***the Father of glory***. Why? Because that was the attribute of God most appropriate for his request, for us to see our hope of future glory.

These three key words, wisdom, mystery and glory, are brought together concisely in one very significant single verse.

- 1 Cor 2.7 we speak the ***wisdom*** of God in ***a mystery***, even ***the hidden wisdom***, which God ordained before the world ***for our glory***

"For our glory." Amen! This sums up the ultimate purpose and objective of the hidden mystery of God at work through the ages. That mystery is the very core of God's plan of redemption to restore the original lost glory of man. In fact, it ***is*** the plan of redemption.

### **Overview of the Mystery of Godliness through the Ages**

The plan to redeem and restore what was lost in the Garden was known from earliest times.

It was referred to by Job, in the patriarchal period.

- Job 19.25-26 I know that my Redeemer liveth... and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God

Why did Job call the Lord his Redeemer? Because he knew the Lord would one day redeem and restore all that had been lost at the fall. Just like Adam at the beginning, man would once again stand in the Presence of God, in a resurrected incorruptible body of glory, able to look on His face.

Although aware of **the fact of** a coming redemption, however, **the manner of** that redemption and its full implications were not revealed to Job. It was a hidden mystery, the mystery of godliness, of how God would be manifest in flesh, becoming Himself our Kinsman so as to be able to pay the required redemption price to restore the lost image and glory of God.

But that mystery was progressively unveiled. Every type, every act of Old Testament Bible characters expressed in a veiled way some aspect of God's purpose which had been kept secret and hidden since before the world began.

In the Gospels that eternal purpose was fulfilled by and in the Man Christ Jesus (Eph 3.11). God was fully manifest in the flesh of His Son.

But that was not the full end of the mystery. Although Paul said the eternal purpose had been fulfilled, John later said that the mystery of God was yet to be finished (Rev 10.7).

Just as God was fully manifest in the flesh of the Son of God, Christ, so Christ was to be fully manifest in the flesh of the sons of God, the Church. The mystery of godliness was not just God manifest in Christ. That was only part of the story, the first step to full redemption. There was a second step. Christ was to be manifest in the flesh of His Church. He was to be the beginning of the creation of God (Rev 3.14), a new creation, the firstborn among many brethren conformed to His image, resulting in their ultimate glorification (Ro 8.29-30).

But that glorious revelation of the hope of the calling of the Church received by Paul at the beginning of the Church Age was lost. She lost her first love and progressively loosened her grip on Christ.

Nonetheless, throughout the Church Ages God continued to work towards the fulfilling of His original purpose. The tide turned. There came a progressive recovering of understanding and experience of the initial revelation.

The awesome last phase of that recovery takes place at the end of the final Church Age, Laodicea, just before the Lord returns for His bride.

In the days of the voice of the 7<sup>th</sup> angel, the messenger to Laodicea, the mystery of God shall be finished. The age-old purpose will be fully revealed and the Church will come to full stature, a stature measured by nothing less than the fulness of Christ Himself (Eph 4.13).

To better understand the progressive working of the hidden wisdom to restore our lost glory, let us now look more closely at the mystery of godliness through the ages:

- **Foreshadowed** in the Old Testament;
- **Realised** in Christ;
- **Lost then progressively regained and reproduced** in the Church;
- **Come to its climax and full manifestation** at the end of the Laodicea Church Age.

## 2. THE MYSTERY FORESHADOWED IN THE OLD TESTAMENT *CHRIST IN THE FLESH OF THE PROPHETS*

Although not yet revealed in Old Testament times, the mystery of godliness is foreshadowed there. That secret mystery, hid in the mind of God from the beginning of the world, was being progressively unfolded from Genesis onwards.

The key to unlocking the understanding of that unfolding is to find Christ there, for He Himself is the full realisation of the mystery of godliness.

The Bible is a complete revelation of Christ. He is its principal theme. In fact, the Bible *is* Christ. He is the Word. He is foreshadowed in the Old Testament in the Psalms, in the history and in many inanimate details. Also, and very significantly, in the lives of the prophets.

*God's secret mystery, He had before the world began... there was something that He was trying and was going to achieve, and He had a motive in doing it, in order to let Himself be expressed...*

*God had a purpose and a hidden mystery... that He had in His mind before the world ever began, and how that it's unfolded itself right down to this present hour... He kept it a secret. Nobody knewed nothing about it...*

*He has showed or revealed it in every type that's in the Bible. Therefore, **the entire Bible is the revelation of God's mystery in Christ.** Hum! The entire Bible is an expression of one goal that God had, one purpose He wanted to achieve in the entire Bible. And **all the acts of the believers in the Bible has been in type, an expressing what God's great goal is...***

*And now in the Book of Saint Luke, the 24th chapter... It is the two of the apostles on the road to Emmaus... And He... begin to talk to them about Christ. He said, "Oh, fools and slow to understand. Don't you know that all the prophets and the Psalms...?" See what was He doing? Identifying Himself to these apostles, that **all of the prophets, and all of the Psalms, and everything, was Him, expressed.** See? ... **He is the principal Theme of the entire Bible. If you read the Bible and don't see Christ in every verse of It, go back and read It again.** See? If you can't see Christ in every verse of the Bible, then you read It again, because you've missed something. **The Bible is Christ.** He is the Word. When you read, "**In the beginning God created...**" there's Christ. See? **From that to the "Amen" in Revelations is every Word testifying of Jesus Christ.***

*Wm Branham, "Christ Is the Mystery of God Revealed", 28 July 1963*

See Appendix 1 for fuller details of historical incidents and aspects of the Mosaic Law which prophetically foreshadow Jesus' future ministry. For the present, however, let us confine ourselves to uncovering Christ in the Old Testament Tabernacle and in the lives of the prophets.

### **Christ in the Tabernacle**

Let us look firstly at the Tabernacle, in particular the veil and what is behind it. They are very relevant to the present theme of the mystery of godliness.

The Cloud of Glory beneath its badger skin coverings and behind the veil of the Holy of Holies beautifully foreshadows God's plan, the mystery of godliness, to manifest Himself in flesh.

The Bible says, *the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us* (Jn 1.14). The word "dwelt" literally means "tabernacled, erected a tent". Christ's physical body/flesh was the antitype, the archetype, of the Old Testament Tabernacle. It was the dwelling place of God, His Tabernacle.

- **The veil** at the entrance to the Holy of Holies foreshadowed His physical body, His flesh (Heb 10.20).
- Behind that veil was **the Glory**, the Presence of God. That Glory was Christ (1 Cor 2.8). (Cp Jas 2.1, which literally says, "our Lord Jesus Christ, the Glory".)
- The Glory was upon the lid of the Ark, **the mercy seat**. In Hebrew this literally means "the place of propitiation". It was where the atoning blood was sprinkled by the high priest. According to Romans 3.25, Christ was the antitype of the mercy seat. (In this verse "propitiation" means the **place**, not the **act**, of propitiation. Hence, the same word is translated "mercy seat" in Hebrews 9.5.)

So, the Tabernacle is a clear prophetic preview/foreshadow of God's plan to veil Himself in the flesh of His Son. This would be how He would restore to fallen man his lost inheritance.

### Christ in the Prophets

Wonderful though it is to see Christ in the Tabernacle, there is a jewel more precious by far. To find Him in the lives of the Old Testament prophets.

The spirit of prophecy is the testimony of Jesus (Rev 19.10).

But the prophets not only testified of Him in their prophesying. There is something even more significant. It is a further stage in the gradual unveiling of God's mystery and plan of redemption to restore to man his original inheritance by incarnating Himself in flesh.

To put it in a nutshell, Christ is found not only **in the words** of the prophets but also **in their lives**.

Different aspects of the personal lives and experiences of the prophets mirror and foreshadow, sometimes in great detail, the future life and ministry of Christ.

How can this be?

Because,

- God not only spoke **by** the prophets, but also (as Hebrews 1.1 can equally well be translated) **in** them.
- So, a prophet not only speaks as he is **moved by** the Spirit (2 P 1.21). The Spirit that speaks through him is not only **upon** him but **in** him.

And what **was** the Spirit that was in the prophets? **The Spirit of Christ** (1 P 1.11). So, being indwelt by the Spirit of Christ, their very lives were living, incarnate prophecies of Christ.

Thus, we not only read prophecies of Christ **by** the prophets, but also see Christ **in** the prophets.

- Since they were indwelt by the Spirit of Christ, they not only **spoke** of and by Him, they **behaved** like Him. Their very **lives** (not just their **words**) were prophetic of Him.

- They not only **declared** His future ministry, they **foreshadowed** it. **They themselves** were shadows and types of different facets of the life and ministry of Christ.

Now, only Christ had the fulness of the Spirit (Jn 3.34). The prophets reflected Him only in measure. Their lives were partial shadows and types of different facets of the life and ministry of Christ. They were living incarnate prophecies of Christ, each mirroring different parts of a huge jigsaw puzzle, the life of Christ. Christ alone is the whole picture. The individual lives and experiences of the prophets only reflected parts of that whole.

There are many examples to illustrate this. Let us look at two, Abraham and David.

### **Abraham**

In Genesis 22, the sacrifice by Abraham of his son foreshadowed the offering up by the Father of the only Son, obedient unto death.

- 22.2 thine only son whom thou lovest Cp Mt 3.17; Jn 3.16
- 22.2 offer him for a burnt offering Cp Isa 53.10
- 22.2 the father spared not his only son Cp Ro 8.32
- 22.6 took wood... and laid it upon Isaac Cp Jn 19.17
- 22.7-8 where is the lamb? ... God will provide Cp Jn 1.29
- 22.9 *the son obedient unto death* Cp Phil 2.5-8

Even the very location Abraham was sent to, where God provided Himself the sacrifice, was significant.

- It was a mountain in the land of Moriah called the mountain of the Lord (22.2,14).
- This was the very place where, in the time of David, the wrath of God was quenched and the plague against sin stayed through the offering of an innocent sacrifice (2 S 24.18-25).
- Later, Solomon built the altar of the temple on that very same spot (2 Chr 3.1), the place of reconciliation between God and man, where He could meet with His people on the grounds of the shed blood of an innocent sacrifice.
- Finally, on this self-same mountain, outside the city wall, was the location of Calvary, the place where God provided Himself a Lamb to take away the sins of the world.

Another example from the life of Abraham is Genesis 24. His quest for a wife for Isaac foreshadows the Father's quest for, and adorning of, a suitable bride for His only Son.

- 24.3 the father seeks a bride for his son Cp Mt 22.2
- 24.3 not a woman of the world Cp 2 Cor 11.2
- 24.5,8 a woman willing to forsake her home Cp Ps 45.10
- 24.58 giving herself to a man she has never seen Cp 1 P 1.8
- 24.11 the servant came for a bride at evening time
- 24.53 he brought gifts from the groom Cp 1 Cor 12.7-11
- 24.53 and a wedding garment Cp Rev 19.8
- 24.63) the groom met his bride after leaving home, Cp 1 Th 4.16  
) in the evening time Cp Mt 25.6

### **David**

There are several details of the life of David that foreshadow Christ. For example,

- The place of his birth, Bethlehem (1 S 16.1; cp Lk 2.4), which was,
  - A centre of grain cultivation (cp Ru 2.23), supplying the bread of life. (Its very name means "House of Bread".)
  - Renowned for its cool, refreshing water (cp 2 S 23.15), the water of life.

- The place where the high priest came each year to seek a lamb without blemish for the Passover sacrifice in the temple.
- The rejected king, weeping over Jerusalem on the Mt of Olives as he departed from the city (2 S 15.30; Cp Lk 19.37, 41).

Even more instructive is to see how personal experiences of David described in his psalms are said to be prophetic of Christ.

Very significantly, certain psalms contain verses which unquestionably refer to Christ since they are specifically quoted as such in the New Testament. Yet there are other verses *in those very same psalms* which *cannot* relate to Him.

For example,

- Ps 40.6-8 + Heb 10.5-7 Yet, Ps 40.12, my iniquities
- Ps 41.9 + Jn 13.18 Yet, Ps 41.4, I have sinned
- Ps 69.4 + Jn 15.24-25 )
- Ps 69.9a + Jn 2.17 )
- Ps 69.9b + Ro 15.3 ) Yet, Ps 69.5, my foolishness, my sins
- Ps 69.21 + Jn 19.28-29 )
- Ps 69.25 + Acts 1.16, 20)

How can this be explained? There is no obvious division between those parts of the psalm specifically stated to refer to Christ and those which can only relate to David.

The answer is quite simple.

- **There is no division** between those parts which are prophetic of Christ and those which can only relate to the psalmist himself. **The whole psalm** relates to David's own personal experiences.
- But since the Spirit of Christ was in David, the things he experienced were experienced precisely because he was living by and in that Spirit.
  - That indwelling Spirit brought him into similar circumstances as Christ
  - It led him to react just as Christ would have to such situations.
  - That same Spirit in David provoked the same reaction in others towards him as did the Spirit of Christ in Christ Himself when on earth.

So, insofar as He lived by the Spirit of Christ, the psalmist's personal experiences were also prophetic of Christ.

(Two further detailed examples, Joseph and Moses, are found in Appendix 2.)

### **The Progressive Unveiling of the Mystery**

Wonderful though it is to see Christ behind the veil of the Holy of Holies, and especially behind the veil of the flesh of the Old Testament prophets, that is but the first stage in the fulfilling of the eternal purpose and the mystery of God.

The remarkable parallels between the lives of the Old Testament prophets and Christ are but a foretaste of later developments in the full unveiling of that great mystery, the mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh.

Let us now turn our attention to how the mystery **foreshadowed** in the Old Testament Tabernacle is,

- **Firstly, fulfilled** in **God behind the fleshly veil of the tabernacle/temple of His Son** (cp Heb 10.20; Jn 1.14; 2.19-21), the fulness of God in flesh (Col 2.9).
- **Then, reproduced** in **God behind the fleshly veil of the tabernacle/temple of His sons** (2 Cor 5.1; 6.16; Eph 2.20-22), the fulness of God and Christ in flesh (Eph 1.23; Col 3.19).

God's original purpose to identify Himself with man and to express and completely reveal all that He was to him had been possible with Adam and Eve. But sin separated them.

The Lord, however, had a plan to redeem and recover what was lost.

- **Firstly**, to reveal Himself fully in a new Man, pouring all He was into Christ, the second Man, the fulness of the Godhead bodily.
- **Then**, all the fulness of the Spirit that was in Christ was to be poured into a people in whom He had the pre-eminences so that He could express Himself fully in and through them. Just as the Spirit of Christ in the Old Testament prophets caused them to reflect Him, so the same Spirit in the New Testament believer (Ro 8.9; Gal 4.6) conforms him to His image, transforming him into His likeness.

Thus would be restored what was lost in Eden, where God walked and talked with man face to face. Man would again be a revelation of God in flesh. The lost image and glory of God would be fully reversed and the mystery of the plan of redemption fully completed.

Truly, *“without controversy, **great** is the mystery of godliness.”*

### 3.

## THE MYSTERY FULFILLED IN THE GOSPELS GOD IN THE FLESH OF CHRIST

### The Mystery of Christ

As already explained, the mystery of God (and associated mysteries) describes the overall purpose of God in history.

Though foreshadowed in the Old Testament, however, the mystery was hid in God until New Testament times.

Let us look more closely at what exactly that mystery is.

Associated expressions such as “*the mystery of God*”, “*the mystery of the gospel*” and “*the mystery of the faith*” (Eph 6.19; 1 Tim 3.9) speak only of the **fact** of a mystery. They shed no light upon its **content** or **how it is to be accomplished**.

But another expression, “*the mystery of Christ*” (Eph 3.4; Col 4.3), provides the key.

This does not mean the mystery that Christ **taught**, but the mystery that He **is**. Christ does not **explain** the mystery; **He Himself is its content and embodiment**. This is explicitly stated in Colossians 2.2 (NASV), “*God’s mystery, that is, Christ Himself*”.

In what way is Christ the revelation of **how the mystery is accomplished?**

The answer lies in Paul’s definition of another of the mysteries associated with the mystery of God, the mystery of godliness.

- 1 Tim 3.16    great is the mystery of godliness: **God was manifest in the flesh**

So, the essence of this mystery is for God **to express Himself fully in flesh**. That has been His purpose through the ages. The means to achieve, accomplish and fulfil the mystery of God was Christ **in flesh**. In **the Man** Christ Jesus, all the fulness of the Godhead dwelt **bodily** (Jn 1.14,18; Col 2.9). He was the full revelation of all of God. **He Himself was the full unveiling of the mystery**.

This is why Paul says, “*the eternal purpose which he **purposed** in Christ Jesus*” (Eph 3.11). The word “purposed” means “effected” or “carried into effect”. God’s age-old purpose was accomplished, realised and executed in Christ.

This means more than that the purpose **was accomplished by Christ**. Christ Himself, what He was, God manifest fully in flesh, **was its accomplishment**, its climax, its end and its fulfilment.

In the Man Christ Jesus, the mystery hid in God, and foreshadowed in the Old Testament, was fulfilled. The invisible God, the eternal Spirit, was made visible in flesh. Christ was the unveiling of the mystery hidden from the foundation of the world. He Himself **was** the mystery. He embodied the realisation and fulfilment of God’s plan to fully manifest Himself in a body.

Let us now see in more detail how Christ in flesh fully manifested all of God.

### Christ the Fulness of God

We have seen how the Spirit of Christ was *in* the Old Testament prophets. Not only did their **words** foretell of Him. Their **lives and experiences** foreshadowed the One whose Spirit was in them.

But the prophets only had the Spirit in measure. Just as a shadow gives an incomplete idea of the body casting it, not the full picture, so the prophets' lives were but a partial portrayal of the life of Christ.

Christ, however, did not have the Spirit only in measure. He had all the fulness of the Spirit. He was the total, complete, perfect fulness of all of God.

- Jn 3.34      God giveth **not** the Spirit **by measure** unto him
- Col 1.19      it pleased the Father that in him should **all fulness** dwell
- Col 2.9      in him dwelleth **all the fulness** of the Godhead

### Christ the Tabernacle of God

Furthermore, that fulness was manifested in a body of flesh.

- Col 2.9      in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead **bodily**
- 1 Tim 3.16    God was manifest **in the flesh**
- Heb 10.5-7    **a body** thou hast prepared for me

Now, in the Bible the body of flesh is described as a tabernacle (e.g., 2 Cor 5.1; 2 P 1.13-14) or a temple (e.g., 1 Cor 3.16). Why? Because the body is **the antitype, the archetype**, of the Old Testament Tabernacle and Temple. Those earthly dwelling places of God were but shadows. A body of flesh was to be **the true** dwelling place of God.

As explained earlier, the Old Testament Tabernacle and Temple foreshadowed Christ. His flesh was the veil. Behind it dwelt the Cloud of Glory. So, when Christ was made flesh and dwelt among us, His physical body was described as a tabernacle or a temple.

- In John 1.14, "*the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us*", the word "dwelt" means literally "**tabernacled**, erected His tent".
- In John 2.19-21, which speaks of *the temple of his body*, the word "temple" means "the dwelling place, the temple itself, not the outer precincts". (In Bible times, a temple was not only where a deity was **worshipped** but where they **dwelt**.)

So, Christ was the dwelling place of God.

But Christ was not only the fulness and the dwelling place of God. He was the image of God.

### Christ the Image of God

Since all the fulness of God dwelt behind the flesh of Christ, He was the complete revelation of all that God is. Put in other words, He was the image of the invisible God (Col 1.15).

In fact, He was not just the image of God, He was the "**express** (i.e., exact) **image of his person**" (Heb 1.3).

This, of course, does not mean physical likeness. It is an identity of personality. The word "Image" means the sum of all those features which distinguish one person from all others. Jesus bore all the distinguishing features which identified Him as the one true God.

Jesus made **visible**, in His flesh, all the attributes of the **invisible** God.

This explains His reply when asked by Philip to shew the disciples the Father.

- Jn 14.9 **he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father;** and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?

The Father was in Him. To see or to know Jesus was to see or to know the Father.

- Jn 17.21 thou, Father, art in me
- Jn 12.45 he that seeth me seeth him that sent me
- Jn 14.7 if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also

### Christ the Exegesis of God

What are the implications of Jesus' being the exact image of God? His every deed, word or thought are a revelation of what the Father would have done, said or thought.

- Deeds (Jn 5.19 the Son can **do** nothing of Himself  
(Jn 14.10 the Father that dwelleth in me, he **doeth the works**.)
- Words (Jn 3.32, 34 what he hath seen and heard, that he **testifieth...** he whom God hath sent **speaketh** the words of God  
(Jn 8.38 I **speak** that which I have seen with my Father  
(Jn 12.49-50 as the Father said... so I **speak**  
(Jn 14.10 the **words** that I speak unto you I speak not of myself  
(Jn 14.24 the **word** which ye hear is not mine  
(Jn 17.8,14 I have given unto them the **words** thou gavest me
- Teaching Jn 7.16 My **doctrine** is not mine
- Opinions Jn 5.30 as I hear, I **judge**

In fact, Jesus was the incarnate expression of the Will of God. In every circumstance He visibly embodied the Will of God. He was the Will of God made flesh.

- Jn 6.38 He came to do the Father's will
- Jn 4.34 His meat was to do His will
- Lk 22.42 His cry was to do His will
- Jn 17.4 He ended His life having finished His will

To sum up, truly of Jesus it may be said,

- Jn 1.18 no man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son he hath declared Him.

The word "declared" means "to interpret, explain, expound, give an exegesis, bring out into the open".

Jesus not only explained God by His **words**, but by His **deeds**. He made visible in His flesh all the distinguishing characteristics of the invisible God. His reaction to every circumstance revealed exactly how God would have reacted to the same circumstance.

## The Last Stage of the Unveiling of the Mystery

Let us take stock of what we have covered and what remains to be done in our overall theme.

We have seen how the mystery that was hid in God from the beginning was foreshadowed in the Old Testament then fulfilled in Christ.

But that is not the end of the story.

Although God's age-old purpose had been **fulfilled** in and by Christ, the mystery of God was not yet **finished**.

Only one aspect of the mystery of godliness had been unveiled and completed. But there was a second. God manifest in the flesh of His Son was not an end in itself. It was a stepping stone to His ultimate objective, to manifest Himself also in the flesh of His sons.

How? As with all things, through Christ.

- Just as Christ was the fulness, the tabernacle, the image and the exegesis of God in flesh,
- So, through the indwelling Spirit of Christ, the Church was to be the fulness, the tabernacle, the image, and the exegesis of Christ in flesh.

Only when that is fully accomplished will the mystery of God be finished.

The plan to redeem and restore to mankind the lost image and glory of God through Christ will also be fully realised. He will not only be our Redeemer. Christ Jesus Himself will truly and fully have been made unto us wisdom and redemption (1 Cor 1.30). He will not only be our Saviour. He Himself, all that He is in us, will be our salvation (Lk 2.30).

*"Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift."* (2 Cor 9.15)

Amen and amen!

## 4. THE MYSTERY REPRODUCED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT *CHRIST IN THE FLESH OF HIS CHURCH*

### The Mystery of Christ and the Church

Though foreshadowed in the Old Testament, God's mystery remained hid in God until Christ came in flesh. When He came, however, though He fulfilled God's eternal purpose, one further stage was needed for the mystery of God to be finished. Christ's coming in flesh embodied and **fulfilled** God's secret plan/mystery, but did not **finish** it.

Why do I say this? Because although Ephesians 3.11 clearly says God's age-old purpose had been realised and executed in Christ, Revelation 10.7 says the mystery of God would not be finished until the sounding of the seventh angel. Since Revelation was written well after Ephesians, that finishing was clearly something different and future.

Let us see how we may reconcile the **future** finishing of the mystery of God in Revelation 10.7 with the **past** accomplishment of the eternal purpose in Ephesians 3.11.

- As explained earlier under the heading "The Mystery of Christ", the essence of the mystery of godliness is God manifest **in the flesh**. Christ fully unveiled and fulfilled this once secret purpose.
- But it did not end there. The next stage is unfolded in another mystery associated with the mystery of God, "*the great mystery... concerning Christ and the Church*" (Eph 5.32). This reveals the amazing oneness between Christ and His Church. She not simply imitates Christ and seeks to do His will in all things. She is actually part of Him. Just as Eve was part of Adam, even though distinct from him (Gen 2.22-23), so it is with the Church and Christ (Eph 5.30-31). So, just as Christ was God in flesh, God's purpose is for the Church to be nothing less than Jesus Christ in flesh.
- How? Christ was to be the first of a new race, the prototype of a new creation, a new man, to replace the old fallen man. He was both the last of the old creation, the last Adam (1 Cor 15.45), and also the second man (1 Cor 15.47). This is why Christ is called "**the firstborn of all creation**" (Col 1.15, NKJ) and "**the beginning of the creation of God**" (Rev 3.14) (i.e., of the **new** creation). As well as being Himself perfectly conformed to the image of God, He was also the firstborn of a new creation designed to be fully conformed to His own image (Ro 8.29).

That conformity is achieved by the indwelling life of Christ.

- 2 Cor 4.10-11 that **the life also of Jesus** might also be **manifest in our body... in our mortal flesh**
- Gal 2.20 I live, yet not I, but **Christ liveth in me**, and **the life which I now live in the flesh** I live by the faith of the Son of God
- Gal 4.19 until **Christ** be **formed in you**
- Col 1.27 this mystery... which is **Christ in you**

So, the mystery of godliness both has been, and is yet to be, fulfilled. The Man Christ Jesus was both its fulfilling and consummation, the **end** of the eternal purpose, and its **beginning**.

- Firstly, the mystery of God was unveiled and **fulfilled** in the Son of God, the Man Christ Jesus, fully manifesting God in His flesh.
- Afterwards, through the Church Ages, the mystery comes progressively to its climax and will be fully and finally **finished** when Christ is fully manifest in the flesh of the

sons of God, His Church, a new creation conformed to His image.

What are the implications of the foregoing? That,

- Just as Christ, the second Man, was the fulness, the tabernacle, the image and the exegesis of God in flesh;
- So the Church, His new creation, is to be the fulness, the tabernacle, the image and the exegesis of Christ in flesh.

Let us see how.

### **The Church, the Fulness of Christ**

Since the fulness of God was in Christ, then if Christ is in His Church, she is not only to **receive** from His fulness (Jn 1.16), but also herself to **be** the fulness of Christ and of God.

If that seems impossible, consider the astonishing prayers of Paul for the Ephesians.

- To be given the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, the eyes of their understanding being flooded with light, to see that **the Church is the fulness of Christ** (Eph 1.16-23).
- To be strengthened with might by the Spirit in the inner man, that they may know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that they may be **filled with all the fulness of God** (Eph 3.16-19).

When the whole body of Christ is grown up in all things into Him and come to a fully mature, perfect man (Eph 4.13-16; Col 2.19), with each member fulfilling its God-given ministry, then, taken as a whole, that body will be a full revelation of Christ in flesh.

It will not only have **received from** His fulness, it will have **received** His fulness.

Then truly shall be finished the mystery of God.

### **The Church, the Tabernacle of Christ**

As already seen, the Old Testament Tabernacle foreshadowed Christ indwelt by the Cloud of Glory behind the veil of His flesh.

But it is not only the physical body/flesh of Christ that is so described.

The body of the believer also is described both as a tabernacle (e.g., 2 Cor 5.1) and as a temple (e.g., 2 Cor 6.16). Why? Because, just like Christ, the body of the believer also is the antitype, the archetype, of the Old Testament Tabernacle and Temple. Through the indwelling Christ it is the temple of God through the Spirit (1 Cor 3.16; 6.19).

Not only is each body of a believer a temple. Individual believers are also described as living stones in one single temple which has been under construction throughout the Church Age (Eph 2.21-22; 1 P 2.5).

That temple will be perfected at the end of the Age. The Headstone will be brought forth (cp Zech 4.7) and the building filled with the Glory of God (cp Ex 40.34; 2 Chr 5.13-14). Christ will be presented with a glorious Church (Eph 5.27), or, as it literally says, a Church in glory.

### **The Church, the Image of Christ**

Not only is the Church the fulness of Christ and the tabernacle of Christ, she is also the image of Christ.

### ***The original intention: Man, the Image of God***

Adam was the son of God (Lk 3.38), originally created in His image and glory.

- Gen 1.26 Let us make man in our image, after our likeness
- 1 Cor 11.7 a man... is the image and glory of God

When Adam fell, he lost the glory (Ro 3.23; 1 P 1.24) and the image was marred. From then on, his offspring bore only the image of fallen man, not that of a son of God.

- Gen 5.3 a son (*i.e.*, Seth) in **his own** (*i.e.*, fallen) likeness, after **his** image

But God's original intention did not change. He planned to restore the lost image and glory.

As the first stage of that plan, He sent a second Man, Christ Jesus. Like the first, He too was the image and glory of God.

- Col 1.15 the **image** of the invisible God
- Heb 1.3 the brightness of his **glory** and the express **image** of His person

Although tempted in all points like us, unlike the first man, the second Man did not fall.

God could now proceed to the second stage of His plan of restoration.

### ***Christ formed in you***

The plan was to reproduce the Life/Spirit of that second Man, Christ, in a new creation, the Church. So, just as Christ bore the image of God, she was to bear the image of Christ. Thus would be achieved the original divine purpose, a people having the image and glory of God.

- Ro 8.28-30 the called according to his purpose... he also did predestinate to be conformed to the **image** of his Son... Moreover... them he also **glorified**

The apostle Paul was granted the revelation of that purpose. This included an understanding of the mystery of Christ, of who He was and of His role in that plan (Eph 3.2-11).

Furthermore, the mystery of Christ was not only revealed **to** Paul, it was revealed **in** him. He embodied his preaching.

- Gal 1.16 (it pleased God) to reveal his Son **in** (*not, to*) me
- Gal 2.20 not I, but Christ liveth in me

Nor did it not stop there. Paul's objective was not just to proclaim and illustrate the mystery of Christ to his spiritual children. It was to see the image of Christ revealed in them also.

- Gal 4.19 I travail in birth... until Christ be formed in you

By coming to the image of Christ, who was Himself the image of God, they would be restored to God's original purpose, a people in His own image.

## **The Church, the Exegesis of Christ**

### ***Christ our life***

God gives life to all creation, but to His Church He gives His very own life. We not only have life **through** Christ; we have the life **of** Christ. He not only gave His life **for** us; He gave His life **to** us.

- 2 Tim 1.1 the promise of life (*or, as many translate, **the** life*) which is in Christ Jesus
- 1 Jn 5.11 God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son
- Jn 14.6 I am... the life

Christ not only **gives** us His life; He **is** our life. He not merely gives us all He **has**; He gives all He **is**.

So, for Paul to live **was** Christ. That means far more than to live **for** Christ. Paul was so one with his Lord that his life was but an expression of the life of Christ.

- Not just living **unto** Him Ro 14.8 we live unto the Lord
- But living **is** Him Gal 2.20 I live yet not I, but Christ liveth in me  
Phil 1.21 to me to live is Christ  
Col 3.4 Christ who is our life

Now, to live by His life means to have His Spirit.

- Not just **from** Him Jn 20.22 he breathed on them, and saith...  
Receive ye the Holy Ghost
- But the Spirit **of** Him Ro 8.9b if any man have not the Spirit of Christ,  
he is none of His  
1 Cor 6.17 he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit  
Phil 1.19 the supply of the Spirit of Christ

To the measure that this oneness of life and Spirit is found in the Church, in like measure her life will be an expression of Christ.

This is the very essence of the mystery of godliness.

### **Christ liveth in me**

The extent to which we may reveal the life of Christ is remarkable.

- Just as every deed, word, teaching or opinion of Christ was by or from the Father. He declared the Father (Jn 1.18), or, as the word means, He interpreted, He unfolded, He was the exegesis of the Father.
- So, every characteristic of the Church can be a full exegesis of Christ.

### **Our Love**

We are not simply to **imitate** the love of Jesus. We may actually possess that self-same love. It was not love **for** Christ that constrained Paul but the very love **of** Christ. Paul's love was Christ's love.

- Not just **for** Him Eph 6.24 them that love our Lord Jesus in sincerity
- Nor even **as** Him Jn 15.12 love one another, as I have loved you
- But **of** Him 2 Cor 5.14 the love of Christ constraineth us

### **Our Joy**

God gives all men joy (Acts 14.17). But our joy is Christ's own joy.

- Not just **in** Him Phil 4.4 rejoices in the Lord
- Nor even **from** Him Jn 16.24 ask ... that your joy may be full
- But **of** Him Jn 15.11 these things I have spoken unto you that My joy might remain in you (cp Jn 17.13)

### **Our Peace**

Our peace is not just **through** or **from** Christ. It is the very peace **of** Him.

- Not just **through** Him Ro 5.1 peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ
- But **of** Him Jn 14.27 My peace I give unto you

### Our Bowels

Paul's was so one with Christ that his bowels were Christ's bowels. This is far more than to seek to **imitate** the compassion of Christ. It is to **have** it.

- Not just **as** Him Col 3.12-13 put on... bowels of mercies... forgiving one another... even as Christ forgave you
- But **of** Him Phil 1.8 I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ

### Our Faith

Our faith is not just in Him nor even from Him. It is His very own faith. He Himself is our faith.

- Not just **in** Him Gal 3.26 by faith in Christ Jesus
- Nor even **by** Him Acts 3.16 the faith which is by Him
- But **of** Him Gal 2.20 by the faith of the Son of God

### Our Words

When Paul spoke, he could say it was actually Christ Himself speaking in him. This is far more than simply quoting Christ's words, or even Christ putting words into Paul's mouth. The Lord spoke through a dumb ass (2 P 2.6), and through Caiaphas (Jn 11.51), but even though they spoke by the Spirit, He was certainly not one with them in spirit.

- Not us speaking **of** Him Eph 5.32 I speak concerning Christ
- But Him speaking **in** us 2 Cor 13.3 a proof of Christ speaking in me

### Our Mind

To have the mind of Christ is far more than to know His thoughts. Jesus knew the thoughts of His critics, but He certainly didn't share them!

- Not **knowing** His mind Jn 15.15 all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you
- But **having** His mind 1 Cor 2.16 we have mind of Christ  
Phil 2.5 Let this mind be in you, which was in Christ

### Our Sufferings

Believers may suffer for Christ (cp Acts 9.16; Phil 1.29). But the union between Christ and the believer is so deep we not only suffer **for** Him, we suffer **with** Him.

This is what Paul meant by wanting to know "*the fellowship of His sufferings*". He did not mean to **understand** them better, but to **share** them. He was not, of course, speaking of Christ's sufferings for our redemption, but His **present** sufferings. The Bible says they are not complete. Paul was sharing in what was still to be endured of Christ's sufferings.

- Not just **for** Him Acts 5.41 worthy to suffer shame for His Name
- Nor even **with** Him Ro 8.17 if we suffer with Him  
1 P 4.13 partakers of Christ's sufferings  
Acts 9.4 why persecutest thou me?
- But **of** Him Col 1.24 fulfil what is lacking of the sufferings of Christ  
Phil 3.10 the fellowship of His sufferings

(For further examples of the depth of the oneness between God and the believer (but without any explicit reference to Christ), see Appendix 3.)

### **“Sir, we would see Jesus”**

A beautiful illustration of the identification of Christ and His own is found in His enigmatic reply to a simple request.

- Jn 12.20-21 certain Greeks... came... and desired... Sir, we would see Jesus...
- Jn 12.23-24 Jesus answered ... Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit

How did Jesus' reply answer the request? What does a grain of wheat falling into the ground and reproducing have to do with seeing Him? The answer is blessed.

- When a single grain of wheat is sown, it falls into the ground and rots. But from the death of that one grain comes a harvest of multiple wheat grains, each having the same life and properties as the original.
- Jesus is the single grain which dies. But the fruit of His dying will be a multitude of grains, all with the same life and doing the same works.

What, then, did Jesus' reply mean? How did it answer their request?

- Those who made the request were Greeks. They were Gentiles. The disciples were not sent to evangelise the Gentiles until after Jesus' ascension. In the flesh He was not sent to the Gentiles but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Mt 10.5-6).
- The time for the Gentiles to see Jesus had not yet come. They were to see Him in the Church Age, not in His earthly body but in the many members of the Body of Christ. He was the firstborn of many brethren. Since those many members all have the same parentage, they will reveal the same life and ministry.

So, then, how would the Gentile Greeks see Jesus? Not in the body of His flesh, but in His mystical Body, the Church.

### **To Conclude**

It should now be quite clear how that great mystery, the mystery of godliness, is the very heart of the plan of redemption to restore man's original image and glory.

Not just God in the Man Christ Jesus, but God-in-Christ in the flesh of His Church. (*"I in them, and thou in me"* (Jn 17.23).)

- Just as Christ was the incarnation, the visible expression in flesh, of the invisible God, so the Church is to be the incarnation and the revelation of Christ.
- Just as Christ was the express image of God, so the Church is to be conformed to the image of Christ.

And the day is soon to come when the mystery at work through the Church Ages will come to its grand climax. The mystery of God shall be finished.

The Church will come to the fulness of Christ and be filled with all the fulness of God.

(For a more detailed exposition of Christ and the Church as the image and the habitation of God, see the third and fourth articles in the booklet entitled *The Mystery of Godliness* on my website at the following address, [https://c3147f83-0592-4dde-8312-4def18876205.filesusr.com/ugd/f81e1b\\_9044e660137c40bdab92ce764d627ce2.pdf](https://c3147f83-0592-4dde-8312-4def18876205.filesusr.com/ugd/f81e1b_9044e660137c40bdab92ce764d627ce2.pdf).)

## 5. CONCLUSION

*His Word was bread. It was the perfect manna, which, if a man lives by, he shall never die. But right after the death of the fathers, no one seemed to know the exact truth and in a short while this manna seemed to have become hidden to the people. But in every age God began to give back by revelation that which was hidden until in this last day according to Revelation 10.7, a prophet will come and reveal all the mysteries and then the Lord will come.*

**Wm Branham, "The Seven Church Ages", p 210**

### **The Church Loses Her First Love**

Throughout the Church Ages, God has been working towards the full and final finishing of the mystery of God, His eternal purpose.

But from the beginning that purpose has been resisted by a demonic flood of seducing spirits.

The battle to accomplish God's ultimate intention in the Church is prophetically foretold and recounted in the mystery of the seven stars and the seven golden candlesticks (Rev 1.20). It unveils the titanic struggle throughout the Church Ages between the Spirit of Christ and the spirit of antichrist, the Spirit of Truth and the spirit of error, the mystery of godliness and the mystery of iniquity.

Even in New Testament times there are clear indications of demonic inroads. As Paul feared (2 Cor 11.2-4), just like the first bride, Eve, the ear of the early Church bride was turning to another spirit, to another gospel, to another Jesus. The Church began to weaken her grip on that which she heard from the beginning. And to turn from the original Word is to lose the first love, for to love God is to keep His Word (Jn 14.15; 1 Jn 5.3).

As a result, the Church commenced a progressively precipitous downwards slide from her original calling, culminating in the awful depths of satan (Rev 2.24). It is prophetically described in the letters to the first four churches of Asia in Revelation 2.

### **The Mystery of God shall be Finished**

But the original purpose of God was not to be frustrated. The mystery of God would be finished.

Despite all that hell could do, what the Lord began, He would also finish. His plan of redemption would be accomplished.

- Ps 57.2 I will cry unto God most high, unto **God that performeth** (*i.e., completes, finishes, brings to an end*) **all things for me**
- Ps 138.8 The Lord **will perfect** that which concerneth me
- Phil 1.6 he which hath begun a good work in you **will perform** (*literally = perfect, complete*) it until the day of Jesus Christ
- Heb 12.2 Jesus the Author and **Finisher** (*literally = Perfecter*) of our faith

The tide turned. The downwards slide was reversed.

In the last three Church Ages, a progressive restoration began, prophetically described in the three churches of Revelation 3. Step by step the Lord has been bringing the Church back to His original intention, to her first calling, to the depths of God (cp 1 Cor 2.10), to the mystery first revealed to Paul. She will yet be the revelation of Christ in flesh.

This restoration process climaxes in Laodicea, the seventh and final Church Age.

Very significantly, one the designations of Christ in His letter to Laodicea is, “*the beginning of the creation of God*” (Rev 3.14). This may equally well be translated the “beginner”, “author” or “originator”. We know Christ was most certainly the Beginner of the **first** creation and not its beginning (Jn 1.3). But He was also the Beginner of the **new** creation (Eph 2.10; 2 Cor 5.17). And that creation will be brought to its final completion in the Laodicea Age,

Although a most glorious Age, however, paradoxically Laodicea also experiences the greatest deception in all history and the apostasy of the great mass of professing believers.

But there will be a faithful remnant who will heed “*the voice of the seventh angel*” (Rev 10.7), the message of the angel to the final Laodicea Church Age. They will experience the climax of the Church’s restoration to her original calling. In them, the mystery of God shall be finished.

That finishing will entail not merely a **full understanding** of the mystery by the end time Church bride but also its **full manifestation** in her flesh. The fulness of Christ, in whom was all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, will be incarnated in His many-membered Body.

The fulfilling of the mystery of God through the indwelling Christ will result in our glorification. The process described by Paul of being changed into His image from glory to glory (2 Cor 3.18) will come to its ultimate conclusion. Both living and resurrected dead believers shall appear with him in glory (Col 3.4), in a body like the body of His glory (Phil 3.21, literal translation).

That time is very, very near. The Bridegroom will very soon come for His bride.

Then shall the mystery of God be finished.

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God willing, I hope to issue a fuller exposition of the glorious expectation of the faithful end time Church, as she waits to be caught up to meet her coming Bridegroom, in a later study, “The Mystery of God is Finished”.

## APPENDIX 1

### Types & Foreshadows of Christ in The Old Testament *Historical Incidents & The Law of Moses*

Jesus explicitly said the Old Testament Scriptures testified of Himself (Lk 24.27).

In what ways do they testify of Him?

One obvious way is by prophecy. The spirit of prophecy is the testimony of Jesus (Rev 19.10). The prophets testified of Him in **direct** prophecy (e.g., Isa 53), and **compound** prophecy, i.e., prophecies with more than one application/fulfilment (e.g., Ho 11.1 & Mt 2.15).

But there is more. Many Old Testament incidents and practices are prophetic of the life and ministry of Christ. These are often called types, shadows, patterns or examples of the true (cp Heb 8.2,5).

- The **true (or, antitype)** is the original, the archetype/prototype of which all others are partial copies (e.g., Jn 15.1).
- A **shadow** is a partial, incomplete outline or image of an original object.
- Likewise, a **type/pattern** is literally a mark or imprint of an original left by a stroke or blow. It does not give a full picture, only that part revealed by the blow (e.g., a footprint; the impression left by a hammer blow; cp Jn 20.25, "print").
- An **example** is a copy or specimen of an original.

Let us illustrate from selected historical incidents and details of the Law of Moses.

#### Historical Incidents

A few of the many incidents in the history of Israel that foreshadow Christ are listed below.

- **Jacob's ladder**, giving access to heaven, foreshadowing Jesus restoring communication between heaven and earth (Gen 28.12,17 & Jn 1.51).
- **The rock** and **the manna** in the wilderness, foreshadowing Christ as the water and the bread of Life (1 Cor 10.4; Jn 6.31-33).
- **The brazen serpent** lifted up on a pole saving those bitten by serpents (Nu 21.9). The serpent is a symbol of sin, and brass - produced by beating - of judgement. So, this incident foreshadowed how those bitten by sin are saved by looking to Christ, who was lifted up on the tree (1 P 2.24), became sin (2 Cor 5.21) and was smitten/bruised (Isa 53.10) by the serpent for us.

#### The Law of Moses

Examples of the life and ministry Christ foreshadowed in the Mosaic Law include the sacrifices, the law of redemption and the year of jubilee. Also, the weekly, monthly and annual feasts of the Lord are explicitly stated to be shadows of Christ (Col 2.16-17).

Let us illustrate from the seven annual feasts of the Lord of Leviticus 23.

These are prophetic rehearsals of Jesus' future ministry.

- **The first three** of His rejection by Israel at His 1<sup>st</sup> Coming, and of His death and resurrection.

- **The last three** of the regathering of Israel before His 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming, of their repentance, acceptance of their atonement and entrance into the rest of the Millennial kingdom.
- **The sixth**, the Day of Atonement, of His ministry as both Atonement and High Priest.

Let us look in more detail at the first three and the sixth of these feasts.

### **The First Three Annual Feasts**

<b>Feast</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Key Events of Jesus' 1<sup>st</sup> Coming Prophetically Rehearsed</b>
<b>Passover</b>  Ex 12.1-14 Lev 23.4-5	1 <sup>st</sup> month, 14 <sup>th</sup> day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The sacrifice of the Passover lamb was a rehearsal of Jesus' crucifixion for our sins.</li> <li>• Jesus is the Lamb of God (Jn 1.29) and our Passover (1 Cor 5.7).</li> <li>• He died on the same day and at same hour the lambs were sacrificed for the evening Passover meal.</li> <li>• The lamb sacrificed in the temple was chosen by the high priest several days before from the fields around Bethlehem, then carefully scrutinised to ensure it was without blemish.</li> </ul>
<b>Unleavened Bread</b>  Ex 12.7-8, 15-20 Lev 23.6-8	1 <sup>st</sup> month, 15 <sup>th</sup> to the 21 <sup>st</sup> day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During this Feast, all leaven (= sin &amp; corruption, in the Bible) was to be put away (Ex 12.15,19-20) and the bread eaten unleavened.</li> <li>• This foreshadowed Jesus, our Bread of Life and Bread of heaven (Jn 6.35). In Him was no leaven or corruption.</li> <li>• After His death, His body was hurriedly put in the tomb just before sunset, in perfect time for the start of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.</li> <li>• While in the tomb, no leaven/corruption spread through His body. The sinless unleavened Bread of Heaven was uncorrupted by death and kept from decay (Ps 16.10; Acts 2.27).</li> </ul>
<b>First Fruits</b>  Lev 23.9-14	1 <sup>st</sup> month, 17 <sup>th</sup> day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This was a prophetic rehearsal of the <b>fact</b> and the very <b>day</b> of Jesus' resurrection.</li> <li>• At this Feast, the 1<sup>st</sup> fruits of the grain harvest were ceremonially gathered by the high priest and taken into the temple.</li> <li>• The fruits of a natural seed result from its death when buried/planted in the earth and its subsequent rising again.</li> <li>• Jesus was the true sheaf of the 1<sup>st</sup> Fruits. He too was planted in death (Jn 12.24). He then rose again, <b>the first</b> from the dead (Acts 26.23) and <b>the firstfruits</b> of those that slept (1 Cor 15.20-23).</li> <li>• He arose on the <b>very day</b> that the firstfruits was gathered and offered in the temple, at sunrise, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day after the crucifixion.</li> <li>• Also, as the high priest was entering the earthly temple with the 1<sup>st</sup> grain, Jesus the true High Priest was taking the 1<sup>st</sup> fruits of the resurrection, Himself, into the true temple in heaven.</li> </ul>

### **The Sixth, the Day of Atonement**

In addition to prophetically rehearsing the future time when Israel accepts Christ as her atonement, the sixth feast, the Day of Atonement (Lev 16; 23.26-32), rehearses Jesus' current ministry as Atonement and High Priest to both Jew and Gentile who receive Him in the present Church Age.

- Isa 53.10 His soul was **the sin offering** to atone for sin.
- Jn 1.29, 36 He was **the substitutionary lamb** upon which sins were placed.

- Heb 9.12 His was **the blood** of the sacrifice taken into the Holy of Holies.
- Heb 9.11 He was **the high priest** who alone could pass through the veil bearing that blood.
- Heb 10.20 His flesh was **the veil** at the entrance to the Holy of Holies behind which was the Glory.
- 1 Cor 2.8/Jas 2.1 He was **the Glory** on the mercy seat upon the ark.
- Ro 3.25 He was **the mercy seat** upon which the blood was sprinkled. (The word "propitiation" here means the **place** of propitiation, not the **act**.)
- Jn 6.31-33 He was **the manna** before/within the ark (Ex 16.32-34; Heb 9.4).

Also,

- Just as on the Day of Atonement, every 50th year, a trumpet announces the year of jubilee, a time of liberty (Lev 25.9-11);
- So, at His 1<sup>st</sup> Coming Jesus proclaimed liberty to all who received Him (Lk 4.17-21).

Truly all the Scriptures testify of Christ.

Nor should this be surprising, for He **is** the Scriptures, the Word.

## APPENDIX 2

### Types & Foreshadows of Christ in The Old Testament *The Prophets*

In addition to Old Testament inanimate events and practices, Christ is also foreshadowed in the lives of the prophets. This was because they were indwelt by the Spirit of Christ. Joseph and Moses are two more examples.

Although the Bible nowhere explicitly says they are types of Christ, the remarkable extent of the similarities is too great to be coincidental.

#### Joseph

Joseph foreshadows Christ in his calling to lead his (Jewish) brethren, his initial rejection and turning to the Gentiles, and his subsequent acceptance by, and future ministry to, his brethren.

##### ***Loved of his Father***

Gen 37.3		Mt 3.17
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##### ***Rejected by his Brethren***

37.13, 16	Sent by his father to his brethren.	Lk 20.13
37.14	Left his father's company and went to his brethren,	Jn 16.28
37.16-17	going after and seeking them.	Lk 15.4,10
37.4-5	But they hated him;	Jn 15.25
37.5	they did not believe in him;	Jn 1.10-11; 7.5
37.11	they envied him;	Mk 15.10
37.8	and refused to accept his God-given authority.	Lk 19.14
37.11	But his parents, though perplexed, pondered his words.	Lk 2.50-51

##### ***Humiliation & Sufferings***

###### ***(a) In Canaan***

37.18	His (Jewish) brethren conspired to slay him.	Mt 27.1
37.23	When in their power, they stripped him of his garment,	Mt 27.28
37.24	threw him into a pit to die,	Ps 69.2,14-15
37.25	and then sat down.	Mt 27.36
37.28	At the suggestion of Judah (in NT Greek = Judas), he was sold for the price of a slave,	Mt 26.15; Ex 21.32
37.26	and delivered into the hands of foreigners/Gentiles.	Mt 20.19

###### ***(b) In Egypt***

40.15	There, though guiltless,	Jn 8.46; 19.4;
39.14	he was falsely accused,	Mt 26.60
39.20	bound,	Mt 27.2
Ps 105.18-19	and his feet painfully shackled.	Ps 22.16
39.20	He was numbered with the transgressors,	Isa 53.12
40.2-3	and put with two malefactors.	Lk 23.32
40.13	For one he had a message of life; the other perished.	Lk 23.43

**Exaltation**

41.14	The king sent and loosed him from his bands,	Acts 2.24
41.40	and exalted him over all his house,	Heb 3.6
41.40,44, 55	with all authority over the people.	Eph 1 .20-22
41.43	Every knee was to bow to him.	Phil 2.10

**Takes a Gentile Bride**

41.45	Rejected by his Jewish brethren, he took a Gentile bride,	Ro 11.19
41.50	and begat children,	Heb 2.13
41.51-52	one of whom was named Ephraim (= Fruitful).	Jn 12.24

**Ministers the Bread of Life to the Gentiles**

41.56-57	While among the Gentiles, there came a mighty famine.	Lk 15.14
41.56-57	When they had come to an end of their own resources, he provided the bread of life to a starving world.	
41.55	All who wanted that bread had to come to him.	Acts 4.12

**Ministry to His Jewish Brethren****(a) Initially Veiled from Them**

42.7-8	During this period, his brethren were blind to who he was.	Ro 11.25
42.7,17	He made himself strange to them.	Ro 11.28
42.22	They then began to realise/acknowledge their guilt, and to feel that his blood was required of them.	Mt 27.25
42.24	As he observed the changes, he turned about and wept.	Lk 19.41

**(b) Later He Revealed Himself to Them**

44.16	His brethren began to seek cleansing ("God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants").	
45.1	Then, without his Gentile bride being present,	
45.1	he made himself known to his Jewish brethren.	
45.12	See, it is my mouth that speaketh unto you.	Lk 24.39
45.3	But they were troubled at his presence.	Zech 12.10
45.4	He called them to come near to him,	Eph 2.13
45.8	and told them being sent away was part of God's plan.	Acts 2.23
50.20	He meant it for good to save much people alive.	Ro 11.11-12
45.22	He gave them all a change of raiment	Rev 6.11

**Moses**

Moses' life in Egypt, Midian and in the wilderness leading the exodus foreshadows both the ministry of Jesus and also his own end time ministry as one of the two prophets of Revelation 11, just before Jesus' 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming.

Only the part of his ministry which mirrors that of Jesus is covered here.

**General**

Dt 18.15-19	Prophet	Jn 6.14 (i.e., Dt 18.15-19)
Ps 99.6	Priest	Heb 7.24
Dt 33.4-5	King	Acts 17.7

Ex 18.13	Judge	Jn 5.27
Acts 7.35	Ruler	Mi 5.2
Isa 63.11-12	Shepherd	Jn 10.11, 14
Nu 21.7	Intercessor	Ro 8.34; Heb 7.25
Nu 27.5	Advocate	1 Jn 2.1
Ex 32.30, 34	Willing to be a substitute	1 P 2.24

***Moses' 1<sup>st</sup> Coming Foreshadows Jesus' 1<sup>st</sup> Coming***

Ex 1.22	Attempt to destroy at birth.	Mt 2.13-16
Acts 7.20; Heb 11.23	Fair unto God (Greek/AV Margin).	Lk 2.40, 52
Heb 11.24-25	Before beginning his ministry, he rejected the kingdoms of this world and their glory.	Mt 4.8-10
Heb 11.26	He also rejected the riches of this world for the reward of another world.	Heb 12.2; 2 Cor 8.9
Acts 7.25	He was rejected by his own brethren.	Jn 1.10-11
Acts 7.27	They would not have him to rule over them.	Lk 19.14

***Between Jesus' 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Comings***

Ex 2.21-22; 3.1	While estranged from his brethren, and living in the land of the Mountain of God, he took a Gentile bride.	The Church Age
Ex 2.23-25	But Israel was not cast off; the Lord was still mindful of her during her sufferings.	Ro 11.25-26a
Ex 3.7-8a, 10	Behind the scenes, a future deliverance was in preparation, according to the promise ...	Ro 11.26b
Ex 3.8b, 17; 6.8	... to take Israel to the land of promise.	Millennium Kingdom

***Moses' 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming to Israel Foreshadows His Ministry Just Before Jesus' 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming***

Ex 4.29-31	Israel accepts her Deliverer at her 2 <sup>nd</sup> opportunity.	
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(Moses' battle with Pharaoh to deliver Israel from Egypt, together with the plagues that accompanied his message, foreshadow the end time battle between the beast and the two prophet witnesses, Moses and Elijah, and the plagues they inflict on the earth.)

Truly, the Spirit of Christ was in the prophets.

## APPENDIX 3

### Additional Examples of the Oneness of God & the Believer

Here are some further references revealing the depth of the oneness between God and the believer. Unlike the instances listed earlier, however, in these there is no explicit reference to Christ.

#### **Holiness**

- Not just **as** Him      1 P 1.16      be holy as I am holy
- But **of** Him      Heb 12.10      partakers of His holiness

#### **Jealousy**

- Not just **for** Him      1 K 19.10      been very jealous for the Lord
- But **of** Him      2 Cor 11.2      jealous over you with godly jealousy (*Literally, with a jealousy of God*)

#### **Wisdom**

- Not just **from** above      Jas 3.17      the wisdom that is from above
- But **of** above      1 K 3.28      the wisdom of God was in him

#### **Prayers**

Even our very prayers are not to be our own, but divinely inwrought:

- Jas 5.16      the effectual (*literally = inwrought*) fervent prayer of a righteous man
- Ro 8.26-27      we know not what we should pray for: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us
- Rev 22.17      the Spirit and the bride say, Come

#### **Hands**

Our physical body also may carry and impart Christ. In Acts, the believers asked **the Lord** to stretch forth **His** hand to heal. How did He answer? Through **their** stretched forth hands.

- Acts 4.30      **by stretching forth thine hand** to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done
- Acts 5.12      **by the hands of the apostles** were many signs and wonders wrought

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The underlying principle in the above examples, and in those in chapter 4 specifically mentioning Christ, is beautifully summed up by Peter.

- 2 P 1.4      Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises:  
**that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature**

We actually have the very nature of God Himself!

*“Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God”* (1 Jn 3.1).

Indeed.