

This miniseries on the Lord's second coming and our hope of the appearing is nearing completion.

These final few emails will address the key link of the hope in the post Acts epistles to the second coming of the Lord at the Trumpet as found in Matthew, Thessalonians and Revelation. After that we will make some suggestions about the "out resurrection" of Philipians 3 as it relates to the resurrection of Christ as the seed of David. Then we will address the false idea that the "body" descends to the earth with Christ.

Today we examine a post Acts letter of Paul which for many years was problematic for me. As always, the Word of God is never the problem, it was my own ignorance.

My problem was that I thought everything about the Mystery, that is the dispensation of the grace of God of Ephesians 3 and Colossians 1, was hidden in God. This is not the case. Redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, and righteousness by grace through faith were never hidden away from ages and generations and must never be understood as the Mystery. Grace is not the Mystery; love is not the Mystery yet praise God these elements are also found in the Mystery. Without the finished work of Christ not one calling of God will stand. The cross of Christ is not the Mystery, but some of the work accomplished there was not revealed in the Gospels or Acts it was still "hidden in God" until after Acts 28. See "by the blood and by the cross" in Eph.2:13-16.

Likewise the appearing was never "hidden in God" but what was hidden in God and away from ages and generations was that a company would appear in heavenly places with Him. By confusing the things hidden with the things apparent, we invented a false hope called the "rapture" and then to make the error worse, we placed it in a false timeframe. The rapture totally disarms Christians from the perilous times coming by lying to them that there will be a secret escape from that which God has clearly said we will experience.

Returning to our real hope the appearing, we find in the post Acts first letter of Paul to Timothy, passages that link the appearing (epiphaneia) with the Trumpets and second coming of the Lord. Before examining an incredible phrase I'll supply a simple structure of 1Timothy based on one by Mr. Stuart Allen as found in the Berean Expositor vol.48, page 42.

A. 1:1-2. Greetings.

B. 1:3-20. Teach no other. (doubts, shipwreck). Godly dispensation, Paul's ministry, charge.
The King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise GOD.

C. 2:1-7. Salvation of all men. (including Kings?). The MAN Christ Jesus, to be testified in due time.

D. 2:8-3:15 These things I write.

E. 3:15, 16. The Mystery of godliness
God manifested (phaneroo) in flesh
Justified (vindicated) in the Spirit
Seen of Angels
Preached among Gentiles
Believed on in the world
Received up into Glory (currently hid in God Col.3:3)

E. 4:1-8. Apostasy. Demons

C. 4:9-12. Saviour of all men. The Living God.

D. 4:13-6:2. These things teach.

B. 6:3-20. Teach otherwise. (waste, error). Timothy's fight, calling & charge,
the appearing (epiphaneia). In his times, He will show.
Only Potentate, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords,
immortality alone, in the light, unapproachable, unseen.
Amen.

A. 6:21 Greetings.

It is truly wonderful that the first occurrence of the word appearing (epiphaneia) after Acts 28, occurs in this wonderful letter. The first of Timothy speaks of our Lord's current hidden status but also that future "time"; a due time, a unique time when He will be shown forth.

My past problems with this letter were based on such questions as, why would Paul refer to the ascended Lord Christ with all those earthly titles? If Christ was seated at the Father's right hand in the heavenly places, then surely the title of Head would have been more appropriate. But we have King, the only Potentate, King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and it is the man Christ revealed as GOD with these all encompassing titles. Of course now I realize that at the moment of our Lord's appearing He will appear in every sphere as God, the Man Christ Jesus, the mystery of godliness demystified if you will. Because He will appear in every sphere He appears bearing every rank and authority the Father has given Him. This glorious time is the beginning of His Kingdom which spans from the heights of heaven to the earth beneath. The appearing is the first stage of His second coming and we dear friends, are going to share in this glorious all sphere appearing. What an honour!

All these titles prove to us that His appearing is for all and seen in all spheres and not just the above heavens. In other words, while our Lord appears seated at the Father's right hand in heavenly places, He appears to all in all spheres. Therefore the timing of the appearing is not something unique to our calling.

As we have seen, this is the first occurrence of epiphaneia after Acts 28 and Paul's only use of epiphaneia before Acts 28 is found in 2Thess.2;

2Th 2:6 And now you know what holds back, for him to be revealed (apocalypse) in his own time.

2Th 2:7 For the mystery of lawlessness (iniquity) is already working, only he *is* now holding back until it comes out of *the* midst.

2Th 2:8 And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the breath of His mouth and shall destroy with the brightness (epiphaneia) of His coming (parousia),

2Th 2:9 whose coming (parousia) is according to the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,

So in 2Thess.2 we have the mystery of iniquity or lawlessness and the appearing or brightness of our Lord's coming; His parousia. In 1Tim.6 we have the mystery of godliness and the appearing, the unseen One revealed in His due time.

These two "systems", the mystery of lawlessness and the mystery of godliness come together in resolution at the appearing of our Lord. Mr. Allen puts this rather eloquently;

"We should note that the "Mystery of godliness" is in direct opposition to the "mystery of iniquity" and both find their expression in a person (1) the Lord Jesus Christ and (2) the man of sin, the son of perdition, energized by Satan, and both represent a climax of revelation of these two opposing forces. Let us never forget that Christ is Himself, the Mystery (secret) of God (Col.2:2 R.V.)-Who later became "manifest in the flesh". BE.Vol.48 page 225.

At the Lord's coming, the LIE is exposed, its exponents destroyed and incapacitated and truth reigns. Compare the truth and the lie in 2Thess.2:10-11.

In 1Tim.6 we find an amazing link between the appearing and the second coming of the Lord in power. Please note the following powerful title in this verse;

1Ti 6:15 For He in His own time will reveal who is the blessed and only Potentate, the **King of kings and Lord of lords**,

It is quite stunning to note that the title King of Kings and Lord of Lords only occurs in one other place in the New Testament as follows;

Rev 19:5 And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all His servants, and the ones fearing Him, the small and great.

Rev 19:6 And I heard as the sound of a great multitude, ... saying, Hallelujah! For the Lord God omnipotent reigns!

Rev 19:7 Let us be glad and rejoice and we will give glory to Him. For the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has prepared herself.

Rev 19:11 And I saw Heaven opened. And behold, a white horse! And He sitting on him was called Faithful and True. And in righteousness He judges and makes war.

Rev 19:12 And His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head many crowns. And He had a name written, one that no one knew except Himself.

Rev 19:13 And He had been clothed *in* a garment dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God.

Rev 19:14 And the armies in Heaven followed Him on white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.

Rev 19:15 And out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, so that with it He should strike the nations. And He will shepherd them with a rod of iron. And He treads the winepress of the wine of the anger and of the wrath of Almighty God.

Rev 19:16 And He has on *His* garment, and on His thigh a name written, **KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS**.

The title King of Kings and Lord of Lords is the link between 1Tim.6 and Revelation 19. It is powerful and provides the key to understanding the timing of the appearing, the hope before us today. The appearing in 1Tim.6 is linked with the apocalypse, not before.

Remember, this appearing was never hidden in God but no revelation had been given that any company would participate in this great blazing forth of the unseen God until after Acts 28.

Please note, I am not suggesting we are descending to the earthly marriage supper of the Lamb or that we will be part of the armies of heaven descending with Him to the earth, I am simply trying to show that in my view the Scriptures are clear, the “appearing” is the first stage of the Lord’s second coming; His great manifestation to all in every sphere.

Don’t forget the chart on this link;

<http://www.bibleunderstanding.com/appearingchart.htm>

And previous lesson in this series can be found here;

www.bibleunderstanding.com/pastissues.htm