

The GREAT Mystery

God and Mankind

Part 2

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A Review of the history of Ancient Israel

God has a plan for mankind. From before our creation, His plan was to increase His family, the God family. We are His newest unborn family members; unborn because we are not yet transformed into our eternal bodies. Rulership was part of God's plan from the beginning, that is, ruling righteously.

God's inheritance is Jacob and his descendants; that is why they are referred to as His people. God's plan is to build a holy kingdom of royal priests—a kingdom of teachers who preach the Ways of God. The sons of God, in God's heavenly court, were given rulership over the nations at the time of Babel when God divided the nations according to the number in His heavenly court (Deuteronomy 32) and established the borders, but these sons failed to rule righteously and teach the nations the Way of God. Judgment awaits them; they will not be awarded His kingdom as recorded in Daniel.

God taught Jacob and his descendants His Ways, but they rebelled. They desired the ways of the nations—self-direction, self-reliance, self-glory. They failed to learn God's way of love and fought among themselves. Their kingdom fractured and split into two houses.

The northern house was the first to rebel and corrupt themselves with detestable practices. God brought them into captivity; the second house soon followed them and went into captivity 120 years later. The northern house didn't repent when they came out of captivity. They were angry and continued in their rebellion against their Creator; they became faithless. God divorced them from the covenant family and scattered them, but His scattering was not careless. He watched over them, never completely destroying them or rejecting them. The southern house repented after their captivity, and served God but as the pendulum would swing, over time, they moved away from the narrow path of righteousness and fell into self-righteousness and they became unfaithful. One house of Jacob became faithless while the other became unfaithful. Fortunately, God can successfully work with both states of rebellion.

God reigns supreme. From the view of little mankind, it may appear like they have power and strength to direct their paths, but they are mistaken, very mistaken. From the view of God—our Creator, who resides outside of time, outside of our immeasurable expanse and establishes His order securely in place by the command of His voice—we are nothing. As nations rise to superpower status, their view may be worldwide, but only the worldwide view of this little planet, which is a mere drop in the bucket.

Jacob's descendants at one time knew God, the Creator, yet still, they rebelled. Their childish, short-sighted focus brought them down to their knees as an inferior people for hundreds of years. God is working with His people. His plan for them and all of mankind is very much in play. God will accomplish what He set out to do. First, He will sift through His people and destroy the wicked. He will test and purify the repentant and they will become a re-united holy kingdom of royal priests serving God and mankind. While working with His people, He has called from the nations, people to repentance and service to Him. From this repentant group from the descendants of Jacob and of the nations, a new government will be formed—one led by Jesus Christ and ruling with him this new coalition, the Saints. The battle for God's kingdom will soon be announced, however, it is already decided and was recorded long ago in the book of Daniel and hidden in God's coded language in the books of Ezekiel, Isaiah, Zechariah and Hosea.

God tells His most intimate stories in His coded language. Learn the code and you will understand the great mysteries hidden—for only the curious, the relentless researchers who love their Creator.

The Great Mystery of those Cedar Trees in Lebanon, God's Garden of Eden recorded in the Book of Ezekiel.

- **Assyria**
- **Egypt**
- **Babylon**
- **Satan**

Assyria

“Consider Assyria, once a cedar in Lebanon with beautiful branches overshadowing the forest; it towered on high, its top above the thick foliage. The waters nourished it, deep springs made it grow tall... The cedars in the garden of God could not rival it, nor could the pine trees equal its boughs, nor could the plane trees compare with its branches—NO TREE IN THE GARDEN OF GOD COULD MATCH ITS BEAUTY. I made it beautiful with abundant branches, the envy of all the trees of Eden in the garden of God” (Ezekiel 31:2-9).

This cedar tree that God calls Assyria is the son of God ruling over the nation of Assyria on earth.

Egypt

“Which of the trees of Eden can be compared with you in splendor and majesty? Yet you, too,

will be brought down with the trees of Eden to the earth below; you will lie among the uncircumcised, with those killed by the sword. 'This is Pharaoh and all his hordes,' declares the Sovereign LORD" (Ezekiel 31:18).

"No longer will there be a prince in Egypt, I will spread fear throughout the land... I will set fire to Egypt... I am against Pharaoh king of Egypt. I will break both his arms, the good arm as well as the broken one, and make the sword fall from his hand" (Ezekiel 30:13, 22).

This cedar tree that God addresses as Pharaoh is the son of God ruling over the nation of Egypt on earth.

Babylon

"On the day the LORD gives you relief from suffering and turmoil and cruel bondage, you will take up this daunt against the **king of Babylon**: 'How the oppressor has come to an end! How his fury has ended! **The LORD has broken the rod of the wicked, THE SCEPTER OF THE RULERS**, which in anger struck down the peoples with unceasing blows... All the lands are at rest and at peace; they break into singing. Even **the PINE trees and the CEDARS of Lebanon exult over you** and say, '**Now that you have been laid low, no woodsman comes to cut us down.**' The grave below is all astir to meet you at your coming" (Isaiah 14:3-9).

Absolutely, the place where they all are imprisoned will be roused to meet the son of God ruling over Babylon. They thought they would win. God has not yet fully dethroned this son of God ruling over Babylon, for it will rise again in the near future. But, when it is overthrown, the pine trees and cedars who are the remaining righteous sons of God will rejoice and no longer fear their own destruction—"no woodsman comes to cut us down."

The battle in the heavens goes unseen by mankind, but these scriptures describe the suffering of the righteous sons of God in heaven—the pine trees and the cedars by wicked heavenly rulers—rulers holding a scepter—sovereign rulers who were given authority by God, but they became filled with pride and arrogance and turned against their own Creator. Such is the foolery of the proud.

Still in the future... "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the Great! She has become a home for demons and a haunt for every evil spirit... Then I heard another voice from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, lest you take part in her sins, lest you share in her plagues for her sins are piled up to heaven, and God has remembered her crimes" (Revelation 18:1-2, 4-5).

Satan, God's oldest enemy

Satan has his domain in the high seas in heaven. He has a coalition and it includes a son of God—a cedar tree—from God's headquarters in Eden.

"They have made all your planks of fir trees from Senir; **They have taken a CEDAR from Lebanon to make a mast for you...**" (Ezekiel 27:5). The mast is tall, so descriptive of the heights of cedar trees that provide a bird's eye view. These "cedars" have knowledge of God's grand

plan for they were part of His headquarters in Eden. But, things have changed since they rebelled, God has secrets, “None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory” (I Corinthians 2:8).

Satan is doomed. “But **the east wind** [God Almighty] will break you to pieces in the heart of the sea. Your wealth, merchandise and wares, your mariners, seamen and shipwrights, your merchants and all your soldiers, and everyone else on board will sink into the heart of the sea on the day of your shipwreck” (Ezekiel 27:26-27).

God’s Heavenly Headquarters is being Rebuilt

Due to this great fall of God’s most powerful and trained sons in His inner sanctuary, God will no longer give such power to His creation again, except for His only heir.

“**No other trees so well-watered are ever to reach such a height; they are all destined for death**, for the earth below, among mortal men, with those who go down to the pit” (Ezekiel 31:14).

“Then **ALL THE TREES OF EDEN, THE CHOICEST AND BEST OF LEBANON, ALL THE TREES THAT WERE WELL-WATERED, WERE CONSOLED IN THE EARTH BELOW**. Those who lived in its shade, its allies among the nations, had also gone down to the grave with it, joining those killed by the sword” (Ezekiel 31:15-17).

“See, the Lord, the LORD Almighty, will lop off the boughs with great power. The **lofty trees will be felled**, the **tall ones will be brought low**. He will cut down the forest thickets with an ax; **LEBANON WILL FALL BEFORE THE MIGHTY ONE**” (Isaiah 10:33-34).

“Wail, **CYPRESS tree**, for the **CEDAR** has fallen while the **STATELY TREES are destroyed**. Wail, **OAK trees of Bashan**, for **THE OLD GROWTH FOREST HAS BEEN CUT DOWN**” (Zechariah 11:2).

God will not tolerate pride and rebellion in either heaven or on earth.

The NEW membership in Government’s Headquarters

- Christ, King of kings and Lord of lords
- The repentant descendants of Jacob, God’s covenant people
- The righteous from the nations
- Saints—Christ’s Bride

Lebanon is the coded place of God’s government and He is rebuilding it.

CHRIST SITS WITH GOD ALMIGHTY

This new government with Christ at the right hand of God will blossom again.

“In a very short time, will not **Lebanon be turned into a fertile field** and the fertile field seem **LIKE A FOREST?**” (Isaiah 29:17)

“Instead of the thorn bush will **grow the pine tree**, and instead of briars the **myrtle will grow**” (Isaiah 55:13).

This loyal Son who loves righteousness is prepared to battle until everything is restored prior to iniquity. He is the Co-Creator, a unique Son of God. He is the only heir who now rules with God. He is the splendid cedar of Lebanon. God shared with Daniel another body of people, who too, will rule with Christ; these are the saints, the people of God. Satan and the rogue sons of God don't like the news of this **new three-some**; they are prepared to fight, if necessary until everything is destroyed.

THE RISE OF THE SPLENDID CEDAR OF LEBANON

“This is what the Sovereign LORD says: **I MYSELF will take a shoot from the very top of a cedar and plant it, I will break off a tender sprig from its topmost shoots** and plant it on a high lofty mountain. **On the mountain heights of Israel, I will plant it**; it will produce branches and bear fruit and become a **SPLENDID CEDAR [Christ]**” (Ezekiel 17:22-23).

God chose this Son. He knew this unique, beloved Son would succeed. Only one heir qualified to rule with Him.

“See, **my servant will act wisely; he WILL BE raised and lifted up and highly exalted**. Just as there were many who were appalled at him—his appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any man and his form marred beyond human likeness... **He grew up before him like a tender shoot and like a root out of dry ground**. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering... he was despised and we esteemed him not. Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities, the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way, and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all” (Isaiah 52:13-15, 53:2-6).

This son will stand with the great! He became perfect through suffering both in heaven and on earth. Christ—the Co-creator, perfect and living in righteousness suffered to become a perfect Savior, a perfect mediator, a perfect companion and a perfect leader for a people born in suffering.

“After the suffering of his soul, he will see the light of life, and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities. Therefore, I will give him a portion among the **GREAT**, and **he will divide the spoils with the strong** [the saints will rule with him], because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors” (Isaiah 53:11-12).

ANCIENT ISRAEL UNDERSTOOD THE IMAGERY OF THE CEDARS IN LEBANON

Amaziah, a young king of Judah defeated 10,000 men of Edom in the Valley of Salt; he was proud of his conquest. In his pride, he sent a message to the king of Israel with an invitation. The king of Israel declined and responded with a comparison of their rulership. The king of Israel viewed his own rulership as strong and accomplished compared to the young Jewish king who he considered to be rough-around-the-edges and inexperienced. "So King Jehoash of Israel sent this message to King Amaziah of Judah: **'The thorn bush in Lebanon sent this message to the cedar in Lebanon: "Give your daughter to my son in marriage."** But just then **a wild beast from Lebanon** wandered by and trampled down the thorn bush. You have indeed defeated Edom and now you are arrogant. Glory in your victory, but stay at home. Why ask for trouble and cause your own downfall and that of Judah also?" (II Kings 14:9-10).

Notice, both houses were considered by the king of Israel to be in **Lebanon—God's government which they recognized they were part of—as a covenant people ruling on earth.**

God said, "How fair are your tents, O Jacob, Your dwellings, O Israel! Like valleys that stretch out, like **GARDENS beside the river, like ALOES planted by the LORD, like CEDARS beside the waters**" (Numbers 24:5-6).

THE REPENTANT DESCENDANTS OF JACOB WILL BECOME "TREES" IN GOD'S GOVERNMENT.

In the rebuilding of God's government in heaven, He will include the repentant descendants of Jacob—they will become "trees" in His garden of Eden.

"I will be like the dew to Israel, he will blossom like a lily. **Like a CEDAR of Lebanon**, he will send down his roots, his young shoots will grow, **His splendor will be like an OLIVE TREE**, his fragrance like a **CEDAR OF LEBANON**. Men will dwell again in his shade. He will flourish like the grain... blossom like a vine and his fame will be like the wine from Lebanon" (Hosea 14:5-7).

"But now listen, O Jacob, my servant, Israel, whom I have chosen. This is what the LORD says—I **will pour out my Spirit on your offspring**, and my blessing **on your descendants**. They will spring up **like grass in a meadow, like POPLAR TREES by flowing streams**. One will say, 'I belong to the LORD,' another will call himself by the name of Jacob; still another will write on his hand, 'The LORD's,' and will take the name Israel" (Isaiah 44:1, 3-5).

Again the imagery of trees as leadership positions in God's government is used by Isaiah.

"He has sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release for the prisoners... to comfort all who mourn, and provide for those who grieve in Zion—to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called **OAKS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS**, a planting of the LORD for the display of his splendor" (Isaiah 61:1-3).

JERUSALEM WILL BE ADORNED WITH THE GLORY OF LEBANON

“The Redeemer will come to Zion, to those in Jacob who repent of their sins,’ declares the LORD... Though in anger I struck you, in favor I will show you compassion... **THE GLORY OF LEBANON WILL COME TO YOU, the PINE, the FIR and the CYPRESS together, to adorn the place of my sanctuary and I will glorify the place of my feet...** all who despise you will bow down at your feet and will call you **The City of the LORD, Zion of the Holy One of Israel**” (Isaiah 59:20, 60:10, 60:13, 14).

“I will turn the desert into pools of water, and the parched ground into springs. I will put in the desert **the CEDAR and the ACACIA, the MYRTLE and the OLIVE**. I will set **PINES in the wasteland, the FIR and the CYPRESS together**, so that people may see and know, may consider and understand, that **the hand of the LORD has done this, that the Holy One of Israel has created it**” (Isaiah 41:19-20). The desert is the coded image of the place void of God’s word, dead to truth. God is going to seed all of the wastelands with righteous leaders of varying government levels to teach the ignorant the Way of God and establish God’s Order of Love.

THE RIGHTEOUS FROM ALL NATIONS WILL BE PART OF THIS NEW GOVERNMENT.

“The righteous man will flourish like the **PALM TREE**; he will grow like a **CEDAR in Lebanon; planted in the house of the LORD, they will flourish in the courts of our God**. They will still bear fruit in old age, they will stay fresh and green, proclaiming, ‘**The LORD is upright; he is my Rock, and there is no wickedness in him**” (Psalm 92:12-15).

King David understood the imagery. “**The trees of the Lord flourish, the CEDARS of Lebanon that He planted**” (Psalm 104:16).

THAT IS NOT ALL!

God desires that ALL of mankind repent.

“The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance” (II Peter 3:9).

“Say to them: 'As surely as I live, declares the Lord GOD, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that the wicked should turn from their ways and live. Turn! Turn from your evil ways! For why should you die, O house of Israel?’” (Ezekiel 33:11)

“Do I take any pleasure in the death of the wicked? declares the Lord GOD. Would I not prefer he turn from his ways and live?” (Ezekiel 18:23)

God has a place for everyone in His kingdom.

Jesus said, “There is more than enough room in my Father's home. If this were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you?” (John 14:2)

Listen to the Apostle Peter, “His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through the knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. Through these, he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil

desires. **In view of all this, make every effort to respond to God's promises.** Supplement your faith with a generous provision of moral excellence, and moral excellence with knowledge, and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. For if you possess these qualities and continue to grow in them, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ... Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. **For if you do these things, you will never fall, and you will RECEIVE A RICH WELCOME into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ**" (II Peter 1:4-10).

The Saints will rule with Christ.

"Blessed and holy are those who share in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years" (Revelation 20:6).

Christ and His bride will marry.

The Bride is the image that describes the intimate relationship between Christ and His beloved church. They will work as one, a unified body with the same goals and desires to obey God Almighty and serve Him.

Paul understood this mystery and wrote, "For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior" (Ephesian 5:23). The husband is head of the wife. It was designed and planned that way from the beginning that Christ would die and pay the price for mankind and that he would marry his beloved church. Hence, he would be the head of His church and she would be his body and as the body is comprised of many parts, so she would be comprised of many members. So, God created mankind male and female to enact this relationship in everyday life and drive the point home, but deception swept over mankind through rogue heavenly rulers and Satan, God's ancient enemy and this great wonder has become a great mystery.

"Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it" (I Corinthians 12:27).

"The human body has many parts, but the many parts make up one whole body. So it is with the body of Christ" (I Corinthians 12:12).

"Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready" (Revelation 19:7-9).

The bride is Christ's beloved church. "That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Ephesians 5:27).

"And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband" (Revelation 21:2).

The Saints, once mere mortals are the future holy city, the New Jerusalem—Christ’s Bride. God records his future ruling in Daniel. “But the court will sit... Then **the sovereignty, power and greatness of the kingdoms** under the whole heaven **WILL BE HANDED OVER TO THE SAINTS, the people of the Most High**” (Daniel 7:26). The Saints will receive the kingdom and rule with Christ. So, make your election sure; run the race to the end—win!

And so, this great mystery is solved!
Shalom.

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