Jesus Christ in the Old Testament

(Part 16 – Jesus, The Messenger of Yahweh in Judges)

(Judges 2:1-7; 6:11-24; 13:3-25)

12/29/2013

I. **He appeared to bring His <u>SALVATION</u> to Israel** (Judges 2:1)
(Jesus Saves us as well!)

II. **He appeared to give His <u>REBUKE</u> to Israel** (Judges 2:2-7)
(Jesus <u>Corrects</u> us as well!)

III. **He appeared to declare His <u>PRESENCE</u> to Gideon** (Judges 6:11-24)
(Jesus <u>Abides with</u> us as well!)

IV. **He appeared to make His <u>PROMISE</u> to Manoah and His Wife** (Judges 13:3-25)
(Jesus <u>Speaks the Truth</u> to us as well!)

Jesus Christ in the Old Testament

(Part 16 – Jesus, The Messenger of Yahweh in Judges)

(Judges 2:1-7; 6:11-24; 13:3-25)

12/29/2013

Mysterious Christophanies

Christ's pre-existence

Jesus did not begin to be at His physical conception, but literally and eternally existed in Heaven with God the Father and the Holy Spirit prior to His incarnation (taking upon Himself a physical body).

In other words, Jesus existed before His birth in Bethlehem

Jesus Christ testified of His own pre-existence.

> Jesus said that He "came down from Heaven" (Jn. 6:33, 50; Note the Jew's reaction - v. 41, 42)
>
> Jesus said: "Abraham rejoiced to see my day" (Jn. 8:56; cp. with Gen. 17:22, 18:22, 19:27).
>
> Jesus said: "Before Abraham was, I am" (Jn. 8:58)
>
> Jesus said that He was with the Father "before the world was" (Jn. 17:5, 24).

Not only did Christ pre-exist before all living creatures, but at certain times, He chose to visibly manifest Himself (even prior to His incarnation).

Jesus is the revealer of God:
Christ mysteriously appears in the Old Testament Hebrew Scriptures:

All Old Testament references to someone seeing "God" (Elohim) or "the LORD" (Jehovah), must refer to God the Son.
Why? The reason is simple. The Bible states that no one (that is, no mortal human being) has ever seen God the Father (Ex. 33:20; Jn. 1:18, 6:46).

John 1:18 No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

"declared" - εξηγεομαι (exegeomai) – We derive our term "exegesis" from this word. Exegesis is the science of mining the hidden gems of Scripture and leading these truths out of the Sacred Text so that we can understand the deep things of God.

Such appearances of Christ are specifically called "Christophanies" or appearances of Christ.

As noted in the book: "Christ in the Old Testament" by James A. Borland, page 33-34, these appearances of Christ were:

1) **Actual Occurrences** (Not imaginary, hallucinatory experiences)
2) **Initiated by God** (He revealed Himself as He willed; Not at the whims & wishes of people)
3) **Revelatory** (Each served a purpose of giving promises, warnings, or instruction.
4) **For individuals** rather than for multitudes.
5) **Intermittent** (no predictability)
6) **Temporal** (transitory and fleeting, often lasting for only a few minutes; unlike Christ's incarnation when He became a man for 33 ½ years)
7) **Audible and visible** (Not people "seeing and hearing things" in the recesses of their own mind, but actual appearances perceptible to conscious, thinking people)

1. The LORD Jesus appears at <u>the Tower of Babel</u> (Genesis 11:6-7)

Genesis 11:5
"the LORD came down" – Whenever the Lord appeared on earth, it was always a pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus Christ

v. 7 - "Come, let us go down"

2. The LORD Jesus appears to <u>Hagar the Egyptian maid-servant</u> Genesis 16:1-16

"The angel of the LORD" – lit. the messenger of Yahweh. A pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus Christ (a Christophany).
Cp. Gen. 16:7-14; 21:17-21; 22:11-18; 31:11, 13; Exod. 3:2; Jud. 2:1-4; 5:23; 6:11-24; 13:3-22; II Sam. 24:16; Is. 63:9; Zech. 1:12; 3:1; 12:8.

v. 13 - "Thou God seest me" – lit. El Roi.

3. The LORD Jesus appears to <u>the patriarch, Abraham</u>

Jesus was manifested to Abraham
John 8:56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.

Genesis 12:7 - And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him.

Genesis 18:1-8 - An Incredible VISIT
The LORD visits Abraham's Tent

Genesis 19:24
"The LORD . . . from the LORD" – two different references to *Yahweh*. Two distinct persons are in view. The Lord Jesus is the first reference; God the Father is the second.

4. The LORD Jesus appears to Abraham on Mount Moriah
Genesis 22:1-18

Christ appears to Abraham as "The messenger of Yahweh"
(v.11-12; 15-18)
v. 11
This "angel (messenger) of the LORD" is a theophany (an appearance of God's Son).
The evidence is as follows:

1. He speaks as God (note v. 12 – "from Me");

2. He identifies Himself as God (note v. 15-16)

3. He claims the prerogatives of God (v. 17)

v. 14
"Jehovah-Jireh" – "The Lord will see to it" or "The Lord will provide." And He did so, when Christ died on this very Mount Moriah.

6. The LORD Jesus appears to Isaac

A. He "appeared" to Isaac and directed him (Gen. 26:2-5).
v. 2
"The LORD (Yahweh) appeared unto him" – Christ appeared.
v. 5
"Because Abraham obeyed My voice" – Isaac and his family enjoyed the blessing of God because Abraham was obedient

B. He "appeared" to Isaac and gave <u>assurance of blessing</u> (Gen.26:24-25).
v. 24
"The LORD appeared unto him" – Christ appears to Isaac again.
"Fear not, for I am with thee"

7. The LORD Jesus appears to <u>Jacob</u>

A. He spoke to Jacob in a <u>dream</u> as the "Angel of <u>God</u>" (Gen. 31:11) and as God Himself (31:13).

B. He <u>wrestled</u> with Jacob in the form of a man (Gen. 32:24-30) (This One who wrestled with Jacob is called "the Angel" of God in Hosea 12:3-5).

C. He <u>redeemed</u> Jacob (Gen. 48:15, 16).

Now we want to look at the pre-incarnate appearances of Christ in the Book of Judges.

I. He appeared to bring His <u>SALVATION</u> to Israel (Judges 2:1)
(Jesus Saves us as well!)

"an angel of the LORD" - the messenger of Yahweh. A pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus Christ (a Christophany).
Cp. Gen. 16:7-14; 21:17-21; 22:11-18; 31:11, 13; Exod. 3:2; Jud. 2:1-4; 5:23; 6:11-24; 13:3-22; II Sam. 24:16; Is. 63:9; Zech. 1:12; 3:1; 12:8.

"Angel of the Lord" (Lit. "messenger of Yahweh").

The word Angel" means messenger and does not always refer to an angelic being.

Hebrew:
"Messenger" (angel) = malak (Is. 42:19)
"Message" = malakuth (Hag. 1:13)

(Cp. Malachi 3:1 - John the Baptist is predicted and is called "my messenger." Jesus Christ is referred to as "The Messenger of the (New) Covenant").

Malachi 3:1
Behold, I will send my messenger (malak) – (John the Baptist), and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger (malak) – (Jesus) of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts.

NOTE: Jesus was called "the Messenger of Yahweh" and yet still was "Yahweh," just as He is called the "Son of God" and yet still is "God" (EX: Jn. 20:28).

No New Testament reference to "the angel of the Lord" is to Jesus, but to an angel such as Gabriel (Mt. 1:20 [cp. Lk. 1:26]; Acts 5:19, 8:26, 12:7). All N.T. references to an "angel of the Lord" are not appearances of Christ, but mere angels doing the Lord's bidding.

Judges 2:1 - **"Gilgal"** - This location was significant for several reasons:

1) It was the first place the Israelites touched when they crossed the Jordan River on dry ground (Josh. 4:19)

2) Joshua set up 12 stones in Gilgal as a memorial of the Jordan crossing (Josh. 4:20)

3) It was at Gilgal that Joshua ordered the circumcision of all Jewish males who had not been circumcised since the Exodus (thus the reproach of Egypt was "rolled off" at Gilgal - Josh. 5:9)

4) Gilgal would be the place of the first Passover in Canaan land (Josh. 5:10)

5) Gilgal would be just east of Jericho where "the Captain of the Lord's Host" (Jesus Christ) would meet Joshua (Josh. 5:13-15).

6) Gilgal would be the location of the camp from which Joshua would lead into battle (Josh. 9:6; 10:6-7, 15, 43; 14:6)

"I made you to go up out of Egypt" - the Messenger of Yahweh was the One who brought deliverance from Egypt. He produced the Exodus and the crossing of the Red Sea!

"I. . . have brought you unto the land" - It was the Messenger of Yahweh who led Israel, giving them divine guidance and protection!

"Which I sware unto your fathers" - Here He clearly speaks as God (Yahweh). He claims to be the One who gave the oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob regarding Israel obtaining the Promised Land.

It was the "LORD thy God" who made the oath and brought Israel into the Land (Deut. 6:10).

"My Name is in Him" - Yahweh said of the Messenger who would protect Israel and bring them into the Promised Land -

Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared.
Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions: for my name *is* in him.
But if thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak; then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries.
For mine Angel shall go before thee, and bring thee in unto the Amorites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites: and I will cut them off.
Exodus 23:20-23

Who was the One who brought the victory of salvation (rescue) from Egypt and victory over all attacking enemies in the wilderness for 40 years? It was none other than Jesus Christ (The Messenger of Yahweh)!

The same is true for the believer today! Jesus is the only Savior and source of victory over sin, death, and Hell.

"Neither is there salvation in any other. . ." (Acts 4:12)

II. He appeared to give His REBUKE to Israel (Judges 2:2-7)
(Jesus Corrects us as well!)

v. 1b
"I said, I will never break my covenant with you" - Again speaking as God (Yahweh), the Messenger (Jesus Christ) reaffirms His faithfulness to His covenant promises. He would always keep His end of the agreement. Note: It was a conditional covenant -- you obey, you will be blessed; you disobey, you will be cursed.

v. 2
"Make no league with the inhabitants of this land" - the Israelites were to be a separate people (not allowing the corrupting elements of the Canaanites to infect them). Yet they disobeyed God's clear commands to drive them out of God's land. Instead they allowed them to dwell among the Israelites (SEE: Judges 1:21, 27-33).

Note: God expects His children to separate from the ungodly influences of the world! He is grieved when we corrupt ourselves by allowing the world to seep into our hearts by what we allow in our homes and lives!

As a result of Israel's disobedience (v. 2), the Lord would allow them to reap the consequences of their disobedience! The Canaanites would be "thorns" and "snares" to the Israelites.

READ Judges 2:4-11

--Throughout Judges we find the perpetual cycle of:
Sin
Suffering
Supplication
Salvation (by means of a judge)

v. 4
After being rebuked the people would feel the sad effects of their sin and weep ("bochim").

Our Lord Jesus chastens and rebukes us as well -- As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. Revelation 3:19
Our response should be repentance.

III. He appeared to declare His <u>PRESENCE</u> to Gideon (Judges 6:11-24)
(Jesus <u>Abides with</u> us as well!)

The Sin Cycle continues in Judges 6:1ff. So God raises up another deliverer (Gideon). And the Messenger of Yahweh appears to Him (6:11-24).

The context of the appearance: 6:1-10

When the Messenger of Yahweh appeared, He seemed to Gideon to be an ordinary man.

He sat down (v. 11), He talked (v. 12-23), and He carried a staff (v. 21).

However:

1) He is revealed as the LORD (Jehovah) in v. 14, 16, 23.

2) He gives a sign of being supernatural (v. 21)

It was common knowledge that no one could see God and live (Gen. 32:29-31; Exod 24:10-11, 33:20), so the Messenger of Yahweh gave the comforting words that Gideon (though he saw the second Person of the Trinity) would not die (v. 23).

There is one particular promise that the Messenger of the Lord gave to Gideon: The promise of His presence (v. 12b, 14, 16).

Jesus Christ made a similar promise to the New Testament believer (Mt. 28:20; Heb. 13:5-6; Mt. 18:20).

IV. He appeared to make His <u>PROMISE</u> to Manoah and His Wife (Judges 13:3-25) (Jesus <u>Speaks the Truth</u> to us as well!)

13:3 -
The Messenger of Yahweh had also appeared to Sarah, promising her a son (Gen. 18:9-14).

v. 6
Manoah's wife noticed something uniquely different about hits visitor

v. 16
Manoah had no idea that he was standing in front of the Messenger of Yahweh!

v. 18
"Secret" - wonderful. The same word translated "wonderful" in Isaiah 9:6.

Words cannot express the surpassing, mysterious greatness of Jesus Christ.

v. 22
By seeing the Messenger of Yahweh, Manoah recognized the fact that he and his wife had seen "God" (Elohim). They also knew that no man can see God and live! His wife recognized that if Yahweh ("the LORD") had intended to kill them, He would not have received the offering, showed them the sign, and spoken to them regarding their Son.

v. 24
The Lord kept His Word! She would have Samson.

Every promise Jesus ever made, He kept! He is faithful and true!

"Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words shall not pass away" (MT. 24:35).

Conclusion:

Why would the LORD (JEHOVAH) make these mysterious appearances in the O.T.? Why in particular would Jesus appear throughout the O.T.?

(And isn't it interesting that when He appears in the O.T. it is primarily to do 1 of 2 things: Either He appears to announce a birth or He appears to bring judgment on the earth.)

Why is this? Why did He periodically and temporarily appear to do these two things?

Answer:

1. To prepare the Hebrew people for His first physical coming (i.e. His miracle birth & incarnation)

2. To prepare His people for His future return (His second coming) for judgment.

It should have been no surprise to the Jewish world that Messiah would be God; and that God (Yahweh) could make visible visits to the earth--That He could make grand appearances for some great purpose.

This was sort of a Theology 101 preparing the mindset of the Hebrew world to readily accept His infleshment; His taking upon Himself flesh and blood, His virgin birth and His incarnation. And He would partake of humanity so that He could redeem humanity by His crucifixion.

As believers, what lessons can we learn from Christ's periodic appearances in the O.T.?

1. He can be present even when we don't recognize His company.

   (Now He does not make visible appearances today as He did in Bible Days when He was disclosing new revelation to the world.
   As Peter said: "whom having not seen, you love…"

   However, Christ (by His Holy Spirit) now fills all things regarding His church and where two or three are gathered together in His name, He resides in the midst of them.

2. We (as believers) need to live our lives with the awareness of Christ's presence!

   May Christ be at home in our lives. As Paul wrote to the Ephesians:
   Eph 3:17 That Christ may dwell (settle down in; be at home) in your hearts by faith;

   May we not view Him as an occasional guest, but as a permanent resident, and live in light of His presence in our lives. (There are certain things we would do and not do if we were aware of His presence in our lives).

Don't think His presence is LOST
Don't think His presence is something to be DREADED

There may be some listening to me who have really never thought much about the presence of Christ. Many have had hanging over the door of thier home these words: "Christ is the Head of this house, the Unseen Guest at every meal, the Silent Listener to every conversation." It should arrest our attention to realize that God was listening to whatever we talked about. His presence is with us.

The Bible and the TV Guide

On the table side by side,
The Holy Bible and the TV Guide.
One is well worn and cherished with pride,
No, not the Bible, the TV Guide.
One is used daily to help folks decide,
No it isn't the Bible it's the TV Guide.
As the pages are turned what shall they see?
Oh, it doesn't matter, just turn on the TV!
And so they open the book in which they confide,
Not the Bible the TV Guide!
The word of God is seldom read;
Well, maybe a verse e'er they fall into bed.
Exhausted and sleepy and tired as can be,
Not from reading the Bible but watching TV.
So back to the table side by side,
The Holy Bible and the TV Guide.
One is cherished and well worn with pride,
Not the Bible, the TV Guide!
The plan of salvation is seldom heard,
(Nor the love of God, or encouraging words,)
Forgiveness of sin so full and free
Is found in the Bible not on TV!!

(heard from Little Bear Wheeler at a conference)