

# Introduction to “The Secret Wisdom”

BBI IIb: 01

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I. The Greek word for “secret” or “mystery” is μυστήριον (musterion):

A. Friberg Analytical Greek Lexicon: *“(1) as a religious technical term in the cults of the Greco-Roman world, a religious secret confided only to the initiated; (b) In the NT, what can be known only through revelation mediated from God; (c) as the hidden meaning of a symbol with metaphorical significance, a mystery”*

B. Thayer’s Greek Lexicon: *“(1) a hidden or secret thing, not obvious to the understanding; (2) a hidden purpose or counsel; secret will; (3) in rabbinic writers, it denotes the mystic or hidden sense of an O.T. saying.”*

II. Biblical Usage:

A. The word “secret” μυστήριον (musterion) in the OT canon is found exclusively in Daniel chapter 2 (vss. 18,19,27,28,29,30,47).

B. It occurs 28 times in the NT and concerns 3 major themes.

1. The secrets of the Kingdom in parables

2. the secrets of the symbols in Revelation

3. **The Secret (singular), which is the Son Himself as Wisdom.** This Secret includes the “head” and “one body,” which forms “one new Man,” the collective Son of God.

### III. God intentionally hid His secrets from rebellious Israel:

**A. Isaiah 6:8-10 (NKJV)** 8 Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying: "Whom shall I send, And who will go for Us?" Then I said, "Here am I! Send me." 9 And He said, "Go, and tell this people: 'Keep on hearing, but do not understand; Keep on seeing, but do not perceive.' 10 Make the heart of this people dull, And their ears heavy, And shut their eyes; Lest they see with their eyes, And hear with their ears, And understand with their heart, And return and be healed."

**B. John 12:37-41 (NKJV)** 37 But although He had done so many signs before them, they did not believe in Him, 38 that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke: "Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?" 39 Therefore they could not believe, because Isaiah said again: 40 "He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts, Lest they should see with their eyes, Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, So that I should heal them." 41 These things Isaiah said when he saw His glory and spoke of Him.

**C. 2 Cor. 3:14-18 (ESV)** 14 But their minds were hardened. For to this day, when they read the old covenant, that same veil remains unlifted, because only through Christ is it taken away. 15 Yes, to this day whenever Moses is read a veil lies over their hearts. 16 But when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed. 17 Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. 18 And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

#### IV. God alone reveals His secrets:

##### A. To the humble:

1. *Matt. 11:25 (NRSV) 25 At that time Jesus said, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants;*

##### B. Jesus revealed some of God's secrets to His disciples, yet continued to conceal them from the rest.

1. **Mark 4:9-12,33-34 (NRSV) 9** *And he said, "Let anyone with ears to hear listen!" 10 When he was alone, those who were around him along with the twelve asked him about the parables. 11 And he said to them, "To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God, but for those outside, everything comes in parables; 12 in order that 'they may indeed look, but not perceive, and may indeed listen, but not understand; so that they may not turn again and be forgiven.'" ... 33 With many such parables he spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear it; 34 he did not speak to them except in parables, but he explained everything in private to his disciples.*

##### C. Some things Jesus told His disciples were not understood until much later:

1. **Luke 18:31-34 (NRSV) 31** *Then he took the twelve aside and said to them, "See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished. 32 For he will be handed over to the Gentiles; and he will be mocked and insulted and spat upon. 33 After they have flogged him, they will kill him, and on the third day he will*

rise again.” 34 But they understood nothing about all these things; in fact, what he said was hidden from them, and they did not grasp what was said.

**2. John 12:16 (NKJV)** 16 His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written about Him and that they had done these things to Him.

D. The “Breath of Truth” continued to reveal God’s secrets progressively to the Apostles after Jesus’ ascension:

**1. John 16:12-13a (LGV)** 12 I still have much to tell you, but you are powerless to carry it right now. 13 But when that should come, the Breath of Truth, it will lead you into all the truth, ...

V. Paul and the “Secret” which is Christ.

**A. Romans 16:25-27 (LGV)** 25 To the One who is able to establish you according to my Good Message, and the preaching of Jesus Anointed according to the revelation of the Secret having been concealed in past ages, 26 yet now revealed through the prophetic writings according to the decree of the age-enduring God, made known unto all the nations for obedience of faith; 27 to the only wise God [be] glory, through Jesus Anointed, unto the ages, Amen.

**B. 1 Corinthians 1:19-24 (LGV)** 19 For it has been written, “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise and nullify the reasoning of the intelligent.” 20 Where is the wise? Where is the scholar? Where is the debater of this age? Did not God make absurd the wisdom of this world? 21 For since the world did not know God through Wisdom, God determined (in God’s wisdom) to rescue the

trusting ones through the absurdity of the proclamation. 22 Since also Judeans demand a sign, and Greeks seek wisdom, 23 yet we proclaim the Anointed having been crucified. To the Judeans [He is] a scandal indeed, to the Greeks an absurdity, 24 but to those – the invited, both Judeans and Greeks – [He is] the Anointed, the Power of God and *the Wisdom of God.*

**C. 1 Corinthians 2:6-10s (LGV) 6** And we proclaim Wisdom among the mature, but not the wisdom of this age or *the principle [men] of this age, those being deposed.* 7 But we speak *the Wisdom of God in a Secret, having been concealed,* whom God predetermined before the ages for our glory, 8 who none of the principle [men] of this age have discovered. For if they had discovered, they would not have crucified *the Master of Glory.* 9 But just as it has been written, “That which the eye did not see and the ear did not hear and the heart did not ascend towards, these things God prepared for those loving Him.” 10 Yet God revealed [the Secret] to us through His Breath.

**D. Colossians 1:24-27 (LGV) 24** I now rejoice in my sufferings over you and supplement in my flesh what is lacking in the tribulations of Christ concerning His Body (which is the assembly) 25 of which I became a servant according to the stewardship of God – which was given to me for you to fulfill the word of God – 26 *the Secret having been hidden from the ages and from the generations,* yet now was made apparent to His saints, 27 to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of *this Secret* among the nations, which is Christ in you, the Hope of the glory,

**E. Colossians 2:2-3 (LGV)** 2 so that their hearts may be called near, being united in love and unto all riches of the complete assurance of comprehension unto full knowledge of God's Secret, which is Christ, 3 in whom all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden.

**F. 1 Timothy 3:16 (LGV)** 16 And indisputably great is the Secret of God-likeness who was made to appear in flesh, was pronounced just in breath, was displayed to the messengers, (announced among the nations, was trusted upon in the world), [and] was taken up in glory.

### **G. Conclusions:**

1. The "Secret" concerning Christ was hidden since creation within the text of the Old Testament Scriptures (Rom. 16:25-26).
2. Neither the Jews nor the Greeks formerly understood the "Secret" of Christ, but it was revealed exclusively to the Apostles through the "Breath of Truth" (1 Cor. 2:4-16).
3. The "Secret" is called "*the hidden Wisdom*" who is then identified as "*the Lord of Glory*" who was crucified (1 Cor. 2:7-8). Jesus is called "*the Wisdom of God*" and "*the Power of God*" (1 Cor. 1:24).
4. The "Secret" is Christ Himself (Col. 2:2-3).
5. The "Secret" is of "God-likeness who was revealed in the flesh" (1 Tim. 3:16).

## **VI. Presuppositional errors of Biblical Unitarians:**

A. NT must be viewed through an obscure Jewish rabbinical tradition about two things:

1. “**Notional preexistence**” (things that merely preexisted in the mind of God but not in reality).

a. This idea is demonstrated, not from the Old Testament, but from extra-biblical Jewish literature, the very literature which Paul calls “*the wisdom of men*” in contrast to the “*wisdom of God in a mystery*” revealed to the Apostles alone.

b. It is alleged that the New Testament language of preexistence was intended to be viewed within this framework, and that the Apostles expected their readers to understand this “notional preexistence” when reading the preexistence language in their works.

c. This fails to account for the following:

1. The books that contain “preexistence” language were written primarily to Gentiles, except Hebrews.

2. The revelation knowledge about the “Secret of Christ” was not from Jewish sources, or based on Jewish rabbinical tradition, **but directly from the “Breath of Truth.”** Extra-biblical Jewish tradition is not from the “Breath of Truth” but from “blind guides.”

3. Scripture repeatedly states that the “secret/mystery” of Christ was hidden and not previously revealed to Israel.

d. The NT passages alleged to teach “notional preexistence” are all grossly misinterpreted due to

poor translations driven by Calvinistic ideas of “predestination” imposed on the text.<sup>1</sup>

2. **“Personification” of God’s attributes:**

a. The idea of “personification” (especially of God’s “Wisdom” in Prov. 8 & His “Word” in Gen. 1) fails to account for the “hidden” riddles and HOW God concealed His “Son” within the text of the Old Testament. Yet His Son is clearly revealed in plain and literal language progressively through the New Testament.

B. Summary of the approach of Biblical Unitarianism:

1. makes the Old Testament Scriptures (in which the secret was hidden) no secret at all.

2. turns the “*revelation of the Secret*” by the Spirit of Truth through the Apostles into a new “secret” that cannot be understood without the elaborate explanations offered by Biblical Unitarians.

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<sup>1</sup> See the following article for a good example: <https://www.4windsfellowships.net/articles/God/Foreknowledge.pdf>