

The Gospel of John - 1.e

¹⁴And the Logos became flesh and tabernacled among us, and we beheld His glory, *the* glory as of an only-begotten from *the* Father, full of grace and truth.

The Gospel of John sees Christ as the New and True Temple of God (Behr)

- ❖ *Beholding His glory* – evokes the ‘tent of meeting’ or the ‘tent of witness’ in which the glory of God dwelt.
- ❖ In Ezekiel’s vision of the restored Temple, God promised that ‘I will dwell in their midst forever’ (Ezek 43:9 & Zechariah 2:10). These words repeat God’s promise to dwell in the consecrated Tabernacle (Exod. 25:7 (8); 29:45) and are proclaimed by John as having been fulfilled in Christ, when the word became flesh. Jesus is now the dwelling place of God among His people, and so replaces the Tabernacle and the Temple. (John Behr, *John the Theologian and his Paschal Gospel*. Pg. 140)

Chrysostom: “What is this? ‘We beheld His glory, the glory as of an only-begotten from the Father.’ We could not have beheld it unless it had been shown to us, by means of a body reared and living together with us....

Chrysostom: “What then was the tabernacle in which He dwelt? Hear the Prophet say; I will raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen (Amos 9:11). It was fallen indeed, our nature had fallen an incurable fall, and needed only that mighty Hand. There was no possibility of raising it again, had not He who fashioned it at first stretched forth to it His Hand, and stamped it anew with His Image, by the regeneration of water and the Spirit.”

Chrysostom: “He inhabits this tabernacle forever, for He clothed Himself with our flesh, not as again to leave it, but always to have it with Him. Had not this been the case, He would not have deemed it worthy of the royal throne, nor would He while wearing it have been worshipped by all the host of heaven, angels, archangels, thrones, principalities, dominions, powers.”

But what means ‘glory as of an only-begotten from the Father’? Since many of the prophets also were glorified,...as Moses, Elias, Elisaiois,...and with them Daniel and the Three Children, and many others who showed forth wonders, and angels who appeared among men,...and even Cherubim...and Seraphim, the evangelist leads us away from all these, and creation, and the brightness of fellow slaves and sets us at the summit of good things—the Master Himself, the King Himself, the genuine only-begotten Son, the Lord of all Himself did we ‘behold the glory.’ For the expression ‘as’ does not here mean similarity, or comparison, but confirmation and unquestionable definition.” [Hom. 12, P.G. 59:66, 67 (cols. 81, 82).]

¹⁵John bears witness concerning Him, and has cried out, saying, “This One was *He* of Whom I said, ‘The *One* Who comes after me has come to be before me, for He was before me.’”

Chrysostom: “The phrase, ‘The *One* Who cometh after me,’ means, ‘the *One* Who preached after me,’ not ‘the *One* Who was born after me.’ And this is hinted at in Matthew, where it says, ‘The *One* Who comes after me...shall baptize you in *the* Holy Spirit and in fire [Mt. 3:11].’ ...What then

does it mean that he ‘has come to be before me’? He is more glorious, more honorable. It is as if he were saying, ‘Do not suppose that I am greater because I came preaching first.’...Now he is discoursing concerning honor.[Hom. 13, *P.G.* 59:75, 76 (col. 89).]

¹⁶And of His fullness we all received, and grace for (instead of, not upon) grace;

i.e. The Grace of the Temple is instead upon Christ, the true and eternal Temple

- ❖ “Christ is not simply a repetition of that which went before, but rather, ‘he brings a new and unexpected twist to the dwelling of God among his people. God makes himself accessible to people in an unprecedented form, a body’” (Fr. Behr, p. 140)

Saint Chrysostom: “There was a sanctification, and there is a Sanctification; there was a baptism, and there is a Baptism; there was a sacrifice, and there is a Sacrifice; there was a temple, and there is a Temple....And so too there was a grace, and there is a Grace. But the words in the first case are used as types, in the second as realities, preserving a sameness of sound, though not of sense.” [Hom. 14, *P.G.* 59:79 (cols. 92, 93).]

¹⁷for the law was given through Moses, but the grace and the truth came to be by Jesus Christ.

Christ is Grace and the Truth – a *Person*

Saint Chrysostom: “He points out the difference with the bare words: ‘grace and truth’ as opposed to ‘law’; and ‘came to be’ with ‘was given.’ Great is the difference between them. For on the one hand the words ‘was given’ belongs to something ministered, when one has received them from another, and given to whom he was commanded to give; but on the other hand, ‘the grace and the truth came to be’ is fitting for a king with authority forgiving all sins and himself furnishing the gift.” [Hom. 14, *P.G.* 59:82 (col. 95).]

Saint Leo: “Everything that belonged to the law, whether as to circumcision, or to the different offerings, or to the observance of the Sabbath, all gave testimony to Christ, and foretold the grace of Christ. And He is the end of the law [Rom. 10:4], not in that He brings it to nothing, but in that He fulfills it. And though He is the Author of both the New and the Old, He brought the mystical significance of the figures and promises to an end, in that He fulfilled the promises, and caused the prophecies to cease, since He Who had been foretold had now come. But in the moral order there was no change in the precepts of the old law; rather were many of them enlarged through the Gospel teaching, that they might be clearer and more perfect....” [“Sermon 63, The Fruits of the Passion,” V, in Toal, II:151; cf. Sermon 63, XII, *P.L.* 54 (col. 353).]

¹⁸No one has seen God at any time. The only-begotten Son, Who is in the bosom of the Father, that One declares *Him*.

Saint Chrysostom: “What of the manifestations in the Old Testament?...Esaias [Is. 6:1],...Ezekiel [Ez. 1 and 10],...Daniel [Dan. 7:9],...or Moses [Ex. 33:13(11)]?...Saint John declares that all these were instances of (His) condescension, not the vision of the bare essence.” [Hom. 15, *P.G.* 59:85 (col. 98).]

That each of you take in hand that section of the [Gospels](#) which is to be read among you on the first day of the week, or even on the [Sabbath](#), and before the day arrive, that he sit down at home and read it through, and often carefully consider its contents, and examine all its parts well, what is clear, what obscure, what seems to make for the adversaries, but does not really so; and when you have tried, in a word every point, so go to hear it read. For from [zeal](#) like this will be no small gain both to you and to us. We shall not need much labor to render clear the meaning of what is said, because your minds will be already made familiar with the sense of the words, and you will become keener and more clear-sighted not for hearing only, nor for learning, but also for the teaching of others. Since, in the way that now most of those who come hither hear, compelled to take in the meaning of all at once, both the words, and the remarks we make upon them, they will not, though we should go on doing this for a whole year, reap any great gain.