

GRACE GAZETTE

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Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.

Hebrews 12:12-13

THE MYSTERY

Now to him that is of power to establish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, But now is made manifest, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith: To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ forever. Amen.

Rom 16:25-27

A mystery is a secret waiting to be revealed. Once that mystery is exposed then it is no longer hidden from the eyes of those to whom it is revealed. Paul is here speaking of a mystery which was hidden since the world began. Yet now he says it has been made manifest or put in plain view. That mystery which he speaks of is none other than the gospel of JESUS CHRIST which is now revealed in the plain view of all who are given eyes to see it.

There is no nation, tribe, or tongue to which it has not been made known in order that the called out sons of GOD might be found walking in obedience to its precepts and magnifying the name of HIM who is worthy of all praise. The preaching of the gospel is for the establishment or edification of those who are the children of GOD. It is preached that they might believe it and in believing it that they might be built up in that most holy faith.

The faith of the old testament saints had the same source and foundation as that of those called after the new testament was made plain. Yet they could not see it as a mystery revealed but rather confessed that they looked for a city which had a foundation whose builder and maker was GOD, but yet died not having seen that city.

This is why the LORD said that even though John the Baptist was the greatest of all of the old testament prophets; yet the weakest of the new testament saints was greater than him. Those saints in the OT knew that CHRIST would come some day, but they died without knowing the details of HIS coming and the finality and completeness of HIS work.

John the Baptizer was privileged to see the beginning of the ministry of CHRIST and to behold HIM as the LAMB of GOD which taketh away the sin of the world. Yet John saw dimly and without certainty as to the scope and nature of HIS redemptive work, since he died before the LORD displayed the redemption of HIS people at Calvary, the empty tomb, and HIS ascension back to the right hand of the FATHER. He was not privileged to survey the finished work of CHRIST which even the most timid of GOD's saints in this Gospel age can.

We are certain of that which CHRIST came to perform as the REDEEMER of HIS people and entertain no notions of the establishment of an earthly kingdom of flesh and blood; (as even his disciples did right up until the time of HIS ascension.) (see Acts 1:6) The destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD was the death knell of all such notions and occupies a prominent place in HIS testimony to HIS disciples. (see Mat. chap 24)

The first time the LORD used the word "mystery" in the NT scriptures HE is referring to HIS kingdom, *"And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables."* (Mark 4:11) HIS kingdom is one which is not carnal but rather one which is established in SPIRIT and TRUTH. It cannot be discovered by men, *"And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation."* (Luke 17:20) It cannot be discerned or comprehended by any except those HE is pleased to reveal it too. *"But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory."* (1Cor 2:7)

All of the Jews were convinced that they were the elect people of GOD by virtue of their descent from Abraham. They considered that as such they were the rightful heirs to HIS kingdom. It pleased the LORD to set forth the nation of Israel as a type and foreshadow of the true Israel which has been the apple of HIS eye since before the foundation of the world. But now once in the end of the age it has pleased HIM to manifest the true Israel which was kept secret since the world began.

The Church of JESUS CHRIST for which HE shed HIS precious blood is that true Israel. *"And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God."* (Eph 3:9-10) This mystery which has now been revealed is *"That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel."* (Eph 3:6)

Yet there is indeed even yet a remnant of the elect among the descendants of their earthly father, Abraham. Lest we should be lifted up with pride or think that they are in some manner inferior to the Gentiles we are reminded, *"For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in."* (Rom 11:25) And so all of that true Israel shall be saved. *"Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all."* (Col 3:11) *"Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: That in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ."* (Eph 1:9-12)

Now this is indeed the revelation of that mystery; that the LORD would not only call HIS children to HIMSELF through the gospel but that HE would dwell with them. (see Ezek.37:21-28) *"Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God; Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."* (Col 1:25-27)

The ultimate manifestation of this mystery will yet be seen in the day of the resurrection when CHRIST comes to claim HIS purchased possession. *"Behold, I show you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."* (1Cor 15:50-53) Even so come LORD JESUS! mam