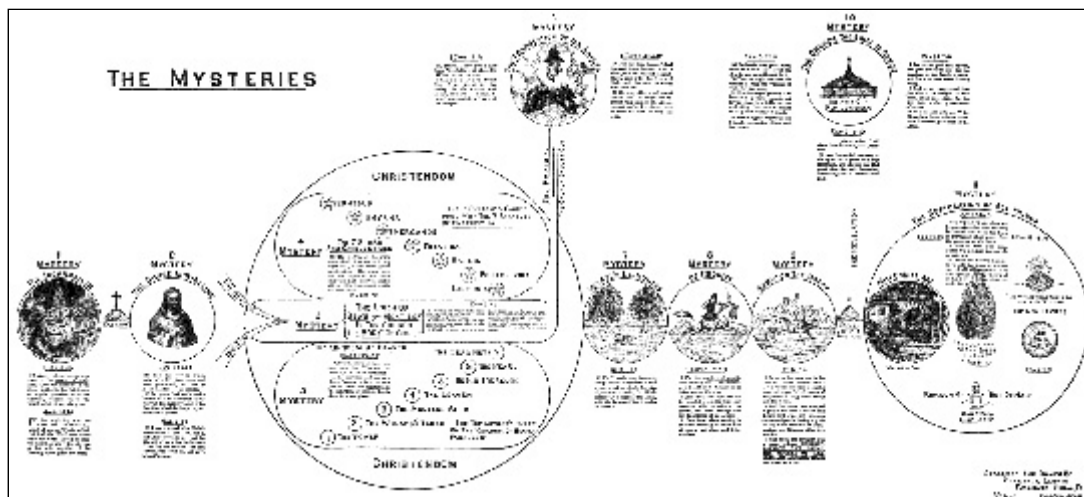




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Chapter 27. The Mysteries



Writing to the Corinthians Paul says-"Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the-'**Mysteries of God**'." 1 Cor. 4:1.

In [Rom. 16:25,26](#), Paul speaks of what he calls "My Gospel," which he calls the "Revelation of the Mystery," which was kept "Secret" since the world began, but now is made "manifest." It was the "revelation" that was promised to Paul at his conversion ([Acts 26:16-18](#)), and which comprises the "Mysteries of God."

The "Mysteries" are eleven in number, eight of which were revealed to Paul. Of the remaining three, one was revealed by Christ, and two were revealed to the Apostle John.

A "Mystery" in the New Testament sense is not something that cannot be understood, but is some plan or purpose of God that has been known to Him from the beginning, but which He has withheld from the knowledge of men until the time came for Him to reveal it. Let us examine these "Mysteries" in the order in which they are fulfilled.

I. The Mystery of the "Incarnation."

"Without controversy great is the

'Mystery of Godliness'

God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." [1 Tim. 3:16](#).

It is no mystery that God should reveal Himself by speaking from the Heavens, as on Mt. Sinai, but that He should take on the "Human Form" and "tabernacle" among us that was a great mystery. This He did in the person of Christ. [John 1:1-14](#). So Jesus could say, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." [John 14:9](#).

II. The Mystery of the "Divine Indwelling."

In [Col. 1:26-28](#), Paul speaks of another "Mystery" which had been hid from "Ages" and from "Generations," but was then made manifest to the saints. He calls it the Mystery of "**Christ in**

You." This is a great mystery because it is the mystery of the **"New Birth."** A mystery that brought from Nicodemus the exclamation-**"How** can a man be born when he is old?" [John 3:4](#). The New Birth is wonderful, but it is a wonderful fact. It is the union of the Divine Nature and ours. So that just as Jesus became one with us by His taking our human nature, so we become one with Him by taking on the Divine Nature. The mystery of this union is, that it is a union of "identity." We are just as much a part of Christ as the members of the body are a part of the body. [1 Cor. 12:12](#). It is for Christ to live in us. [Gal. 2:20](#).

III. The Mystery of the "Union of Jews and Gentiles in One Body Called the Church."

In his letter to the saints at Ephesus ([Eph. 3:1-11](#)), Paul says, that God by revelation made known to him the "Mystery," which in other Ages had not been made known unto the sons of men, "That the Gentiles should be 'Fellow Heirs,' and of the 'Same Body,' and partakers of His promise in Christ by the Gospel."

It is almost impossible to overestimate the bitter "Race Hatred" which existed in Christ's day between Jew and Gentile. It was a lofty "middle wall or partition" between them. The Jews looked upon the Gentiles as "dogs," and the Gentiles despised the Jews. It was worse than the caste spirit of India. It was therefore to them a revelation that, God was going in this Dispensation to take some Jews and some Gentiles and form of them a "New Body" called the Church. In Christ all race and class distinctions disappear, and it is only in the Church that such a "Holy Brotherhood" can be found as the world is seeking.

IV. The Mystery of the "Seven Stars" and the "Seven Candlesticks".

To the Apostle John was revealed the Mystery of the "Seven Stars," and the "Seven Candlesticks." [Rev. 1:12-20](#). He was told that the "Seven Stars" stood for the Angels or Messengers of the Seven Churches that were in Asia Minor, and the Seven Candlesticks stood for the Seven Churches themselves. The Mystery of these Candlesticks lay in the fact that the Seven Churches mentioned were representative Churches, whose history was typical of the history of the Christian Church for the past 1900 years, and the Mystery could not be understood until the present time, or until the correspondence between the character of those Churches and Church history should be revealed. For a full discussion of this see the Chapter on "The Seven Churches."

V. The Mystery of the "Kingdom of Heaven."

When the Jews rejected Christ, and thus prevented the setting up of the Kingdom, the Kingdom took on another form, the "Mystery Form." To show the character of this "Mystery Form" of the Kingdom, Jesus resorted to parables. These parables are 12 in number and are found in Matthew's Gospel only. For a full description of them see the Chapter on "The Kingdom," part two, "The Kingdom In Mystery."

VI. The Mystery of the "Translation of the Living Saints."

In [1 Cor. 15:51-55](#), Paul says-

"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."

This is the greatest of all mysteries, because it reveals something that reason never dreamed of. According to reason the common lot of man is to die, but to be taken off this earth and translated to heaven without dying was never thought of until revealed to Paul. For a full description of this Mystery see the Chapter on "The Church."

VII. The Mystery of "Israel's Blindness."

Writing to the Romans ([Rom. 11:25](#)) Paul says-

"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 'Fulness of the Gentiles' be come in."

This is not so much spiritual blindness as **Judicial** blindness caused by their rejection of Christ. This blindness is national and not individual, for we must not forget that the bulk of believers in the Apostles' day were Jews, and quite a few Jews have embraced Christianity since. The revelation of this Mystery to Paul was to account for what otherwise would remain a Mystery, the survival of the Jewish people as a race while scattered among the nations. See the Chapter on "The Jews."

VIII. The Mystery of "Iniquity."

In [2 Thess. 2:1-12](#), Paul, speaking of the "Man of Sin" or Antichrist, calls his teaching and claims the

"Mystery of Iniquity,"

which was already at work in Paul's day. The "Mystery of Godliness" is **God** manifest in the **flesh**, and the "Mystery of Iniquity" is **Satan** manifest in the **flesh**. This Mystery is fully explained in the Chapter on "The Antichrist."

IX. The Mystery of "Babylon the Great."

This Mystery is revealed in the seventeenth chapter of the Book of Revelation and is fully described in the Chapter on "Babylon the Great."

X. The Mystery of the Church As the "Bride of Christ."

This was revealed to Paul, and is disclosed in [Eph. 5:22-33](#), under the figure of the relation of man and wife. "This is a 'Great Mystery'; but I speak concerning Christ and the Church." The first Adam had a bride, Eve; and the second, or Last Adam must have a Bride, the Church. This is a "Great Mystery" because it explains why there should be a "Parenthetical Dispensation" between the First and Second Comings of Christ, in which, by grace, a chosen people should be "called out" to form the Church, the Bride of Christ. This is fully described in the Chapter on "The Church."

XI. The Mystery of the "Restoration of All Things."

This is spoken of by Paul in his letter to the Ephesians ([Eph. 1:9-10](#)), as the

"Mystery of His Will,"

and reveals how that in the "Dispensation of the Fulness of Times," it is God's purpose to undo all that sin has done, and restore "All Things" as they were before the "Rebellion of Satan" and the "Fall of Man." How this is to be done is described in the Chapter on the "Renovation of the Earth."

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