

The Mystery of The Gospel

What is this 'mystery' we find mentioned in the New Testament? The Apostle Paul said that he spoke in such a way that only by God's Holy Spirit will the elect Christians understand, while most will not comprehend. 1 Corinthians 2:7, 9–10. 'No, the wisdom we speak of is the mystery of God--his plan that was **previously hidden**, even though he **made it for our ultimate glory** before the world began....However, as it is written: "What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived" -- the things God has prepared for those who love him--these are the things God has **revealed to us by his Spirit**. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God.' NIV. His words would mean nothing to the unconverted, especially as the information is scattered - here a little, there a little.

Paul also spoke of this in Ephesians 5:31–32, "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be **united** to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." This is a profound **mystery**--but I am talking about **Christ and the church**.' NIV. We will learn that his words have a physical and spiritual meaning, even as they did when first used by God in Genesis 2:24, 'That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh.' The mystery lies in their spiritual meaning which God has kept hidden until Paul explained. Ephesians 3:9, 'and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things.'

It is then, hardly surprising that most of Christianity is in the dark about this 'mystery' Jesus said concerns the Kingdom of God, Mark 4:11, '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:' It will be understood by those who truly love Him. 1 Corinthians 2:9, 'But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared **for them that love him**.'

Colossians 2:2 brings a little more, 'That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ;' The mystery concerns God *and* the Father *and* Christ. Is God to be more than the Father and Christ?

We need to know that God has planned that those Christians who qualify, will be resurrected in the *first* resurrection, the 'better resurrection', Hebrews 13:35, 'Women received back their dead by resurrection; and others were tortured, not accepting their release, so that they might obtain a **better resurrection**'.

On that resurrection, they will be carried by angels to the Sea of Glass we read of in Ezekiel 1:16–28, and thence to heaven, where they take part in their marriage to Jesus Christ before his Father's Throne, Revelation 19:5,7, and 14:1–3. 'And a voice came from the throne, saying, "Give praise to our God, all you His bond-servants, you who fear Him, the small and the great." "Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for **the marriage of the Lamb has come** and His bride has **made herself ready**."

'Then I looked, and behold, the Lamb was standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His name and **the name of His Father** written on their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, like the sound of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder, and the voice which I heard was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps. And they sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders; and no one could learn the song except the one hundred and forty-four thousand who had been purchased **from the earth.**'

Here we see that the Bride of Christ is now entitled to the Father's Name, having married His Son. She made herself ready by overcoming her human nature, continuing to repent and be forgiven through Christ when she does sin, and dedicating her life to doing God's will. Like her husband to be, she shared the same goal as His Father in heaven – the establishment of His Kingdom and will, here on the earth, Matthew 6:9–10, **"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven."**

She had become 'one' with her husband to be, Colossians 1:27, **'To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.'** NIV. It was only on the loss of my own wife, when I experienced grief which *almost* overwhelmed me that I began to fully comprehend the depths of this subject. Only now has medical science caught up with this 'broken heart syndrome', where the loss of a partner in a couple who has become 'one' over many years *can* result in *death* by the remaining partner giving in to overwhelming grief. This, then, is the depth of that 'oneness' that a true marriage can achieve, and which pictures the 'oneness' between Jesus Christ and His Bride.

But it is more than just Christ and His Bride, because *Christ* is 'one' with His Father, also. John 10:30, **"I and my Father are one."** So, it is about God, and what God *is to become*. Ephesians 3:19, **'and to know this love that surpasses knowledge--that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.'** NIV. Thus the Bride of Christ will also become one with the Father, sharing at least some of His power and glory, 1 John 3:2, **'Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.'** As Christ is the image of his Father, so shall we also be like Him, Revelation 1:13, **'and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around his chest. The hairs of his head were white, like white wool, like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire.'** God will have become a family, but so unified that they will be as "one", spiritually indivisible.

Nevertheless, it is clear that God the Father will always be the Head of the Family. Jesus always obeys Him, even as His Bride is *now* proving that she will **always** honour and *obey* Christ. God cannot afford to take chances in giving anyone eternal life, and especially those who will share membership in His family, with divine powers! The example of rebellious Satan ensures that!

We must remember that there are two resurrections, and most who claim to be Christians fail to obey, fail to understand that the word 'love' is Biblically defined by the Ten Commandments, and so will be in the second resurrection, John 15:10, **'When you obey my commandments, you remain in my love, just as I obey my**

Father's commandments and remain in his love.' NLT. Ephesians 5:23, 'For a husband is the head of his wife as Christ is the head of the church. He is the Savior of his body, the church.'NLT.

What an awesome future lies ahead for the *faithful* Christian! No one else will *ever* gain such close relationships with Christ and His Father! However, the pattern and example of Jesus Christ reveals to us that after His resurrection He could still appear as a normal man, recognisable to His disciples, John 21:13-14, Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." Now none of the disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?" **They knew it was the Lord.** Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and so with the fish. This was now the third time that Jesus was revealed to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.'

Similarly, and thankfully, when we are raised from the dead we will recognise each other, and what a joyful occasion that will be! I personally believe that it will only be after our marriage into God's Family that we will be given the ability to appear in a glorified state. I think we can be glad of that so that we are not too traumatised when we arise from the grave!

Our future role in God's Kingdom is explained in Revelation 3:12, "He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will not go out from it anymore; and I will write on him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God, and My new name.' NAS. We will be faithful, reliable, permanent supports of our Father and Jesus Christ for all eternity, our positions never to be taken away. It is clear that it does not refer to a literal 'temple' here (Which as we saw in a previous article can mean 'sanctuary') because there is no temple in the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:22), so we can expect to be used wherever in the universe God's expanding family is to be found. The Mystery continues!

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