

YOU ARE COMPLETE in HIM.

COLLOSSIANS 2:10 NKJV

A new creation focus through Colossians ...

The Hidden Mystery

People are interested in secrets. One of the pulls of the forces of darkness is the supposed revealing of information forbidden to man, which is called *divination*. But God is pretty emphatic: "The secret things belong to the Lord our God," Moses informed the generation of Israel on the doorstep of the Promised Land, "but the things revealed belong to us and to our sons forever" (Deuteronomy 29:29). Hence, the children of Israel were not to consort with those who practiced divination, the sorcerers, the interpreters of omens, the mediums, or those who claimed to call up the dead. But God,

in Old Testament times, had some things hidden, but later to be revealed to the children of the New Covenant. "Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, and which have not entered the heart of man," Paul quotes from the prophet Isaiah, "all that God has prepared for those who love Him" (1 Corinthians 2:9) — refers to the things hidden in the Old Testament but revealed by the apostles in the completed word of God, inspired by the Spirit of God. "For to us," emphasized the apostle to the Gentiles, "God revealed them through the Spirit" (1 Corinthians 2:10).

- **Hidden from past ages and generations** — The apostle Paul noted that he had a stewardship to fully carry out the preaching of the word of God, a stewardship "for your benefit." This stewardship focused on "the mystery, which has been hidden from past ages and generations; but now has been manifested to His saints" (Colossians 1:26). Jesus' crucifixion, for example, was prophesied in the Old Testament, but the Jews did not connect those prophesies with the Messiah; it took that which was revealed to the holy apostles and new covenant prophets to bring that understanding to the fore. In the same way, what the apostle calls *the mystery* was hidden in the old covenant writings but brought into view under the terms of the new will of Christ.

- **The mystery** — There are number of mysteries — secrets — in the New Testament. But in his writings here, the apostle breaks this one out as *the mystery*, a "stand alone" as contrasted to mysteries that have to be directly connected to their context. So the apostle, speaking in context of the mystery being manifested to the saints, adds, "to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Colossians 1:27). *The mystery* is: Christ in you! Writing to the church at Rome, the same apostle spoke of "His Spirit who indwells you." This "Spirit of God" who "dwells in you" is also called "the Spirit of Christ" and "Christ in you" (Romans 8:9-11). The mystery — Christ in you — is the indwelling Holy Spirit.

The promise of the indwelling Spirit was openly prophesied to Israel, as was stated in Ezekiel's prophecy: "And I will put My Spirit within you," said the Lord God Almighty, "and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances" (Ezekiel 36:27). But what was hidden from the past ages and generations was that "God willed to make known to the Gentiles" the riches of the glory of the mystery.

Even at the beginning of the church as recorded in the second chapter of Acts, the mystery was still hidden. "For the promise," said Peter in the lead message, concerning the indwelling Spirit granted at a person's immersion in Jesus' name, "is for you and your children." But he did not stop there: "and," he added, "for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself" (Acts 2:39). The inspired gospel preaching, not yet understood by the apostle who preached it, anticipated the indwelling Spirit for the Gentiles. But it would take another ten to thirteen years before the gospel would go to the Gentiles, that they would be able to be indwelt by the very Spirit of God.

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