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COLOSSIANS 2:10, NOV

A new creation focus through Colossians ...

How the Mystery was Hidden

"Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" exclaimed the apostle Paul to the Roman brethren. "How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!" (Romans 11:33). The Father, in His infinite wisdom and knowledge, decided to hide what He calls "the mystery" in the pages of the Old Testament writings, but to reveal it to the new covenant saints. The particular focus of this mystery is that Holy Spirit would indwell those Gentiles who would obey the gospel of Christ. The Jewish people, had they been good scholars of the

Old Testament, would have anticipated that God would put His Spirit within them during the time frame the prophets called "the last days." But that the Spirit would indwell faithful Gentiles would have been beyond their comprehension.

- ◆ **Promise to the patriarchs** — God gave the same promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, though He worded it slightly differently. "In your seed," was one of the All Wise's statements to Abraham, "all the nations of the earth shall be blessed" (Genesis 22:18). Someone, called "the seed of Abraham," was coming, through which all the Gentile peoples of the world would potentially be blessed. On the surface, this promise would seem to point to Jesus, "the son of David, the son of Abraham," as the genealogy of the Christ begins as recorded by Matthew. But Christ in the flesh did not, except for one brief get-away, go to the Gentiles; He said, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matthew 15:24). So it was not "Christ in the flesh" who would bless all the nations, it is "Christ in the Spirit" who is this blessing promised to Abraham. The *mystery*—the indwelling Spirit to the Gentiles — was hidden here at the foundational promise to Abraham, but revealed later through apostles such as Paul.

- ◆ **Living water** — The Lord Himself unlocked the key to understanding many of the hidden references to the mystery in the Old Testament writings. Speaking to the multitudes gathered for the fall Feast of Booths, Jesus stated: "If any man is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.' " (John 7:37,38). The apostle John, inspired by the Spirit Himself, pointed out that "living water" is a reference to the indwelling Spirit who would first come to those "born again" as recorded in Acts chapter two, then extended to the Gentiles as recorded in Acts chapter 10. The river of living water, then, of Ezekiel chapter 47 is a prophecy of the Holy Spirit flowing from Christians and bringing the dead world around them to life. The indwelling Spirit is the river pictured as flowing out of Jerusalem, half to the east and half to the west (Zechariah 14:8). He is the "waters" of Isaiah 55:1,2; the One making the desert bloom in Isaiah 35; and so many more references spicing the entire Old Testament.

"For My own sake, for My own sake, I will act," said the Lord Jesus through the prophet Isaiah. "For how can my name be profaned? And My glory I will not give to another" (Isaiah 48:11). "Who has announced this from of old? Who has long since declared it?" He queried. "Is it not I, the Lord? And there is no other God besides Me, and righteous God and a Savior; there is none except Me. Turn to Me, and be saved, *all the ends of the earth*; for I am God, and there is no other" (Isaiah 45:21:22). "Come near to Me," said Jesus the Savior, "listen to Me. From the first I have not spoken in secret, from the time it took place I was there. And now the Lord God has sent Me, *and His Spirit*" (Isaiah 48:16). But mystery is now revealed; Gentiles have come into the body of Christ, and all Christians have been given God's glory through the Spirit. "You are blessed," said the apostle Peter, "because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you" (1 Peter 4:14).

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God has sent Me,
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(Isaiah 48:16).*