

No.
52

***"IF YE THEN BE RISEN WITH CHRIST, SEEK THOSE THINGS WHICH
ARE ABOVE, WHERE CHRIST SITTETH ON THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD."***
COL.3.1

THE MYSTERY.

***An Address (revised) in
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***by
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THE MYSTERY

PERCY W. HEWARD

At the outset we need to omit the word "the" and to ask ourselves, What is a mystery? The word "mysterion" comes in the later Scriptures twenty-seven times, of which twenty-four refer to good mysteries. Twenty-one times is the word used in the singular. Three of the occurrences are in the Gospels, and six in the epistle to the Ephesians, which is the epistle to which most believers would turn when asked to explain "the mystery." It will be noticed that all these numbers are multiples of three,— "three" being suggestive of the work of our Triune God, but by usage ALONE we cannot easily understand the word. We need also derivation, but usage, and derivation are alike of little worth unless we are within the leading of the Holy Spirit. Derivation bears an interesting testimony, and general usage among the Greeks also. The word comes from a root that implies a certain "closing up", a certain "hidden revelation" belonging only to the initiated, and among the Greeks there were religious mysteries, which one may describe as codes of instruction for those who were members of secret societies, associated with the worship of various demons. God often takes up words which are commonly employed and gives them a new meaning. The Greek "Ecclesia" was the town assembly of free men, and God takes the word out of this context, yet alluding to it, and speaks of HIS Ecclesia, free men of the heavenly city. The "Apostolos" was often a naval delegate, and the Lord Jesus thus describes HIS apostles, who were to go from land to land in their service unto the Lord. Thus, beloved friends, the word "mystery" is taken out from its demon association (even like the word "interpretation" which in Greek really refers to Hermes), and applied to that revelation of the Lord and the Lord's will which we find in connection with the wondrous unveiling of grace during the present dispensation. There are several "mysteries" mentioned in Scripture, but we are apt, in using the word, to think only of "THE mystery," in one relationship.

Furthermore, some of the passages that refer to

"the mystery" seem to give various aspects in connection with that mystery. Mention may be made of the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, or of the Kingdom of God, in Matthew 13:11 and parallel passages in Mark and Luke. The mystery concerning Israel in Romans 11:25 is closely related to the mystery to be considered afterwards. 1 Corinthians 4:1 speaks of a stewardship of the mysteries of God. Chapter 15:51 of the same epistle,— "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." 2 Thessalonians 2:7 reminds us of Satan's counterfeit. "The mystery of the lawlessness is already inworking." "The mystery of the faith," and "The mystery of godliness" in 1 Timothy 3, verses 9-16, seem to contain certain references to the use of the word in Ephesians, but also certain contrasts. Revelation 1 brings before us the mystery of the lampstands and stars. Revelation 17 mentions the woman whose name is "Mystery, Babylon," plainly a parallel passage with 2 Thessalonians 2:7, where the mystery of "the lawlessness" (Feminine) leads up to "the lawless one" (masculine). We find both the feminine and the masculine in Revelation 17, though the masculine aspect, "the lawless one," leads beyond the feminine, right on to the Coming of the Lord, against Whom Antichrist will personally engage in wicked conflict. Now, all these mysteries are interesting, and it may be pointed out that some of the passages will emphasize the meaning, even though we cannot particularly study them in this paper. Take, for example, the words of Romans 11,— "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." Here the thought is that a mystery is something of which one will naturally be ignorant unless there is a special unfolding, and a special instruction. Take, too, the passage of 2 Thessalonians 2,— "The mystery of the lawlessness doth IN-work." The thought is of something secret, something hidden, something that is not shown to everyone, and is not known by everyone. Indeed the FIRST usage of the word, which is so often decisive, bears this testimony, for in Matthew 13, we read, "To you it is GIVEN to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven." —but to others it was not given. And the Lord goes on to say "Their eyes they have closed." "Blessed are your eyes, for they see." "Their ears are dull of hearing." "Blessed are your ears, for they hear." Thus we have the thought that a

mystery is something which is given us to know. 1 Corinthians 2 with Revelation 2 may help us in this connection. In 1 Corinthians 2 we have "the deep things of God." In Revelation 2 "the deep things of Satan." 1 Corinthians 2 says "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither did come up on to the heart of man the things which God made ready for those that love Him." These did not come up, but God in mercy brought them down, God uncovered them to us through His Spirit. So we see a mystery is something unveiled through the Spirit to special persons, that which is not known in general, and just as we find the Gospel is unpalatable, and that which is palatable is not the Gospel, so the mystery is unknown by man naturally, and that which is known is not the mystery. Here we have something, which, though you may explain it in words, will ever remain "mysterious" to the ungodly, but to the believer is that which he appreciates, and feels in measure, though longing in God's mercy to appreciate and feel it more. To Him the thought of mystery is not something mysterious, but something REVEALED TO BE KNOWN. As our English word misleads today, a definite stress must be laid upon this thought.

But WHAT is the mystery? For in the present time many of God's dear people know nothing about the mystery, as they might be expected to know. Experimentally they may have some knowledge of their Lord, and what identification means, but a true, clear, mental, yet withal spiritual, apprehension of the mystery seems quite neglected by some who bear the name of the Lord; whereas others, it may be almost said, speak of other parts of truth too little, and, by lack of spiritual balance, they misuse truth, and indeed fail to understand that of which they speak most. Shall we therefore turn to two or three passages, that we may seek to see by the leading of THE HOLY SPIRIT what is the teaching of GOD, as to the mystery? In 1 Corinthians 2:7 the apostle says, "We speak God's wisdom in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages (protonton aionion) with a view to our glory, WHICH NOT ONE OF THE RULERS OF THIS AGE KNEW." Here we have the Divine statement very briefly. In passing it may be pointed out that in verse 1 the reading, "to marturion" is probably correct not "to musterion"; this first verse is not counted in the number of verses that contain the word for the apostle, when he went to Corinth at the first, did not go declaring the mystery, but went declaring the witness of God to the unsaved. He determined to know nothing among them "save

Jesus Christ and Him crucified." "We speak wisdom among them that are PERFECT, the wisdom of God in a mystery" is contrasted with the witness that was preached at the first. Returning to the later verse, notice the words that the Holy Spirit links together, "wisdom," "mystery," "hidden," "before the ages," "unto our glory." Now shall we find these words anywhere else? Turn, to Ephesians 1:8, 9,— "Wherewith He abounded unto us in all WISDOM, and prudence, having made known to us the MYSTERY of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Him." The word "Purpose" (proetheto) contains the word "before" which occurs in "before the ages." That we should be to the praise of His GLORY" is the added testimony of verse 12, and we know how the context goes on to contrast US with this age, just as the princes of this age are set on one side in 1 Corinthians 2. Come to the third chapter of Ephesians: "With reference to the grace linked with this, I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus on account of you, the nations, if ye heard of the stewardship of the grace of God which was given to me with a view to you, that according to a revelation, (an unveiling) He made known to me, ("Made known," again) the mystery, (THE MYSTERY, without any further explanation), according as I fore-wrote in brief, turning to which, you are able (if you keep on reading) to have known my comprehension in the mystery of THE Christ; which mystery in distinct generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it was now unveiled to His holy apostles and prophets in Spirit." (verses 1 to 5) Then we read in verse 6, "The Gentiles to be fellowheirs." In other words, to know that the Gentiles are fellowheirs, or heirs together," and "bodied together and partakers together of the promise in Christ through the Gospel." "THE promise,"—mark this word. As to the promise, it may be noticed how this is mentioned in Ephesians. We read of "The Holy Spirit of promise" in the 1st chapter, where the rendering should be the "Spirit of THE promise." And in Ephesians 2 "Strangers from the covenants of THE Promise," so here it is the promise through the Gospel. The important point is that through the Gospel the Gentiles are heirs together, as Hebrews 11 shows. They shared the promise. "Of which I became a servant according to the gift of the grace of God, that was given to me, according to the inworking of His power, who am less than the least of all holy ones was there given this grace," (now mark) "to the nations to preach the Gospel of the untrackable riches of Christ, (or of THE Christ), and to enlighten, (not

only to preach the Gospel, but to give light on) what is the stewardship linked with the mystery that hath been hidden from the ages," (somewhat as in Corinthians "before the ages"), in God Who created all things, in order that there might be made known, (just as in Corinthians) "Now to the principalities and to the authorities in the heavenlies, through the called-out church, the manifold wisdom of God, according to a purpose of the ages," (or it may be "A placing before the ages" if we take the "pro" with the "ton aionion" "which He made in Christ Jesus our Lord." (verses 7 to 11). The wording is very similar to Colossians 1. The apostle says, in verse 23, "If ye remain in the faith, having been founded and steadfast, and not being removed away from the hope of the Gospel which ye heard, which was heralded in all the creation under the heaven—of which (Gospel), I, Paul, became a servant; now I rejoice in my sufferings on behalf of you, and I fill up correspondingly the things that are lacking, of the tribulations that belong to the Christ in my flesh, on behalf of His body which is the called-out church, of which (church) I became a minister," a servant (verses 24, 25).

If the Lord will to be continued.



THE MYSTERY

(Continued)

Foreword

The following article is based upon an address given by the late Percy W. Heward in London on September 19, 1913, and is being printed by request. In order to its being more fully understood, some editing has been necessary. References have been inserted, and some paragraphs rearranged. It will be noted that quotations from Scripture may sound unfamiliar. This is because the speaker was translating literally from the Greek New Testament.

Ed.

It will be clearly marked in 1 Corinthians 2, that the chapter begins with witnessing of God to the unsaved (verse 1), that is, the Gospel (verse 2), and then goes on to speak of "the mystery" among those who were believers and able to appreciate it. In Ephesians 3, the apostle distinctly declares that he was entrusted with two things, namely, with the declaration of the Gospel (verse 8), and also to enlighten others as to what is the stewardship of "the mystery." The Gospel first (verse 8) and thus parallel with first Corinthians. In Colossians 1:23-27 and 2:1-3, still more strikingly, he declares first, "I became a minister" of the Gospel. Secondly "I became a minister"—of the church, for he writes, of which I became a minister according to the stewardship of God that was given me, with a view to you, to have filled the Word of God." The mystery that hath been hidden" (same words), "away from the Ages" (same words), and in verse 26, we read, "Which in other ages was not made manifest, but now was manifested to His saints; (the word suggests a light, blazing forth) to whom God willed to have made known what the riches of the GLORY (Glory always suggests a light,—see also Corinthians 2:7,8) of this mystery among the Gentiles,—which is Christ in you, the hope of the glory, Whom we keep on announcing, warning every man, and teaching every man, in all wisdom, that we may have made to stand every man perfect in Christ Jesus, with a view to which also I am toiling, (agonising), according to His inworking which keep-

eth on inworking in me in power. For I wish you to know what agony, (great conflict), I have concerning you, and those in Laodicea, and as many as have not seen my face in the flesh, that their hearts may have been called alongside and comforted, having been knit together in love, and with a view to all riches of the full bearing along of the comprehension, with a view to a grounded knowledge of the mystery of God, IN WHOM are all the treasures of the wisdom and the knowledge HIDDEN AWAY. Gentiles, be it noticed, are before us in every case. It is remarkable that, in 1 Corinthians 2 the Jews are put on one side, very definitely, as Jews; "THE RULERS OF THIS AGE," is a description that includes the Pharisees particularly.

There is, then, a clear statement, in all the passages, not only that (a) believers today have something which is contrasted with what the world knows, in the present; but (b) contrasted with what believers knew in the past. There is thus the double contrast. Probably, no reader has the slightest difficulty as to (a), namely that is a contrast with what men of the world know in the present time. But, as to what the people of God knew in times past, we read strikingly in Ephesians 3:9, that "the mystery" had been hidden, and God has revealed it unto us, (saints of the present dispensation) by His Spirit. The words "hidden in God," are very similar to those in Colossians 2:3. "The knowledge of the mystery of God," (Possibly we should say of Christ. Who is God, or of the Christ of God)—"In Whom (at once are the added words) are (in the present time) all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden away." The phrase, "hidden in God" brings before us in the one case, the treasures hidden, but in the other case, the mystery hidden in olden times, a striking difference as to the present. What is hiding? Let Colossians 3 a very similar passage, answer—"If ye be raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is on the right hand of God seated. The things that are above, mind ye, not the things on the earth, for ye died away, and your life hath been hidden with Christ in God." Of old it was "the mystery" hidden in God, but now "YOUR LIFE has been hidden with Christ in God," and this gives us a wonderful part of the key to "the mystery;" surely, we need to bring Colossians 3 more into consideration. Of old there was the mystery hidden in God. Now those words "in God" are very striking, but, in the present time, it is "your life is hid WITH CHRIST in God". Not merely the mystery, but your life—Your life with Christ. That difficult reading in chapter 2 where

we see Christ and God linked together, and the treasures hidden IN Christ and thus hidden in God, will afford a very striking parallel.

May it not be that "the mystery" contains something of the teaching that John 17 brings before us? "That they may be one, as Thou, Father, art in Me and I in Thee." We realise the force of this in the three-fold "sun" of Ephesians 3:6—"sun" with the word "kleronomos" (heirs together)—"sun" with the word "soma" (bodied together); "sun" with the word "metochos" (partakers together). A threefold stress on the word "sun." These two prepositions of "the mystery" are "en" and "sun,"—"in" and "together with." "Christ IN you, the hope of the glory," means not only in you individually, but in you collectively, and your life hid with Christ in God. Now the marvellous fact is that poor Gentile sinners," called uncircumcision by that which is called circumcision in the flesh, made by hands," should be brought into this wondrous union. It would not seem so remarkable, having the earlier Scriptures in our hands, to find the Jews receiving wonderful privileges, but that poor Gentile sinners should be thus entwined with such, and that Jew and Gentile in Christ should be brought into the very presence of God; that they should be represented in the glory; that, the veil being rent, they should be those who have a share in the Most Holy Place. This is indeed marvellous. The mystery," therefore, is one of union with Christ, and, consequently, with one another. The Apostle says in another passage, "This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church." May it be said reverently, that we cannot understand the mystery without the wonderful thought of the Lord's people being so closely entwined with their Lord? It is wonderful that God should arrange this. We have done nothing to deserve it. The apostle may well say "a great mystery," but this mystery is a fact, like "the mystery of godliness," which is called "great" (1 Tim. 3:16), and must therefore be approached with "godly reverence" as the word implies. Yes, this mystery, though great, is real; "Christ and the Church" says Ephesians 5:32, that is, inseparable, with common interests. All His perfectness and all His merits made available for His own. This is the promise. By nature we, as sinners of the Gentiles had nothing to do with the promise. To Israel were made known the covenants of the promise. Not only one covenant. More than one covenant is found in the earlier scriptures connected with the promise. The promise has heavenly blessings, and earthly blessings alike, and they are hinted in the

earlier part of Scripture, but they are, in measure, hidden there. Mark the clear statement of Romans 3, dealing with a somewhat similar subject. The apostle, speaking of righteousness, says, "But NOW the righteousness of God, without the law, has been manifested" as much as to say it was not manifested before, but he adds, "BEING witnessed by the law and the prophets." As soon as it is manifested, the law and the prophets bear their twofold corroboratory witness. They contain nothing contradictory. So with this mystery.

Romans 16:25 brings before us the striking statement, "But to Him That has power to have established you according to my Gospel, and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, (that is the first thing) according to the unveiling of the mystery" (that is the second thing). "The mystery" is always second. The Gospel is first; the mystery next. Just as in Acts 2, they first believed, and then were baptised; the next thing was the receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit, and there is not much doubt but that the teaching of "the mystery," and the experience of being in the One Body, when the Lord arranged this on the Day of Pentecost, were very closely related. Returning to Romans 16, "According to the unveiling of the mystery, having been silenced in times of the ages, (just the same words,— "silenced" is similar to "hidden") but now made manifest, (the shining forth word,) and through prophetic Scriptures having been made known." It will be noticed that, just as the apostle in Romans 3 says, "It has been manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets," he adds at once here, having spoken of this being manifested, "AND through prophetic Scriptures having been made known." Does this only refer to New Testament prophets? The writer thinks not. The apostle in 1 Corinthians 2, when speaking of the mystery, refers back to the earlier part of Scripture. What does it say in Isaiah 64? "For since the beginning of the world, men have not heard, not perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside Thee, what He hath prepared for him that waiteth for Him." Now mark the next verse, which if we mistake not, speaks of "the mystery." Let us not be afraid to find, *in the light of the New Testament Scripture*, "the mystery" in the Old Testament Scriptures. It is "silenced" there; the Holy Spirit says so, but it is not absent therefrom. "Thou meetest Him That rejoiceth and worketh righteousness, (that is Christ), THOSE that remember Thee in Thy ways" (verse 5). How are we to account for the change from the singular to the plural? Only in the light of "the mystery" can we understand it, for here is the link of the redeemed

with their Lord, inseparable, that He breaks down mere ordinary grammar. "Thou meetest HIM" is at once changed to the plural, "THE ONES that remember Thee in Thy ways." Not that they work righteousness to secure a righteousness of their own. The ONE Who works righteousness is seen here first. Then follow, "those that remember Thee." They are joined with Him in His perfectness, although as verse 6 adds, "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." Thus we have brought before us an indication of "the mystery" in the VERY passage to which the Holy Spirit alludes in that chapter (1 Cor. 2.) Doubtless other passages could be multiplied. Only one more will be quoted,—"HE shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation; this is the GENERATION of THOSE that enquire for Him, that seek Thy face O Jacob" Psalm 24: 5,6). Hence we are told, "a SEED shall serve Him, it shall be accounted to the Lord for a GENERATION" (Psalm 22:30). How are we to understand the grammatical sequence in verses 5 and 6 of Psalm 24? "The mystery" is the key; the Lord Jesus is the One spoken of as the Perfectly Righteous Servant of the earlier verses of this passage. Just as in Isaiah 64 we have righteousness first, and *then* the mystery, so is it in Psalm 24, so is it in the Epistle to the Romans, so it is in 1 Corinthians 2; there is the stress on the Gospel first, and "the mystery" next. The work of the Lord Jesus Christ in fully meeting all the demands of law, the work of the Lord Jesus Christ in His life, death, and resurrection are clearly brought before us in Scripture in their wonderful sequence. He lived, causing a righteousness. He died, that He might bear the sin of many, and that all His work might be available for His blood-bought people, but in resurrection they are united with Him, and that is "the mystery." There is no union with Christ the other side of the grave. We are joined to Him on resurrection ground, and that is "the mystery," association with Him there.

Before Christ died, all His perfectness could not be viewed as made ours, though His promise was equal, in one sense, to the performance. But the Corn of wheat had not fallen into the ground and died, so could not bring forth fruit, but when He died, He in resurrection brought forth much fruit (John 12:24). His people are the fruit. Here is "the mystery." Our life is with Him. Our union is with Him. This, we can now see, is hinted in the earlier Scriptures, for we read of the promise; but how amazing that the Gentiles should have a share in the promise! Oh how wonderful it is! If the Lord will, to be continued.



THE MYSTERY

(concluded)

"But," you will perhaps say, "Why should we look back to the earlier Scriptures at all? Is not this only to be found in the writings of Paul?" The writer, thinks not, for the statement in Romans 16:25, 26 is "Which hath been SILENCED . . . in the Scriptures;" this would imply it was there, but kept under, if one may so express it. In Ephesians 3 we have a similar thought, for the apostle says "Which in distinct generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it is now unveiled to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit." Mark all that is said here, "It was not made known to the sons of men." It is now revealed to His holy apostles and prophets." Not only to God's servant Paul; observe the plural. But who are the apostles and prophets in Ephesians? Chapter 2:20 says, the foundation is of apostles and prophets; but of what building? It is an holy temple in the Lord, a habitation of God through the Spirit. Searching through this Epistle it will be found that the thought of the Most Holy Place, God's Dwelling Place, is made parallel with the idea of the body, and the Church, and the unity of saints. Different aspects and figures are brought together to bring out something of the fulness and the blessedness of those who are so wondrously joined to their Lord, that they are made a habitation of God in Spirit. Now mark another contrast, "It was not made known AS it was now unveiled." The "AS" is suggestive. In the earlier Scriptures, there were promises; they were veiled, but they were there. But they were not made known AS they are now unveiled. Thus we see not only is there something fresh in the later Scriptures, but there is a removing of the veil from off that which is expressed in a dark enigma in the earlier Scriptures. There are certain passages, for example, the Song of Solomon, which become much clearer in the light of "the mystery," and therefore, just as witness is borne to righteousness by the law and prophets, so the prophetic Scriptures of the earlier part of God's Book bear their testimony to "the mystery." This has an important bearing on Revelation 10 for

the apostles there declares in verse 7, "But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he is about to be sounding (Mark these words "When he is about to be sounding") there was ended the mystery of God, as He preached the Gospel (euaggilise) to His Own bondservants, the prophets." Already we have seen a stress on the prophets in the quotation from 1 Corinthians 2, and the Prophetic Scriptures in Romans 16. Here (Rev. 10) we are told that the mystery of God will be ended when the angel is about to sound. Why? Because the Lord's work in the present dispensation will then be complete. It is important to notice this. It contains in it, if the writer mistake not, the pledge of a revival; and, furthermore, a clear statement as to when the time of the present dispensation shall have run out. When the angel is ABOUT to sound, *not when he begins to sound*, the mystery is ended. Why? Because when he sounds, the saints are caught up, in accord with the words that are linked with the word "mystery" in Corinthians 15:51, 52—"Behold, I shew you a mystery, we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment, (an atom) in the twinkling of an eye, IN THE LAST TRUMP." Therefore the mystery must be ended just before this last or seventh trump, that so it may be caught up, and to these words we may add that striking testimony of 1 Timothy 3:16. After a reference to the word "church," the Holy Spirit says, "And confessedly great is the mystery that is linked with the reverence. God (or He Who) was manifested in flesh, declared righteous in Spirit, seen by angels, heralded among the nations, believed on in the world, received up in glory." That HAS taken place in one sense, but has it taken place fully? Christ was declared righteous in Spirit, for He was raised because of our "righteousness" (Rom. 4:25). He was seen by angels when he led captivity captive. He was heralded among nations, and the testimony goes on, and He is believed on in the world, but that testimony is not accomplished yet. Christ "mystically" *shall be* received up in glory. "It is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the Church." You cannot sever the two in the mystery, hence the stress on the word "Christ" in this connection. There may be temporary "gaps," in the carrying out of Divine workings. Israel wandered for forty years in the wilderness, and there is a gap in "the seventy sevens." (Daniel 9:24-27.) So it seems there is a gap now. A gap that man's failure has brought about, and we cannot appropriate to ourselves in all their fulness the many words that describe the wonderful privileges that the redeemed had when

the Lord founded His Church at Pentecost. But there shall be a reviving and when that reviving is completed the Lord will be pleased to appear and His redeemed shall be caught up in Glory. May this view of God's teaching as to the mystery, not only encourage us to pray more in the spirit, and make us feel our failure more, but give, perhaps, one of the most definite statements that can be found in the whole of the pages of Scripture as to the ending of the present dispensation. May the Lord enable us to accept His Truth and live gratefully in the light of it.

QUESTIONS

Q. Please explain Matthew 13:24 and Romans 1:16.

A. First coming to the Matthew passage, I would suggest that as soon as the Lord turned away from Israel, whether in chapter 12 or chapter 23, He laid a stress on the present dispensation, and that neither in Matthew 13 nor in Matthew 24 have we a view of some future dispensation, but of the PRESENT dispensation. The passages are similar and should be studied prayerfully together. Undoubtedly the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven in Matthew give us the history of the whole dispensation. In the first parable we have the WORD of the kingdom, sown by the Sower, but in the parable of the Sower no church is formed. In the second parable, we have the kingdom of the heavens, that is, the new dispensation is viewed as begun, and everything is distinct. I will not say entirely separate, but distinct. The seed is sown into the ground in the first parable, but the good seed ARE the children of the kingdom, in the second. They are identified with this. A work has, I believe, taken place. The second parable views Christ's resurrection as past, and here we have not different pieces of ground, but the one field, His field, and awhile there is only good seed, but the enemy comes and sows tares, and that is, if I mistake not, the beginning of Christendom. The church is altered to Christendom, to the extent Satan can alter it,—as an earthly executive. In the third parable of the mustard seed we have the development of religious greatness which is so contrary to the mind of the Lord. In the fourth parable we see the mystery of lawlessness, inworking, and of evil corrupting all the "fine flour" doctrine until the climax will be—the whole is leavened. This parable goes plainly on till the end, until *the whole* be leavened. In the fifth parable we have brought before us the treasure that is hid in the field. The thought seems to be that the Lord has His people as hidden ones,

and He views them as very precious to Him, and that portion of Truth is in measure realised, but we are waiting earnestly for the revival of which the sixth parable speaks, when the saints will, not only realise they are hid treasure, as many of them do realise now, but that they are to illustrate in measure that they are one pearl, to be more than hid treasure, for the saints of God are to be together in a wonderful unity toward the end of this dispensation. In connection with that there will be the preaching of the Gospel and the testimony which the seventh parable shows. Thus we have brought before us the history of this dispensation most markedly. As to what you say concerning Romans, I am largely of one mind with you, except that I do not like the word "separate." The mystery does not seem to me entirely separate from the Gospel, but wonderfully linked thereto. If I might sum it up in words that are not complete, but which will give you some idea,—The mystery is subjective, the Gospel is objective. The Gospel is Christ for me, The mystery is Christ in me. 1 Corinthians 15 says, "I make known to you, brethren, the Gospel," and that Gospel is, "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,—He was buried and He hath been raised," but the mystery is that "ye died and your life has been hid with Christ in God." Hence it is closely related.

Q. This mystery was made known to Paul, but in what relation do the other apostles stand to that? And what was this mystery made known to him? The earlier part of Acts could not have contained teaching concerning this mystery.

A. But it was made "known to Christ's apostles, and prophets," is the statement of the apostle who particularly spoke concerning it. Undoubtedly the Acts shows plainly that the Lord's dear servants were slow to grasp the blessed unity of saved Jew and Gentile in Christ. Consequently they were slow to turn to the Gentiles, and the Lord raised up Paul to fill the gap of Judas, and limited Peter. Originally the testimony to Peter was "Go ye into all the world," "Go ye therefore and teach all nations," and when he held back, Galatians 2 shows he became the apostle of the circumcision. He was not that at the first. But if we hold back, the Lord, Who took of the Spirit from Moses and gave it to others, will limit our sphere; and Paul was particularly made an apostle of the Gentiles, and, as such, emphasised the wonderful mystery that Gentiles should be co-heirs. Consequently, though the Lord Jesus Christ built His church on resurrection ground, as the Acts shows, and the

Spirit of God descended on the Day of Pentecost, there was not at first anything like the full understanding of the mystery. There was man's attempt to hinder it, and till a large number of Gentiles had been saved, as well as Jews, and Jews and Gentiles linked together, there could not be the exemplification of the mystery on earth, and the manifestation of the manifold wisdom of God. Sad to relate, almost as soon as the manifestation had been wondrously reached, manifest failure set in. Such is man, let us be warned and humbled before our God.

Q. *Did you use the word "the mystery caught up"? Was it advisable?*

A. I did not mean to imply that the mystery as a doctrine was caught up, but I was referring to the passage where we read of the Lord Jesus Christ received up in glory, where there seems to be a special reference to His earthly representatives being received up. He was received up at the beginning of the dispensation. They are received up at the end of it, and thus there is the completeness of the saints of the present dispensation, and the link with the saints of previous dispensations, for God has provided some better thing that they without us should not be made perfect, but that we should be united together, and so Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and the prophets, and the Gentile saints of the present dispensation will be together in the glory. I used the words in that connection, but I am thankful that you give me the opportunity of explaining what I did not mean. Perhaps the words were inadvisable.

Q. *You substituted the word "untrackable" for "unsearchable," are not the two words the same?*

A. The idea of a track is, I suppose, something whereupon we walk, and as that is the term which the Holy Spirit has used, and as there is another word for unsearchable, it seems wiser to keep to it. I think a large number of believers have adopted that translation.

Q. *You would not preach this mystery to sinners?*

A. "We speak wisdom among them that are full grown." You do not primarily preach a subjective Gospel to sinners, but an Objective CHRIST and His finished work on Calvary. Believers are to realise Christ in them and their relation to one another in Him, and to Himself, wondrously pictured by the Mercyseat and the Cherubim.

(concluded)

Further literature, concerning the Lord, gladly sent (international) to exercised believers for personal perusal, and **passing on** to God's glory, some also in German, Spanish, Russian, Polish, Czech, Romanian:

– *"To Testify the Gospel of the Grace of God."* –

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