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If you are not a believer in Jesus Christ, or aren't sure and would like to become one, then you need to believe that Jesus Christ was and is the Son of God, that he was God who became a man, that he lived a sinless and perfect life, keeping the Law of God perfect in every way, that he kept faith perfectly, and that he was crucified on that cruel cross for your sins, mine and the entire world - he died for our sins! His death on the cross paid the penalty fully, one time for all sins that we have ever committed and that we will ever commit. He died; he went down into the bowels of the earth, even into Hell, and was raised from the dead on the third day in a resurrected, eternal body. He ascended back into heaven, was seated at the right hand of God, and is now Lord over heaven and earth. He is coming again to judge the world, to raise the dead, where he will give an eternal, resurrected, glorified body to everyone that has believed on him as their Lord and Savior, and to establish his kingdom one earth.

You come become a Christian right now as you read this, by personally placing your faith and trust in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior; believing that he is God's only begotten Son, that he died on the cross for you and that he was raised from the dead and is now seated in heaven at the right hand of God the Father. *“Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved..” Acts 16:31a* And when you do trust Christ, and Christ alone, as your Lord and Savior, then go to God the Father in heaven in prayer and tell him so. Tell him that you have believed on his Son, thank him for his Son, and thank him for forgiving your sins and saving you! *“That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord”, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.” Romans 10:9,10* *“For, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” Romans 10:13* *“Therefore, being justified by faith (declared righteous), we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Romans 5:1*

The Mystery Of God

“According to the revelation of the **mystery**, which was kept secret since the world began,”
Romans 16:25b

Intro: #01

The first thing we need to look at is the definition of the word **mystery**. *Musterion* spoke of that which is hidden, something secret; something that has not been revealed. It referred to something that only an individual, or individuals knew, and no one else. And the only way that anyone else can know what is the secret is by the person, who has the knowledge, revealing it to someone else.

The fraternal societies of ancient times, and today, freemasonry and the Babylonian Mystery system are built around this concept. They have a secret(s) that only those in the order know. Going back to the beginning of things the original secret that Lucifer passed off to man, and thereby deceived him because it is a lie, is that man can become a *god*.

The mystery religions are based upon a multi-layered approach in this by revealing more and more secrets to the initiate as they go higher and higher up the pyramid in their pursuit of being an enlightened being and ultimately a god, or so they think, or have been led to believe.

In the Bible *musterion* is a term that refers to a knowledge that only those inside the fraternity know, that is to say, it is knowledge possessed only by those in Christianity and not those on the outside. This hidden knowledge, or secret, was held by God for a long period of time and then revealed to Christians. So a mystery is something that no one else knows, but the one who possesses it. There is no way that anyone else can know what the knowledge is possessed by the other person, except by the one, who possesses the knowledge, decides to reveal it. His decision to reveal it, to whom he wishes to reveal it, and when he decides to reveal it, lies solely in the prerogative of the one who has the secret.

A. Hidden For Ages (Times Eternal) Past. Romans 16:25

“Now to him who is able to establish you in accordance with my gospel, the message I proclaim about Jesus Christ, in keeping with the revelation of the **mystery hidden** (kept silent, or secret) **for long ages past**,” Romans 16:25 - τω δε δυναμενω ‘υμας στηριζαι κατα το ευαγγελιον μου και το κηρυγμα ιησου χριστου κατα **αποκαλυψιν** μυστηριου χρονους αιωνιους σεσιγημενου

The first thing we want to note is that **this secret had been hidden for long ages past**. The NIV translation of this passage, as we have here, brings out the Greek, *κατα αποκαλυψιν μυστηριου χρονους αιωνιους σεσιγημενου*. *Aioniois* is the plural for *aion*, **ages**, instead of **world**.

The word for **hidden** here is the perfect passive participle of *sigao* – to keep silent, which tells us that, in the perfect passive participle, this secret was absolutely airtight. **God was totally silent on this matter and kept silent about it for ages**. No one on earth knew about it and no one in heaven knew about it. And there was no way that anyone could know about it, unless God decided to reveal it. **And God kept silent about it for ages for a reason! So what is the Mystery of God?**

B. The Mystery of God!

“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;” Colossians 2:2 – ‘ινα παρακληθωσιν ‘αι καρδιαι αυτων συμβιβασθεντων εν αγαπη και εις παντα πλουτον της πληροφοριας της συνεσεως εις **επιγνωσιν** του μυστηριου του θεου και πατρος και του χριστου

We will go into what the mystery is, but first of all we need to see that it is referred to as, “**The Mystery of God**”. By the use of the singular we see that it refers to one thing. We will also see that there are other facets in it, concepts that come from the one mystery that are called *mysteries*, plural.

To put it simply “**The Mystery of God**” is: 1) **Jesus Christ** – God and man in one body! 2) Then we have in **the Mystery the Church** – which is the mystical body of Christ, made up of believers in Christ. 3) Then we have **Christ in us** – Christ indwelling those who believe in him. So we have: 1) **Jesus Christ**, 2) **the Church**, 3) **Christ in us**, 4) and **us in Christ**. That’s the core of the Mystery of God and then there are other things that proceed from that.

C. Hidden for Ages.

“Even the mystery which hath been **hid from ages and from generations**, but now is made manifest to his saints:” Colossians 1:26 - το μυστηριον το αποκεκρυμμενον απο των αιωνων και απο των γενεων νυνι δε εφανερωθη τοις ‘αγιοις αυτου “And to make all men see what is the **fellowship of the mystery**, which **from the beginning of the world**, (from the beginning of the ages), **hath been hid in God**, who created all things by Jesus Christ:” Ephesians 3:9 - και φωτισαι παντας τις ‘η κοινωνια του μυστηριου του **αποκεκρυμμενου** απο των αιωνων εν τω θεω τω τα παντα κτισαντι δια ιησου χριστου

It is very clear that God had a plan that he had determined in eternity past to unfold at a certain time in history, but he kept this plan secret from all, from fallen angels, from unfallen angels and even from his own people. It was the Mystery of God. **Hidden** - *apokrupto* – perfect passive participle.

To understand the expression of “the **fellowship of the mystery**” we have to go back to what occurred in the mystery religions. The devotees claimed to have a union with their “savior god”, which they learned more and more about as they went through their many stages of initiation. As they did so they were going unto higher levels of “enlightenment” unto “perfection”. Throughout the year they would all meet together to eat and drink, (usually they were drunken feasts), but they would get together to celebrate their “union” with their god, which was really a demon. One of the things that they celebrated was their union with their deity; this was their fellowship in their mystery, or in the Greek their *koinonia* in the *musterion*. **Our fellowship is to be centered around the Mystery of God.**

So what does that mean to us today? Christians do not come together for fellowship by eating and drinking, but by sharing the same thing we have in common, which is we are all a part of the **Mystery of God**. 1) **Jesus Christ** – God and man in one body! 2) Then we have included in the **Mystery, the Church** – which is the mystical body of Christ made up of believers in Christ. 3) Then we have **Christ in us** – Christ indwelling those who believe in him, **Christ in you, the hope of glory**. **So when we come together for fellowship it’s over our mutual bond of Christ being in us! #01 1-19-17**

D. The Mystery of God is finally revealed. #02

“Which in other ages was **not** made known unto the sons of men, as **it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;**” Ephesians 3:5 – ‘ο εν ‘ετεραις γενεαις ουκ εγνωρισθη τοις ‘υιοις των ανθρωπων ‘ως νυν απεκαλυφθη τοις ‘αγιοις αποστολοις αυτου και προφηταις εν πνευματι. God finally revealed his mystery to certain men, namely the apostles and prophets, and he did so through the revealing ministry of the Holy Spirit. **No one in the OT people knew this – no one!**

The Mystery of God is Jesus Christ! God has now become Man! Paul tells us what this mystery is in 1 Timothy 3:16, “*And 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.***” - και ‘ομολογουμενωσ μεγα εστιν το της εσεβειας μυστηριον θεοσ εφανερωθη εν σαρκι εδικαιωθη εν πνευματι ωφθη αγγελιοις εκηρυχθη εν εθνεσιν επιστευθη εν κοσμω ανεληφθη εν δοξη The **Mystery of God** was that God was now in Christ; the Messiah was God. 2 Corinthians 5:19

Arthur S. Way’s translation of, 1 Timothy 3:16, brings it to light further:

“I have referred above to the ‘Mystic Secret of our religion’. Beyond dispute, grand is that Mystic Secret, as set forth in our confession-chant –

In human form was Messiah revealed:

By spirit-power was he proved the Just One:

To angels he appeared: Among Gentiles was he proclaimed:

In the world was He by faith accepted;

In glory was He received up into Heaven.”

E. Why the Mystery was concealed by God.

“*But we speak the wisdom of God in a **mystery**, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: Which none of the princes of this world knew: **for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.***” 1 Corinthians 2:7,8

Whenever knowledge concerning something is concealed, it is concealed for a reason. Sometimes it’s because the knowledge is considered so special that it is concealed from those considered unworthy of possessing it. In the mystery religions those people that the hidden knowledge was kept from are referred to as the **profane**.

But concerning the **Mystery of God**, which centers around the incarnation of deity in the person of Jesus Christ, his sacrificial death on the cross where he paid the full penalty for our sins, his victorious resurrection from Hades and triumphant entry into heaven. **It was necessary to keep this knowledge concerning the Mystery of Jesus Christ concealed until after Christ ascended into heaven and was seated at the right hand of God the Father!**

And we note that it is only **after the ascension of Christ into heaven** that the knowledge of this mystery was **then** given to the apostles and prophets in the Church to announce to God’s people! “*Even **the mystery** which hath been **hid** (apokrupto) from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints:” Colossians 1:26 **If this secret had been revealed before, then the princes of this age, the fallen angels of Lucifer, would not have had the Lord crucified!***

We must keep in mind the Angelic Conflict, when we view the history of God's people on earth. The first man God put on this planet failed and thus plunged the planet and the people of this world into sin and being ruled by the devil. And throughout the years there were those men who stood in the gap, and even though they may have failed at different times in their lives, they did not fail in crucial matters pertaining to the angelic conflict, but stood their ground in their faith and succeeded.

Enoch walked with God, Noah walked with God, Melchizedek was God's man of the hour, and Abraham walked with God in his covenant. The entire Old Testament is a record of those, who had human frailties, but succeeded in the angelic conflict. And on into the New Testament the angelic conflict came down upon one man, (among many others), in the person of Joseph the stepfather of Jesus Christ. What if he had put Mary aside in divorce? It took an angel from the Lord to reassure him.

And the most important person in all this was the god-man Jesus Christ. How he was taken down into Egypt for his protection. How he was tempted to sin, but didn't; how he kept his faith in the Father all the way through the cross, Hades and on into heaven. And how evil men tried to kill him repeatedly, but failed. So we can see, because of the angelic conflict the Father kept everything about his Mystery secret, **until after** Christ paid the penalty for our sins, went down into Hades, was raised from the dead and ascended back into heaven to be at the right hand of the Father once again.

Then he revealed the Mystery, which was wrapped up in Jesus Christ, and more, to his servants the apostles and prophets through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. And you say, what about the mysteries of the kingdom he talked to his disciples about? Quite true, but remember that he spoke to them in parables so that the unsaved, those outside the brotherhood of believers, could not understand them! The unsaved would be standing right there listening to what he had to say, but because they were unsaved they could not understand the Mystery doctrine he was teaching!

The **Mystery** of Jesus Christ entails the person of Christ, the unique nature of Christ being both God and man, the work of Christ, the Body of Christ consisting of redeemed individuals from the earth, the victory of Christ over the fallen angels and sin, and eternity future that centers around Christ!

To put it one way Jesus Christ was the "**secret weapon**" that God had in his arsenal to defeat the fallen angels in the angelic conflict. It was the "weapon" that was going to finally and completely win the war in Satan's long going battle against *Yahweh*.

Another way of looking at this Mystery of God, and this is not how it happened, but I'll put it in the form of a drama to bring it out for the purpose of wonder and amazement on those in heaven. Let's say that God has a secret that will finally win the war against the devil and his angels. The unfallen angels so eagerly want to know what it is. They talk amongst themselves; they ask God what it is, just like all of us in our curiosity would want to know what lies behind the curtain. For eons the angels excitedly want to know what is behind the curtain, but God won't tell them. He keeps it a secret. Then one day he parts the veil and out walks the god-man, Jesus Christ! They just stand there in wonder and amazement at the wisdom of God. This is the Mystery that he has kept secret for long ages past. **#02 1-26-17 #03**

Satan had tried repeatedly to kill the Lord before, but when he had the Lord crucified, and the Lord's soul subsequently went down in Hades, Satan was now firmly convinced that he had finally defeated *Yahweh* in his ongoing war against him! His tactical downfall, though, was that **he never saw the true significance of Jesus Christ!** He did not realize that Jesus Christ was *Yahweh's* secret weapon against him and by killing Jesus Christ he fell into God's plan and actually sealed his own doom!

So while the Lord was down there in Hades, Satan was confidently reveling in his own smugness in his presumed victory over God on High. It was not until the Lord was raised from the dead that he realized that something was up, and then when the Lord ascended into heaven and was seated at the right hand of God, he knew that he had been tactically defeated. It was then that the angels finally knew about the **Mystery of God** that he had kept hidden for ages. What Satan tried to wrest for himself and failed, God gave to a man from earth – his throne!

Now Satan had to change his tactics and we see that the angelic conflict went into high gear after the ascension of Christ into heaven, with much of it centering on the Church here on earth through the teaching of Bible Doctrine, which is not only for the true believers in Christ here on earth, but also for the angels in heaven, both fallen and unfallen. *“To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God,”* Ephesians 3:10

When Satan lost his position as the Guardian Cherub and consequently was expelled out of the third heaven, many believe that after losing his position and domicile there he went down to the domain of the angels in the known universe, where new strategies and tactics for deposing *Yahweh* from his throne were developed. Gaining control of the earth and establishing a worship of himself on the earth were all a part of this, but when Jesus Christ victoriously ascended to the throne of God in the third heaven, his strategies and tactics were altered to fit the new situation.

And when, at some time in the near future now, he is kicked out of heaven and has to come to earth, (and having great rage), new strategies and tactics will have to be developed to fit the new situation. One of them will be, seeing that he is going to have to continue retreating once again, he will send scouts to earth, an advanced demonic force, to set the earth up for his final arrival here on the planet. This will be done by having the world brought under a new economical and governmental order, a New World Order run by the antichrist under Satan.

F. “The Mystery of God” is Jesus Christ and the Church!

*“This is a great **mystery**: but I speak concerning **Christ and the church**”.* Ephesians 5:32 - το μυστηριον τουτο μεγα εστιν εγω δε λεγω εις χριστον και εις την εκκλησιαν

When we think of Jesus Christ in this context, we must bring in at the same time the mystical body of Christ, which is the Church. And when we talk about the Church our thinking must go to the universal body of all those who have believed on Christ as their Savior and not local churches. Although local churches are where the Church is to assemble for the teaching of the Word of God, not all believers in Christ go to church. But even though they do not attend church, they are still a part of **the Church**.

Christ refers to these people as his sheep, others refer to it as the flock of Christ, and Paul brings out the use of the term, “the Body of Christ”. *“So we, being many, are **one body in Christ**, and every one members one of another.”* Romans 12:5 *“For as **the body is one**, and hath many members, and all the members of that **one body**, being many, are **one body**: so also is Christ.”* 1 Corinthians 12:12 *“Now ye are **the body of Christ**, and members in particular.”* 1 Corinthians 12:27

And Christ is **the head of this body**. The Church as a body tells us that this body is all connected, all unified, all a part of each other, all one and all having a part and function in the body. *“And **he is the head of the body, the church**: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.”* Colossians 1:18 The **Church** is included in the **mystery** of God.

Christ is the head of the **body**; Pastor-Teachers are the ligaments that hold the joints together, “*And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.*” Colossians 2:19 And all the rest of the believers make up the various component parts of the body and all are important! “*For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?*” 1 Corinthians 12:13-17

The Church is also put as a **temple**, the temple of God in which Christ dwells. “*What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?*” 1 Corinthians 6:19 “*In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord.*” Ephesians 2:21 The individual believers in Christ are put as living stones in this temple. “*Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.*” 1 Peter 2:5 And Christ is put as both the **corner stone** of this temple, “*And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;*” Ephesians 2:20, and the **capstone**. “*Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner;*” 1 Peter 2:7

I point these things out to demonstrate that, as **the Church** is connected to Christ in all things and all ways, so also is the Church connected to being included in **the Mystery of God!** When the Mystery of God existed in eternity past, and God was silent about it, **the mystery entailed the Church** as well. It was Christ **and** his Body, the Church universal, the Church triumphant! When God foreordained the **mystery** of his Son, **he also foreordained us at the same time because of our union with him**, even to the place where the Church was foreordained to be conformed to the image of Christ!

G. The Mystery of God is Christ in us!

“*To whom God would 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 - ‘οις ηθελησεν ‘ο θεος γνωρισαι τις ‘ο πλουτος της δοξης του μυστηριου τουτου εν τοις εθνεσιν ‘ος εστιν χριστος εν ‘υμιν ‘η ελπις της δοξης

We see more of the facets of this Mystery of God. First it was the unique person of Jesus Christ, who was and is both God and man. Then we see that God the Father gave a body of people to his Son, which is referred to as the Church. Then now we see something else, in that, Christ indwells each one of those believers who make up the body of Christ!

Christ in us explains **how** it is that we have the power to be able to go through all of life’s trials and anything that the devil can throw against us. It explains how it is that Christ strengthens us. Christ strengthens us, and Christ can strengthen us, because he is **inside** us! “*I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.*” Philippians 4:13 - παντα ισχυω εν τω ενδυναμουντι με χριστω

The word for **strengthen** here is *endunamoo* and it means to strengthen someone on the inside, to strengthen inwardly, to show that the source for this strengthening comes from inside us and it comes from inside us because Jesus Christ dwells **inside** us! **I can do** is *ischuo* and that means to prevail in

victory over a situation, and one is able to prevail because they have the strength. **And, in our cases, we do not have the strength from within ourselves, but from the indwelling Christ! It is not our strength that gives us the victory, but Christ's strength in us!**

The Mystery of Christ in us explains why we're being conformed to the image of Christ. "*For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.*" Romans 8:29 God predestined in eternity past that all believers in Christ would be **conformed**, *summorpho*, to the image of his Son. **This is where the inner essence of our souls is being brought into absolute and perfect conformity to the Christ dwelling in us!** This has been predetermined by God in eternity past, that is, God determined beforehand this to occur.

This also explains the concept of spiritual growth in the soul of Christ being formed in us. "*My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you,*" Galatians 4:19 If we're a part of the Mystery of Christ, then it follows that Christ is formed in us. It also would explain the great battle that is going on inside of every one of us, as the flesh nature fights against Christ being formed in us. Not just with our lusts and emotions, but psychological battle. **Christ is being formed inside of you and me!** "*This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.*" Galatians 5:16,17 **#04 2-09-17** #05

And not just with the lusts, emotions and pleasures, and not just in a psychological battle, but also from the Old Man. **The Old Man fights back against the emergence of the New Man!** When someone believes on Christ as their Savior, a new man is created inside them. Covered by the flesh it emerges from its concealment into the light of day, through the intake of Bible Doctrine and the filling of the Holy Spirit. "*Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*" 2 Corinthians 5:17 Our strength is tied up with Christ, our identity is tied up with Christ, our future, our inheritance, our life, our very existence both now and eternally is connected completely to Christ. Christ is our life! That is why Paul said that the basis of his existence was Christ. "*For to me to live (infinitive of purpose - reason for living) is Christ, and to die is gain.*" Philippians 1:21 It is for all of us; it's just that Paul realized that and many or most believers haven't.

H. The Communicators of the Mystery.

*"Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the **mystery of Christ**), which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now **revealed** (apokalupsis – revealing of deity) unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;"* Ephesians 3:4,5

We begin with God having the mystery, something that he had been silent about for ages. If he revealed it, when he revealed it, to whom he revealed it and how he revealed it was his sole prerogative. Here we see that he revealed it **after** his Son ascended into heaven at the beginning of the Church Age, and he revealed it to his Apostles and Prophets by the means of the Holy Spirit after he came to earth.

It was several years after the Church Age had begun that Paul became a believer in Christ. And it was when he became a believer in Christ that this Mystery of God was revealed to him through the Holy Spirit. "*How that **by revelation he made known unto me the mystery**; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)"* Ephesians 3:3,4

We had mentioned that the essence of the Mystery of God is Jesus Christ specifically that Jesus Christ

is both God and man. “*To wit, **that God was in Christ**, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.*” 2 Corinthians 5:19

Now we have seen that **the Mystery of God is Christ**, and then **Christ’s Church** is in that, but we will also see that this Church is one body made up of both Jews and Gentiles. “*That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel.*” Ephesians 3:6 The Gentiles are fellowheirs, but with whom? The Jews, that is, the saved of the 12 tribes of Israel.

To the Jews it was incomprehensible, to some unacceptable, that the Gentiles would become the people of God. It was the Jews that God had a covenant with. It was through Abraham, Isaac and Jacob that the promises had come. But the apostles clearly show, because of the revelation of the Mystery by the Holy Spirit, that we, the Church now, made up of believing Jews and Gentiles, is the people of God. “*As he saith also in Osee, **I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved. And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, **Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God.*****” Romans 9:25,25 “*Which in time past were not a people, but are now (vvv δε) the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.*” 1 Peter 2:10

All this was prophesied in the OT, if they would have bothered to check. “*Then said God, Call his name Loammi: for **ye are not my people, and I will not be your God. Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered; and it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, **Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, **Ye are the sons of the living God.*******” Hosea 1:9,10 “*And I will sow her unto me in the earth; and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and **I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God.***” Hosea 2:23

It is through the New Covenant and Christ’s redeeming work on the cross that God has created for himself one new man comprised of both Jews and Gentiles. The Old Covenant, which the Israelites broke billions of times, has been replaced by the New Covenant “*Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;*” Ephesians 2:15

When we come down to the concept of a covenant, one of the concepts found in it is that if either party breaks it, then the covenant is broken. If party A does not break the covenant that he has with party B, but party B does, then party A has the right to walk away from it for good. Party B has no rights in this because he has broken the covenant that exists between he and party A. Now, if party A wants to continue on with the covenant arrangement he has with party B, he has every right to do so.

And thus is the story between God and Israel for centuries. Israel kept breaking the covenant with *Yahweh*. But remember, that if the covenant is broken at any time *Yahweh* does not have to set in place once again. He can set it aside permanently for Israel is the one who shattered it.

But there is something else. If party B breaks the covenant he had with party A, and remember party B has no say so in this at all, party A has the right to institute a new covenant to replace the old one, as long as it is equal to, or better than, the old one. And this is what we have in Jesus Christ and the New Covenant he brought to Israel. “*But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of **a better covenant**, which was established upon better promises.*” Hebrews 8:6

This covenant was prophesied in the Old Testament and was offered to both the houses of Israel and Judah in the New Testament by Jesus Christ the Righteous Branch. “*For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah:*” Hebrews 8:8 “*Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:*” Jeremiah 31:31 “*Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will perform that good thing which I have promised unto the house of Israel and to the house of Judah. In those days, and at that time, will I cause the **Branch of righteousness** to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land.*” Jeremiah 33:14,15

The new covenant that God was going to have between himself and the nation of Israel had been prophesied back in the OT. It was a covenant that was based upon better promises and was vastly superior to the old covenant in every way. The Holy Spirit was the **sign** of this covenant and had been promised as well along with the New Covenant. In fact, he was called the Spirit of promise, or the promised Holy Spirit. “*That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive **the promise of the Spirit** through faith.*” Galatians 3:14 “*In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with **that holy Spirit of promise,***” Ephesians 1:13

Now we go to a very important concept concerning Israel. Where does Israel fall in all this? Did God forsake his people? What happened to Israel’s covenant relationship with *Yahweh* and many other questions that can be brought up on this matter? It’s a question that Paul answers in Romans 11:1, “*I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.*”

Now what is he saying? He’s saying, by establishing first of all his credentials, that he is an Israelite, descended from Abraham and of the tribe of Benjamin. But he’s also saying that God did not forsake his people, because he is an Israelite and he has not been forsaken. Why? Because he is saved! He has been saved through faith in Jesus Christ! All of Israel could have been saved, if they had placed their faith in Jesus Christ, which would have brought them into this New Covenant that *Yahweh* had established through the blood of his beloved Son! **#05 2-16-17** #06

I. The Mystery also contains the spiritual life dynamic.

“*Holding the **mystery of the faith** in a pure (cleansed by the blood of Christ) conscience.*” 1 Timothy 3:9 - εχοντας το μυστηριον **της πιστεως** εν καθαρα συνειδησει

The faith as mentioned here and in other places in the NT is the orthodox teaching of Christianity. It is the term to the spiritual life dynamic (SLD) we give to the believer in Christ living by faith in the Word of God, its doctrines and promises, all within the sphere of the new nature that was created in him by God, in the filling and power of the indwelling Holy Spirit.

We have seen that the **Mystery of God** is Jesus Christ, and then the body of Christ, that is, the Church made up of born again believers in Christ. Now the body of Christ not only **shares in the same nature** that Christ had here on earth and has now, and that only because of the new natures that were created in us by God at the moment of our salvation, natures that are patterned after the nature of Jesus Christ, the Church is to **live by the same spiritual life dynamic** that the Lord did when he was here in the flesh!

So how did the Lord live his life here on earth? **He lived it by faith!** Faith in the Father's **plan** for his life; faith in the Father's **promises**; faith in the Father's **protection**; faith in the Father's **provisions**; faith in the Father's **power**; and faith in the **process** that the Father chose to bring him to maturity!

To understand this we need to see that Jesus Christ originated a new kind of faith, while he was here on earth, that God's people are to live by. Not faith itself, for it has been here since the beginning, but a new kind of faith, in that, we are to live by a faith in God as one would live by faith in their father.

*"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of (our) **the** faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."*

Hebrews 12:2 αφωρωντες εις τον **της πιστεως** αρχηγον και τελειωτην ιησουν 'ος αντι της προκειμενης αυτω χαρας 'υπεμεινεν σταυρον αισχυνης καταφρονησας εν δεξια τε του θρονου του θεου εκαθισεν

Our attention is brought to the use of **faith with the definite article, the faith, tes pisteos**. And the passage tells us that he was the **Originator, archegos**, of this faith, and that he was the **Perfector** of the faith, that is, he brought it to completion or perfection, *teleiotes*. When we examine Christ's life here on earth in relation to his Father, it all centered around his faith in the Father. It preceded his incarnation, his developing years, his public ministry, and his atoning death on the cross for our sins, (where his faith in the Father was completed), his journey down into Hades and his ascension into heaven.

The Lord had to share in our humanity in every way and everything his people would go through here on earth. **And if we had to live by faith in the Father, so would he!** *"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;"* Hebrews 2:14

Some mistakenly thought that when the Messiah came to earth that he would be like a knight on a white horse eradicating all of Israel's enemies. It never once occurred to them that he would live here on earth as a man, but also a man who suffered, and a man who lived by faith in God the Father as they do, or as they were supposed to do.

It is as we live by faith in the promises and doctrines of God's Word that we are empowered by the Holy Spirit. This is the spiritual life dynamic. *"Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in **believing**, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost."* Romans 15:13

J. The Completion of the Mystery of God.

*"But in the days of the voice of the **seventh** angel, when he shall begin to **sound, the mystery of God should be finished**, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets."* Revelation 10:7 - αλλα εν ταις 'ημεραις της φωνης του 'εβδομου αγγελου 'οταν μελλη σαλπιζειν και τελεσθη το μυστηριον του θεου 'ως ευηγγελισεν τοις 'εαυτου δουλοις τοις προφηταις. **#06 2-23-17** #07

To set the context we have the seventh seal opened and seven angels each one blowing a trumpet. The scene now focuses on the seventh angel about to blow his trumpet. *Mello* has the idea that it is at this time, or about this time, or no later than this time, that the seventh angel blows his trumpet. It has it as at this point in time, but not past this point in time that something happens. What happens is that the Mystery of God is completed. The word to complete is the aorist passive infinitive of the verb *teleo*. So the **Mystery of God is completed** at or before the blowing of the seventh trumpet. Now the word *teleo* meant to complete a project undertaken. This tells us that there has to be a **beginning** to the project, the **action of the project going on** over a period of time, then finally the **completion** of the project.

So what is the project in view here? It is **the Mystery of God**, which refers to the **Church**, the Body of Christ! The Church, the mystical body of Christ, had its beginning at the first advent of Jesus Christ; it has been going on for almost two thousand years; but it's telling us that there is a point in time in human history **when it will be completed!**

The Church began with Jesus Christ, who is the cornerstone. *"This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner."* Acts 4:11 The apostles and prophets are the foundation stones. *"And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;"* Ephesians 2:20 And every believer in Christ since then makes up the walls as it goes toward its completion. *"Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."* 1 Peter 2:5 **When that final believer in Christ is added to this body of Christ, then the Mystery of God, (Christ and his body, the Church), will be completed and that occurs at the last trump.**

The Bible teaches that there will be some who will be alive when Christ returns to earth and not have to experience the concept of physical death as everyone else does. These believers will be transformed at his appearing and instantly receive a resurrection body. *"Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,"* 1 Corinthians 15:51

"In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." 1 Corinthians 15:52 This passage is very clear showing that believers in Christ will be raised from the dead and receive their resurrection body at the same time; the **Mystery** is completed. Now the question is, **when**, or **at what point** in the sequence of things, will this occur? And it is specified that it will be at the blowing of the **last trump!**

Now when we think of things, such as the first and the last, what do we mean by that? What is meant by the **first**? Who would be the first one in line? It would be the **very first one** standing in line. And what do we mean by the **last** one in line? The last one would be the **very last person** in line, not the next to last, but the last. So, if one was the last one standing in line and someone else came in after him, what would that make the new guy in line? **It would make him the last!** So when we come down to the last trump, what does that mean? When the very last trump is blown, then the Mystery of God will be completed. And the **seventh** trump toward the end of the Tribulation is the **last** one to be blown.

As **the Church** is in union with Christ in all things and in all ways, so also is the Church connected to being included in **the Mystery of God!** *"This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning **Christ and the church**"*. Ephesians 5:32 When the Mystery of God existed in eternity past, and God was silent about it, **the Mystery of God entailed the Church** as well. It was Christ **and** his Body, the Church universal, the Church triumphant! When God foreordained the **mystery** of his Son, **he also foreordained us at the same time**; the Church was also foreordained to be conformed to the image of Christ!

Going back to our dramatization when the curtain hiding **the Mystery of God** hidden for times eternal opened up and out walked the god-man Jesus Christ what no one could see was hidden in him were countless numbers of redeemed, regenerated believers in Christ known as **the Church**; people, who were not yet born physically, nor born again spiritually. Hidden in him were the spiritual seeds that would create a new species of human beings created in his image. What the angels could not see was a kingdom of Kings and Priests hidden in Christ! What the angels could not see is that he would be in them and they would be in him and all would be in the Father.

Jesus Christ was the **secret weapon** that *Yahweh* the Father would use to finally defeat the devil, the prosecutorial figure that had been warring against God for so many years. And hidden in Jesus Christ were the spiritual seed that he would implant in certain people, which would “germinate”, that is, come to life spiritually creating a new person when they trusted in Jesus Christ. The Bible teaches that we were **crucified** with Christ because of our union with him, that we **died** in Christ because of our union with Christ; we were **buried** with him; we went into **Hades** with him; we were **raised** from the dead with him; we **ascended** into heaven with him; and we are **seated** at the right hand of God with him. How this happened is because **we were in Jesus Christ in seed form** when he did all these things.

Our identification with Christ is complete in every way; he is in us and we are in him. Christ and his Church are one. The Bible teaches that **we believers are kings and priests, but so is Christ!** He is a **believer** in the sense that he trusts the Father completely, as we are to trust the Father in everything. **He is a king and we are kings**, only he is the king of these kings. And **he is a priest, as we are priests**, only he is the High Priest over all these priests.

Romans 16:25 - “Now to him who is able to establish you in accordance with my gospel, the message I proclaim about Jesus Christ, in keeping with the **revelation of the mystery hidden** (kept silent, or secret) for **long ages past**,” τῷ δὲ δυναμένῳ ὑμᾶς στηριξάει κατὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιόν μου καὶ τὸ κήρυγμα Ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ κατὰ **ἀποκαλύψιν** μυστηρίου χρόνοις αἰωνίοις σεσιγημένου

The word for **revealing** here, *apokalupsis*, has as its emphasis the revealing of deity. So when it says the revelation of the mystery, and that mystery is Jesus Christ, then it tells us that Jesus Christ is **God**.

Colossians 2:2 – “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;**” ἵνα παρακληθῶσιν ἅι καρδίαι αὐτῶν συμβιβασθέντων ἐν ἀγαπῇ καὶ εἰς πάντα πλοῦτον τῆς πληροφορίας τῆς συνέσεως εἰς **ἐπιγνώσιν** τοῦ μυστηρίου τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ χριστοῦ. The word for **acknowledgement** is *epignosis*, which denotes knowledge combined with faith. Understanding the doctrine plus faith in the doctrine gives us the perception of this doctrine.

1 Timothy 3:16, “And 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.**” - καὶ ὁμολογουμένως μέγα ἐστὶν τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας μυστήριον θεὸς ἐφανερώθη ἐν σαρκὶ ἐδικαιώθη ἐν πνεύματι ὤφθη ἀγγέλοις ἐκηρυχθῆ ἐν ἔθνεσιν ἐπιστεύθη ἐν κόσμῳ ἀνεληφθῆ ἐν δόξῃ

The word **manifested** is the aorist passive indicative of *phaneroo*. It’s related to *phainomai*, which has the idea that something appears to be what it is. Not that something appears to be something, but in truth is something else, but it appears to be what it actually is. This tells us that God appeared in the flesh, not just that he appeared to be God in the flesh, but that he was God in the flesh!

Part of this Mystery of God is the **mystery of godliness**, εὐσεβείας μυστηρίου, which appears to denote that the spiritual life dynamic of the believer’s communion with God is also included in this mystery. Man, who has believed on Jesus as his Savior, can now have communion with God.

Colossians 1:26 - “Even the mystery which hath been **hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints:**” τὸ μυστήριον τὸ ἀποκεκρυμμένον ἀπὸ τῶν αἰῶνων καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν γενεῶν νῦν δὲ ἐφανερώθη τοῖς ἁγίοις αὐτοῦ **#07 3-02-17** #08

We notice here that this doctrine not only had been hidden by God from all his creatures since the very beginning, but also that it was revealed to the Church, to those to which this applies.

Ephesians 3:9 - “*And to make all men see what is the **fellowship of the mystery**, which from the **beginning of the world**, (from the beginning of the ages), **hath been hid in God**, who created all things by Jesus Christ.” This **fellowship of the mystery** speaks of the mystical spiritual communion that believers have with each other over the fact that they are a part of this mystery of being in Christ.*

Ephesians 3:5 – “*Which in other ages was **not** made known unto the sons of men, as **it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit**;*” We notice that this mystery was only revealed to the Apostles and Prophets and that by the Holy Spirit when he came to earth to indwell the Church.

1 Corinthians 2:7,8 - “*But we speak the wisdom of God in a **mystery**, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: Which none of the princes of this world knew: **for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory**.*” God kept this Mystery hidden to prevent Satan and his angels from knowing what his plan was.

Ephesians 3:10 - “*To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God,*” This tells us that it is by the Church that the Mystery of God revealed to all the heavenly host. This is accomplished as, the Word of God on these matters is taught by the Pastors to their local congregations.

Colossians 1:27 - “*To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this **mystery** among the Gentiles; which is **Christ in you, the hope of glory**;*” οἷς ἠθελήσεν ὁ θεὸς γνωρίσαι τις ὁ πλοῦτος τῆς δόξης τοῦ μυστηρίου τούτου ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ὅς ἐστιν χριστὸς ἐν ὑμῖν ἡ ἐλπίς τῆς δόξης
The Mystery also includes Christ indwelling a body of believers.

Philippians 4:13 - “*I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.*” πάντα ἰσχύω ἐν τῷ ἐνδυναμοῦντι με χριστῷ Because Christ indwells every single person who believes in him, we have the strength to go through everything victoriously that life or Satan might throw at us.

2 Corinthians 5:19 - “*To wit, **that God was in Christ**, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.*” The Mystery of God is that God was in Christ!

Revelation 10:7 - “*But in the days of the voice of the **seventh** angel, when he shall begin to sound, **the mystery of God should be finished**, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.*” ἀλλὰ ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις τῆς φωνῆς τοῦ ἑβδόμου ἀγγέλου ὅταν μελλῆ σαλπίζειν καὶ τελεσθῆ το μυστήριον τοῦ θεοῦ ὡς εὐηγγέλισεν τοῖς ἑαυτοῦ δούλοις τοῖς προφηταῖς.

This is another passage that reveals that the Church, which is a body of born again believers in Jesus Christ who are mystically and spiritually united to Christ, is a part of the Mystery of God hidden from the beginning of the world. It is when the last believer is saved and added to the body of Christ that the Mystery of God will be completed and that at the Last Trump of God.

The Last Trumpet. v.52.

“*In a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the **last trumpet**. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be **changed**.*” 1 Corinthians 15:52.

In a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet - *en atomo, en rhipe ophthalmou, en te eschate salpingi*. (**Changed** – *allasso* – different, but better).

It must be noted again that the subject here is still the doctrine of the resurrection of those who have believed on Christ and now Paul is telling us, (and this is still a part of the mystery he mentioned in v.51), that **the resurrection will occur at the Last Trumpet blast**.

En is used to denote the point of time when something occurs, in, or **at the Last Trumpet**. *Atomos*, a flash, from which we get the word atom, actually means something that is indivisible because of its smallness. Which is how we thought of the atom, the smallest of elements, as being indivisible, until it was divided by fission in the atomic bomb.

But this is not talking about elements, but **time**. So it means **a time period that is so small it is indivisible; a better word would be instantaneous**. The dead will be raised and we will be changed instantaneously.

Twinkling, *rhipe*, is the casting of a glance, or that little twinkling that appears in the eye that takes so short of a period of time that it happens in an instant. So **the first two statements** tell us **how fast the raising up of the dead ones will be - instantly**; the **third statement** is **when it will be**, that is, at what point of time in the end time chronology it will occur - **at the Last Trump**.

Different words in the Greek are used to denote sequence or chronology. The first, the second, the third; the beginning and the end; the first and the last. 1) First, second and third, when one wants to denote chronological sequence of one thing following after another. 2) The beginning and the end, when one wants to denote the beginning of a matter, and then, its final conclusion or summation. 3) The first and the last, when one wants to denote the first thing of things or events, and then the last one of those things.

Here we have the Last Trumpet. Now **if there was a last trumpet, then there has to have been a first trumpet!** The first and the last, with a certain number of trumpet blasts in between. Which means there was a first trumpet blasting, a second one, etc., till the last one is blown. And, of course, there has to have been the next to the last trumpet being blown. So whatever is in view here, there has to be a first trumpet blown, others to follow, and then **the very last trumpet that is blown will be the last one**.

There are several references that the raising up of the dead will occur at the **last trumpet**: 1) 1 Corinthians 15:52 - (Instantly), “*At the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.*” 2) John 5:25,28,29 – “*I tell you the truth, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the son of God and those who hear will live.*” “*Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out- those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned.*” 3) Matthew 24:30b,31 – “*They will see the son of man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory. And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.*” 4) 1 Thessalonians 4:16 – “*For the Lord himself will come down from Heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.*” 5) Revelations 10:7 – “*But in the days when the seventh angel is about to sound his trumpet, the mystery of God will be accomplished, just as he announced to his servants the prophets.*” (See Romans 16:25,26; Ephesians 3:3-6). 6) Revelations 11:5 – “*The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and there*

were loud voices in heaven, which said: 'The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and his Christ, and he will reign forever and ever.'" **There are no trumpets blown after this one!**

The seventh angel blowing the trumpet is the last trumpet that is blown as noted in the Book of Revelation. This tells us that this is the last trumpet and the time of the resurrection. And there are several other references, which support this. 1) "*The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of God*", v.15. 2) Christ will reign forever; the millennium begins, v.15. 3) You have begun to reign, v.17. 4) "*Your wrath has come*", v.18. 5) "*The time has come for judging the dead*", v.18. **To judge the dead and reward the saints implies that first of all they must be raised from the dead to do so.**

One thing is clear, the dead are raised at the Last Trumpet; and the **last trumpet** to be found is the **seventh trumpet** in Revelations 11:15. **The resurrection of the Church occurs at the last trumpet on the day of the Parousia of Christ.** Matthew 24:27; 1 Corinthians 15:23; 1 Thessalonians 4:15.

For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed - *salpisei gar, kai hoi nekroi egerthesontai aphetartoi, kai hemeis allagesometha* – future passive indicative - egeiro, future passive indicative - allasso, future active indicative - salpizo.

For the trumpet will blow, and those who are dead will be raised up, and we will be changed. Both of these verbs are in the future indicative expressing the certainty of the action occurring in the future. And in the passive voice it shows that those being raised up and those being transformed will receive the action of the verb. It is Christ who does it. **The trumpet sounding doesn't raise the dead ones; it simply announces the event.**

Three resurrections are mentioned in v.23,24: 1) **Christ**, the first fruit from the dead; 2) **those who belong to Christ** at his *parousia*, which we see here is at the last trumpet; 3) then **the rest** will be raised at the end of the millennium.

Nothing is ever said about a secret coming, and a secret rapture, and a secret resurrection. Rather the entire event is portrayed as a bold, dramatic, dynamic, earth shaking event. The sun is darkened; stars do not give their light; heavenly bodies shaken; Christ appearing in great glory, every eye seeing him, etc.. Matthew 24:26-31. #08 3-09-17

Pastor Mike