

Message Nine

The Mystery of the Church

RK Hymns: 948, 852

Scripture Reading: Rev. 10:7; Rom. 16:25; Eph. 1:5, 9, 11, 22-23; 3:3-11; 1 Cor. 6:17

- Rev 10:7 But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel when he is about to trumpet, then the mystery of God is finished, as He has announced the good news to His own slaves the prophets.
- Rom 16:25 Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel, that is, the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which has been kept in silence in the times of the ages
- Eph 1:5 Predestinating us unto sonship through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,
- Eph 1:9 Making known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself,
- Eph 1:11 In whom also we were designated as an inheritance, having been predestinated according to the purpose of the One who works all things according to the counsel of His will,
- Eph 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,
- Eph 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.
- Eph 3:3 That by revelation the mystery was made known to me, as I have written previously in brief,
- Eph 3:4 By which, in reading it, you can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ,
- Eph 3:5 Which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in spirit,
- Eph 3:6 That in Christ Jesus the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the Body and fellow partakers of the promise through the gospel,
- Eph 3:7 Of which I became a minister according to the gift of the grace of God which was given to me according to the operation of His power.
- Eph 3:8 To me, less than the least of all saints, was this grace given to announce to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ as the gospel
- Eph 3:9 And to enlighten all that they may see what the economy of the mystery is, which throughout the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things,
- Eph 3:10 In order that now to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenlies the multifarious wisdom of God might be made known through the church,
- Eph 3:11 According to the eternal purpose which He made in Christ Jesus our Lord,
- 1 Cor 6:17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.

I. Ephesians 3:3-11 reveals that we may experience and enjoy Christ as the mystery of the church.

- Eph 3:3 That by revelation the mystery was made known to me, as I have written previously in brief,
- Eph 3:4 By which, in reading it, you can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ,
- Eph 3:5 Which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in spirit,
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- Eph 3:10 In order that now to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenlies the multifarious wisdom of God might be made known through the church,
- Eph 3:11 According to the eternal purpose which He made in Christ Jesus our Lord,

II. God's hidden purpose is the mystery, and the unveiling of this mystery is revelation; the Bible speaks of the revelation of the mystery—Rom. 16:25; Eph. 3:3, 5:

- Rom 16:25 Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel, that is, the proclamation of

- Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which has been kept in silence in the times of the ages
- Eph 3:3 That by revelation the mystery was made known to me, as I have written previously in brief,
 Eph 3:5 Which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in spirit,
- A. The mystery of Christ, the church, was hidden in other generations but has been revealed in the New Testament age—v. 5.
 Eph 3:5 Which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in spirit,
 - B. This mystery was hidden in God throughout the ages, but now the New Testament believers, having been enlightened, are able to see it—v. 9.
 Eph 3:9 And to enlighten all that they may see what the economy of the mystery is, which throughout the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things,
 - C. The mystery of Christ has been revealed to the apostles and prophets in their spirit by revelation—v. 5:
 Eph 3:5 Which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in spirit,
 1. The mingled spirit is the means by which the New Testament revelation concerning Christ and the church is unveiled to the apostles and prophets.
 2. When our spirit is mingled with the divine Spirit, our spirit becomes the organ to which the mystery of Christ is revealed—1 Cor. 6:17; Eph. 1:17; 3:5.
 1 Cor 6:17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.
 Eph 1:17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of Him,
 Eph 3:5 Which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in spirit,
 - D. If we would see the revelation of the hidden mystery, we need to be strengthened into our inner man, our regenerated spirit, and allow Christ to make His home in our heart—vv. 14-17a.
 Eph 3:14 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father,
 Eph 3:15 Of whom every family in the heavens and on earth is named,
 Eph 3:16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,
 Eph 3:17a That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, ...
 - E. In Romans 16:25 and 26 Paul speaks of the revelation of the mystery: “The proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which has been kept in silence in the times of the ages but has now been manifested.”

III. The seventh trumpet, as the conclusion of the eternal economy of the processed Triune God, closes the present age of mystery; hence, Revelation 10:7 says, “The mystery of God is finished”:

- A. “To seal up vision and prophet” (Dan. 9:24c) is to close the age of mystery, that is, to finish the mystery of God (Rev. 10:7; 1 Tim. 3:9).
 Rev 10:7 But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel when he is about to trumpet, then the mystery of God is finished, as He has announced the good news to His own slaves the prophets.
 1 Tim 3:9 Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.
- B. In the dispensations from Adam to Moses and from Moses to Christ, everything was unveiled, manifested, and there was no mystery.
- C. It will be the same in the dispensation of the millennial kingdom and in the new heaven and new earth—everything will be unveiled, and then there will be no more mystery.
- D. Christ Himself (Col. 2:2), the church (Eph. 3:4-6), the kingdom of the heavens (Matt. 13:11), the gospel (Eph. 6:19), the indwelling of Christ (Col. 1:26-27), and the coming

resurrection and transfiguration of the saints as the end of this dispensation of mystery (1 Cor. 15:51-52) are all mysteries that were hidden in times of the ages (Rom. 16:25; Eph. 3:5; Col. 1:26).

- Col 2:2 That their hearts may be comforted, they being knit together in love and unto all the riches of the full assurance of understanding, unto the full knowledge of the mystery of God, Christ,
- Eph 3:4 By which, in reading it, you can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ,
- Eph 3:5 Which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in spirit,
- Eph 3:6 That in Christ Jesus the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the Body and fellow partakers of the promise through the gospel,
- Matt 13:11 And He answered and said to them, Because to you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of the heavens, but to them it has not been given.
- Eph 6:19 And for me, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known in boldness the mystery of the gospel,
- Col 1:26 The mystery which has been hidden from the ages and from the generations but now has been manifested to His saints;
- Col 1:27 To whom God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory,
- 1 Cor 15:51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed,
- 1 Cor 15:52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we will be changed.
- Rom 16:25 Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel, that is, the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which has been kept in silence in the times of the ages

- E. All these mysteries will be completed, finished, and will be over at the trumpeting of the seventh trumpet.
- F. At the trumpeting of the seventh trumpet, not only God's judgment of wrath upon the earth but also the mystery of God are finished.
- G. In the dispensation from the incarnation of Christ to the millennial kingdom—the church age, the age of grace—everything is a mystery:
 - 1. The incarnation of Christ, as the beginning of the age of mystery, is a mystery—1 Tim. 3:16.
 - 1 Tim 3:16 And confessedly, great is the mystery of godliness: He who was manifested in the flesh, / Justified in the Spirit, / Seen by angels, / Preached among the nations, / Believed on in the world, / Taken up in glory.
 - 2. Christ is the mystery of God—Col. 2:2.
 - Col 2:2 That their hearts may be comforted, they being knit together in love and unto all the riches of the full assurance of understanding, unto the full knowledge of the mystery of God, Christ,
 - 3. The church is the mystery of Christ—Eph. 3:4-6:
 - Eph 3:4 By which, in reading it, you can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ,
 - Eph 3:5 Which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in spirit,
 - Eph 3:6 That in Christ Jesus the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the Body and fellow partakers of the promise through the gospel,
- a. Christ is a mystery, and the church, as the Body of Christ to express Him, is the mystery of Christ.
- b. Christ and the church as one spirit are the great mystery— 5:32; 1 Cor. 6:17.
 - Eph 5:32 This mystery is great, but I speak with regard to Christ and the church.
 - 1 Cor 6:17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.
- c. During the church age, the age of mystery, Christ is building up the church to be His bride—Matt. 16:18; Eph. 4:16; Rev. 19:7-9.
 - Matt 16:18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

- Eph 4:16 Out from whom all the Body, being joined together and being knit together through every joint of the rich supply and through the operation in the measure of each one part, causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love.
- Rev 19:7 Let us rejoice and exult, and let us give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.
- Rev 19:8 And it was given to her that she should be clothed in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteousnesses of the saints.
- Rev 19:9 And he said to me, Write, Blessed are they who are called to the marriage dinner of the Lamb. And he said to me, These are the true words of God.
4. The kingdom of the heavens, the indwelling of Christ, and the resurrection and transfiguration of the saints are all mysteries—Matt. 13:11; Col. 1:26-27; 1 Cor. 15:51-53.
- Matt 13:11 And He answered and said to them, Because to you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of the heavens, but to them it has not been given.
- Col 1:26 The mystery which has been hidden from the ages and from the generations but now has been manifested to His saints;
- Col 1:27 To whom God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory,
- 1 Cor 15:51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed,
- 1 Cor 15:52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we will be changed.
- 1 Cor 15:53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

IV. The mystery of the church is the ultimate mystery in the universe:

- A. The church is the hidden mystery in God's eternal economy— Eph. 3:9-11:
- Eph 3:9 And to enlighten all that they may see what the economy of the mystery is, which throughout the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things,
- Eph 3:10 In order that now to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenlies the multifarious wisdom of God might be made known through the church,
- Eph 3:11 According to the eternal purpose which He made in Christ Jesus our Lord,
1. The mystery of the universe is God, the mystery of God is Christ, and the mystery of Christ is the church—Gen. 1:1; Rev. 4:11; Col. 2:2; Eph. 3:4.
- Gen 1:1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.
- Rev 4:11 You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power, for You have created all things, and because of Your will they were, and were created.
- Col 2:2 That their hearts may be comforted, they being knit together in love and unto all the riches of the full assurance of understanding, unto the full knowledge of the mystery of God, Christ,
- Eph 3:4 By which, in reading it, you can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ,
2. According to Ephesians 3:4, the church has a particular title—*the mystery of Christ*.
- Eph 3:4 By which, in reading it, you can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ,
3. In the ages before the New Testament, the mystery of the church was hidden from men; it has been revealed to the apostles and the believers only in the New Testament age—v. 5; Col. 1:26.
- Eph 3:5 Which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in spirit,
- Col 1:26 The mystery which has been hidden from the ages and from the generations but now has been manifested to His saints;
4. The mystery of the church was hidden from eternity past throughout the Old Testament times, but in the New Testament age it has been manifested to all the believers in Christ.

5. In the New Jerusalem God obtains an eternal and full expression in the man whom He created; this is the ultimate mystery in the universe—the mystery of the church—Eph. 5:32.
 Eph 5:32 This mystery is great, but I speak with regard to Christ and the church.
 6. Our spirit needs to be strong and full of wisdom and revelation so that we may know the mystery of the church—1:17.
 Eph 1:17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of Him,
 7. The mystery of Christ and the mystery of the church are great and deep.
- B. The great mystery—Christ and the church—is the meaning of the universe and of human life—Rev. 4:11; Eph. 5:32:
- Rev 4:11 You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power, for You have created all things, and because of Your will they were, and were created.
- Eph 5:32 This mystery is great, but I speak with regard to Christ and the church.
1. God's intention in His creation of all things, including man, was that man would be mingled with God to produce the church—Zech. 12:1; Eph. 3:9.
 Zech 12:1 The burden of the word of Jehovah concerning Israel. Thus declares Jehovah, who stretches forth the heavens and lays the foundations of the earth and forms the spirit of man within him,
 Eph 3:9 And to enlighten all that they may see what the economy of the mystery is, which throughout the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things,
 2. The desire of God's heart is to have the mystery of Christ—the Body of Christ as the increase and expression of Christ—1:5, 9, 11, 22-23.
 Eph 1:5 Predestinating us unto sonship through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,
 Eph 1:9 Making known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself,
 Eph 1:11 In whom also we were designated as an inheritance, having been predestinated according to the purpose of the One who works all things according to the counsel of His will,
 Eph 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,
 Eph 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.
 3. The Body life is the ultimate satisfaction of our spiritual experience—5:30.
 Eph 5:30 Because we are members of His Body.
 4. The economy of the mystery hidden in God throughout the ages is the mystery of the church as the Body of Christ—3:9-10.
 Eph 3:9 And to enlighten all that they may see what the economy of the mystery is, which throughout the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things,
 Eph 3:10 In order that now to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenlies the multifarious wisdom of God might be made known through the church,
 5. The mystery of Christ and the mystery of the church should be our daily life; without this mystery, our life would be merely the life of a human being, not the life of a Christian—v. 4; 1 Tim. 3:15-16.
 Eph 3:4 By which, in reading it, you can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ,
 1 Tim 3:15 But if I delay, I write that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and base of the truth.
 1 Tim 3:16 And confessedly, great is the mystery of godliness: He who was manifested in the flesh, / Justified in the Spirit, / Seen by angels, / Preached among the nations, / Believed on in the world, / Taken up in glory.