

The Mystery of God

Rev. 10: 7.

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The word "mystery" occurs over twenty times in the New Testament and not once in the Old. It is a word which conveys to us that the things of God are not understood by natural means, but they are truths written in the Scriptures which are understood only by those who have the gift of the Holy Spirit of God. The Spirit has the key to every mystery, and will unfold them to the saints of God who seek light as to them. There are some fifteen distinctive mysteries, and we wish to speak of this one, hoping it will be a word of consolation to the tried and sorrowing ones amongst the saints of God. In point of time it will be the last one to be unfolded to us, as we shall see.

The mystery of God mentioned in Revelation 10 is not the same as the mystery of God referred to in Colossians 2. In the latter Scripture it is an unfolding of the *counsel* of God which took shape before time began, and as having in view the blessing of both Gentiles and Jews. Here it is concerned with the *ways* of God, and has blessing for both heaven and earth in view. The mystery of God in Colossians began to be effected when Christ took His place in glory at the right hand of God, and the Holy Spirit came upon the Christian company, formed Christ in them, and attached them to Him in glory; but the mystery in Revelation 10 began in the garden of Eden, and will not be completed until the world-to-come.

It has to do with the ways of God on earth; why He allows the evil and the suffering and the persecution of the saints of God. How often have the suffering saints in all dispensations cried out Why? Why? Why? At times God has allowed circumstances to come upon the saints which have raised the agonizing cry to God, Why has this been allowed in my life? Yet no answer, no solution to their problem has been given. We may well ask, "Will there ever be an answer, will there be an unfolding by God as to why He has allowed these distressing things to affect His people? We have the assurance that *all will be revealed*, and all the evil which has been allowed in this world will be seen to have an answer. This is taught in the passage to which we have called attention. That this passage has a universal character is obvious, but while it does include all things, we have in mind to speak of it as it affects us today. There can be no doubt but that *we shall see all revealed* at the judgment seat of Christ; but the earthly saints and the world at large will not see this revealing until the moment to which this passage looks on. We have been mystified at times when we have taken account of the evils which have been perpetrated in this world, and perhaps have wondered why God allowed them to happen. All is involved in this passage, for we shall see that it stands related to the testimony of God through the prophets and saints of all dispensations.

God has ever given testimony that He would bring blessing to this earth in spite of all the evil influences which abound. It may have appeared as though God had forgotten His promises as we have waited in patience in this day of apparent delay. But we are quite assured that, if God has promised certain things, he will certainly bring them to pass in His own time, and not according to our thoughts. Meanwhile, He allows our faith to be tested by the many trials we are called upon to endure, and we need, as Abraham the father of those who have faith needed, to have the assurance "that what He had promised, He was able also to perform," Rom. 4: 21.

At the beginning of Revelation, Rev. 10, we read of an angel lifting up his hand to heaven, with

one foot on the sea and the other foot on the earth, thus claiming the universe for God. We understand this to be a picture of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His service to God, about to take hold of the universe and to administer all things for the glory of God. In view of this He says, "that there should be no longer delay" (New Trans.). We are also assured that the precise moment for this to be effected will be when the seventh angel begins to sound. This will be the moment when God will no longer act in "mystery," nor any longer bear with the evil, but will shew clearly that which he has been working to secure both in heaven and earth.

In Rev. 11: 15, we read, "And the seventh angel sounded." This is the time referred to by the angel in Rev. 10, the time of the *unfolding*, when it will be revealed to all why God has acted as He has done in His dealings in this world. What shall we do when we see this unfolding? We shall fall on our faces and give God thanks! Christ will then have universal dominion, and in that power will reward the saints for every moment spent in His service in this world. All that was promised in the prophets will be brought into effect, and the saints who have waited and served will be suitably rewarded. The destroyers of the earth will themselves be destroyed; all will be ordered in heaven and on earth for the glory of God, and all will be filled with the greatness of Christ. The reason for the providential dealings of God will then be known; and the heavenly company, seen in the character of the twenty-four elders, will worship God and give Him thanks.

Until that moment let us not attempt to question the ways of God, either regarding ourselves or regarding the nations, but let us be assured that when we *do* see all in the day of display, we shall see that God has made no mistake, and that those very sorrows which caused us so many tears today, will in that day be the very cause of thanksgiving to God.