

21 June 2015

The Bible Mysteries & Rome (The mysteries of God Pt 5 & Final).

Introduction:

This is our fifth and final study on the topic of the mysteries of God.

Previous study:

1. The sixth mystery: The mystery of iniquity.
2. The seventh mystery: The mystery of godliness: God manifest in the flesh.

Three points are established from the Scriptures for this study.

1. The eighth mystery: The mystery of seven stars & seven candlesticks.
2. The ninth mystery: The mystery of Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots
3. The Tenth mystery: The Kingdom of God.

Our three points in more detail.

1. The eighth mystery: The mystery of seven stars & seven candlesticks.

Supporting Verse.

Rev.1: 20 "The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches."

Context and meaning of our verse.

* This is a revelation of Jesus Christ sent by an angel unto John of "things which must shortly come to pass" (verse 1). And those things are concerning "the seven churches which are in Asia" (verses 2 & 3). Verse 4 he says that it is "from him which is and which was, and which is to come; from the seven Spirits which are before his throne;" (verse 4) "And from Jesus Christ" (verse 5). In verse 10 John says "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice as of a trumpet." Confirming who He is, and asking him to write in a book what he sees, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia. Verse 11 says that John turns to see who was speaking unto him and sees seven golden candlesticks, and in the midst of the candlesticks, "one like the Son of man", whose eyes "were as flames of fire" (verse 12, 13 & 14). According to verse 15 he (the one like the Son of man) had in his right hand seven stars. And when John saw Him he "fell at his feet" (verse 17), and then the one like the Son of man, put his right hand upon him, and told him to "Fear not, I am the first and the last". And verse 18 continues for the reader to clarify He is the Lord Jesus Christ that "was dead" but now "liveth", and He has "the keys of hell and of death". Then comes our verse: "The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches." Hence, the Lord explained to John the mystery of what he saw in the Spirit.

Other scriptural support.

Rev.10: 7

Application of our verse today.

* That which follows the mystery is details of the spiritual condition of the seven churches which are both a picture of the spiritual condition of the church in the church age, and actual churches in the tribulation. Hence, this mystery is applicable to us today,

Illustration.

* How many churches do you know that believe they are the **true** church. You have Rome, Mormon, Jehovah Witness, Seventh Day Adventists, Church of Christ, and others all believe they are right. I have listened to a Pastor from the Church of Christ on TV and he said, that they are the true church, then he proceeded to teach from four different Bible versions. So I emailed him to ask him how can he make a different point from different books that each claim to be the word of God, but say something different. I never heard back, and that is the **true** church.

Learning from our Illustration.

* Every apostate church today that sees their beliefs, and hears or reads the word of God but either does not make a link between their own apostasy and the word of God is blind to the mystery that was shown to John of the seven churches, and that which follows in chapters 3 & 4.

Challenge & or encouragement.

* What was shown to John was a mystery that Christ explained to him in simple words. The seven stars "are the angels of the seven churches". There are seven types of churches and each of them is a mystery to those churches today that are spiritually like one of the seven, where what they see is **not** what the Lord sees. Do you see things as God says He sees them in the word of God?

2. The ninth mystery: The mystery of Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots.

Supporting Verse.

Rev 17:5 "And upon her forehead [was] a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH."

Context and meaning of our verse.

Verse 1 the seven angels talked with John and told him they wanted to show him "the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters." The kings of the earth have committed fornication (idolatry) with the whore, and the inhabitants of the earth were drunk with the wine of her fornication (verse 2). The angel carried John away in the spirit and he saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast full of the names of blasphemy" (verse 3) and the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour and decked with gold, and having a "golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication" (verse 4). And it was upon her that the name was written "MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH." Who is that woman?

Verse 6 says, she is drunk from the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.

Verse 9 helps us when it points out that the seven heads which the beast has, "on which the woman sitteth", are seven mountains. Verse 15 points out that the waters that John saw are "peoples, multitudes, and nations and tongues". And the woman which thou sawest is that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth. Question: Which city sits on seven mountains, whose people are drunk from the blood of the martyrs, array themselves in purple and scarlet colour, have abundant riches, and hold a golden cup in their hand?

Application of our verse today.

* The Scriptures identify a mystery city that has committed many evil acts against the saints, and for anyone today that is a Christian and acknowledges the battle that we are in, to be ignorant of who this mystery woman refers to, is a demonstration of how much the devil has deceived the body of Christ. Those in Christ need to know, without a doubt who is this mystery woman.

Illustration.

* I sought to identify who an evangelist was the other week, so as a parting question I asked him "who is the whore of Babylon?" There was no answer. There will be many in the church who are either oblivious to the seriousness of this question, or ignorant of the power of Satan to deceive.

Learning from our Illustration.

* The man in our example is either ignorant of who the mystery woman refers to because he has been taught by those who have been deceived by Rome, or he is a deceiver.

* I challenge you to ask the next minister you see the question: who is the whore of Babylon in Revelation 17? For a pastor or evangelist to not know who the woman is, is a lesson for all of us today, that just because the church knew 400 years ago, does not mean that they do today. The mystery woman, the whore of Babylon is fulfilled in the Roman Catholic institution, that calls themselves the true church whilst committing fornication and abominations of the earth.

Challenge & or encouragement.

* Be **not** ignorant of this mystery! If the stewards of God, who are responsible for teaching their flock from the scriptures, were faithful (1Cor.4: 2), then we would not have the ignorance of who the woman is in Rev.17. But alas, the devil has deceived much of the body of Christ, and so, sadly,

this mystery is still a mystery to many. Let us pray for those who remain blind to this mystery, and when, and where possible ask the question of those we meet, that we would participate in the education of the body, the edifying of the body, in love, that others may know who is "MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH" (Rev.17: 5).

3. The Tenth mystery: The Kingdom of heaven (KOH).

Supporting Verse.

Mt.13: 11 "He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given."

Context and meaning of our verse.

Verse 2 indicates that there was a great multitude gathered on the shore, whilst Jesus went into a ship, and according to verses 10 & 11 he taught his disciples (in parables according to verse 3). The parable in our context is that of the sower, where the seed that the sower sowed went on different ground, "some fell upon stony places" (verse 5), some among thorns (verse 7) and some fell on good ground (verse 7). The amount of fruit from the seed was dependant on the quality of the ground. His disciples then ask "why speakest thou to them in parables?" (verse 10), and then we have our verse as a reply: "Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given." Hence, the mysteries of the KOH are for the Jews ("unto you" i.e. his disciples). Jesus goes on to provide an interpretation of the parable and then share others.

Other scriptural support.

Lk.8: 10.

Application of our verse today.

* Jesus preached the KOH (Matt.3: 2, which is physical – Matt.11: 12), and although Rome, Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses and many main stream churches teach the kingdom gospel, it is for the period of the kingdom, not the church age. But as we can see from the first parable of the sower, we can make application of this verse to today.

Illustration.

* I have never asked a minister of the cloth for an understanding of the differences between the KOH and the Kingdom of God (KOG), but just as we asked the evangelist, the question of who is mystery Babylon the Great, let us ask a minister the difference between these two kingdoms.

Learning from our Illustration.

* Given what Rome preaches as the gospel today, the Kingdom gospel, compared to what Paul teaches us to preach, being Christ crucified, I expect we will receive answers that show either ignorance of understanding or that show they err not knowing the scriptures on the KOH.

Challenge & or encouragement.

* This final mystery in the Scriptures was taught to the disciples in parables, for them to understand. Paul did not preach, or teach on the kingdom of heaven, because Christ was crucified and therefore the kingdom was not brought in, but is deferred until the kingdom age. But, just as it was a mystery to the multitude, so is the KOH a mystery to many in the body of Christ today. Let us pray for those who have the role as stewards of the mysteries of God, that they would be good managers of these mysteries, rightly dividing the Scriptures. When they do they will establish that seven mysteries apply directly to the church and three apply to another subsequent age, but have spiritual application for today. We conclude this series acknowledging that the KOH that Christ proclaimed is a mystery to many today.

Summary of our three points.

1. The eighth mystery: The mystery of seven stars & seven candlesticks.
2. The ninth mystery: The mystery of Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots
3. The Tenth mystery: The Kingdom of heaven.