

# **SPIRITUAL MYSTERIES REVEALED IN OUR TIME**

**MATTHEW 13:11**

**By Mike Burnham**

A mystery is that which, being concealed for a time, is brought out of concealment by a revelation. It is also something that is beyond our comprehension. At the second coming of Christ, there will be no more mysteries or secrets.

There are tremendous upheavals in nature and governments in our day. The nations cannot find peace because, in the invisible world, the secret things which are hidden from the natural man are coming to pass. And the powers of darkness know that their time is short. Only he who is in union with the Lord Jesus Christ begins to understand the spiritual mysteries. (Gen. 18:17-18; Psa. 25:14.)

At the first coming of the Lord Jesus--there was worldwide turbulence. Caesar Augustus ordered a census, "That all the world should be taxed" Luke 2:1b, and every man had to go to his own city, to the place of his birth. The whole Roman empire was in motion. It was a time of great tension and stress. Why? So the Word of the Lord could be fulfilled which said that Jesus would be born in Bethlehem, (Micah 5:2).

The first coming of Jesus brought the Kingdom of God to the heart of man, (Luke 17:21b).

His second coming will bring the Kingdom of God to earth visibly. This is the reason for the worldwide turbulence in our day, with the focus on the Middle East, Russia, Iraq, etc., for the Kingdom of God will become visible in

Israel. (Dan. 2:28,44,45; Micah 4:1-7; Zech. 12:8-10; 14:3,4,16,17).

The first coming of Jesus was a secret. He came where nobody expected Him. Though the coming of the King of Kings was announced, it was not to the mighty people of the world but to poor people who groaned beneath their sins. The shepherds who watched their flocks by night, to Simon, the elderly man, and to Anna, the elderly widow, who served God in the temple with fastings and prayers night and day. Yet never was the coming of a king proclaimed as it was at the birth of Jesus: innumerable hosts of angels praised God in that night on the plains of Ephratah and the Holy Spirit Himself revealed to Anna and Simon, (Luke 2:25-27, 36-38).

When the Kingdom of God comes visibly, however, it will be in great power and glory--all the earth will see Him, (Rev. 1:7; Matt. 24:29,30). It will not be a secret.

### **THE MYSTERY OF INQUITY**

2 Thessalonians 2:7,8: there is a battle being fought between the mystery of iniquity and the mysteries of the Lord. This battle, which is fought in the spiritual realm, (Eph. 6:12), is visible to a very small extent in our day and only those who are the Lord's know the hidden powers. Jesus recognized the Mystery of iniquity (or lawlessness) that worked against Him, (Luke 22:53). This mystery, which is lawlessness, is found within churches and in the world. It is the anti-Christ influence and teaching that comes from the devil and especially works through secret societies and organizations to fulfill his lawlessness. The visible embodiment of this lawlessness will be in the form of a man called the anti-Christ, the man of sin, the beast out of the sea, and many other names. But for now, this force is being restrained by (I believe) the Holy Spirit (he) working through God's children. So, for now, Satan has to work behind the scenes, deceiving and destroying secretly. People know that something is wrong but since they have no insight into the

spirits' realm they go their merry way either disbelieving or thinking that the spirits are good and there to help one find peace and fulfillment.

PSALM 25:14 The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant. (KJV)

But when the time in God's plan comes and the Holy Spirit's influence is "taken out of the way" or "snatched out of the midst", (which I believe is the rapture), the man of sin will be revealed and the secret force behind all lawlessness will no longer be secret, v-8-12. We can see the time of this happening drawing ever closer every day. Why can't people see the end approaching, even people who call themselves Christians? We are experiencing a worldwide increase of religion without the fear of God, and without the cross. If churches don't teach the awesomeness of God and the Cross of Christ they will produce blindness to the secrets of the Lord. This is what happened when Christ first came. He openly proclaimed the "Kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 4:17), but later, as religion gained the upper hand and self-righteousness through the party of the Pharisees began to dominate, He veiled His speeches and only spoke in parables.

### **THE MYSTERY OF THE INCARNATION OF GOD 1 TIMOTHY 3:15**

Paul told Timothy that the church was the pillar and ground of the truth and he now tells him how grand that truth is that the church upholds. 1 TIMOTHY 3:16: "Without controversy" or "by common consent", Great is the mystery of godliness. The truth from verse 15 is here called "The mystery of godliness. The subject of this mystery is Christ and He is the revelation of God to man, (Col. 1:25-29). He who before was "hidden" with God was made manifest (revealed), and the mystery is God's divine plan embodied in Christ, once hidden from, but now revealed to us who believe (Rom .16:25,26; Eph. 1:9). Godliness comes from Christ living in us, as Paul said, (Gal. 2:20).

Manifested in the flesh: (Jn. 1:14) points to Christ's previous concealment and preexistence. The beginning of the mystery is Christ coming out of that concealment. The Creator descended into the conditions and circumstances of a creature of His creation. The almighty Builder of the universe was a helpless infant. He descended so low that he had to proceed from weakness to strength, from ignorance to knowledge, from Glory to suffering, (Luke 2:40,52; Heb. 2:14-18, 5:7-9).

Justified in the Spirit: (Rom. 1:3,4) Justify, here, means to vindicate or prove to be right. In the flesh Jesus didn't appear to be the pre-existent Son of God, the Sent One of God to be the Saviour of the world, but He was justified or vindicated in the Spirit. At the very first in His being, He was separated from the sin nature of ours through the power of the Holy Spirit in His birth from a virgin. At His baptism the Spirit descended upon Him, and the voice of the Father came from Heaven saying, "this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." At the beginning of His public career, under extreme temptation, He showed that He was not to be turned aside from his mission. His public life was filled with miracles that witnessed to the truth of His claims. And last, He was justified by His resurrection.

Seen of Angels: (1 Peter 1:12) They could not turn away from beholding and wondering. They saw the Son of God in a form that was level to them, that was even below them; for he was made a little lower than the angels. And as the mystery developed, how their wonder would increase! To see the Eternal Son of God degraded until he could to no lower depth be degraded. What wonder and amazement they must have exhibited when they looked upon Calvary, (Eph. 3:8,10; Col. 1:16,20).

Preached unto the Gentiles: What angels came to know by "seeing", the Gentiles learned by "preaching." The universalism of the gospel is classed next among the wonders of this mystery, and this factor would have special point for Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles. The Hebrew Christ (Messiah) had become a Christ for the nations, (Eph. 2:12-18; Isa. 49:6).

Believed on in the world: The next step in this ascending scale is the acceptance of Christ, in a world that lies in wickedness, as the Saviour, (1 (1 John 5:19,20; Col. 1:5,6)

Received up into glory: (John 17:5; Mark 16:19) This is the conclusive evidence to the greatness of the mystery. If this verse was part of a hymn, as some believe, it could not close more suitably than with the humiliated Messiah's exalted entry into His Heavenly Home.