

PROPHECY

Peter said to Israel, “Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath SPOKEN BY THE MOUTH OF ALL HIS HOLY PROPHETS SINCE THE WORLD BEGAN.” (Acts 3:19-21)

- I. Concerns a KINGDOM; a political ORGANIZATION (Daniel 2:44)
- II. The kingdom to be established ON EARTH (Jeremiah 23:5, Matthew 6:10)
- III. The kingdom PROPHESED since the world began (Luke 1:67-75)
- IV. Israel to be given SUPREMACY over the nations (Isaiah 61:6)
- V. The Gentiles to be blessed through Israel’s RISE AND INSTRUMENTALITY (Zechariah 8:13, 23)
- VI. Prophecy mainly concerns NATIONS (Isaiah 2:4)
- VII. Prophecy concerns blessings, both MATERIAL and spiritual, on EARTH (Isaiah 11:1-9)
- VIII. Christ comes to His people, Israel, ON EARTH (Revelation 1:7)
- IX. Justification is by a man’s faith and it must be a faith that WORKS (James 2:24)
- X. The proclamation of the prophetic program committed particularly to the TWELVE apostles (Acts 1:6-8)

MYSTERY

Paul said to the body of Christ, “Now unto him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was KEPT SECRET SINCE THE WORLD BEGAN, BUT NOW IS MADE MANIFEST” (Rom. 16:25-26a)

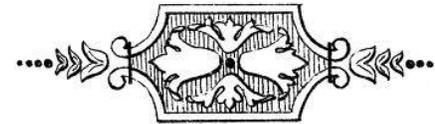
- I. Concerns a BODY; a spiritual ORGANISM (I Corinthians 12:12-13)
- II. The body given a position in HEAVENLY places (Ephesians 2:5-6)
- III. The body was chosen in Christ before the world began, but kept SECRET since the world began (Ephesians 1:4, 3:9)
- IV. Jew and Gentile placed on the SAME LEVEL before God (Romans 10:12, 11:32)
- V. The Gentiles blessed through Israel’s FALL AND DIMINISHING (Romans 11:11-12, 15)
- VI. The mystery concerns INDIVIDUALS (II Corinthians 5:17)
- VII. The mystery concerns all SPIRITUAL blessings in HEAVENLY places (Ephesians 1:3)
- VIII. Christ comes for His body, the Church, meeting them IN THE AIR (I Thessalonians 4:17)
- IX. Justification is by the faith of Christ (Galatians 2:16) and is received through faith WITHOUT WORKS (Romans 3:28; 4:5)
- X. The proclamation of the mystery committed particularly to PAUL (Colossians 1:24-27)

All scripture is for our learning (Romans 15:4), but it certainly was not all written to us or about us. Yes, the apostle Paul said that all scripture is profitable (2 Timothy 3:16), but in the same epistle he also told us to study it by “rightly dividing” it (2 Timothy 2:15). Therefore, while all scripture is profitable for our study because it is given by inspiration of God, it can be rendered unprofitable, even hurtful, by failing to rightly divide it.

Many Bible teachers claim that the most important division in the Bible is between the Old and New Testaments. They say, “The Old Testament was for the Jews and the New Testament is for the Church.” Technically, the Old Testament did not begin with Genesis but Exodus 20, and the New Testament did not begin with Matthew 1. The earthly ministry of our Lord was conducted under the Law (Galatians 4:4), and a new testament was not even possible before He shed His precious blood (Matthew 26:28; Hebrews 9:16). Furthermore, although both the old and new covenants affect us, they were actually made with Israel (Exodus 19:5-6; Jeremiah 31:31). Another serious blunder is to suppose that every mention of a church in scripture is a reference to the Body of Christ. Israel was a “church in the wilderness” (Acts 7:38), and the “little flock” of Jews that followed the Messiah was also a church (Matthew 18:17; Acts 2:47). Those churches were very different from the “church which is his body” (Ephesians 1:22-23). The Body of Christ is a spiritual organism that is neither Jew nor Gentile but one new man (Ephesians 2:14-16). This body could not have been formed before the casting away of Israel (Romans 11:15) and therefore did not begin before Acts 7. Certainly Israel had not yet been cast aside when they were being offered the prophesied kingdom in Acts 3. The events transpiring in the first chapters of Acts were in harmony with the prophesied “last days” that precede the setting up of the kingdom (Acts 2:16-17; 3:24). What is transpiring in this present dispensation was not prophesied by the prophets but rather hidden from them and revealed first through the apostle Paul (Ephesians 3:5). When God saved Saul of Tarsus, He graciously interrupted the prophetic program that was headed toward the great tribulation and ushered in a mystery program. The nation of Israel is the subject of prophecy and the Body of Christ is the subject of the mystery. Thus, the most important division in the Bible is between prophecy (that which was made known in other ages) and mystery (that which was not made known in other ages).

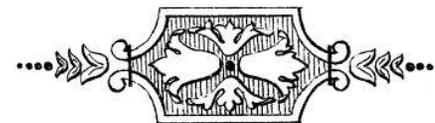
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The Main Division In the Bible



Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

2 Timothy 2:15



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