



Bible Student's Notebook™

The Herald of His Grace

Presenting *every man* perfect in Christ Jesus. Colossians 1:28

Volume VIII
Issue 183

The Lost Precious Gem

by – J.C. O'Hair (1876-1958)

Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in Him, which is the Head of all principality and power (Colossians 2:8-10).

There is a lost precious gem in Christendom; it is the divine message and program, for which the apostle Paul was an ambassador in bonds, for which Paul suffered as an evil doer (Ephesians 6:19-20; Colossians 4:3-4; II Timothy 2:8-9). He called this particular divine truth, "the mystery of Christ," "the mystery of the gospel," "the mystery of God's will," "the dispensation of the grace of God," "the eternal purpose of God."



for centuries it was almost entirely **lost sight of**. In fact, until brought to the fore through the writings and the preaching of a distinguished ex-clergyman, J.N. Darby (1800-1882), in the early part of the last century, it is scarcely to be found in a single book or sermon throughout a period of sixteen hundred years!

Concerning this precious gem, God's will for every saint is expressed in Ephesians 3:9:

And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God ...

Let us quote from the book of H.A. Ironside (1876-1951), *The Mysteries of God* (page 50):

Throughout the writings of the apostle Paul he again and again refers to a wondrous secret which he designates in a special way as "the mystery" or a "great mystery." Other mysteries he treats of, as we have seen, but there is one that is preeminently such. It occupies much of his ministry, and is clearly **the chief gem** in the diadem of the truth of Christianity; yet

If any doubt this statement, let them search, as the writer has in measure done, the remarks of the so-called Fathers, both pre- and post-Nicene; the theological treaties of the scholastic divines; Romans Catholic writers of all shades of thought; the literature of the Reformation; the sermons and expositions of the Puritans; the general theological works of the day. That a doctrine so clearly revealed in the Scriptures could have become **so utterly lost** is only to be accounted for by **the Judaizing of the Church**, and the consequent minding of earthly things that beclouded the heavenly ones. ▶

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Here we learn what every Christian should know; the chief gem in the diadem of the truth of Christianity was for centuries almost entirely lost sight of. How are we to account for the loss of that gem, "the mystery"? "The Judaizing of the Church." How then are saints to uncover, recover or re-discover the lost gem? By dejudaizing the Church.

From Ironside's same book, page 51, we quote:

Of ordinances exalted to the place of mysteries, as in heathen rites, he will find much; but as to "the Mystery," which to the apostle was so unspeakably precious, rarely a reference.

The truth concerning "the Mystery" is indeed "lost truth." If it were possible for you to visit all of the "churches" in this country and hear all of the preachers, including the outstanding Fundamentalists, you would not find one-tenth of one per cent of them obeying Ephesians 3:9,

*And make all men see what is **the fellowship of the mystery**, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God ...*

So far as the ninety-nine plus per cent is concerned, the gem is still lost; it is still "hid in God." It is lost, because the Church has been Judaized.

Several years ago I attended one of the sessions of the Founder's Week Bible Conference at Moody Bible Institute. I heard a splendid "grace" message from a Bible teacher, who is pastor of a Presbyterian Church right outside Philadelphia. He said that shortly after the death of Paul the truth concerning "the dispensation of the grace of God" was forgotten and lost. He said, "The Church went into apostasy and darkness."

Several weeks after I heard this very stirring message some one handed me a book written by E.W. Bullinger (1837-1913). In that book I uncovered or discovered the fact that years before he, too, wrote concerning lost or forgotten truths that the Presbyterian preacher gave out at the Moody conference.

Bible Student's Notebook™

Paul Our Guide – Christ Our Goal

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This weekly publication (52 times a year) is dedicated to:

- the proclamation of the riches of God's abundant, exceeding grace (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7)
- the affirmation of God's purpose to save all mankind through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (I Timothy 2:3, 4; 4:10; Titus 2:11)
- the "preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began" (Romans 16:25)
- true freedom and liberty apart from the law (Galatians 5:1)
- the organic nature of the church, the body of Christ (I Corinthians 12)
- the distinct ministry of Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles (Romans 11:13)
- the importance of receiving all whom Christ has received (Romans 14-15)
- the recovery of rich Biblical truth that has too long remained hidden under the veils of traditionalism, prejudice, misunderstanding, and fear (Mark 7:7, 13).
- the completeness of the believer in Christ (Colossians 2:10), with ...
 - total forgiveness of sins (Colossians 1:14)
 - identity in His death, burial, and resurrection (Romans 6)
 - adult sonship position (Galatians 4)

This publication is a joint effort of a few members of the body of Christ. It is a product of our individual lives and ministries together. We do not claim infallibility for its contents. Our readers are asked to be as the Bereans and search the Scriptures (Acts 17:10-11; I Thessalonians 5:21).

This publication is not connected with any "church," "denomination," "movement," "organization," "mission," "creed," "meeting," "school," "conference" or "fellowship."

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Remember that it is our responsibility as husbands and fathers to take the truths we learn from God's Word, the truths that we hold dear, and impart them to our families.

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We again quote what H.A. Ironside has printed in one of his books (*Baptism*) concerning the lost truth recovered by John Darby:

It is a great truth that the Lord is teaching many over again in the present day, after it has been buried in the rubbish of ecclesiastical tradition for centuries, that God has a Church upon earth. It is our part, then, not to be making churches but to acknowledge what He has already made ... Into this membership man cannot admit, but the Lord only.

Truly Darby was an able, excellent, spiritual Bible teacher and proclaimed some wonderful truths concerning the "one Body," and some of the differences between the messages and programs of Peter and Paul. Darby saw that in this dispensation of grace the Church is not working under the so-called great commission of Matthew 28:19-20 and Mark 16:14-18. He knew that so far as the "Acts" record is concerned, there is no proof that any of the twelve apostles left the land of Israel to preach the "grace" gospel to Gentiles. He taught, from Acts 3:14-26, that the Son of man would have come back and redeemed the nation Israel and established the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, sending the Israelitish messengers to the nations under the Matthew and Mark commissions, if Israel's rulers had repented.

Darby acknowledged that the Body of Christ was God's secret, not the subject of prophecy, and that the truth concerning that Body was revealed to Paul before any of the twelve apostles knew it.

Note carefully and ponder well this statement from the pen of H.A. Ironside:

The mystery was not something of difficult, mysterious character, but a sacred secret never known to mankind until in due time opened up by the Holy Spirit through the apostle Paul.

I most heartily agree with both Bullinger and Ironside that historically "the dispensation of the grace of God" did not begin until Israel rejected Christ in resurrection. This Ironside plainly teaches in his book (*Romans*) in his comments on Romans

16:25-26. In this he teaches the truth.

The Old Testament Scriptures clearly predicted the calling of the Gentiles, but always in subjection to Israel ...

Let the reader not fall into a mistake very commonly made today. The Kingdom is not the Church (Body) ...

"The Mystery," on the other hand, is spiritual and belongs to heaven. A break in God's ways having come in, He now makes known His hidden purpose ...

"The Mystery" formed no part of the revelation of the previous dispensation. Had it been otherwise, Paul could not rightly have written that it was "kept secret since the world began." He (Paul) learned it not from the former Scriptures, but by direct revelation from the Lord Jesus Christ in glory ...

A truth never before made known. The Old Testament will be searched in vain for it. It is not there, because it was "hid in God" ...

Preachers of Old Testament truths, which they offer in place of New Testament mysteries, would not find it so easy to go on confusing the people of God if there was real exercise of conscience among those who are content to be styled "the laity," and who seldom read their Bibles for themselves and endeavor to rightly divide the Word of Truth.

Note his remarks, pages 17-18, *The Mysteries of God*:

Not a saint in a hundred knows the difference between the two terms ... the bulk of professing believers know little or nothing ... unquestionably the onus of blame rests upon the guides, who, professing to be Christ's ministers, are anything but "stewards of the mysteries of God" ...

But this doctrine of the one Body is never referred to by any other apostle than Paul. He

calls it “*the dispensation of the mystery*” with which he especially had been entrusted. Indeed it was the characteristic truth of his large and varied ministry.

Every servant of Christ, who is familiar with the denominational creeds and programs and who has endeavored to teach the general run of Christians the glorious “grace” message, knows how true are Ironside’s statements concerning the appalling ignorance of the Word of God among Christians.

In his book, *The Mysteries of God*, Ironside stated many important facts concerning an intelligent knowledge of the Scriptures by understanding God’s present “grace” program during this parenthetical age when God’s eternal purpose is being accomplished, while the “Kingdom” covenants have been interrupted, and the Kingdom of Heaven has been postponed. Hear his words, which should be heeded and obeyed by every Christian:

Christ’s ministers are to be stewards of the mysteries of God, not merely preachers of what people so often call the simple gospel.

Surely every Bible teacher who has read I Corinthians 4:1-4 should know how true this statement is.

Paul plainly stated that a dispensation was committed unto him (I Corinthians 9:15-17; Colossians 1:23-26; Ephesians 3:1-9). As Ironside suggests, if the “Reverends” and “Doctors of Divinity” go on in their utter confusion, do not be blind followers of blind leaders, but rather remember to be true Bereans (Acts 17:11).

It is so important to believe Paul’s statement in I Corinthians 3:10:

According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

The risen, glorified Christ, the living Head of the Church, which God is edifying in this age and dispensation of grace, appointed the apostle Paul His chief foreman in building up the Body of Christ. To Paul we must go for the blueprints and specifications, if we are to be workmen who need not to be ashamed. Let us take heed how we build together upon that foundation which Paul laid.

WHAT OTHERS HAVE SAID

Now read what William T. Pettingill (1886-1950) has written concerning Pauline truth:

“*Now to Him that is of power to stablish you*” (Romans 16:25-27). This closing paragraph is of great doctrinal importance as touching the person of Christ.

1. God is of power to stablish His people;
2. He stablishes them according to Paul’s gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ;
3. This preaching of Jesus Christ by which God stablishes His people must be a preaching of Jesus Christ according to “*the revelation of the mystery*”!

There is much preaching of Jesus Christ which does not stablish God’s people, because it is not according to Paul’s gospel, nor according to “*the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began,*” but was made manifest by revelation to the apostle Paul. (Compare Ephesians 3:1-7).”

Now from the pen of William R. Newell (1868-1956):

You can judge any man’s teaching by this rule – is he Pauline? Does his doctrine start and end according to those statements of Christian doctrine uttered by the apostle Paul? No matter how wonderful a man may seem to be in his gifts and apparent consecration, if his gospel is not Pauline, it is not the gospel, and we might as well get our minds settled at once on that point.

For instance, if you were to take Paul's Epistles out of the Bible, you cannot find anything about the Church, the Body of Christ, for no other apostle mentions the Body of Christ.

Would that we had grace to defend just as vigorously this great message today, for it has many enemies and even real friends who do not yet see it clearly; and there are others who, like Peter (Galatians 2:11), through fear of others, are ready to compromise.

Now I will give you a little from C.I. Scofield (1843-1921):

After repeated study of the Epistles written after Paul's arrival at Rome, I am convinced that in them is found a curative teaching for all of the present-day delusions and fanaticisms found among many of the most sincere saints in the Church ...

Also by careful restudies of the Book of the Acts and of the Epistles written before its close, I am convinced that those who contend for a purely Kingdom dispensation covering the Book of Acts period are as much deceived by Satan as are those who contend that the sign gifts are still in the Church and would be in manifestation everywhere if God's people were in a healthy spiritual state and exercising faith to that end ...

When the apostles were doing "signs and wonders" in the Book of Acts period for the purposes mentioned in Romans 15:18-19 and Hebrews 2:3-4, the sovereign sign gifts of the Spirit mentioned in I Corinthians 12 were operative among some of the members of His Body, the Church ...

The fact that the Bible does not give a hint of the manifestation of the sign gifts after the close of the Book of the Acts period must carry convincing evidence to the careful student who compares Scripture with Scripture, that they have been retired ...

In the latest Epistles of Paul not only is it noticeable that the sign gifts are nowhere in manifestation but a different order is brought forth by the Holy Spirit for the correction of prevailing hobbies and fanaticism ...

There is no foundation in the Word of God for the prevailing popular doctrine of "divine healing" ...

It is not true that healing is as much the will of God for every Christian as salvation is for the unsaved. Some of the choicest of saints, by the elective will of God, have been patient sufferers for years upon sick beds ...

The sign-gifts of I Corinthians 12 were operative only during the Acts period ...

A careful study of the Epistles, especially of the latest Epistles of Paul, which give the normal course of the Church during the present dispensation, would dismount all from their hobbies, eliminate the last vestige of Judaism from their lives and teaching, and would adjust things in general, placing secondary things in their place and first things where they belong ...

Is it the Spirit of God, or Satan, who turns the eyes of sincere Christians back to Pentecost and away from the goal placed before them in Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians?

(C.I. Scofield, *Tongues, Visions, Signs Not God's Order Today.*)

Scofield's teaching is that God's spiritual program for the Body of Christ was somewhat changed after the pronouncement of Acts 28:25-28, God's judgment upon Israel. He believed that it was the same Body under a changed program; that in Paul's prison epistles is found the normal course of the Church for this present reign of grace, and also the curative for every form of Pentecostalism and all the "isms" and ills with which the Church of Christ is afflicted.



THE FALL OF ISRAEL: GENTILE SALVATION

There are some foundation truths that the Christian must first know before he is ready to see and make others see what is *"the fellowship of the mystery,"* which was *"hid in God"* from before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 3:9; Romans 16:25). One of the most important truths is stated in Romans 11:30, that the Gentiles obtained mercy from God because of Israel's unbelief. Think of this verse seriously and prayerfully. When did the Gentiles obtain mercy from God because of Israel's unbelief? Let us see from the Scriptures how true is the statement of Ironside that *"the mystery"* was not revealed until after Israel had rejected Christ in resurrection. This is the all-important truth that students of the Word of God must understand, if they want to have the eyes of their understanding opened to know the most glorious, wonderful truth for saints in all of the Bible, and be no longer children *"tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine"* (Ephesians 4:14).

What is the meaning of Romans 11:11, that through the fall of Israel salvation was sent to Gentiles, the meaning of Romans 11:15, that the casting away of Israel brought reconciliation to the rest of the world? What is meant by *"the fullness of the Gentiles"* in Romans 11:25; that blindness in part happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in?

When Israel, the builders, rejected the Stone (Christ), it was the Lord's doing and it is marvelous in our eyes (Matthew 21:42). Therefore Christ on the cross prayed for their forgiveness (Luke 23:34). When Israel rejected Christ in resurrection the apostle of the Gentiles cried,

O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God. How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out! (Romans 11:30-33; c.f. Acts 5:29 to 32).

(1938)

Christ and Religion

by – Fredrik H. Robison (1885-1932)

The center of religion is man himself: *his character, his work, his worth, his merit;* it is I, I, I, myself from start to finish. The center of the life in Christ is the Lord Jesus Christ: *His character, His work, His worth, His value;* it is all Christ.



Religion can and does exist without Christ; but the life in Christ cannot exist without Him. All religion claims for the present is mere morality, reform. The claim of Christ is a new creation.

The goal of religion embraces human betterment of all kinds, political, ecclesiastical, pedagogic, economic, hygenic. Christ is unique, singular. He has but one objective, and that is the glory of God. Religion is all kinds of forms of godliness; Christ is the fact of godliness.

Christ sets aside man's pride, man's ability, man's righteousness, man's goodness, and holds up once and for all the God of all grace. It is not even best to look through the Word of God to Christ, but through Christ, a Person, a living Person, to the Word of God; for the "Bible" can be made a religion, a ritualistic subject and object as well as anything else.

Not I, but Christ, be honored, loved, exalted;
Not I, but Christ, be seen, be known, be heard;
Not I, but Christ, in every look and action;
Not I, but Christ, in every thought and word.

Not I, but Christ, to gently soothe in sorrow;
Not I, but Christ, to wipe the falling tear;
Not I, but Christ, to lift the weary burden;
Not I, but Christ, to hush away all fear.

Christ, only Christ, e'er long shall fill my vision;
Glory excelling soon, full soon, I'll see;
Christ, only Christ, my every wish fulfilling;
Christ, none but Christ, my All in all to be.

Christ in the Word

The Scriptures ... testify of Me (John 5:29).

OLD TESTAMENT ... The King and Kingdom ... *Promised, Pictured and Prophesied*

The King and Kingdom are promised (II Samuel 7), pictured (in both type and symbol), and prophesied for Israel (Isaiah 11, 35; Ezekiel 37; Zechariah 14).

“Behold He Comes”

GOSPELS ... The King and Kingdom ... *Proclaimed and Rejected*

The King and the kingdom are proclaimed to Israel as “*at hand*,” but the Kingdom is rejected and the Mysteries (Secrets) of the Kingdom are revealed (Matthew 13:11, 34-35). The King is crucified, but is then raised from the dead and ascends into heaven.

“Behold He Dies”

ACTS ... The King and the Kingdom ... *Offered and Rejected*

The resurrected and ascended King and His Kingdom are offered to Israel (Acts 3:19-21), but are again rejected. The Mystery of Christ (I Corinthians 2:6-8) through Paul, apostle to the Gentiles (Acts 9:15). The Kingdom offer is withdrawn; the nation of Israel is set aside (Acts 28:25-28).

EPISTLES ... The King and the Kingdom ... *Postponed*

Pauline Epistles – “*Behold He Saves*” (Romans 1:16)

The Kingdom being postponed, the King is exalted and made Head over all things to the Church, His Body (Ephesians 1:22-23). The Mystery (Secret) of Christ and His Church is fully revealed, thus fulfilling God’s Word (Colossians 1:24-28).

Hebrew Epistles – “*Behold He Sustains*” (Jude 24-25)

The Kingdom being postponed, the King serves as the Example for His earthly people, Israel (I Peter 2:21), who will suffer much tribulation (I Peter 4:12-13) before the King returns to reign

THE REVELATION ... The King and the Kingdom ... *Established*

The King is enthroned and the Kingdom is set up with Divine power and glory (Revelation 19-20). All promise and prophecy are fulfilled (Acts 3:21). Israel rules and reigns with Him (Revelation 1:6; 20:4).

“Behold He Reigns”

– Idea borrowed from *How to Enjoy the Bible*, by E.W. Bullinger.



Our Mailbag

I don't usually send responses, so as not to jam up your email. But, this one [Daily Email Goodies] is great, a real joy. – **e-Mail**

The more I see the light of this truth, the more I identify with the sinner. Used to be I was saved and THEY were lost. Now I see all lost, all from the same sin nature, just I am one of the first "trustees" as you call it ... I just am realizing more and more where I came from and what salvation has delivered me from ... the sin nature. I guess I just focus more on WHO HE IS rather than my shortcomings and striving for perfection. Praise breaks forth more and more in my heart.

There's a family down the road that I have actually felt hate in my heart toward ... long story ... After years of "trying" to love them, I'd given up. But this morning, when reflecting that even Hitler would be saved, I thought of them ... especially a young girl named _____ ... and a feeling of "God forgive her she knows not what she does" was in my heart. ... He put that there. I couldn't love her before in my own "trying to be Christ-like actions." But since coming to understand God more, this is what He's bringing out of my heart ... understanding and compassion for the lost as I've never had before. That's what I mean when I say I identify with her now ... I'm no different than her ... just God's grace touched my heart first ... or I'd be just like her (and truth be known many times **have** acted like her in the past).

I'm seeing that there really is a self-righteousness that the saved have ... even if they were a bad sinner like me before salvation. We **do** separate ourselves from the lost.

Christ didn't ... He died for them.

Thank you my dear Brother, for being patient, sharing what the Lord's given you, and being a "helper of my joy" as we seek relationship with our Father. Thank you for being there and continuing to keep on keeping on in the truth. You are a blessing to us and our joyful hearts are a direct result of God's ministry through you. Thank you for loving Him.
– **NC** ■

The Art of Conversation

Twelve Golden Rules

Josephine Turck Baker (1921)

1. Avoid unnecessary details.
2. Do not ask question number two until number one has been answered; nor be too curious and too disinterested; that is, do not ask too many questions nor too few.
3. Do not interrupt another while he is speaking.
4. Do not contradict another, especially when the subject under discussion is of trivial importance.
5. Do not do all the talking; give your tired listener a chance.
6. Be not continually the hero of your own story; on the other hand, do not leave your story without a hero.
7. Choose subjects of mutual interest.
8. Be a good listener.
9. Make your speech in harmony with your surroundings.
10. Do not exaggerate.
11. Indulge occasionally in a relevant quotation, but do not garble it.
12. Cultivate tact. ■

His Good Pleasure

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure (Philippians 2:13).

God *Himself* brings about His work in our lives – working the lofty end of living His *own* life through us. His *will* is produced in us, then the ability to *accomplish* it – resulting in *His good pleasure!* ■