

Chapter 1

God's Revealed Mystery



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How Do We Begin to Find God?

In order to understand God the Father's desires for mankind it is necessary to search for and find Him, acknowledge Who He IS, and realize various things about Him, starting with three important factors. (1) Everything about His nature and personality already has been revealed to us already through His Son--Jesus of Nazareth. (2) Jesus sent us Their Holy Spirit after His earthly ministry as a guarantee of Their love and support. (3) We have been given a copy of Their commitment to humanity through Their sworn Word--the Holy Bible.

"To you has been given to know the mystery of the Kingdom of God." (Mark 4:11)

"I do not desire, brethren, that you be ignorant of this mystery lest you be wise in your own opinion," (Romans 11:25)

"For, we all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23)

God the Father created mankind to be His earthly children and to have perfect, everlasting communion with them. Unfortunately, the very first male and female naively rebelled against Him and in doing so transferred both themselves and this world to His enemy's jurisdiction. However, God still loved all that He had produced and hated having to watch it deteriorate under its new evil authority and influences. So, He devised a plan to recoup every single individual who willingly decided to be reborn spiritually back into His undefiled Kingdom.

He initiated covenants, or agreements, with individuals who chose to listen to and

obey His voice, instead of whatever or whoever surrounded them and contradicted it. These contracts began only verbally and just involved a handful of people, but eventually their influence expanded and increasingly allowed more of God's authority back into His creation as more and more people began to obey His leadership for themselves.

Finally, God the Father was able to bring about the birth of His Heavenly Son as a natural human being. The covenant that They made with each Other was (and remains) powerful enough to embrace not only the initial man and woman, but ever single person ever born since. Unlike all other covenants that had been initiated and confirmed with previous individuals, the one that God the Father made with God the Son will last throughout all time--since They will live forever and never disregard any of its revelations. Consequently, it is vital to investigate it to find the connection between Them and us. This book is a synopsis of the history of these relationships.

God is everywhere, knows everything, and has promised to reveal it to us. We must keep in mind however, that He also considers us to be children. Consequently, He will guide us as such, imparting His knowledge and wisdom little by little as He perceives that we become able to handle it. Whenever we try to deal with something that we are not spiritually mature enough to manage wisely, God will make us wait for His wisdom and timing. When we rebel and "jump the gun", so to speak, is when we allow adversity either to happen or increase, whether in our own lives or the world around us.

"Ask and it will be given unto you. Seek and you will find. Knock and the door will be opened to you, for everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. Or, what man is there among you that if his son asks for bread will give him a stone? Or, if he asks for a fish will give him a serpent? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Heavenly Father give good things to those who ask Him?" (Matthew 7:7-11)

The Scriptures teach us to ask God directly when we want to find out anything about Him or our lives. He always will reveal the answers to us in a way that obeys His written Word. Often His response will come in a manner or at a time that we did not anticipate. No matter how unexpectedly He may guide us to proceed, when we obey His directives He will provide additional insight. However, when any explanation does not concur with the Scriptures we must ignore it and keep waiting, no matter how good the perceived revelation seemed to be.

"If any of you lacks wisdom let him ask of God, Who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But, let him ask in faith with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. Let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord. He is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways." (James 1:5-8)

Whenever we are waiting for something from God, whether it is an answer to a question or help in a predicament, we must sustain our faith in His desire and ability to

control the situation. When we doubt in Him and His sworn Word to us, we become like a wave that is ever fluctuating instead of an immovable rock that is both steady and strong. Consider that anyone ready to get a message or a package who is standing still easily is able to receive what he/she is waiting for.

In contrast, when we are motion, the chances of our being in the right place at the right time decrease proportionately. The more we change course the more likely we will miss what we were waiting for. We become like a radio receiver moving further and further out of range. The more distant we move away, the more static we will pick up instead of the true broadcast, finally culminating in not being able even to tune in the station at all any more.

The Bible never teaches that God is the party Who abandons us, rather that we choose to give up His goals in favor of what our physical senses dictate. As a consequence, we become more flesh oriented than God directed. Read in *Genesis 3* how one single act of self-centeredness on the part of the first human beings eventually led not only to their separation from Him, but also included Satan's getting control over the rest of this entire planet and everything on it. Furthermore, in order to benefit from the message or gifts we are waiting for, it is vital to believe that they are, indeed, genuine. Therefore, to establish an accurate groundwork for our studies of the Holy Scriptures that make up the Bible let us always keep in mind the following:

The Significance of the Holy Bible

"The Word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intent of the heart. And, there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to Whom we must give account." (Hebrews 4:12-13)

"Man lives by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God." (Deuteronomy 8:3)

"Heaven and earth shall pass away; but, My words will, by no means, pass away." (Matthew 24:35)

"Your Word is truth." (John 17:17)

"Take firm hold of instruction. Do not let her go, for she is your life/Life." (Proverbs 4:13)

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God's Word is Spirit, living (like any other organism), powerful, instructional, and pure. It acts like nourishment for our soul and spirit (invisible human qualities) just as bread, and all other healthful food and drink, is to sustain our physical bodies (which are visible). The Bible teaches that just as we require regular sustenance and good nutrition for our outward-selves, our inner beings need to be cared for also in order to survive and grow. It also is like a sword, a defensive weapon against attack and an offensive weapon toward the source of that attack, which always originates from God's

enemy, Satan. We will show supporting evidence of this claim further in this book.

We can count on God's words revealing only the truth about our existence. It never will deceive us about Him or ourselves. As such, we must be very, very careful how we handle them for ourselves, as well as share this knowledge with any other people. We are instructed to take firm hold of the instructions given for us in the Scriptures in order to live as abundantly as God wishes. A firm hold is deliberate and ever vigilant process that never slacks off because it is ever aware of the consequences. We should act like sentries guarding and defending our position in a war. They are the first line of defense against any infiltrator, agitator, or blatant antagonist.

Who Authored the Scriptures?

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness that the man of God be complete--thoroughly equipped for every good work." (II Timothy 3:16-17)

"No prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man. But, holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." (II Peter 1:20-21)

The Bible makes absolute claims to the fact that although the Scriptures were set down on paper by people; only God (the Trinity--Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) inspired every manuscript and was the Author of each book. The compilers merely acted like secretaries taking down dictation by way of their hearts and minds from the Holy Spirit. The Scriptures testify not only to their Source and authenticity, but they state unequivocally that anyone or anything that alters, adds to, or even disclaims their instruction about God the Father, His Son--Jesus of Nazareth, and God the Spirit is false. Following any of these teachings will only lead to eventual decline and ultimate destruction. No information contained in the Bible is to remain private, that is to say, for a select few, because God has no partiality to any person or group. Every teaching applies to all of humanity, always.

Why Did God Influence People to Write Down His Word?

God holds all of humanity accountable for every single behavioral choice that we ever make, no matter how seemingly trivial at the time. Whether we purposely or unknowing obey, ignore, or deny what the Bible teaches, like exercise or a lack of it, our decisions and actions will add up and eventually either be beneficial or detrimental to us. If we ever perceived this revelation it or not (because the build up or disintegration could appear externally or internally), everything we do has far greater and lasting effects that causing temporary pleasure or unpleasantness.

"I call Heaven and earth today as witnesses against you that I have set before you life/Life and death/Death, blessing and cursing. Therefore,

choose life/Life, that both you and your descendants may live/Live. That you may love the Lord your God, that you obey His voice, and, that you may cling to Him, for He is your life/Life and the length of your days...." (Deuteronomy 30:19-20)

"The secret things belong to the Lord our God but those things which are revealed belong to us, and to our children, forever--that we may do all the words of the Law." (Deuteronomy 29:29)

"Grace and peace be multiplied to you, in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, as His Divine power has been given to us all things pertaining to life and godliness through the knowledge of Him Who called us by glory and virtue. By which have been given to us exceeding great and precious promises, that through these, you may be partakers of the Divine Nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. But also for this very reason: giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control patience/perseverance, to patience/perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness; and, to brotherly kindness love. For, he who lacks these things is shortsighted even to the point of blindness." (II Peter 1:2-9a)

The Scriptures are intended as a guidebook for us to follow and have the best lives possible. First, God revealed His desires for us in a set of regulations to follow known as the Law and the Ten Commandments. As that plan was imperfect, because all human beings were incapable of following them consistently, God sent a perfect Man--a Second Adam--to accomplish for us what every other person who ever lived, lives presently, or will be born was unqualified to achieve. God the Father sent His Own Son to ransom us from the destiny mankind's own folly had caused when the first man and woman disobeyed Him and set off a chain reaction of sin that began to expand on the earth instantly, eventually affecting everything and everyone on it. This negative influence never has ceased.

Covenants Introduced to Mankind

First of all, what exactly is a covenant? A covenant is equal to that of any binding contract or treaty. It is a promise from one party to another to agree to keep certain negotiations. The content of every covenant will vary depending on the circumstances that induced its existence. For example, the terms of a covenant to end a war will not be the same as those to sell property. God introduced the notion of covenants to humanity in order to redeem us out from under Satan's--His enemy's--influence and control. They were designed to: (a) insure the complete protection and well-being of the people who accepted them, and (b) subsequently fix any predicaments originated by their rebellion when the first man and woman decided to follow the persuasion of his voice in absolute contradiction to the commands of their Creator.

It was irrelevant as to the intensity of the temptation to violate the will of Whom they already were covenanted. The important factor was that they freely chose to

satisfy a stimulus that appealed to their senses over how their God had instructed them to act. Up until the temptation either to listen to or ignore another personality than God's, the first man and woman had lived under a reciprocal agreement with Him to conduct themselves in a certain way. Hence, when they disobeyed they instantly violated and nullified the pact that had linked them all to each other. After the man and woman defied and broke away from God, He still wanted them to under His protection so He instantly devised a way to restore their perfect relationship with Him.

God recognized that another average human being would not be capable of redeeming mankind back to their original, flawless condition. Therefore, instead of repeating another all-inclusive covenant with an average human being, He decided to produce a Person Who would be capable of totally neutralizing the damage that His enemy had instigated. God sent His Own Son into the world to defeat Satan and ransom His Creation back to where they belonged. Until God's Son was ready to be born, His Father began to prepare for His arrival. This God did by recovering as much authority as He could over the earth through smaller covenants with people like Noah, Abraham, Moses, Joshua, and David.

"The Scripture foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles (or, non-Jews) by faith preached the Gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, 'In you all nations shall be blessed.' So then, those who are of faith are blessed with believing Abraham. For, as many as are the works of the Law are under the curse, for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the Law to do them. But, that no one is justified by the Law in the sight of God is evident, for 'the just shall live by faith. Yet, the Law is not of faith that 'the man who does them shall live by them.

'Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the Law having become a curse for us... that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

Brethren, I speak in the manner of men: Though it is only a man's covenant, yet if it is confirmed no one annuls or adds to it. Now, to Abraham and His Seed were the promises made. He does not say, 'And to seeds,' as of many but as of One, 'And to your Seed,' Who is Christ. And this I say, that the Law, which was four hundred and thirty years later, cannot annul the covenant that was confirmed before God in Christ that it would make the promise of no effect. For if the inheritance is of the Law it is no longer a promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise.

What purpose does the Law serve? It was added because of transgressions till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made. And, it was appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator. Now a mediator does not mediate for one man only, but God is One. Is the Law against the promise of God? Certainly not! For, if there had been a Law given which could have given Life, truly righteousness would have been by the Law, but the Scripture has confined all under sin that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.

'But, before faith came, we were kept under guard by the Law, kept for the

faith which would afterward be revealed. Therefore, the Law was our tutor to bring us to Christ that we might be justified by faith. But, after faith has come we are no longer under a tutor for you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Gentile (non-Jew), there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, but you all are One in Christ Jesus. And, if you are Christ's then you are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise.

Now, I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, does not differ from a slave though he is master of all but is under guardians and stewards until the time appointed by the father. Even so, we, when we were children, were in bondage to the elements of the world. But, when the fullness of the time had come God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law to redeem those who were under the Law that we might receive the adoption as sons and because you are sons God has sent forth the Spirit of His son into our hearts crying out, 'Abba, Father.' Therefore, you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son then an heir of God through Christ." (Galatians 3:8--4:7)

After introducing Himself to individual men, God presented His Law to a group of people--the Israelites--as a precursor to what would be His ultimate agreement with all of humanity. The Law was not designed to be the final consummation of getting mankind out of bondage, but merely acted as a supervisor to guard and instruct people until God's final covenant with humankind could be fulfilled. As well as its precursors, the Law prepared the way for God's Son--Jesus of Nazareth--to achieve His mission to come from Heaven and be born as a human being capable of resisting all temptation the way the first couple should have done, instead of bowing to Satan as their new lord and master.

"The first man was of the earth, made of dust. The Second Man is the Lord from Heaven. As was the man of dust, so also are those who are made of dust, and is the Heavenly Man so also are those who are Heavenly and as we have born the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the Heavenly Man. Now, this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, nor does corruption inherit incorruption." (1 Corinthians 15:47-50)

God the Father began to contact humanity through as many people who would listen to and obey His voice. Although non-Jews (like Noah and Abram) did heed His words, He gave His complete Law to the Israelites; Jesus Himself came from their bloodline. However, God did not only want to invite those people to be renewed in their spirits, He desired that all individuals would be able to accept His plan of redemption. Knowing this way beforehand, He designed the Word to reflect and reveal His entire plan, not just how He would reach a select few. Jesus demonstrated this broader scope of salvation when He spoke with or healed people who were not of that race.

"I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ for you Gentiles--if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you, how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have written already by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men as it now has been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs of the same Body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the Gospel." (Ephesians 3:1-6)

Faith in God's Son's accomplishments is the ultimate determinant that will protect and extricate anyone from Satan's clutches, not following the Law. Not a single human being ever born except Jesus of Nazareth has been capable of living by it totally, without ever breaking at least one commandment and as a result brings every curse therein upon themselves.

"Without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He IS and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him." (Hebrews 11:6)

When a person accepts Jesus of Nazareth as their personal Lord and Savior, God the Holy Spirit comes and dwells within his/her heart. This act of being born again in spirit makes that person a child of God, with all of the rights and privileges to have access to everything that Jesus has. This individual becomes adopted into Their Church and the Bible teaches that he/she is considered to be a full citizen of the Kingdom of Heaven. What he/she needs to do is accept this totally undeserved honor and go to the Word in order to find out how to live from that point forward.

"The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, and joint heirs with Christ if indeed we suffer with Him that we also may be glorified together." (Romans 8:16-17)