

Week 42

Christ, the Eternal King, Coming to Possess the Earth and the Finishing of the Mystery of God

Hymns: E148

Scripture Reading: Rev. 10:1-7; 11:15-18

Rev. 10:1 And I saw another strong Angel coming down out of heaven, clothed with a cloud; and the rainbow was upon His head, and His face was like the sun, and His feet like pillars of fire;

Rev. 10:2 And He had in His hand a little opened scroll. And He placed His right foot on the sea and the left on the land;

Rev. 10:3 And He cried out with a loud voice just as a lion roars. And when He cried out, the seven thunders uttered their own voices.

Rev. 10:4 And when the seven thunders spoke, I was about to write, and I heard a voice out of heaven saying, Seal the things which the seven thunders spoke, and do not write them.

Rev. 10:5 And the Angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land lifted up His right hand to heaven

Rev. 10:6 And swore by Him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and the things in it, and the earth and the things in it, and the sea and the things in it, that there shall be delay no longer,

Rev. 10:7 But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel when he is about to trumpet, then the mystery of God is finished, as He has announced the good news to His own slaves the prophets.

Rev. 11:15 And the seventh angel trumpeted; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He will reign forever and ever.

Rev. 11:16 And the twenty-four elders who sit before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshipped God,

Rev. 11:17 Saying, We thank You, Lord God the Almighty, He who is and who was, because You have taken Your great power and have reigned.

Rev. 11:18 And the nations became angry, and Your wrath came, and the time came for the dead to be judged, and the time to give the reward to Your slaves the prophets and to the saints and to those who fear Your name, to the small and to the great, and to destroy those who destroy the earth.

§ Day 1

I. Revelation 11:15-18 and 12:10 indicate that we may experience and enjoy Christ as the eternal King:

A. "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He will reign forever and ever"—11:15b:

1. At the sounding of the seventh trumpet, not only will the great tribulation end, but also this age will close, the mystery of God will be finished (10:7), and another age, the age of the kingdom, the millennium, will begin.
2. The kingdom of the world becomes the kingdom of Christ at His coming back after He executes His judgment upon the nations—Dan. 7:13-14; 2:44-45.
3. Here the Lord's reigning forever and ever is the Lord's reigning in the millennial kingdom and in the new heaven and new earth for eternity—Rev. 22:5.

§ Day 2

B. "You, O Jehovah, abide forever; / Your throne is from generation to generation"—Lam. 5:19:

1. God's eternal being and His throne are higher than His lovingkindness, compassions, and faithfulness—3:22-23.
2. God's lovingkindness and compassions can fluctuate, but God's person and His government remain unchanging forever.
3. In the New Jerusalem, God will be fully unveiled in His person as the eternal King and in His government as His eternal, unshakable kingdom (Heb. 12:28; Rev. 22:3), both of which are the unshakable foundation of His dealing with His people.

§ Day 3

II. In Revelation 10:1-7 we have a clear vision of Christ coming to take possession of the earth:

A. In this chapter Christ is "another strong Angel" (v. 1), like the One in 7:2; 8:3; and 18:1.

B. John saw another Angel "coming down out of heaven"—10:1a:

1. Christ is now coming down out of heaven.
2. This vision is a hint that Christ is still on His way to the earth.

C. Christ is "clothed with a cloud"—v. 1b:

1. He is not yet "on the cloud," as in 14:14 and Matthew 24:30; 26:64.
2. To be "on the cloud" is to come openly, whereas to be "clothed with a cloud" is to come secretly.
3. Christ will be coming secretly, not openly, until He is seen by all the tribes of the earth, as mentioned in Revelation 1:7 and in Matthew 24:30.
4. Even at the time of Revelation 10, Christ's coming is still secret.
5. He will be wrapped in the cloud until chapter 14, when He will sit on the cloud and His coming will be public.
6. By this we can see that the general teaching that Christ will come before the great tribulation is inaccurate.

D. "The rainbow was upon His head"—10:1c:

1. Here the rainbow indicates that Christ in His judgment upon the earth and in His coming to take possession of it will keep the covenant that God made with Noah concerning the earth—Gen. 9:8-17.
2. It indicates also that Christ is the One who will execute judgment according to the God who sits on the throne with the rainbow around it—Rev. 4:2-3.
3. The book of Revelation reveals that God will judge the earth and all the inhabitants.
4. The rainbow around His throne signifies that God is the covenanting God, the faithful God, who will keep His covenant while executing His judgment upon the earth.

5. He will not judge mankind again with a flood nor destroy all mankind, but will keep a part of mankind to be the nations of the new earth for His glory—21:24, 26.

§ Day 4

E. "His face was like the sun, and His feet like pillars of fire"—10:1d:

1. Near the time of His coming to the people on the earth openly, Christ will be like the sun, not like the morning star, which appears before the darkest time, prior to dawn, to those who love Him and wait for Him.
2. Fire in verse 1 signifies the holiness of God (Exo. 19:18; Heb. 12:29), according to which Christ will execute His judgment upon the earth.

F. "He placed His right foot on the sea and the left on the land"—Rev. 10:2b:

1. Christ's placing His feet on the sea and on the land is His treading on them, and to tread on them is to take possession of them—Deut. 11:24; Josh. 1:3; Psa. 8:6-8.
2. This indicates that Christ is coming down to take possession of the earth.
3. Only He is worthy to open the scroll of God's economy, and only He is qualified to possess the earth.

G. "He cried out with a loud voice just as a lion roars"—Rev. 10:3a:

1. A lion's roaring is likened to a king's wrath—Prov. 19:12; 20:2.
2. This indicates that Christ, as the King of the earth, is provoked to wrath.

§ Day 5

III. "The mystery of God is finished"—Rev. 10:7b:

A. In the dispensations from Adam to Moses and from Moses to Christ, everything was unveiled, manifested, and there was no mystery.

B. In the dispensation of the millennial kingdom and in the new heaven and new earth, everything will be unveiled, and there will be no more mystery.

C. In the dispensation from Christ to the millennial kingdom—the church age, the age of grace—everything is a mystery:

1. The incarnation of Christ, as the beginning of the dispensation of mystery, is a mystery—1 Tim. 3:16:
 - a. Through the incarnation of Christ, the infinite God was brought into a finite man.
 - b. The entire God, not God the Son only, was incarnated; hence, Christ in incarnation is the entire God manifested in the flesh.

§ Day 6

2. Christ is the mystery of God—Col. 2:2:
 - a. God is a mystery, and Christ, as the embodiment of God to express Him, is the mystery of God.
 - b. As the mystery of God, Christ is the embodiment, definition, and explanation of God; all that God intends to do is related to Christ.
 - c. In Christ dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; that is, the fullness of the Triune God dwells in Christ in a bodily form—v. 9.
3. The church is the mystery of Christ—Eph. 3:4-6:
 - a. Christ is a mystery, and the church, as the Body of Christ to express Him, is the mystery of Christ.
 - b. This mystery is God's economy, which is to dispense Christ, as the embodiment of God, into God's chosen people in order to produce a Body to be the increase of God's embodiment in Christ, that God may have a corporate expression.

c. Christ and the church as one spirit are the great mystery—5:32.

4. The kingdom of the heavens (Matt. 13:11), the gospel (Eph. 6:19), the indwelling of Christ (Col. 1:27), and the coming resurrection and transfiguration of the saints as the end of the dispensation of mystery (1 Cor. 15:51-52) are all mysteries.
5. At the trumpeting of the seventh trumpet, all these mysteries will be completed; therefore, the mystery of God will be finished.

WEEK 42 — DAY 1

Morning Nourishment

Rev. 11:15 ...The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He will reign forever and ever.

12:10 ...Now has come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ, for the accuser of our brothers has been cast down, who accuses them before our God day and night.

Revelation 11:15...indicates that after God's judgment upon the earth, the earth will be taken over by and returned to God so that Christ will reign in His kingdom on the earth forever and ever...The Lord's reigning [is] in the millennial kingdom and in the new heaven and new earth for eternity (22:5)... We will also reign with Him (2 Tim. 2:12). All the overcomers will reign with Christ for a thousand years (Rev. 20:4, 6), and all the saved ones will reign forever and ever in eternity (22:5b). (The Conclusion of the New Testament, p. 4291)

Today's Reading

After Christ executes His judgment upon the nations at His coming back, the kingdom of the world will become the kingdom of Christ (Dan. 7:13-14; 2:44-45). At the sounding of the seventh trumpet, not only will the great tribulation come to an end, but also this age will be closed, the mystery of God will be finished (Rev. 10:7), and another age, the age of the kingdom, will come for a millennium, a thousand years. When the age of the kingdom arrives, the entire earth will be the kingdom of Christ.

Today the earth is a worldly kingdom under the rule of Satan. But the day is coming when the Lord, as the King, will regain this world...The world spoken of in Revelation 11:15 is the earth that the meek will inherit in Matthew 5:5.

Christ alone is the proper Owner of the earth. He paid the price on the cross to purchase the entire earth so that one day the kingdom would be established on it (13:44). Every inch of this earth belongs to Christ. We do not agree that any part of the earth belongs to anyone else. All others are usurpers; Christ is the unique Owner. Moreover, He is coming back to take possession of the earth (Rev. 10:1-2)...Wherever our travels may take us, we need to learn to declare, "This is my Lord's property. Temporarily it is usurped by the enemy, but one day my Lord will come to claim what is His." Sooner or later, the kingdom of the world will become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ.

Revelation 11:15 says, "He will reign forever and ever." In Revelation 22:5 we are told that the believers "will reign forever and ever." To reign forever will be the final blessing to God's redeemed in eternity. This reigning is an issue, a glorious, eternal, corporate consummation of our present reigning in life through the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness unto eternal life. This is a blessing we will enjoy for eternity in the new heaven and the new earth. We will be kings over the nations, reigning forever.

We need to remember that we are members of the royal family, kings of the kingly family. Even when we are at a restaurant, we should remember that we are kings eating there. We are heaven-born kings; hence, we should never sell our royal status. If we consider that we are kings, we would not act lightly, talk loosely, or behave meanly. We can even preach the gospel with this in view. We may tell others that we are kings. Then we may start our preaching of the gospel by saying, "The Bible tells me that, as a child of God, I am a king." There are many ways to preach the gospel. We need this kind of vital preaching of the gospel.

In eternity the believers as sons of God and as the constituents of the New Jerusalem will all be kings. The angels will be serving ones (Heb. 1:13-14), serving us. They are the servants of the royal family, and we are kings over the nations. This is the kingdom of God in eternity. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 4291-4292, 4437-4438)

Further Reading: The Conclusion of the New Testament, msgs. 421, 433

WEEK 42 — DAY 2

Morning Nourishment

Lam. 3:22-23 It is Jehovah's lovingkindness that we are not consumed, for His compassions do not fail; they are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness.

5:19 You, O Jehovah, abide forever; Your throne is from generation to generation.

I believe that this word [in Lamentations 3:22 and 23] came to Jeremiah as he was contacting the Lord in the morning, reviewing all the afflictions of his people. While Jeremiah was reviewing these afflictions, he must have regretted the sinfulness of Israel. At this juncture the word of Jehovah came to him, that no matter how much He had punished Israel, He had not utterly consumed them. Jeremiah and many others remained. This was God's lovingkindness. Realizing that he and all the others who remained with him were under God's compassions, Jeremiah praised, saying, "For His compassions do not fail" (v. 22b). The people of Israel had failed, but God's compassions did not fail. His compassions had preserved the remnant of Israel.

Jeremiah went on to say, "They are new every morning" (v. 23a). This indicates that Jeremiah contacted the Lord as the compassionate One every morning. It was through his contact with the Lord that he received this word regarding His lovingkindness, compassions, and faithfulness.

God's compassions do not fail, because He is the faithful One. The faithfulness of God [v. 23b] refers to His word...God had spoken to Israel's forefathers, and He was faithful to keep His word. (Life-study of Lamentations, 2nd ed., pp. 6-7)

Today's Reading

When the household of Israel receives the Lord's salvation, who will turn first, Israel or the Lord?...[Zechariah 12] reveals that it is the Lord, not

Israel, who will take the initiative and turn. When Jerusalem is besieged by Antichrist, the Lord Jesus will turn to the children of Israel and appear to them. They will then look upon Him, the One whom they have pierced, and repent (v. 10). This means that when they see the Lord, they will turn to Him and receive His household salvation.

Jeremiah concluded his writing by asking two questions of Jehovah: "Have You utterly rejected us? / Are You exceedingly angry with us?" [Lam. 5:22]. Jehovah had not utterly rejected Israel, nor was He exceedingly angry with them. But they needed to wait on Him until the time of restoration, when He will restore the children of Israel to be in His person and in His eternal kingdom to enjoy what He had promised to their forefathers.

In the third lamentation Jeremiah spoke of God's loving-kindness, compassions, and faithfulness, and at the end of the fifth lamentation he appealed to God's eternal being and His eternal throne, His unchanging government...God's eternal being and throne are higher than His lovingkindness, compassions, and faithfulness.

According to the New Testament, God's salvation is a matter of His love (John 3:16), His grace (Eph. 2:8), and His righteousness (Rom. 1:17). God's love and grace may change, but God's righteousness cannot change, because His righteousness is related to His government (Psa. 89:14)...God's lovingkindness and compassions can change, but God's person and His government remain unchanging forever.

Jeremiah ended Lamentations not with God's lovingkindness, compassions, and faithfulness but with God's eternal being and His throne. This is a strong sign that in writing Lamentations Jeremiah touched God's economy...There, in 5:19, he touched God's person and God's throne.

In the New Jerusalem, God will be fully unveiled in His person and in His government, both of which are the unshakable foundation of His dealing with us. At that time, we will see God Himself as the eternal King with His eternal, unshakable kingdom (Heb. 12:28). (Life-study of Lamentations, 2nd ed., pp. 14-15)

Further Reading: Life-study of Lamentations, msg. 3; Life-study of Jeremiah, msg. 11

WEEK 42 — DAY 3

Morning Nourishment

Rev. 10:1 And I saw another strong Angel coming down out of heaven, clothed with a cloud; and the rainbow was upon His head, and His face was like the sun, and His feet like pillars of fire.

4:3 And He who was sitting was like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance, and there was a rainbow around the throne like an emerald in appearance.

In Revelation 10:1-11 we have a clear vision of Christ coming to take possession of the earth. In this chapter Christ is “another strong Angel,” like the One in 7:2; 8:3; and 18:1. This vision is a hint that, before the seventh trumpet, Christ is still on His way to earth.

Revelation 10:1 also says that Christ is “clothed with a cloud.” He is not yet on the cloud, as in 14:14 and in Matthew 24:30; 26:64. To be on the cloud is to come openly, whereas to be clothed with a cloud is to come secretly. This indicates that even after the sixth trumpet, which will be in the midst of the great tribulation, Christ will still be coming secretly, not openly, until He will be seen by all the tribes of the earth [Rev. 1:7]...Even at the time of the sixth bowl, during the gathering at Armageddon, Christ will give the warning that He is coming as a thief (16:15)...By this we see that the general teaching that Christ will come before the great tribulation is inaccurate. (Life-study of Revelation, p. 296)

Today's Reading

In this vision Christ has a rainbow upon His head. Here the rainbow indicates that Christ in His judgment upon the earth and in His coming to take possession of it will keep the covenant that God made with Noah concerning the earth (Gen. 9:8-17). The rainbow is a sign of God's covenant with man and all living creatures that He will not destroy them again with a flood (vv.

8-17). The book of Revelation shows that God will judge the earth with all its inhabitants. The rainbow around His throne [4:3] signifies that God is the covenanting God, the faithful God, who will keep His covenant while executing His judgment upon the earth. He will not judge mankind again with a flood nor destroy all mankind, but will keep a part of mankind to be the nations of the new earth for His glory (21:24, 26). This rainbow indicates that God is faithful in His administration toward mankind. In chapter 4 God is about to judge mankind, but in exercising His judgment, He will remember His covenant with Noah. He is the judging God, and He is also the covenant-keeping God.

This rainbow around God's throne is like an emerald in appearance. An emerald is a precious stone whose grass-green color signifies the lives on earth. This indicates that as God is executing His judgment upon the earth, He will remember His covenant and will spare some of the lives on earth, as indicated in Genesis 9:11. An emerald, being a precious stone, is solid. God's reminder to keep His covenant is solid. There is this solid reminder around the throne.

In Revelation 4:5 we are told that “out of the throne come forth lightnings and voices and thunders.” All of these signify God's wrath in His judgment. In the Epistles, out of the throne of grace come the mercy and grace of God for anyone who approaches Him through the redeeming blood of Christ. But here, out of the throne of judgment come forth lightnings, voices, and thunders as warnings to the sinful world. In the book of Revelation, after all of God's judgments have been executed, the throne of God will be the throne of eternal life supply, out of which will proceed the river of water of life with the tree of life growing in it. All the believers who are participating in God's mercy and grace today by approaching God's throne of grace will enjoy the river of life and the tree of life out of God's throne as their life supply for eternity, while the unbelievers, who will be judged by God's throne of judgment, will have no share in the eternal enjoyment issuing out of God's eternal throne. (Life-study of Revelation, pp. 296-297, 208-209)

Further Reading: Life-study of Revelation, msg. 17

WEEK 42 — DAY 4

Morning Nourishment

Rev. 10:2-3 And He had in His hand a little opened scroll. And He placed His right foot on the sea and the left on the land; and He cried out with a loud voice just as a lion roars. And when He cried out, the seven thunders uttered their own voices.

Revelation 10:1 also says that “His face was like the sun.” Surely here, close to His coming to the earth openly, He will not be like the morning star, which appears before the darkest time, prior to dawn.

When Christ comes to take possession of the earth, His feet will be “like pillars of fire.” Here, pillars indicate steadfastness (Jer. 1:18; Gal. 2:9). Fire here signifies the holiness of God (Exo. 19:18; Heb. 12:29), according to which Christ will execute His judgment upon the earth. (Life-study of Revelation, p. 297)

Today's Reading

This little opened scroll [in Revelation 10:2 and 8] is the scroll in 5:1, which only Christ is worthy to open and which He took out of the hand of God (vv. 5, 7). Now it is in His hand. In 5:1 it was sealed; in 10:2 and 8 it is opened. The scroll has been opened because all the seals have been loosed. Here, being only a part of the scroll, it is called “a little...scroll.” The main part of the scroll has already been revealed.

Christ's placing His feet on the sea and on the land [in 10:2] is His treading on them, and to tread on them is to take possession of them (Deut. 11:24; Josh. 1:3; Psa. 8:6-8). This indicates that Christ is coming down to take possession of the earth. Only He is worthy to open the scroll of God's economy, and only He is qualified to possess the earth. In Joshua, God told the people that they would possess whatever part of the land the sole of their foot would tread upon. They were to walk through the good land, and

wherever they set their feet, that would be their possession. Based upon the same principle, Christ, as another Angel sent by God, will come to tread upon the sea and the earth, for the earth and the sea have both been given to Him as His inheritance (Psa. 2:8). Although the earth and sea have been usurped by His enemy, and although He has been tolerating this for centuries, one day He will tolerate it no longer. He will come to claim His rightful inheritance.

Revelation 10:3 says that Christ “cried out with a loud voice just as a lion roars.” A lion's roaring is likened to a king's wrath (Prov. 19:12; 20:2). This indicates that Christ, as the King of the earth, is provoked to wrath. In the Gospels Christ spoke like a lamb, but in Revelation He roars like a lion. Chapter 3 mentions the word of the Lord's endurance. Endurance means toleration. But by the time of chapter 10 the Lord no longer exercises endurance. Rather, in His coming to take possession of the earth, He roars like a lion.

When Christ cried out with a loud voice, “the seven thunders uttered their own voices.” The seven thunders must be the ultimate utterances of God's full wrath. Verse 4 says, “And when the seven thunders spoke, I was about to write, and I heard a voice out of heaven, saying, Seal the things which the seven thunders spoke, and do not write them.” Today we do not know what the seven thunders said, but one day we will know.

Verses 5 and 6 say, “And the Angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land lifted up His right hand to heaven and swore by Him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and the things in it, and the earth and the things in it, and the sea and the things in it, that there shall be delay no longer.” The main item of the things in heaven is the angels, the main item of the things in the earth is men, and the main item of the things in the sea is the demons. After the sixth trumpet, there will be no more time of toleration in God's judgment upon the earth. Hence, the seventh trumpet is the most serious of God's judgments. It is God's answer in full to the martyred saints' prayer in 6:10. (Life-study of Revelation, pp. 297-299)

Further Reading: Life-study of Revelation, msg. 26

WEEK 42 — DAY 5

Morning Nourishment

Rev. 10:7 But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel when he is about to trumpet, then the mystery of God is finished, as He has announced the good news to His own slaves the prophets.

1 Tim. 3:16 ...Great is the mystery of godliness: He who was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen by angels, preached among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory.

[In Revelation 10:7] we see that the completion of God's mystery will be at the trumpeting of the seventh trumpet. When the seventh angel is about to trumpet, the mystery of God will be finished. In the dispensations from Adam to Moses and from Moses to Christ, everything was unveiled, manifested, and there was no mystery. It will be the same in the dispensation of the millennial kingdom and in the new heaven and new earth—everything will be unveiled, and there will be no more mystery. But in the dispensation from Christ to the millennial kingdom, everything is a mystery. The incarnation of Christ, as the beginning of this dispensation of mystery, is a mystery (1 Tim. 3:16). Christ Himself (Col. 2:2), the church (Eph. 3:4-6), the kingdom of the heavens (Matt. 13:11), the gospel (Eph. 6:19), the indwelling of Christ (Col. 1:26-27), and the coming resurrection and transfiguration of the saints as the end of this dispensation of mystery (1 Cor. 15:51-52) are all mysteries that were hidden in the times of the ages (Rom. 16:25; Eph. 3:5; Col. 1:26)...At the trumpeting of the seventh trumpet, not only God's judgment of wrath upon the earth but also the mystery of God are finished. (Life-study of Revelation, pp. 299-300)

Today's Reading

Today the indwelling Christ and the church are a mystery...Christ's dwelling in us is a mystery. When non-Christians receive too much money

in change from a cashier in a restaurant, they are pleased and consider it a bargain. But when we receive extra change, we return it...The unbelievers cannot understand what kind of people we are...Although today is a time of mystery, when the seventh trumpet is sounded, the mystery will be over. At the trumpeting of the seventh trumpet, Christ will be manifested, and the whole earth will recognize Him.

In the opening of the seals, Christ is silent, but in the sounding of the trumpets, He is no longer silent. In the seventh trumpet the good news that God announced to His own slaves the prophets, as in Isaiah 2:4; 11:1-10; 65:17-20; and 66:22, will be fulfilled; that is, the kingdom in its manifestation will come (Rev. 11:15), and the new heaven and new earth with the New Jerusalem will follow (21:1-3). (Life-study of Revelation, p. 300)

In the incarnation Christ is God manifested in the flesh (1 Tim. 3:16). He was manifested in the flesh not only as the Son but as the entire God, the Father, the Son, and the Spirit. As the Word, who is the very God, Christ became flesh (John 1:14). Therefore, He is God—the Triune God—manifested in the flesh.

It is important for us to realize that it was the entire God and not only the Son of God who was incarnated. John 1:14 says that the Word, which is God, became flesh. This God, who the Word is, is not a partial God; rather, He is the entire God—God the Son, God the Father, and God the Spirit. The New Testament does not say that the Word, who became flesh, was God the Son. Instead, the New Testament indicates that in the beginning was the Word, and this Word is the entire Triune God, the Father, the Son, and the Spirit. Hence, Christ in incarnation is the entire God manifested in the flesh.

Because of the influence of traditional teaching, we may think that only the Son of God, not the entire God, was incarnated. Actually, the New Testament does not say that the Son of God was incarnated; it says that God was manifested in the flesh. This means that the entire God became incarnated. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 281-282)

Further Reading: The Conclusion of the New Testament, msg. 26

WEEK 42 — DAY 6

Morning Nourishment

Col. 2:2 That their hearts may be comforted, they being knit together in love and unto all the riches of the full assurance of understanding, unto the full knowledge of the mystery of God, Christ.

Eph. 3:4 By which, in reading it, you can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ.

5:32 This mystery is great, but I speak with regard to Christ and the church.

The mystery of the universe is God. The mystery of God, the New Testament reveals, is Christ (Col. 2:2). The mystery of Christ is the church (Eph. 3:4). Actually these are simply three stages of one mystery. God is to be found in Christ, and Christ is to be found in the church. The church, then, is the mystery of Christ, who in turn is the mystery of God, who Himself is the mystery of the universe.

The mystery of God in Colossians 2:2 is Christ, whereas the mystery of Christ in Ephesians 3:4 is the church. God is a mystery, and Christ, as the embodiment of God to express Him, is the mystery of God. Christ is also a mystery, and the church, as the Body of Christ to express Him, is the mystery of Christ.

According to Ephesians 3:4, the church has a particular title—the mystery of Christ. When we consider Ephesians 3:4 in context, we see that the mystery of Christ is the church. Thus, Christ is the mystery of God, and the church is the mystery of Christ. God is a mystery, Christ is the mystery of God, and the church is the mystery of Christ. Hence, the church is actually a mystery within a mystery, for the church is a mystery in the third stage. The first stage is God Himself as the mystery of the universe; the second stage is Christ as the mystery of God; and the third stage is the church as the mystery of Christ. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 2053-2054)

Today's Reading

In God's economy revealed in the New Testament there are mainly two mysteries. The first mystery, revealed in the book of Colossians, is Christ as the mystery of God [Col. 2:2]...Christ is God's mystery. In Himself God is a mystery. He is real, living, and almighty; however, He is invisible. Because no one has ever seen God, He is a mystery. This mysterious God is embodied in Christ. Hence, Christ is the mystery of God. Christ is not only God, but He is God embodied, God defined, God explained, and God expressed. Therefore, Christ is God made visible. The Lord Jesus said, "He who has seen Me has seen the Father" (John 14:9). The first mystery in God's economy is Christ, God expressed, as the mystery of God.

The second mystery...is the mystery of Christ [Eph. 3:4]...Colossians 1:27 says, "To whom God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." As believers, we have Christ dwelling in us. But this Christ whom we have is a mystery. Although Christ lives in us, worldly people do not realize that He is in us. To them, this is a mystery. But although Christ is mysterious, the church is the manifestation of Christ. As the Body of Christ, the church is the expression of Christ. When we see the church, we see Christ. When we come into the church, we come into Christ. When we contact the church, we contact Christ. The church is truly the mystery of Christ.

As a mystery, the church is in the Triune God, in the Father, in the Son, and in the Spirit...The divine mystery is much more with the church corporately than with the believers individually. The church is a corporate unit produced out of Christ, who is the mystery of God. This all-inclusive Christ is the mystery of the mysterious God, and such a Christ as the mystery of God produces a unit which is the church. By this we can realize that the church is the continuation of the mystery which is Christ. Mystery surely produces mystery. Christ, who is the mystery of God, brings forth the church, the mystery of Christ. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 2054-2055)

Further Reading: The Conclusion of the New Testament, msg. 190

WEEK 42 — HYMN

Lord, the King of kings art Thou

Praise of the Lord — His Kingdom

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G D/A G/B D G D7/F# G A A7 D
 1. Lord, the King of kings art Thou, In Thy pre - sence here we bow;
 9 G D/A G/B B Em D7/F# A7 D
 God's a - noint - ed we a - dore, Wor - ship Thee in ho - ly awe.
 17 D7 G D/F# G E Am G/D D7 G
 Un - to Thee, of kings the King, All the saints Thy prais - es sing!

2. Thine authority and pow'r
Shall prevail from shore to shore!
All shall serve and worship Thee
In Thy kingly majesty!
Unto Thee, of kings the King,
All Thy praise shall ever ring!

3. Lord, Thy kingdom stands alone,
And forever is Thy throne!
To Thy glory and Thy pow'r
We will sing forevermore!
Now to Thee, of kings the King,
All the saints Thy praises sing!

4. Gracious Lord, our sovereign King,
Thy dear name we love to sing!
O how sweet Thy reign and rule.
May Thy kingdom come in full!
Yet to Thee, of kings the King
Here Thy praise we gladly sing!

Composition for prophecy with main point and sub-points:

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper has a slight shadow on its right side, suggesting it's resting on a surface.