

The Mystery

Definition

Mystery

MYS'TERY, *noun* [Latin *mysterium*; Gr. a secret. This word in Greek is rendered also *murium latibulum*; but probably both senses are from that of hiding or shutting; Gr. to shut, to conceal.

1. A profound secret; something wholly unknown or something kept cautiously concealed, and therefore exciting curiosity or wonder; such as the *mystery* of the man with the iron mask in France.

2. In religion, any thing in the character or attributes of

God, or in the economy of divine providence, which is not revealed to man.

3. That which is beyond human comprehension until explained. In this sense, *mystery* often conveys the idea of something awfully sublime or important; something that excites wonder.

Great is the *mystery* of godliness. [1 Timothy 3:9](#).

Having made known to us the *mystery* of his will. [Ephesians 1:9](#).

We speak the wisdom of God in a *mystery* [1 Corinthians 2:7](#).

4. An enigma; any thing artfully made difficult.

5. A kind of ancient dramatic representation.

6. A trade; a calling; any mechanical occupation which supposes skill or knowledge peculiar to those who carry it on, and therefore a secret to others.

[The word in the latter sense has been supposed to have a different origin from the foregoing, viz.]

Etymology

early 14c., in a theological sense, "religious truth via divine revelation, hidden spiritual significance, mystical truth," from Anglo-French **misterie*, Old French *mistere* "secret, mystery, hidden meaning" (Modern French *mystère*), from Latin *mysterium* "secret rite, secret worship; a secret thing," from Greek *mysterion* (usually in plural *mysteria*) "secret rite or doctrine," from *mystes* "one who has been initiated," from *myein* "to close, shut" (see *mute* (adj.)); perhaps referring to the lips (in secrecy) or to the eyes (only initiates were allowed to see the sacred rites).

mystery (n.1)

The Greek word was used in Septuagint for "secret counsel of God," translated in Vulgate as *sacramentum*. Non-theological use in English, "a hidden or secret thing," is from late 14c. In reference to the ancient rites of Greece, Egypt, etc. it is attested from 1640s. Meaning "detective story" first recorded in English 1908.

mystery (n.2)

"handicraft, trade, art" (archaic), late 14c., from Medieval Latin misterium, alteration of Latin ministerium "service, occupation, office, ministry" (see ministry), influenced in form by Medieval Latin mysterium (see mystery (n.1)) and in sense by maistrie "mastery." Now only in mystery play, in reference to the medieval performances, which often were staged by members of craft guilds. The two senses of mystery formed a common pun in (secular) Tudor theater.

I. Matt 13:11- 1st use of Mystery

A) Mysteries must be revealed/given

1. Ecc 8:17- Man cannot know the works of God by his own wisdom or effort
2. Job 11:4-12- They cannot be obtained by intelligence

B) KOH has associated “mysteries” (plural)

1. No “mystery (sing.) of KOH
 - i. KOH already revealed and understood
 - a) Acts 1:6- Restore again the kingdom to Israel?
 - b) Dan 2:37- Kingdom had been given to Nebuchadnezzar
 - c) Dan 2:44- God of heaven to establish an everlasting earthly kingdom
 - d) Luke 24:21- Thought Israel would be redeemed at that time physically
2. Mk 4:11- Mystery (sing.) of KOG
 - i. The spiritual KOG was a mystery previously hidden and now beginning to be revealed
3. Luke 8:10- Mysteries (plur.) of KOG
 - i. The spiritual KOG had many mysteries associated with it and would now begin to be revealed to believers in the King through **parables**

II. Matt 13:11-17- Parables to be used to reveal truths which had been previously hidden

A) Amos 3:7- Surely the Lord will do nothing but that He reveals it through the prophets

B) Parable- “Comparison, to set or throw against another. Allegorical lesson or representation or relation to something real or more real (Christ). Something expressed in terms of something else

1. The Old Testament scriptures themselves were “parabolic.”

- i. Heb 10:7- In the volume of the book it is written of Me
 - ii. John 5:39-46- Moses and the scriptures testify of Christ
 - iii. 2 Cor 3:10-18- Veil over OT scriptures done away in Christ
 - iv. Matt 5:17- Christ to fulfill Law
2. The OT scriptures were pointing forward to the work of Christ, yet the deeper spiritual meaning was concealed/veiled
- i. Rev 1:20- Mystery is the deeper hidden or symbolic meaning of scripture
 - ii. 1 Pet 1:10-13- The OT prophets could see there was a deeper hidden meaning
 - iii. Matt 13:17- Righteous men in OT desired to “see” these things
 - a) They would not have desired to “see” them if they did not exist in hidden form
 - (1) Deut 29:29- Moses knew there were secret things
 - (2) Prov 25:2- Glory of God to conceal a thing and King to search them out
 - Jesus the King so He could see Himself in the scriptures
 - (3) 1 Cor 2:9-14- Hidden things had been made known to Paul by the Spirit of God
 - Matt 16:17- Father reveals truth
 - Mark 13:32- No man nor angel knoweth until God reveals
 - Acts 1:7- Father hath set the times
 - Zech 4:1-7- Work of the Lord performed by His Spirit
 - (4) Dan 8:16-17, 26-27- Vision shut up for many days
 - (5) Dan 12:4- Seal the book (written but hidden)
 - (6) Rev 5:1-7- The Lord Jesus Christ hath prevailed to open the book
- III. 1 Cor 1:18-25- Man always thinks he can understand the things of God by his own intelligence
- A) Hubris- “Great or foolish amount of pride and confidence. Exaggerated self-reliance.” The Greek word had relation to man’s view of himself in relation to the Greek gods.

1. 1 Cor 8:1-2- If a man thinks he knows something, he knows not as he should
 - i. Prov 27:1- We don't know what tomorrow brings
 - ii. Ecc 8:6-8- Man knows not what is to be, nor has power over his own spirit to retain it, how much less the Spirit of God.
 - iii. Ecc 8:17- Man cannot know the things of God by his wisdom or effort
 - iv. Ecc 9:12- Man is like the fish about to be caught in net
 - v. Ecc 10:14- Man cannot tell what shall be
 - vi. Ecc 11:5- Man doesn't know the works of God
 - vii. Isa 40:28- No searching of the Lord's understanding
 - viii. Jer 8:7- Man dumber than the birds and creatures
- IV. Prov 25:2- It magnifies God's glory that He can conceal a matter in plain sight, and then that a man must wholly depend on the Lord to reveal it to him
 - A) Rom 11:33-36- No man or angel can "search out" the things of God unless the Lord reveals them
 1. The more we study the more we ought to see how little we know and how our understanding is feeble and totally dependent on the Lord **(I AM)**
 - B) Dan 2:19-22- Daniel praises God as the Revealer of the secret things
 - C) 1 Cor 13:12- Paul also had to wait on the Lord's timing through revelation
 - D) 1 Kings 3:5-15- The example of Solomon, the wisest man ever
 1. If a king is to "judge" (discern) righteously, he must depend on the Lord
 - i. The exact same holds true for a man who is to discern the scriptures righteously
 - ii. Luke 11:5-13- We must pray to God for understanding
 - iii. Luke 18:1-8- We must never turn from our dependence upon the Lord
 2. 1 Kings 11:1-10- The wisest man who ever lived became an idolater when he turned from the Lord's counsel (married against God's will)
 - i. Prov 1:1- Solomon, King of Israel was given wisdom for instruction
 - a) Ecc 1:12-18- What Solomon learned through experience
 - b) Ecc 12:10-14- Solomon's conclusion: "Fear (respect) God"
- V. Matt 11:25-27- The Lord was now beginning to reveal things unto those that had accepted the preaching of John and then Jesus, but still concealing them to the unbelievers (unrepentant of Law contract.)
 - A) Mark 4:11-12- How could parables be spoken to the whole audience and be revealed to one group and hidden from the other?
 1. Prov 26:7-9- Parable and the mouth of a fool

- B) Ecc 3:11- God hath set the world in the heart of man so that he cannot search out the things of God
 - 1. Eph 4:17-19- Understanding darkened through the blindness of the heart
 - i. 2 Cor 3:7-18- When their heart turns to God, the blindness is taken away
- C) Rom 10:1-4- The veil hiding the scriptures is self-righteousness
 - 1. Ex 32:13- 1st use of “self” (God alone can depend on Self)
 - i. John 5:30- Jesus could depend on the Father alone
 - ii. 1 Pet 2:24- We can depend on the Lord Jesus Christ
- D) Heb 4:12- “Thoughts and intents” (motive or spirit behind thoughts and actions)
 - 1. 1 Cor 4:5- Counsels of the hearts made known
 - i. Prov 12:5- Counsels of the wicked are deceit
 - ii. Acts 16:16-18- True words but evil intent
 - a) 2 Cor 11:13-15- Satan’s ministers of righteousness
 - b) 2 Cor 4:1-4- Handling word of God deceitfully
 - c) 2 Cor 2:17- Corrupt the word of God
 - d) 1 Cor 5:8- Unleavened bread of **sincerity** and truth
 - 1. 1 Cor 13:1-3- Charity as the motivation and not self
 - i. Rom 15:2- Do all for the edification of the other
 - ii. 1 Cor 10:24- Care for the wealth of the other
 - 2. If charity is not the motive behind the action, then only self can be
 - i. “Self-Minded” motivation is the tunnel vision that makes it impossible to see the benefit to another
 - a) Self-absorbed, self-acquired, self-acting, self-advancement, self-affected, self-aggrandizement, self-applauding, self-appointed, self-asserting, self-assurance, self-aware, self-born, self-centered, self-complacent, self-composed, self-conceit, self-concern, self-confidence, self-conscious, self-consequence, self-contained, self-contemplation, self-content, self-control, self-deceit, self-defense, self-dependent, self-determination, self-devoted, self-directed, self-discipline, self-educated, self-employed, self-energizing, self-enrichment, self-esteem, self-evidence, self-exaltation, self-existence, self-explanatory, self-fertile, self-flattery, self-formed, self-fulfilling, self-generated, self-glorification, self-governed, self-gratification, self-help, self-image, self-importance, self-improvement, self-indulgence, self-instructed, self-interest, self-involved, **SELFISH**, self-justification, self-knowing, self-love, self-made, self-mastery, self-observation, self-opinion, self-pleasing, self-possessed, self-praise, self-preservation, self-pride, self-proclaimed, self-produced, self-protection, self-purification, self-rating, self-regard, self-

regulation, self-reliance, self-reproof, self-respect, self-restraint, self-revelation, self-rewarding, self-righteous, self-sacrifice, self-satisfaction, self-seeking, self-service, self-subsistence, self-sufficient, self-sustained, self-taught, self-trust, self-understanding, self-will, and **SELF-WORSHIP!!!**

(1) Read this list in light of 2 verses:

- Prov 16:25
- Prov 3:5-6

VI. Mystery/mysteries in the scriptures

A) Matt 13:11- The mysteries of the KOH

B) Mark 4:11- The mystery of the KOG

C) Luke 8:10- The mysteries of the KOG

D) Rom 11:25- Blindness of Israel till fulness of Gentiles come in

1. Israel's blindness alone is not the mystery, but it includes the replacement of Israel with another nation and was hidden in prophecy
 - i. Isa 6:10, 29:9-14, 44:18, 59:10, Psa 69:23
 - ii. Deut 32:21- Provoke Israel with a foolish nation
 - a) Ex 32:10, Num 14:12, Deut 9:14, Psa 118:22

2. Rom 11:30-36- The mystery involves why they were blinded

E) Rom 16:25-26- Mystery of all nations partaking of Christ by the gospel

1. Gal 3:6-9- Scripture foresaw the heathen justified by faith
2. Gal 3:14- Blessing of Abraham on the Gentiles
3. Gal 3:26-29- All the seed of Abraham by faith

F) 1 Cor 2:7-10- The reason for concealing the complete truth

1. Mystery = "Hidden wisdom"
 - i. Rev 1:20- Mystery is hidden meaning or deeper symbolism of scripture
2. Luke 14:28-33- Satan always believed he had the numbers and could muster a greater army as long as God was only dealing with one nation and that by the Law.
 - i. If Satan could was able to see the filling God had planned, he would have known it would take an eternity if the material to fill was limited to Godly Israel
 - ii. He never saw the children of Abraham by "faith" (stars), as they died and went down also prior to the cross
 - a) "Captivity captive" and "triumphing over them in it" (Roman victory procession)

G) 1 Cor 4:1- Stewards of the mysteries of God

1. 1 Cor 13:2- Understanding these mysteries without charity means nothing
2. 1 Cor 8:1-2- Men love a mystery and to be the one who sees it

3. 1 Cor 14:2- To teach the “mystery” today to a lost person rather than the gospel is foolish, and can leave a person believing they are saved by the knowledge of a “mystery”
- H) 1 Cor 15:51- Not all sleep, but all changed
 1. Job 14:12-14- The mystery isn’t the “change” but rather the change of living souls
 - i. Isa 25:8- This mystery again is in the scriptures
 - ii. Hos 13:14- “ “ “ “ “ “
- I) Eph 1:9- The mystery of His will is all things “In Christ”
 1. 1 Tim 2:4- God’s will that “all men” be saved
 2. The children would be spiritual children by adoption “In Christ”
 3. The children would be the seed of Abraham by faith and not flesh
 - i. Matt 11:25-26- Good in Thy sight (“good pleasure”)
 - ii. Phil 2:13- God working His will in believers
 - iii. 2 Thess 1:1- Good pleasure of His goodness
 - a) Ex 33:18-19- God’s glory is His mercy and goodness
 - (1) God’s glory was made known through His unmerited mercy and blessing upon Israel
 - (2) Therefore God’s glory and goodness are magnified when this unmerited mercy and blessing is extended to “all men” (Gentiles) by including them in His program by faith
 4. Eph 1:3- Mystery of Ephesian letter is the spiritual blessings of God bestowed upon the Gentiles
 - i. Rom 3:30- Promises made available to Gentiles through faith (Eph 1:5)
 - ii. Rom 15:27- Gentiles made partakers of Israel’s spiritual things
 - iii. 2 Cor 3:3-6- Promise of His Spirit in man made available to Gentiles
 5. Eph 1:10-13- All things one “In Christ”
 - i. Eph 1:13- Holy Spirit of promise
 - a) Gal 3:14- Spirit of Promise
 - ii. Gal 3:28- Jew and Gentile one in Christ now
 - iii. 1 Cor 15:25-28- Heaven and earth one in Christ in age to come
- J) Eph 3:3-9- Mystery made known to Paul by revelation (uncovering)
 1. 2 Cor 12:1- This was probably through study of OT scriptures and not a vision
 2. Eph 3:6- Also now known to the apostles that the Gentiles were to be fellow heirs and partakers of the promise “In Christ” by the gospel
 - i. “By the gospel” means by faith and not by fleshly lineage or works
 3. Eph 3:8- Unsearchable “riches” (inheritance and not mystery)
 - i. i.e. endless treasures, boundless riches, unfathomable wealth

- ii. Rom 11:33- God's riches and wisdom must be revealed and cannot be ascertained by man's intelligence or diligence
- 4. Eph 3:9- Fellowship of the mystery is all in one body by the cross through faith
 - i. Eph 1:3-5- This mystery was known of God before the foundation of the world, yet kept hidden from Satan
 - a) Gal 6:14- The Household of Faith
- K) Eph 5:32- Great mystery of the current relationship between Christ and His church
 - 1. God's plan is made possible by the spiritual union of each believer with His righteous Son, thus becoming an heir by union to the Son and His performance and not our own performance
 - 2. Gal 3:16- The promise was to the Seed (Christ) and you and I are joined unto and put into the Seed by faith, thus obtaining the promises made to the Seed by faith in the Seed
- L) Eph 6:19- Make known the Mystery of the gospel (Jew/Gentile one in Christ)
- M) Col 1:26-27- Mystery now manifest to saints (all saints)
 - 1. Mystery is "Christ in you (Gentiles)" (notice he doesn't use "us")
 - i. Christ in Gentiles and Gentiles in Christ
 - ii. Col 1:20-22- This is the mystery he refers to
- N) Col 2:1-3- All treasures of wisdom and knowledge revealed in Christ
 - 1. The mental picture is kinda like a person mining in the OT scriptures for gems, and the answer to all of them is "Christ"
- O) Col 4:3- Paul in bonds for the mystery of Christ
 - 1. Acts 22:17-24- Paul arrested for preaching the hope of Israel to Gentiles
- P) 2 Thess 2:7- The mystery of iniquity
 - 1. Iniquity = "in-equity," "unequal," "deviation from rectitude," "crooked"
 - 2. When the Lord begins to make His mystery known, Satan imitates with a mystery of His own
 - i. That which is done with a motive not being charity is done in a crooked or bent fashion. The religious system of today is using God's word for reasons other than the edification of God's House. Although they/we may quote the scripture, or even know mysteries, if the intent is SELF than they/we are veiling or hiding the true purpose for which they/we are striving
 - ii. What is the "spirit" behind what we are doing?
 - iii. The mystery of iniquity is made possible covetousness
 - a) More knowledge, more recognition, more followers, more glory, more money
- Q) 1 Tim 3:9- Mystery of the faith in a pure conscience

1. This is the proving of the mystery of iniquity
 2. Tit 1:15-16- Reprobate workers
 3. Dan 2:19-22- If God reveals the deep secrets to His people then Satan imitates (mysteries = those initiated)
 - i. Rev 2:24- Depths of Satan
 - ii. 1 Tim 4:1- Seducing spirits and doctrines of devils
- R) 1 Tim 3:16- The mystery of Godliness
1. The core of the Mystery is how God the Father sent salvation to all men by faith Through the Lord Jesus Christ
- S) Rev 10:7- Mystery of God finished at 7th Trump
1. Rev 11:1-2- Times of Gentiles runs until then
- T) Rev 17:5-7- Mystery of the great whore Babylon finished in Rev 17-18