

Section Two: The Kingdom of God on Earth (Present)

Category A: Church – Kingdom Intelligence Report #4

Topic: The Extent of the Mystery

The New Testament gives us great clarity in regard to the duration of the mystery known as the Church Age. It has a clear-cut point of origination as well as a well-defined point of culmination. There can be no doubt as to the beginning of this current phase of the Kingdom of God on earth. It occurred on the Day of Pentecost, shortly after the ascension of our Lord into heaven (Acts 1:9-11; 2:1-41). We have confirmation of the “beginning” of this new spiritual entity as the continued expression of God’s Plan B, from the Apostle Peter in Acts 11:15-18. Upon returning from his missionary endeavor to the household of Cornelius, the Roman centurion; Peter is compelled to defend his evangelistic interaction with Gentiles, to his yet unenlightened Jewish brethren in Jerusalem, and he says this:

“And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just He did upon us at the beginning. And I remembered the word of the Lord, how He used to say, ‘John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’ Therefore if God gave to them the same gift as He gave to us also after believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God’s way?’ When they heard this, they quieted down and glorified God, saying, ‘Well then, God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance that leads to life.’”

So the early church recognized the Day of Pentecost as a “beginning.” A new phase of Plan B had been initiated. It would involve a significant transition from one covenant to another. The mystery of the church would now be expressed and fulfilled by means of a new and better relationship between God and His people, promised by the Lord in His last Passover with the disciples, in Luke 22:20 –

“And in the same way He took the cup after they had eaten, saying, ‘This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood.’”

This change from one covenant to another would be marked by both controversy and struggle. As difficult as it would be for a Jewish believer under the Mosaic Covenant to now accept a Gentile on an equal standing before God; it would be even more of a challenge for that Jewish believer to begin living his or her life as a New Covenant Christian. It would be this inward travail among the early Jewish Christians that would prompt the author of the epistle to the Hebrews to provide much needed encouragement, by motivating many to successfully make this all-important transition. The entire letter is designed with that purpose in mind; emphasizing the need to fully experience a relationship with God under a new and better framework (Hebrews 8:1-13). Since we will be dealing with the culmination of the Church Age in our next category; suffice it to say that this current phase of God’s Plan B will end even more dramatically than it began, in an event commonly referred to as the Rapture. For those who have allowed themselves to be brainwashed by Dominionist propaganda, into doubting whether there will even be a Rapture, my encouragement to you would be to thoroughly cleanse your mind and heart from such a corrosive taint, by reading 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.