



Bible Student's Notebook™

The Herald of His Grace

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

Volume 39
Issue 961

The "Secrets" of the Kingdom & the "Secret" of the Present Administration

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

Jesus Christ revealed "secrets" concerning the prophetic "Kingdom of God" and the "Kingdom of the Heavens" (Matthew 13:11; Mark 4:11; Luke 8:10). Paul identified Christ in His earthly teaching ministry as,

a minister of the Circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers (Romans 15:8, KJV).



1:9; 3:3-4, 9; 5:32; 6:19; Colossians 1:26-27; 2:2; 4:3).

AN EXAMPLE OF PAUL'S ACTS PERIOD "SECRETS"

One such example of Paul's prior secrets that were confirmation of Old Testament truths was Romans 16:25-26.

During the Acts-period the Apostles continued this prophetic confirmation. The Twelve conducted their ministry among the Circumcision in the Land, while Paul's ministry and epistles reached forth to the Jews of the Dispersion and on into an expanded, prophetic sphere: toward the Gentiles.

Therefore, we find Paul continuing to reveal "secrets" related to Israel's prophetic Kingdom (Romans 11:25; 16:25; I Corinthians 2:7; 4:1; 13:2; 15:51; II Thessalonians 2:7; I Timothy 3:9, 16). In doing so, he was operating as,

the minister of Christ Jesus for the nations, acting as a priest of the evangel of God, that the approach present of the nations may be becoming well received (Romans 15:16, CV).

Now to Him Who is able to establish you in accord with my evangel, and the heralding of Christ Jesus in accord with the revelation of a secret hushed in times eonian, yet manifested now and through prophetic Scriptures, according to the injunction of the eonian God being made known to all nations for faith-obedience (CV).

The "secret" of Romans 16 was not absolute, but that which was "manifested ... through prophetic Scriptures" (i.e., "the Scriptures of the prophets"). It is founded on the Old Testament, yet "hushed in times eonian."¹

(continued on page 8107)

1. Or, "times of the ages" (DAR, ED, PNB, YLT), "past ages" (TCNT), "ages past" (WNT), "long ages" (HCSB, MNT).

It is not until we get completely outside of the scope of the Pentecost Administration, in operation during the Acts period, to the epistles of Ephesians and Colossians, that Paul reveals an absolute "secret" totally unrelated to prophecy, but rather concerning this present, unprophesied administration (Ephesians

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Bible Student's Notebook™

Paul Our Guide – Christ Our Goal

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Scripture education in a weekly format!

This free electronic publication is dedicated to:

- the absolute sovereignty and deity of God (Romans 11:36);
- the proclamation of the riches of God's abundant, exceeding grace (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7);
- the affirmation that God will save all through the death, burial and resurrection of Christ (I Timothy 2:3, 4; 4:10; Titus 2:11);
- the universality of death and resurrection (I Corinthians 15:21);
- the unique gospel of Paul – which he calls "my gospel" (Romans 2:16; 16:25; II Timothy 2:8; I Corinthians 15:1-4; Acts 13-28; Acts 20:24);
- the "preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret in ages past" (Romans 16:25);
- the epistles of the present Secret Administration being Ephesians & Colossians (Ephesians 3:2, 9; Colossians 1:25);
- true freedom and liberty apart from law (Galatians 5:1);
- the organic nature of the One Body (Ephesians 4:16);
- the Secret Administration, being the operational revelation for today (Ephesians 3:9);
- the unprophesied, Celestial hope and calling of the One Body (Colossians 3:4);
- the distinct message and ministry of Paul, the apostle to the nations (Ephesians 3:1-3);
- 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 freedom from sins (Colossians 1:14);

- union in His death, burial and resurrection and ascended seated position among the celestials (Romans 6; Ephesians 2:6);
- adult sonship position (Ephesians 1:5).

This publication is the product of humble efforts of ordinary men intended to stimulate the earnest study of Scripture. We do not claim infallibility for the contents of this publication; thus they are not meant to imply finality on any subject discussed, or that further research would not add further light from the Word of God. God's storehouse of truth is inexhaustible, so draw on its wealth by prayerful study. 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."

We are always open for discussion, but never for disputation. – André Sneidar

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“kept unvoiced” (GLT)

“kept close” (TNT)

“kept silent” (YLT)

Let us use an illustration. Let's say mom is having a birthday. This is no secret, everyone in the house knows. But let's say that dad along with the older children plan a *surprise* birthday party. This party is not an *absolute* secret, for dad and the older children know about it; and although it is not an absolute secret, it is a *relative* secret. That is, mom and the younger children don't know anything about it.

In this illustration the *surprise* birthday party is a *secret* birthday party to those who do not know about it yet. In other words, the party is “hushed.” As dad would say, “Shhh. Be sure to keep this a secret. Let's keep it on the downlow.”

The information of Roman 16 had been “*hushed in times eonian*.” God had kept it *silenced*, and it remained *unvoiced* until it was divinely resurfaced through the ministry of Paul.

In Paul's Acts-period writings this prophetic “*secret*” reemerged. Paul termed the *reappearance* of this truth “*my evangel*” (i.e., “*my gospel*,” Romans 2:16; 16:25; II Timothy 2:8) since it was not so “voiced” or “un-hushed” by the Twelve, but rather uniquely “*manifested*” by Paul alone.

This prophetic “*secret*” involved the ancient, forgotten “*Gospel of God*” (i.e., “*Evangel of God*”) unto which Paul had been “*separated*,” or “*severed*” (Romans 1:1). This evangel resurfaced as Paul's “*my evangel*,”

which [God] **promised before through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures**, concerning His Son, Who comes of the seed of David according to the flesh, Who is designated Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection of the dead (Romans 1:2-4, BSV).

Thus, Paul plainly declared that his evangel was,

according to the Scriptures (I Corinthians 15:3).

according to the Scriptures (:4).

For,

the Scripture, perceiving before that God is justifying the nations by faith, brings before an evangel to Abraham, that “In you shall all the nations be blessed” (Galatians 3:8, CV).

Thus, the gospel given to Abraham was not just Jewish, it was international.

Happy the man to whom the Lord by no means should be reckoning sin! This happiness, then, is it for the Circumcision, or for the Uncircumcision also? For we are saying, “To Abraham faith is reckoned for righteousness.” How then, is it reckoned? Being in circumcision or uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision (Romans 4:8-10, CV).

This gospel was proclaimed to Abraham *before* the entrance of circumcision, so it was not a mere gospel



58 pages

See [order form](#) under “*Compilations*.”

Paul's Priestly Ministry (A Compilation)

Prior to the revelation of the present *Secret Administration* found in Ephesians and Colossians, Paul's ministry was a *prophetic light* “to the Gentiles” (Acts 13:47) under the auspices of Israel (Isaiah 49:6), Paul himself “*acting as a priest*” (Romans 15:15-16, CV). During his earlier ministry, by his own admission, his teaching was limited to what “*the prophets and Moses did say should come*” (Acts 26:22), proclaiming “*the hope of Israel*” (Acts 28:20). This vital key is crucial to the proper understanding of the epistles which Paul wrote prior to Ephesians, letters which were “*out of an installment*” (I Corinthians 13:9-10, 12, CV).

This is a collection of eight important articles, by four authors: Vladimir Gelesnoff (1877-1921), A.E. Knoch (1874-1965), Adlai Loudy (1893-1984), and Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

for the Circumcision, but included the Uncircumcision as well. And this was the key element of Paul's *priestly* ministry toward the Gentiles, during the Acts period, so that he was,

*acting as a priest of the **evangel of God*** (Romans 15:16, CV).

Thus, it was that Paul, during the past Pentecost Administration,

completed the evangel of the Christ (Romans 15:19, CV).

For, it was he alone, the apostle of the Gentiles, who had been,

entrusted with the Evangel of the Uncircumcision (Galatians 2:7, CV).

Paul referred back to this "completed" evangel in Ephesians 6:19, calling it "*the secret of the evangel*" (CV). This "secret" was not revealed in Ephesians, but only referenced there. This "*secret of the evangel*" was that *all* are reconciled (conciliated) to God through the redemptive work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

A.E. Knoch (1874-1965) wrote,

The *Mystery of the Gospel* is expounded in Romans and Corinthians, not in Ephesians and Colossians. The latter refer to it ...

— *Unsearchable Riches*, Volume 28 (1937)

The *Mystery of the Gospel* was the subject of prophetic writings. But the *Secret Economy* was made

known exclusively through Paul. He alone was to enlighten all as to *that* secret.

In full accord with its character, *the Mystery of the Gospel*, having been "hushed" like a court secret, is proclaimed by heralds and administered by ambassadors in consonance with a decree of the Eternal God. No such royal style attends the *Dispensation of the Secret Economy*. Its scenes are private and in the family circle. ...

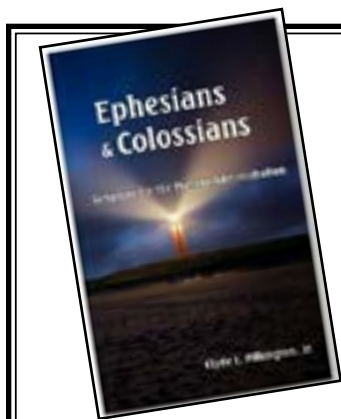
Till now [Ephesians and Colossians], revelation had been concerned with the Earth and its restoration and re-creation. Search the Scriptures and see, *where is there any license for introducing a heavenly destiny and hope before Paul wrote Ephesians?* All things shall be heavenly as to *character*, but this refers to *position*. It was a secret, not only unrevealed, but actually *concealed*.

— *Unsearchable Riches*, Volume 1 (1909)

"*The Secret of the Evangel*" (Ephesians 6:19) is the (re)conciliation found in Romans 5:12-21 and II Corinthians 5:14-21, that Christ died for *all*, an aspect of the evangel that had been previously *hushed up*.

Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, in this way death spread to all men, because all sinned. In fact, sin was in the world before the law, but sin is not charged to a person's account when there is no law. Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who did not sin in the likeness of Adam's transgression. He is a prototype of the Coming One. But the gift is not like

(see **SECRETS**, last page)



Ephesians & Colossians *Scripture for the Present Administration*

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

Ephesians and Colossians are the present truth for the current dispensation. Ephesians introduces the Secret Administration in which we live, while Colossians, its companion epistle, completes the Word of God. There are no other Secret Administration letters beyond Ephesians and Colossians.

76 pages (2nd edition) See [order form](#) under "Clyde Pilkington."

Understanding the Entrance and Purpose of the Law in Relationship to God's Character of Grace

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

Key Points:

The ages are designed to reveal the true nature and character of God to His creation. This is accomplished by providing various contrasts (e.g. good and evil).....8109
The whole experience of the Law was but a test of Israel's faith in the Promises that God had made to them. Israel failed the test. 8109

The entrance of sin in Eden's garden, and its acceleration by the Mosaic law, were but the backdrop of evil, a setting from which could spring forth the glorious grace of God.....8110
If we live in full grace with all of those around us, but see God as a harsh enforcer of His Law, then we will view ourselves as better than He.....8111

The ages are designed to reveal the true nature and character of God to His creation. This is accomplished by providing various contrasts (e.g. good and evil).

Sinai's Law. God "added" the Law (Galatians 3:19), so that sin might "abound" (REB), "increase" (CV), "multiply" (HCSB, TCNT, WNT, GNT), or as the Bible in Basic English (BBE) has it, "to make wrongdoing worse" (Romans 5:20).

As for the Law, it must be remembered that for some 2,500 years or more before its entrance, God dealt with man according to divine Promise (i.e., the Administration of Promise).¹

After all, the whole experience of the Law was but a test of Israel's faith in the Promises that God had made to them. Israel failed the test. Instead of having faith in God and His ability, they had faith in themselves and their own ability to keep the Law.

Thus, it is essential that we understand the nature of

1. The Law operated on an "If-Then" principle, which is the very nature of the Law.
As seen in Exodus 19:5, the Mosaic Law was a conditional covenant that was based on Israel's performance. "If" they obeyed the commandments of God's covenant, "then" they would be "a peculiar treasure" to Him; they would "then" be "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (:6).
"If you will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then you shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people: for all the Earth is Mine: and you shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation."
One only needs to read through the Law to see this "If-Then" principle repeated, over and over.

At Sinai, Moses said unto the people,

Fear not: for God is come to prove you ... (Exodus 20:20, KJV).

The Hebrew word rendered "prove" (נִסָּה; *nāsâh*) in this verse has the meaning of "test," as can be seen in other translations:



The Hope of Paul's Acts Epistles

by — Tom L. Ballinger

A brief consideration of the believers' hope as recorded in the epistles of Paul written during the Acts-Period.

38 pages

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There are enough ways in the world for everyone to have one. – “Big Mama” Webb (Clyde Pilkington’s maternal grandmother)

God has come to **test** you (HCSB).

God has come in order to **test** you (GLT).

God has come to **test** you (ISV).

The Covenant of Law was *added* to the Covenants of Promise. But why so? It was added as a *test*. The offspring of Abraham had all they needed in relationship to “blessing” in the simple covenants that God had made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Why would they, at Sinai, bind themselves to an agreement that would contractually require performance on their part *before* they could be blessed?²

The faith-response to the offer of the covenant through Moses at Mount Sinai should have been, “No thank you, we already have all of the blessings secured in the Covenants of Promise that You made with our Fathers: Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. So, we’ll pass.”

Instead, when Moses had placed before them God’s test, “*the faith of Abraham*” gave-way to their own self-confidence and self-righteousness. Before the details of the covenant were even given their prideful response was,

All that Yahweh speaks we shall do (Exodus 19:8, CV).

All? Really?

2. Throughout Scripture we are presented with various administrations. These administrations, sometimes called “dispensations,” or “economies,” are divine managements, or stewardships. They are the organization and implementation of specific divine purposes. There are seven basic administrations.

For more information on the seven administrations, see,

– [Book] [The Seven Administrations](#), Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr. (On the [order form](#) under “Pilkington.”);

– [Video] [The Seven Administrations](#), Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., [Bible Basics #7](#).

They hadn’t even heard what “*all*” of the commandments were, and yet they unilaterally agreed to keep them? They committed themselves to a binding contract with God without even reading the fine print. Since “*all*” was their voluntary agreement, then “*all*” it would be! So, now to obtain the blessings that were already rightfully theirs by the Covenants of Promise, they must,

observe and to do all His commandments (Deuteronomy 28:1).

This was Israel’s *test* of faith. God gave this test to Israel to show them (and as a divine illustration to the rest of humanity) that they were sinners, without strength, so as to eventually be their “*escort to Christ*” (Galatians 3:24, CV).

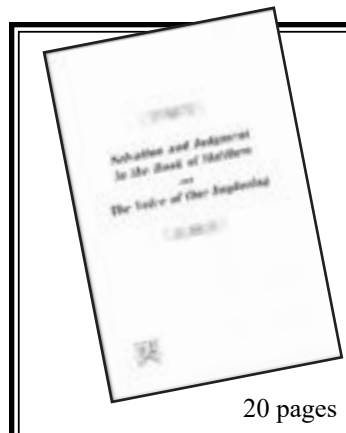
Although unrelated to the Hebrew words for “*sin*,” is it a mere coincidence that the word “*Sinai*” starts with the first three letters **S-i-n**, and that Mount Sinai rises above a place called “*the desert of Sin*” (Exodus 16:1)?

The entrance of sin in Eden’s garden, and its acceleration by the Mosaic law, were but the backdrop of evil, a setting from which could spring forth the glorious grace of God. The canvas must first have a dark background before the vibrant colors of grace could be lavishly painted upon it.

Yet, God’s purpose in all of this was so that He could bring forth His *superexceeding* grace.

Yet law came in by the way, that the offense should be increasing. Yet where sin increases, grace superexceeds (Romans 5:20, CV).

As late as the writing of the book of Romans, Paul



Salvation and Judgment in the Book of Matthew and The Voice of One Imploring

by — Dean Hough

When our Lord came into this world He came to save: “*You shall be calling His name Jesus, for He shall be saving His people from their sins*” (Matthew 1:21). This important declaration of God’s intention forms a solid basis for all that is recorded throughout the book of Matthew, and must be kept in mind in the midst of the stern warnings of judgment, including that even of “*fire unextinguished.*”

(See [order form](#) under “*Other Authors.*”)

was still sustaining the Law.

*Are we, then, nullifying law through faith? May it not be coming to that! Nay, we are **sustaining** law (Romans 3:31, CV).*

It is not until after the close of the Pentecost Administration, at the end of the book of Acts, that the Barrier Wall comes down and the Law is fully “nullified.” Absolute grace is the character of the Secret Administration, as revealed in the epistles of Ephesians and Colossians.

So, while in Paul’s Acts epistles he is not “nullifying law,” he was in Ephesians,

*For He is our Peace, Who makes both one, and razes the central wall of the barrier (the enmity in His flesh), **nullifying the law** of precepts in decrees, that He should be creating the two, in Himself, into one new humanity, making peace; and should be reconciling both in One Body to God through the cross, killing the enmity in it (Ephesians 2:14-16).*

In both Romans 3:31 and Ephesians 2:15 the Greek words for “nullifying” (καταργέω; *katargeō*) and “law” (νόμος, *nomos*) are the same. Yet in Romans the law is *not* nullified, but sustained. However, in Ephesians the law is nullified by the destruction of “the central wall of the barrier.”

With all of this being said, the true revelation of Who God is, is not found in the Law. If our view of God today is sought in *the disparaging, dark backdrop* of the test of the Law, we will have an enormously distorted view of Him. Rather, we need to see our view of Him in *the glorious, vibrant forefront* of absolute grace.

Focusing on God’s law-dealings with Israel is missing the whole contrast of Law and Grace. If we live in full grace with all of those around us, but see God as a harsh enforcer of His Law, then we will view ourselves as *better* than He.

However, once we come to see Him as all-loving and all-gracious, we will know that our love and grace are but mere, faint expressions of Him. For indeed, since “*God is Love*” (I John 4:8, 16), then His is the perfect personification of Love as seen in I Corinthians 13. And since “*God is Love*,” we will here provide an abridged, composite translation with “*Love*” being exchanged for “*God*.”

God is patient, kind, gentle and gracious. He is not agitated, irritated, upset, or annoyed, nor does He keep a record of wrongs. He is tolerant, and loyal, and never gives up, fails or falls short. God is the greatest!

We can never be too loving, too peaceful, too gracious and too embracing, for God is the,

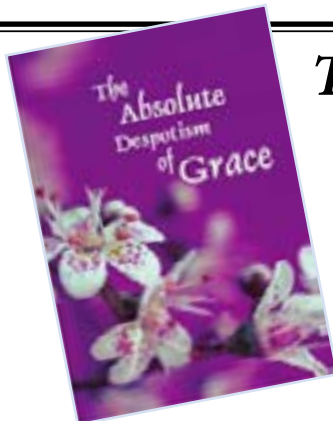
Father of mercies (II Corinthians 1:3),
God of all comfort (II Corinthians 1:3),
God of love (II Corinthians 13:11),
God of patience and consolation (Romans 15:5),
God of hope (Romans 15:13),
God of peace (Romans 15:33),
God of all grace (I Peter 5:10),
One God and Father of all (Ephesians 4:6).

BSN

TOPICS:

Major: God, Grace, Law, Middle Wall

Minor: Faith; Mystery



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A Compilation

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146 pages

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SECRETS (continued from page 8108)

the trespass. For if by the one man's trespass the many died, how much more have the grace of God and the gift overflowed to the many by the grace of the One Man, Jesus Christ. And the gift is not like the one man's sin, because from one sin came the judgment, resulting in condemnation, but from many trespasses came the gift, resulting in justification. Since by the one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, how much more, those obtaining the superabundance of grace and the gift of righteousness reign in life through the One Man, Jesus Christ. So then, as through one trespass condemnation came on all mankind, even so also through one righteous act life-giving justification came on all mankind. For just as through one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so also through the One Man's obedience the many will be made righteous. The law came along to multiply the trespass. But where sin multiplied, grace multiplied even more, so that, just as sin reigned in death, so also grace will reign through righteousness, resulting in eonian life through Jesus Christ our Lord (Romans 5:12-21, BSV).

For Christ's love constrains us, judging this: if One died for all, then all died. ... All is of God, Who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the dispensation of the (re)conciliation: that is, in Christ, God was (re)conciliating the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and giving us the word of

(re)conciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God entreating through us. We are pleading for Christ, "Be reconciled to God." For the One not knowing sin, He made sin for our sakes, so that we would be made the righteousness of God in Him (II Corinthians 5:14, 18-21, BSV).

Dispensationally – "the dispensation of the (re)conciliation" (II Corinthians 5:18) – this "secret" was also related to the "secret" of Israel's "blindness" (or "callousness," Romans 11:25, CV), the Gentiles being "grafted in among them," partaking of their "root and fatness" (Romans 11:17), i.e., "the nations participated" in Israel's "spiritual things" (Romans 15:27, CV).

Dean Hough wrote,

... Israel's callousness (Romans 11:25) ... is closely related to what Paul calls "the Secret of the Evangel" in Ephesians 6:19 and "the word of the conciliation" in II Corinthians 5:19. It is a "secret hushed in times eonian" but now revealed (Romans 16:25-26) ...

— *Unsearchable Riches*, Volume 1 (1909)

BSN

TOPICS:

Major: Ephesians; Hushed; Paul's Gospel, Reconciliation, Romans 16:25-26; Secret
Minor: Prophecy



69 pages

The Seven Administrations:

The Basic Dispensations of Scripture

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

Throughout Scripture we are presented with various administrations. These administrations, sometimes called "dispensations," or "economies," are divine managements, stewardships or households. They are the organization and implementation of a specific divine purpose.

See [order form](#) under "Clyde Pilkington."

This is an introductory look at the seven basic administrations in Scripture. Grasping the overall scope of these will greatly assist us in understanding the Scriptures. Such an awareness of our place in the Divine plan can save us from much confusion, heartache and despair. Extensive endnotes. Overview chart.