

Sunday, July 8, 2018—I Corinthians 15:21-53 Behold I Show You A Mystery

### I Corinthians 15:51

- **Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,**
- *Behold, I shew you a mystery*—the English word “behold” implies that Paul wants the Corinthians to “fix their attention” or “fix their eyes” upon something. In other words, Paul is calling something to the attention of the Corinthians here in verse 51.
- *Mystery*—Paul is fixing to shew them or reveal a “mystery” to them pertaining to the resurrection. The Greek word rendered “mystery” in the KJB comes is the word *mystērion*. This word is used when dealing with information what was kept secret but now is revealed.
  - Romans 16:25-26
  - Ephesians 3:1-5
  - Colossians 1:25-26
- I Corinthians 15:51—this is not the first time that Paul has discussed aspects of the mystery in the book of I Corinthians.
  - I Corinthians 2:1-8—when Paul was originally in Corinth in Acts 18 he did not deem the Corinthians as being ready to hear about the wisdom of God is a mystery. At that time in his ministry, Paul was reserving knowledge of the mystery for those who were mature in the faith and able to receive it.
  - I Corinthians 4:1—Paul viewed himself as a minister of Christ and steward of the mysteries of God.
- I Corinthians 15:51—now at the end of this book of reproof, after Paul’s experiences in Ephesus in Acts 19 (I Cor. 15:32) he calls their attention to a mystery i.e., a secret as it pertains to the resurrection.
- *We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed*—this secret is that not every member of the body of Christ is going to die and sow their body into the earth before the dispensation of grace ends. That being said, every member of the body of Christ is going to be changed.
  - Paul’s use of the word “we” in verse 51 implies that he saw this as a near event that he and Corinthians would partake of.

- God is capable of changing our current terrestrial bodies of man flesh into heavenly celestial bodies of man flesh without requiring that one sow their body into the ground through death.
- This “mystery” that Paul is calling to the Corinthians attention is multifaceted in nature. There are structural aspects to it in terms of what happens to a believer’s body but there are also timing aspects to it in terms of when it will occur.
- I Thessalonians 4:13—Paul does not want the Thessalonians to be ignorant concerning their departed loved ones. He does not want them to sorrow as those who have no hope.
- I Thessalonians 4:14—those who have believed in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus will God bring with him. In other words, these are folks who died believing Paul’s gospel i.e., they were saved people.
  - The departed loved ones of the Thessalonians have hope because they had trusted in the finished work of Christ. As those who “sleep in Jesus” God will bring them with him.
  - Those who do not sleep in Jesus or have not trust in the finished work of Christ are the ones who have not hope in verse 13.
- I Thessalonians 4:15—goes with I Cor. 15:51 in that it clearly states that not every believer is going to die before the Lord returns to catch away the body of Christ. Those who are fortunate enough to be living when this event transpires are not going to prevent the dead in Christ from rising.
- I Thessalonians 4:16—the dead in Christ are going to rise first. This is the resurrection of those who have sown their bodies into the earth through death. They are going to rise from the dead first.
- I Thessalonians 4:17—after the dead in Christ rise first will caught up together to meet the Lord in the air. This is the event commonly referred to as the rapture. This even is explicitly stated to take place where? In the clouds and in the air. This event does not transpire on the earth rather it transpires in the 2<sup>nd</sup> heaven.
  - Revelation 19:11-16—this passage is talking about the Lord’s bodily return to earth in judgment upon his enemies. This return was prophesied in the Old Testament.
  - Zechariah 14:4—one day the Lord Jesus Christ stand bodily upon the Mount of Olives, according to prophecy.
  - Acts 1:10-12

- I Corinthians 15:51—Paul is talking about heretofore unprophesied events. Paul is talking about a return of the Lord to catch away the body of Christ to meet him in the air that is unsearchable in the prophetic scriptures of time past.