

Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge

Commentary for February 20, 2011 — In Christ They Are Concealed

Read carefully and consider thoughtfully this interesting passage in Paul's epistle to the Colossians:

“For I want you to perceive what the struggle amounts to which I am having for your sakes and for those in Laodicea, and whoever have not seen my face in flesh, that their hearts may be consoled [comforted], being united in love, and to all the riches of the assurance of understanding, unto a realization of the secret of the God and Father, of Christ, in Whom all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are concealed. Now I am saying this, that no one may be beguiling you with persuasive words.”

• *Colossians 2:1–4 Concordant Version*

Read this passage in your favorite translations and then compare them to the Concordant Version above. First of all Paul wants to communicate important information to the Colossians and the *ekklesia* in Laodicea.¹ The group in Laodicea is probably the same congregation that the apostle John wrote to in Revelation 3: 14–22. Let us break down this passage into parts with a view to understanding it better:

“For I want you to perceive what the struggle amounts to which I am having for your sakes and for those in Laodicea, and whoever have not seen my face in flesh, [why?]

[1] **that their hearts may be consoled [comforted], being united in love, and**

[2] [leading them:] **to all the riches of the assurance of understanding,**

unto [the goal of] a realization of the secret of the God and Father, of [the] Christ [Messiah],

in Whom all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are concealed.

Now I am saying this, that no one may be beguiling [enticing] you with persuasive words.”

• *Colossians 2:1–4 Concordant Version*

There are **“treasures of wisdom [sophia] and knowledge [gnosis]”** concealed within the **“realization of the secret”** of God the Father and Jesus Christ His Son. What is that **“secret”**? The term in Greek is *mysterion* from which we get our English word “mystery.” It means that which is secret, that which is hidden. The secret involves marvelous treasures, not of gold or silver or precious stones or anything physical. They are **“all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge”** which are concealed in the persons of God the Father and the Messiah, Jesus, His Son. Note what is offered to us: God is not offering to give us some treasures, but He is offering to give us all important information about God and Christ, revealed and available to

¹ Both *ekklesias* abandoned Paul and his teachings (the very teachings he gives here in this passage and the epistles of Colossians, Ephesians, and Philippians) as we know from 2 Timothy 1:15: **“This you know, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me.”** The term “Asia” was a reference to a Roman province by that name on the west coast of Anatolia, which is Turkey today.

us — now — at this moment through the apostle Paul's writings. Do we neglect that offer of treasure? Yes. How insane is that? It is very sad indeed.

Paul's purpose is to reveal those treasures in the writing of the remainder of his epistle to the Colossians. He expands his telling about these treasures in the companion epistle of Ephesians, with still more information in Philippians. See Dr. Martin's articles "[The Mystery and the New Covenant](#)" and "[The History of the Revelation of the Mystery](#)." This secret and mystery deals directly with "['Our Destiny' The Final Revelation of God](#)" which is Chapter 24 in Dr. Martin's book *The Essentials of New Testament Doctrine*.²

The word "realization" is the same word found in 1 Timothy 2:4 about God: **"Who wills that all mankind be saved and come into a realization of the truth"** (Concordant Version). In both Colossians and 1 Timothy the word means much more than simply "knowledge."

Verse	Greek	King James Version	Concordant Version
Colossians 2:2	<i>epi-gnosis</i> , "full knowledge"	acknowledgement	realization (or recognition)
1 Timothy 2:4	<i>epi-gnosis</i> , "full knowledge"	knowledge	realization (or recognition)

The word occurs in 20 verses of the New Testament including these two instances.³ In each occurrence it means an intense, deep, full, and complete knowledge about the subject at hand. Of course, the word is translated in the King James Version by several different English words, but is translated "realization" or "recognition" in the Concordant Version. It denotes the process of connecting with previous conception (recognition) or with some vital fact (realization) tending toward the idea of "full-knowledge."⁴

Job's friend, Zophar, asked: **"Can you by searching find out God? Can you find out the Almighty unto perfection?"** (Job 11:7). The answer is no, not by yourself. For God to be known, He must reveal Himself. For our sakes God revealed Himself to us all through His Word (the Living Word and the written Word, Matthew 11:27; Luke 10:22; John 14:6–9; Hebrews 1:1–2). Then as Paul says above, you can even go to the **"secret of the God and Father, of [the] Christ, in Whom all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are concealed."**

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² Portland, OR: ASK Press, 2001. This book (<http://www.askelm.com/essentials/index.asp>) is available complete online. The printed version (557 pages) can be purchased online at <http://www.askelm.com/books/book007.htm>.

³ Romans 1:28, 3:20, 10:2; Ephesians 1:17, 4:13; Philippians 1:9; Colossians 1:9–10, 2:2, 3:10; 1 Timothy 2:4; 2 Timothy 2:25, 3:7; Titus 1:1; Philemon 1:6; Hebrews 10:26; 2 Peter 1:2–3, 8, 2:20. Note that the word only occurs in the writings of Paul and Peter.

⁴ "epignosis," *Comprehensive Lexicon and Concordance* (Los Angeles: Concordant Publishing Concern, 1930), p. 186.