

# Colossians 1:26

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints:

## Analysis

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**Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints.** "The mystery" (to mystērion, τὸ μυστήριον) in Paul's usage doesn't mean permanently obscure puzzle but previously hidden truth now revealed. This contrasts pagan mystery religions offering secret knowledge to initiates. Paul's mystery was divinely concealed in previous eras but now publicly proclaimed to all believers.

"Hid from ages and from generations" (apokekrymmenon apo tōn aiōnōn kai apo tōn geneōn, ἀποκεκρυμμένον ἀπὸ τῶν αἰώνων καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν γενεῶν) emphasizes long concealment. Old Testament saints saw shadows and types; New Testament believers see fulfillment. God's plan existed eternally but remained partially veiled until Christ's coming revealed it fully. This progressive revelation doesn't mean contradiction but increasing clarity.

"But now is made manifest to his saints" (nyn de ephanerōthē tois hagiois autou, νῦν δὲ ἐφανερώθη τοῖς ἁγίοις αὐτοῦ) announces revelation's completion. "His saints"—all believers, not spiritual elite—now access truth previously hidden. This democratizes divine knowledge, opposing heretical systems claiming that only advanced initiates receive full truth. Every Christian possesses the complete revelation through Scripture.

## Historical Context

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Mystery religions pervaded the Roman Empire, promising secret knowledge through elaborate initiations. Gnostic systems developing in this period claimed hidden truths beyond apostolic teaching. Paul co-opts mystery language but inverts its meaning: Christianity's mystery is revealed to all believers through public proclamation, not hidden from outsiders through secret ritual. This makes Christianity both deeply profound and widely accessible.

## Related Passages

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**Colossians 1:16** — All things created through Christ

**Psalms 19:1** — Heavens declare God's glory

## Study Questions

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1. Do you approach Scripture expecting to understand God's revealed truth, or do you assume it remains mysterious and inaccessible?
2. What modern movements claim 'deeper' revelation beyond Scripture, and how should these be evaluated?
3. How does knowing you possess God's complete revelation affect your confidence in understanding and applying biblical truth?

## Interlinear Text

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τοῖς	μυστήριον	τοῖς	ἀποκεκρυμμένον	ἀπὸ	τοῖς	αἰώνων
which	Even the mystery	which	hath been hid	from	which	ages
G3588	G3466	G3588	G613	G575	G3588	G165

καὶ	ἀπὸ	τοῖς	γενεῶν	νυνὶ	δὲ	ἐφανερώθη	τοῖς	ἀγίοις
and	from	which	generations	now	but	is made manifest	which	saints
G2532	G575	G3588	G1074	G3570	G1161	G5319	G3588	G40

αὐτοῦ
to his
G846

## Additional Cross-References

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**Luke 8:10** (Parallel theme): And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.

**Matthew 13:11** (Parallel theme): He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.

**Mark 4:11** (Parallel theme): And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables:

**1 Corinthians 2:7** (Parallel theme): But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:

**2 Timothy 1:10** (Creation): But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel:

**Psalms 25:14** (Parallel theme): The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant.

