

# Prophecy and Mystery Contrasted - Food Prohibitions - Prophecy15

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[ 0 : 00 ] the song that we just sang because it so well expresses the theme that we have been following in connection with the subject of prophecy which has a lot to do with the law.

And if you would please turn over to the reverse side of the song we just sang in that insert for the September 16 reading entitled The Law Misunderstood and this is in the daily devotional that we have encouraged people to obtain by Mr. Stamm's called Two Minutes with the Bible.

I do not know of any single volume that can provide you with more biblical insight in connection with the interpretation and understanding of scripture on a daily basis than that brief volume. It is remarkable. And it holds true to the principle of line upon line precept upon precept here a little and there a little. And when you get just two minutes a day with one of these you will be amazed at how your overall understanding and ability to connect dots with issues that didn't make sense before start coming together. It's a beautiful thing.

So follow along as I read this if you would please and this will not be our scripture readings for the morning but it is an advantageous reading and will be in Nehemiah chapter 8 after we read this. This is The Law Misunderstood. There are three misconceptions most people entertain about the law of God and its Ten Commandments. And I'm sorry but I don't want to be interrupting Mr. Stamm all the time but I have to make a comment after this first statement. Three misconceptions that most people entertain about the law of God and its Ten Commandments including most Christians.

And frankly there ought to be no excuse for that. But there is. So many Christians entertain the same misunderstandings about the Bible as do a lot of people who are non-Christians. And that shouldn't be true but it is. Let's read on. Number one. Most people have a vague notion that the law always was.

[ 2 : 28 ] That it must have been given to Adam or soon after. Actually it was given by Moses about 1500 BC after about 2500 years of human history had elapsed. Reference John 1 and verse 17. So mankind lived on earth for about 2500 years without the law or the Ten Commandments. Two. Most people suppose that the law was given to mankind in general while in fact it was given to Israel alone. Deuteronomy 5 verses 2 and 3.

We'll look at something in Exodus later that will support that. Three. Most people suppose that the law was given to help us do right. Even some clergymen teach this. Although the Bible clearly teaches that the law was given to show us that we are guilty sinners. It is true that the law while given to Israel also shows the Gentile that he is a sinner. This is why Romans 3 19 says, Now we know that what thing soever the law says, it says to them that are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped and all the world, that's Jew and Gentile, all the world may be brought in guilty before God. But most important of all, few people realize that the

Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins to deliver us from the just condemnation of the law. This is taught in the following scriptures, Galatians 3 13, Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law being made. And 2 Corinthians 5 21. For God has made him, that is Christ, to be sin for us. He who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. And then Romans 6 14. For sin shall not have dominion over you. For ye are not under the law, but under grace. A few weeks ago, at one of our regular men's Bible classes that currently is held here now on Tuesday mornings at eight o'clock, a gentleman who is a regular attendee of the class, but is not from Grace Bible Church, he's from another church, ask a question in response to what I had been teaching from the prophecy of Zechariah. And I was kind of stunned by his question, but it really provoked some thinking in me. And I've been, I've been struggling with his question ever since. And his question was this, he obviously appreciated the content that we were being taught out of Zechariah, and I was relating some of the prophetic features of it. And this kind gentleman, whom I also consider a good friend, raised his hand and asked a question, and he said, the church that I attend, and a number of churches that I have attended over the years, never teach anything like this. Why is that? Why don't they? And it kind of caught me flat-footed, and I thanked him for the question, and I did my best to answer it off the top of my head. But it jarred me afresh and anew as to what some people tell me who are from Grace, who go out for vacations or whatever in their way, and they come home and tell me some of the things that they experienced.

And having been your pastor here for five decades, I understandably really tend to lose track of what everybody else is teaching and preaching. But I am informed constantly that there isn't much teaching going on out there. And that really puzzles me because I can't understand why else believers would band together for this occasion other than to hear from the Word of God. I can't believe, in fact, I know it isn't true. You don't come here just because I'm here. You come here because of what's available from the Scriptures. And that's as it ought to be. We ought to be Scripture-driven, not personality-driven, not pastor-driven. And we ought to be more concerned for the content because of who provided the content and because of the effect that they're supposed to have upon our life, not only enlightenment and encouragement, but sometimes conviction and information and all of these things. Because all Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, instruction, and righteousness, so that the man or woman of God may be mature, thoroughly furnished, and equipped unto every good work. That's what this is all about.

But I hear stories about so many churches being reduced to ritual, tradition, and they have a Scripture reading. Thank God for that. They read from the epistles and from the Gospels and from the law, and then often go on to deliver a little ditty of a sermon 15 minutes long that doesn't have anything to do with the passages that they read. What is that? What's going on in any way? And I know, and I get this across my desk every now and then, where pastors, you can subscribe by mail for ready-made sermons that will tell you everything you need to tell the people, and all you have to do is deliver it.

[ 8 : 59 ] Well, and I don't know how much this is going on. And please, trust me, I don't want to give the impression, I don't want to have an Elijah complex. I, and I alone, am the only one remaining that is faithful and teaching the Word. No, nonsense. I know that's not true. There are a lot of godly men out there filling our pulpits in different denominations who are faithful expositors of the Word, but from everything I've been able to gather, they are becoming fewer and fewer. It's just not all that common, whereas one time it really was. And I want you to turn to Nehemiah, if you would, please.

We're not going to be preaching from there, but I just want to read this passage of Scripture. Nehemiah chapter 8. This is after the people had been in Babylonian captivity for 70 years, and while they were there for those 70 years, most of that generation died off. And it is their children and grandchildren who are returning to the land of Israel under the gracious provision of the Medes and the Persians who had defeated the Babylonians, who were the ones that carried them away into Babylonian captivity. Now they're back home again. Nehemiah is building the wall, and Zerubbabel is the governor.

They don't have a king, and they haven't had a king since Zedekiah. The throne of Israel and the lineage of David has been vacant since 586 B.C. And Israel still doesn't have a king. They have a prime minister.

But the throne will one day be occupied by the only Jew who is, in a hereditary way and a legal way, able to occupy that throne. And that is Yeshua HaMashiach, Jesus of Nazareth. And he will come back and occupy that throne. So what we've got here is a situation where a huge number of people have come back to Israel. And their houses have been, for the most part, ruined and abandoned. The wall's been broken down. The temple's been destroyed. They are in the process of rebuilding the temple. And Nehemiah gathers them all together. And they're going to have a time of enlightenment and reconnecting with the God of Israel. And I want you to see what's taking place here in chapter 8, beginning with verse 1.

And all the people gathered as one man at the square, which was in front of the water gate. And they asked Ezra, the scribe, to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had given to Israel. And then Ezra, the priest, brought the law before the assembly of men, women, and all who could listen with understanding. That suggests maybe an adult or at least an enlightened young person who was able to understand the words that would be spoken. And the text says, and Ezra the scribe stood at a wooden podium. This, I would have you know, is the first pulpit in the world. No, not this one. Not this one, but the one in the text. He stood at the podium. That was a pulpit.

[ 12 : 40 ] And the reason he did was because it gave him elevation. It wasn't a psychological thing to make him look like he was above the people or better than anyone else. But it was for the purpose of amplification and articulation.

And when you can speak to people where you have open air before you, you can project your voice and be heard much more easily than you can if you are down on the same level with everyone and you've got all of these bodies in front of you who are absorbing the sound. So even as was with Ezra, my voice goes out, up, and over.

And even with the amplification, it can make a difference. But he didn't have any amplification. And yet, they were able to speak so as to be heard.

So they had made this wooden podium or pulpit for the purpose. And beside him stood Mattathiah, Shema, and I'm not going to read all these names. Ezra, verse 5. Ezra opened the book.

This was a scroll, actually. It wasn't a book like you're holding. It was a scroll that he was unwinding. He would wind up at the top and unwind at the bottom. Ezra opened the scroll in the sight of all the people, for he was standing above all the people.

[ 14 : 01 ] And when he opened it, all the people stood up. Now, I seriously wonder, after all these years that I've been with you, if maybe we haven't been missing something here, because I recall when Jesus, in Luke's Gospel, chapter 4, returned to his hometown of Nazareth and was given the scroll to read from the prophet Isaiah, I think it was chapter 64, he took the scroll and all the people stood.

Maybe we ought to be doing that. No, it's not going to make the word any more sacred. It's not going to please God anymore. But maybe it's an element of respect that we could be showing to the scriptures that we haven't.

So we ought to think about that. What do you think, Nathan? Give that some thought. Okay? So all the people stood up, and Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God, and all the people answered, Amen, Amen, while lifting up their hands, and then they bowed low and worshipped the Lord with their faces to the ground.

And we don't do much of that anymore either. But, you know, the Muslims do. If you've ever seen the Muslims at prayer in their mosque, they get down on their knees, they bow forward, and they literally put their forehead on the ground.

And that is an expression not only of worship but of submission. And I don't know if you are aware of it or not, but the very word Islam means submission.

[ 15 : 44 ] That's what it means. It doesn't mean what President Bush said it meant when he stood that day on the wreckage of the Twin Towers that had come down as he put his arms around one of the first responders that was there, and he gave his little speech, which was great and very encouraging to the people.

But he said, Islam means peace. No, it doesn't. Islam means submission. And the idea, of course, is submission to God.

So let's read on. Verse 8, And the people, I'm sorry, verse 7 gives all these names again, which I'm going to skip.

But he explained the law to the people while the people remained in their place. And they read from the book, from the law of God, translating to give the sense so that they understood the reading.

Because words and messages can have no impact on you without understanding. You cannot give an intelligent response to what you don't understand.

[ 17 : 08 ] It just leaves you in a fog. And it ought not to be that way. Listen, this book, This book was given for the purpose of people understanding it, grasping the meaning.

Because only in that way can you respond to it with obedience. In fact, only in that way can you respond to it with disobedience. You don't even know to disobey if you don't know what the message is.

So each time the message goes forth, it is designed to find lodging in your heart and mind and cause you to process, to process the information you are getting.

And the wheels start turning. And as you gain an understanding and an appreciation of what is being said, you are saying to yourself, Is this something I must do?

Is this something I should believe? What is my response to this? We are not here just to hear religious words spoken. We are here that it might make a difference in our lives.

[ 18 : 18 ] Not only for now, but for eternity. So, Ezra read from the book of the law and gave the sense so that they understood the reading.

I really appreciate that. I think every preacher and expositor of the word should. So, we are going to go from Nehemiah back to the book of Exodus.

And while you are turning there, I want to share with you some propositional concepts that will lead us into where we want to go because we are dealing with an ongoing kind of situation in a series of messages.

And we are in process of considering the very most major key for the understanding of the Bible. It is a concept that is very simple and yet very profound.

It is simple in the sense that it merely follows an historical line of progression. It considers doctrinal issues to be under an ongoing development.

[ 19 : 23 ] It makes the Bible a volume of gradual unfolding of truth. It is doctrine that is not static, but developing and unfolding repeatedly, providing updates.

And let me just inject something here that I had not planned on. Really, all Nehemiah and Ezra had to be concerned with was the scriptures that God had provided them up to that time.

And in many respects, they didn't have the kind of need that we have for seeing a progression of doctrine because from what he was considering in the Old Testament and the law, there was no progression of doctrine.

What was delivered was it, and it was final, and it was to that audience of Israelites, and there wasn't anything beyond that. But, since that time, an enormous amount of content has been added to the Bible from which Ezra read.

It wasn't complete then. It was then in the process of being developed. And in fact, it may surprise you to realize that it was not until the 4th century A.D.

[ 20 : 36 ] We're talking about 300 to 400 years after the death of Christ that the New Testament canon, that is, the books of the New Testament, were actually recognized and inserted into the volume as the New Testament.

So keep that in mind. What we have is what's called the Old Testament that the Jews call the Tanakh, T-A-N-A-C-H, the Tanakh.

It consists of the Old Testament, and for the Jew, that's the whole Bible. That's the whole thing. They do not accept the New Testament as being the Word of God.

But added to the Old Testament, and as I've often said, if you limit yourself to the Old Testament, when you come to the book of Malachi and read that as the last book in the Old Testament, you are left in a spiritual limbo.

There's no resolution. There's no end to the story. It's just cut short because the rest of the story is the New Testament.

[ 21 : 46 ] And when you come into the four Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, you are given an update of the Old Testament. It is a progression from the Old Testament.

And then when you come to the book of Acts, you get an update or upgrade from the four Gospels. It's going further.

And then when you enter the Pauline Epistles, you're getting an additional update. You see the progression, the unfolding, the ongoingness of the Word of God?

It keeps adding and adding. And when you come to the end of Paul's Epistles, you've got the latest word for the latest body of believers.

That is the church, the body of Christ. And it is found only in the Pauline Epistles. It's not in the Gospels. Not in the Gospels.

[ 22 : 44 ] But when you come to the end of Paul's Epistles, you come to the Christian Hebrew Epistles, and they're called Christian Hebrew or Hebrew Christian for a good reason.

As you read them, I'm talking about Hebrews and James and Peter and 1st and 2nd, 3rd John. As you read those, you won't find anything about the church, the body of Christ.

It isn't there. Why? Because it's an update. An update of what? It's an update that reverts back to the kingdom message that the 12 were preaching, that Jesus was preaching, that was held in abeyance.

The kingdom, of course, never came, never arrived because of their rejection. And inserted instead was this thing called the mystery, the church, the body of Christ that was unprophesied, unpromised, unheard of, unthought of.

And then when it's gone, you've got another update. And following them, and what is the latest update of all? It's the book of the Revelation. Now, is that so hard?

[ 23 : 53 ] We've got a progression of information, of doctrine, of development, all the way from Genesis to Revelation. And if you do not make a distinction between those on the way as to for whom they were given and the content of them, and you try to mix it all together, you've got a problem that just cannot be solved.

Because the word of God has to be rightly divided. And you have just one alternative. If you're not going to rightly divide it, there's only one option that is left open to you.

And that is you wrongly mix it. And when you wrongly mix it, you get all kinds of crazy conclusions. And it is this concept of wrongly mixing the word of God that causes a number of people, well, the Bible has contradictions.

It says one thing in one place and something else in another. That's true, it does. But it isn't a contradiction any more than you are a contradiction. From the time you were 10 years old to the time you're 20 years old or 30 years old, is there something different about you?

Well, of course there is. But are you the same person? Of course you are. But there are a lot of differences because things have developed in the meanwhile. And we need to recognize that is true of the word of God.

[ 25 : 14 ] Now I've gone astray again, so let me get back to this. God is not changing and God does not change in His essence and character, but the human creatures God has created have and still are undergoing change, development, and transition.

And when did the change start? It started in Genesis 3. God created everything and everything was beautiful. And He looked upon all He created and He said, it is very good.

And then, a change happened. A big change. It's called the fall. That set things in motion that were not in motion before.

And Genesis 3.15 talks about a remedy for the fall. And it will be the seed of the woman. But the seed of the woman will not show up for 4,000 years when Jesus will be born in Bethlehem.

So we've got an enormous history involved, a progression that is developing. It is just marvelous. The progression of humanity has changed in many ways.

[ 26 : 27 ] Consequently, human development has called for an attendant provision of divine truth to address that human development. This includes an unprophesied, unexpected element provided for humanity called mystery or secret.

And everything prior to that is referred to as prophecy. Now let me just inject a comment here. When I say everything before that was prophecy, we're not talking about things that are predicted or predicting, although that is a synonym for prophecy and prediction.

But prophecy involves a whole lot more than just foretelling the future. And yet, that's what people often get stuck on. And do you realize that the responsibility of the prophet was greater for just the proclamation of the Word of God, the preaching of the Word of God?

And that that responsibility was much greater and utilized much more frequently than the predicting of the future. But we are enamored.

We are mesmerized by predictions of the future because everybody wants to know what's going to happen. And most of the things the prophets had to deliver was what we would call just plain, old-fashioned, down-to-earth preaching.

[ 27 : 50 ] And the preaching was designed to correct the abuses, the sins, the waywardness of the audience with a warning that if you don't shape up, then comes the prophecy, God will thus and so.

And it was preaching, warning, and often accompanied with the promise of divine visitation if you ignore the message. And of course, we saw that happen time and time and time again in the Old Testament.

Prophecy. Prophecy relates to God's chosen people, the Abraham, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and their descendants. The Jew is the key God has revealed in prophecy to be the catalyst, the key component for the eventual writing, that is R-I-G-H-T, writing of a creation gone awry.

The key component has a key within itself. That is, Israel has a key within itself called Messiah.

He and his mission is literally what everything is all about. You miss the Messiah and you miss everything. You may be right about a lot of things in this world, but if you are wrong about Jesus Christ, who he is, who sent him, why he came, what he did, why it matters, then you ignore that, miss that, or deny that, and you do so to your eternal detriment.

[ 29 : 38 ] Jesus of Nazareth in his person embraces both prophecy and mystery. In prophecy, he was anticipated, promised, prophesied as soon as redemption was needed, way back in Genesis 3, and it was needed when the fall of humanity occurred.

It was predicted to one day arrive in the role of a redeemer to the selected nation of Israel. But, in regard to mystery, which is also referred to as the secret, Messiah would unite Israel with all the rest of the world in a way never imagined by Israel or the rest of the world.

He, by his substitutionary death for the entire human race, would establish a way for a fallen man to come back to his creator simply on the basis of belief.

Just, just believing. That's it. Just believing. Well, anybody can do that. Yes, that's the point. That's why it is called justification by faith, and it means justification by believing.

The world at large is committed to justification by doing. They're just locked into that. And one reason they are is because that's the way life works.

[ 31 : 15 ] That's the way life works. It works on the basis of performance and rewards. Or lack of performance and lack of rewards.

So people automatically carry that over into the area of relating to God. and say you relate to God by pleasing God. And you please God by doing good and by being a nice person.

And by keeping the Ten Commandments. Oh, of course, you've got to keep the commandments. And it is all human religion of do-ism. Do-ism.

Do, do, do, and thou shalt live. And do you know, the thing that we shared earlier from Mr. Stamm about the law, theoretically you could be justified by the law.

I say theoretically. Practically you can. In theory you could. All you have to do is observe every single requirement of the law 100% of the time without fail.

[ 32 : 17 ] Do that and you're in. But we have only one person who ever did that. We have only one person who ever could do that.

Which is why he said he did not come to destroy the law but to fulfill the law. But he who would keep the whole law and yet offend in one point he's guilty of all.

How's that work? If you want to think in terms of, and by the way, Christians, we probably won't get to this today, but Christians are not antinomian.

we are not against the law. We are not under the law, but we are not lawless. We operate on the basis of the law of liberty and Christ Jesus has set us free from the law of sin and death.

That's the law of Christ and it's Romans chapter 8 and it's entirely different. But it is only for regenerated people. So we are not lawless. We have a law, but it certainly isn't the Mosaic law.

[ 33 : 21 ] So theoretically, if you keep the Mosaic law perfectly, anybody does, Jew or Gentile, God has nothing against you. You cannot keep the law of God perfectly and not be on the right side of God.

But no human has and that's why we desperately needed a redeemer. So what we continue to pursue in our morning service is the progress of the prophecy and how it arrives at what is called mystery or secret in that it was never revealed before never prophesied never expected by anyone especially Israel and the twelve apostles that Christ had chosen.

This secret this thing called Jew and Gentile in one body is so stunning and so striking and so amazing that in many circles it still hasn't caught on.

Think of that two thousand years later and it's a mystery that remains a mystery this is where we fault our fellow clergy.

This is what we are to be about and boy have we ever fumbled the ball big time and when I point my finger at them there are three fingers pointing back at me because I'm not the be all end all of this by far I'm just I'm just a voice in the wilderness I guess you would say.

[ 35 : 02 ] So we've already briefly noted the distinction between the believer and the law and grace and Sabbath and Romans 14 and keeping the Sabbath and so on the seventh commandment. Now I want you to go to Exodus chapter 19 if you would please.

Exodus chapter 19 Moses on Sinai in the third month after the sons of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt on that very day they came into the wilderness of Sinai when they set out from Rephidim they came to the wilderness of Sinai and camped in the wilderness and there Israel camped in front of the mountain and Moses went up to God and the Lord called to him from the mountain saying thus you Moses shall say to the house of Jacob and tell the sons of Israel now that is a repetitive thing that is frequently used in Hebrew language and it's the same it's it is saying the same thing in two different ways exactly the same there isn't a bit of difference between these and what he says the house of

Jacob he's not talking about a house a literal house he's talking about people it is the house it is all of the inhabitants of Jacob these are the sons of Jacob how many did he have well he had 12 sons and they made up the 12 tribes of Israel and he says and tell the sons of Israel so the Jacob and the sons of Israel are one and the same it's just a way of emphasizing it and here is what he is to tell by the way there is any indication none at all that God is telling Moses and by the way it would be a good idea if you also let the Egyptians in on this and the Assyrians and God knows the Babylonians could use this truth so you make sure that they get the word none of that none of that all of this content is limited exclusively to the house of Israel the descendants of Abraham Isaac and

Jacob and that causes some people to say are you telling me that God doesn't care about anybody else well you know people will find all kinds of things to be critical about they can just manufacture criticism out of nothing and when the Bible says that Jesus came unto his own John 1 12 and his own received him not there are those who are saying did Jesus just come for the Jews yeah he came to the Jews he came to Israel for everybody if he's going to come to anybody he has to come to somebody he came to Israel if God is going to choose anybody he has to choose somebody he chose Abraham and it's amazing how people can fault God even for that we ought to be delighted that he was willing to choose anybody because when he chose Abraham he set in motion a whole series of things much of which would not be revealed until the whole thing called human history was in progress and rolling and much of that would not be revealed until



Jesus came on the scene and died on the cross and much of that would not be revealed until it is realized that in that act he cemented the reality the possibility of all the rest of the Jews and the non Jews being comprised in one body called the body of Christ amazing absolutely amazing God had it in mind all the time but he didn't reveal it until it was a strategic time to do it so he gives all to Moses and he says you shall say to the house of Jacob and the sons of Israel you yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians how I bore you on eagles wings and brought you to myself now then if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant then see the condition imposed here see the condition if and then you shall be my own possession among all the peoples for all the earth is mine and you

[ 39 : 44 ] Israel you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation these are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel you know what God is doing here he's making a proposition he's making an offer to this nation that he's miraculously delivered out of Egypt and here is the covenant here's the deal Moses came then in verse seven and called the elders of the people the leadership and he set before them all these words which the Lord had commanded him and he as much as said God told me to tell you thus and so thus and so if you do this I'll be your God you'll be my people that's the deal

Israel what do you think you going to buy in or not and verse eight says all the people answered together and said all that the Lord has spoken we will do and Moses brought back the words of the people to the Lord as much as said Moses you go back up the mountain and you tell God he's got a deal we'll do it we'll sign on and then Moses of course ratified the covenant with the animal blood sprinkling on the people sprinkling on the law and so on and that sealed the deal and Israel became embedded permanently in the heart and mind of Jehovah and even now they remain there even though they are in unbelief and under judicial blindness the time is coming when just as Israel was physically physically resurrected in 1948 the only nation in the history of the world to be out of business as a nation state and reinstated 2,000 years later absolutely unheard of but not for Israel and the time is coming when spiritually they are going to be restored not just nationally or physically so all of this content comes together now I want you to turn if you would please to

Acts chapter 10 Acts chapter 10 we will not consider all of the boy I hate to leave that out I've always got so much more content than I'm able to deliver well let's let's let's do it anyway all right and if I go over and anybody needs to leave because they've got a commitment elsewhere get up and leave okay I don't want you sitting here chafing under the message when you think I really I wish you would quit I've got to be so it's a just get up and leave and nobody will think you're rude and nobody will be offended okay so let's let's go to Deuteronomy chapter 14 we're still of course in the Old Testament and in Deuteronomy 14 need to set the stage for this and it's dramatic to me it really really sets the difference and makes it very okay verse 1 you are the sons of the

Lord your God you shall not cut yourselves nor shave your forehead for the sake of the dead and I can't go into that largely because I don't know anything about it for you are a holy people a separated people and that's what the word holy means you are separated means special means you're different from everybody else that's what holy means and the Lord has chosen you to be a people for his own possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth you shall not eat any detestable thing well now just exactly what would you consider detestable how about shrimp nope shrimp is one of the detestables you can't have a shrimp well what are you going to do when you go to Red Lobster and they put that plate of special shrimp in front of you you're going to say well I'm not allowed well let's read on okay you shall not eat any detestable thing these are the animals which you may eat the ox the sheep the goat the deer the gazelle the roebuck the wild goat the ibex the antelope and the mountain sheep these are all edible and any animal that divides the hoof and has the hoof split in two and choose the cud among the animals that you may eat nevertheless you are not to eat of those among those which chew the cud or among those that divide the hoof into the camel the rabbit the rock badger for though they chew the cud they do not divide the hoof they are unclean to you now the reason God knows all this of course is because he's the one who created all these animals he knows exactly how he made them and with what features and the pig uh oh going to get into your bacon now and sausage the pig because it divides the hoof but does not chew the cud it is unclean for you you shall not eat any of their flesh nor touch their carcasses pork off limits and these you may eat of all that are in water anything that has fins and scales you may eat but anything that does not have fins and scales you shall not eat it is unclean for you that means no more catfish catfish have no scales they have skin you have to skin them they are inedible they are bottom feeders like shrimp and lobster they are bottom feeders scavengers they are to the sea what the buzzards and the vultures are to land and he says you may eat any clean bird but these are the ones which you shall not eat the eagle the vulture and the buzzard the red kite the falcon the kite in their kinds and every raven in its kind and the ostrich the owl the seagull the hawk in their kinds the little owl the great owl the white owl the pelican the carrion vulture the stork the heron in their kinds the hoopoe and the bat half these animals

I don't even know what they are I've never seen them and you may eat any clean bird and that includes chickens and turkeys we can eat those isn't that nice someone said that chicken is the most wonderful bird there am you can eat him before he's born and you can eat him after he dies it's just wonderful now I want you to keep all of these prohibitions in mind and the Israelites were under strict orders not to partake of any of these animals and I think for the most part they really observed it I'm sure that they were fastidious about many of these things and to this day I think I might have already told you I don't but maybe it bears repetition because it comes in with the message content anyway but in that same passage that we're just reading and I cut it short I didn't read it all but it talks about not seething a kid in its mother's milk and that means that you do not boil a baby goat which is edible but you do not boil it in its mother's milk well what's the big deal about that do you think its mother would be hurt well its mother wouldn't know anything about it but what you are doing is you are mixing dairy the milk of the goat of the mother goat with meat which would be the meat of the kid and in the

[ 49 : 03 ] Jewish diet you may not meet you may not have milk or meat or a dairy product including cheese which is made from milk at the same time they must be separate and I remember reading this interesting story years ago about McDonald's when they were expanding and we saw what they did here in the United States and how many outlets they have and their Big Macs and burgers and all the rest of it and they opened a McDonald's in Jerusalem this was back in the 19 I think it was in the 1980 and the local Jews were lined up around the block to get in to be some of the first customers at this McDonald's restaurant that they heard so much about and they were just doing a land office business and hanging out the burgers and all the rest of it and boy the first started to fly some of the orthodox came in the ones with the long hair and the curls and the hats and everything and they saw what was going on this is the these are the extreme what shall I say extreme observers of the law under Judaism and they live in an area called

Mia Sharim and it's their own kind of like a quarter where they where they congregate and where they live and they saw that McDonald's was serving cheeseburgers and they shut them down they closed them put a sign up closed they got to the establishment and they told McDonald's you will not serve cheeseburgers you may serve your burgers but you may not serve cheeseburgers and to this day I am told that McDonald's restaurants in the land of Israel is the only place in the world where McDonald's has a restaurant and you can't get a cheeseburger and it's all in observation of this law now in Acts chapter 10 and with this we must hurry on for I'm running out of time certain man well let's do it certain man at

Caesarea named Cornelius centurion of what was called the Italian cohort a devout man one who feared God with all his household gave many alms to the Jewish people prayed to God continually keep in mind this man is a Gentile he is not a Jew but he is a sympathizer to the Jews and he is called a God fear and that is one who recognized that the true God of Israel was the Roman deities that others in the Roman army served and he was committed to the God of Israel being the only true God and we're told that he prayed to God continually and about the ninth hour of the day which would be three o'clock in the afternoon he clearly saw in a vision an angel of God who had just come into him and said to him Cornelius and fixing his gaze upon him and being much alarmed well I guess he said what is it Lord and he said to him your prayers and alms have ascended as a memorial before

God now here's what you're to do about it and by the way it's really interesting and don't be confused by the word Lord here because it's not deity Lord is in small letters it simply means one who is recognized as a superior being to the one who is encountering him and he recognizes this mysterious angelic being as being someone who is certainly his superior so he calls him Lord and he said your prayers and alms have descended as a memorial before God now dispatch some men and these of course would be Gentile Roman soldiers dispatch some men who would be under his command and send for a man named Simon who is also called Peter now both of these places are located right on the

Mediterranean sea and Caesarea is in the north and Joppa is in the south and he says he's staying with a certain tanner named Simon this guy Simon is a tans hides for a living and his house is by the sea he's located there because he needs huge amounts of water to carry on his business and when the angel who was speaking to him had departed he summoned two of his servants and a devout soldier of those who were in constant attendance upon him and after he had explained everything to them he sent them to Joppa okay guys here's your assignment you go up the coast and you come to Joppa and you go in and you find a guy by the name of Simon he's a tanner tans hides and he's there by the sea and you inquire after someone named Peter you got that yes sir boss and they take this by the way is about a three day journey they're not going to do this overnight it's going to take a long time to get there so we are told that as they were approaching the city

[ 54 : 47 ] Peter went up on the housetop about the sixth hour this is 12 noon to pray typical time of prayer and he became hungry was desiring to this is an amazing thing because he's seeing this vision understand he's wide awake he's not sleeping he's not having a dream he's having a vision and this vision just comes out of nowhere but it is as clear as it can be and he sees all the details in this vision and what he is beholding is quite amazing because what is revealed to him is this vision the sky opened up a certain object like a great sheet coming down lowered by four corners to the ground now you've taken sheets and put them on a bed before and you know the sheet has four corners to it and you know the sheet just comes down over the bed and covers the whole thing and if you were to take each of those four corners you just about need four people

I guess person on each corner to hold it up you can imagine that within that sheet and I'm talking about just a regular bed sheet within that sheet there could be a whole lot of things held or contained there because it would be a big big container well this is even bigger than any bed sheet that you're thinking of because this sheet is going to be so huge that it has within it all kinds of animals I mean big animals and small animals large animals but they're not real they're in the vision they appear as real they look as real as any animals you've seen but they were not real except to the eye and the text goes on and says in it were all kinds of four-footed animals and crawling creatures of the earth and birds of the air and a voice came to him saying rise

Peter kill and eat you've got to remember it's noon it's lunchtime but Peter said by no means well of course these were not real animals he couldn't do that physically anyway but that's beside the point and Peter says no no I would never think of doing anything like that absolutely not because he saw what these animals were and some of them were cleaned that could be eaten but some of them were unclean and they were on the forbidden list couldn't do that God forbid that I should sin against God by eating any of those animals and again a voice came to him a second time what God has cleansed no longer consider unholy wait a minute what is this about what

God has cleansed what God has cleansed you mean to tell me that God has cleansed unclean animals and somehow made them clean in which case they would be eligible for eating but that can't be what about what we just read in the Old Testament what does that mean what's taking place here what's going on is God speaking out of both sides of his mouth or what what is going on is the very initial rumblings of a whole new thing that nobody including Peter chiefest if you will of the twelve apostles doesn't have a clue

Peter this is the apostle to whom Jesus said unto you Peter I give the keys of the kingdom and now Peter is in a complete puzzle what is this all about and he says no I won't have anything to do with that well a voice came to him a second time what God has cleansed no longer consider unholy and this happened three times Peter is kind of famous for doing things in threes isn't he he denied the Lord three times remember and Jesus asked him three times Peter do you love me Peter do you remember that in John John Peter Peter Peter is the original hard head of the twelve he has a heart he has a heart that is gigantic but he suffers from foot and mouth disease where he's always putting his foot in his mouth always impetuous always rambunctious always saying stupid things and that's just part of his

[ 60 : 37 ] DNA that's the way he is that's his personality that's the way Peter's wired and I think it's so significant that Peter is such a bumbler in so many ways and Jesus loved him with an incredible love amazing absolutely amazing what God has cleansed no longer consider unholy and this happened three times and immediately the object was taken up into the sky and Peter was greatly perplexed greatly perplexed he hadn't been in on any of this he didn't have a clue this is right out of the blue as to what it might mean and the men who had been sent by Cornelius having asked directions to Simon House they are appearing at the door they're knocking on the door Peter's seen this vision for the third time now these three and somebody goes to the door and here is these three men sent from Cornelius a couple of them might even be in army uniforms I don't know but and he's trying to put all this together what's this yeah

Peter yeah Peter's here and the guy Simon the tanner answered the door and he says yeah Peter he's up on the housetop praying so they call Peter and Peter comes down and these guys say we've been sent here by our commander to get you and Peter says what what what are you what are you talking about your your commander a gentile according to you I no I couldn't do and it's all because of this vision that he had been given where God is saying what God hath cleansed that call thou not common or unclean and what this is all about and you need to understand this this isn't about animals at all it isn't about what animals can be eaten or what animals cannot that's a strict sideline that's involved too that's involved too but what this is really all about is Gentiles

Gentiles what do Jews have to do with Gentiles absolutely nothing that's why when Peter finally goes along with them and he gets to the house of Cornelius and he goes inside and Cornelius welcomes him and Peter says you know you understand don't you that it is unlawful for a man that is a Jew to be in the company of Gentiles like this and Peter is very uncomfortable even being there hoping that God's not going to strike him dead for being there of course not what God is beginning to do is the very earliest inkling of the body of Christ I don't believe it's begun yet but I believe it's in the making and here

Peter is being used to blaze the trail if you will when he gave to Peter the keys of the kingdom keys represent authority the ability to lock or unlock to admit or refuse that's the whole point and Peter is here symbolic using didn't even know it didn't even understand it he was actually opening the door of faith to a Gentile unheard of unthinkable that can't be God doesn't have anything to do with Gentiles or does he this is a whole new thing that is brewing and it is called the very beginning of what will be known as the mystery Jew and

Gentile together in one body this is the start of it and Peter is used to authenticate this and he is as much in the dark as anybody else he's bowled over by this and when he gives them the message about Jesus of Nazareth the spirit of God descends on this crowd of people on these Gentiles and those who were there working under a language barrier their tongues were loosed and they were able to speak in languages that they did not know so as to communicate with each other and that was God's verification to Peter that this thing was of him it was legitimate and Peter is just about bowled over by it all and later we'll see that Peter gets called on the carpet because word will get around well did you hear about Peter no what about Peter he went to the house of Gentiles no I don't believe

[ 65 : 46 ] Peter would never do a thing like that well that's what I heard I got it on good authority and the rumor was circulating and when Peter got back to Jerusalem they called him in on the carpet and they said Peter there's a nasty rumor going around about you and you ought to take steps to put that thing to bed because that could really hurt your reputation the word has gotten around that you went into Gentiles and ate with them and Peter says yeah yeah it's true you did why in the world would you do a thing like that and Peter recounted the whole thing to them and the text says then when Peter explained it all it says then they held their peace in other words they backed off their criticism of Peter and they said well then does this mean that God has also granted repentance to the

Gentiles how could that be you see what we're laying here this is the very earliest inkling of something even bigger that's coming and Paul the apostle is right around the corner it all fits like a hand in a glove and it's a beautiful thing I tell you I can't get enough of this it just connects dots and makes so much sense and if you will stand I will dismiss you our father we've seen so much here that we can appreciate and understand and yet we know there are things that escape us as much as I've been over this material over the years there are parts of it that I still do not see as clearly as I'd like but we can see it clearly enough to act upon it and to appreciate it and our prayer for today is that these dear folks who are here and whoever might be listening through the medium of internet that they will come to an understanding and appreciation of the progression of scripture the development of doctrine how these things are unfolding and will continue to unfold as we move on through this principle of prophecy and mystery we bless you thank you for it and we commit ourselves to further studying investigation of these precious truths in Christ's name amen