

Dear all, greetings.

We continue our discussion today on the questions being raised concerning the Godhead, the Triune God, and whether or not this is a satanic deception. The question that I will be addressing in this Worldview edition is whether, as some allege, the “Mystery of Babylon” on the fallen woman’s forehead is indeed the doctrine of the Triune God.

Working within an historicist framework that most biblical Adventists would understand and agree with, proponents of such a theory argue that the whore of Revelation 17 is an apostate church, and on the basis of Scripture interpreting Scripture, the whore = apostate church = spiritual Babylon, all of which would be readily accepted by SDA believers working within an historicist hermeneutic for prophecy.

Such proponents then argue that the writing on the whore’s forehead (Rev. 17.5) is ‘mystery, Babylon the great, mother of harlots and of earth’s abominations’. The next stage of the argument is the fulcrum around which everything before and after revolves. The proponents argue that whereas the 144,000 have the seal of God written on their foreheads (Rev. 7.3), so also the false, apostate church, represented by the whore of Babylon, has the name of the false god that is worshipped by the apostate church written on her forehead. What is the name of that false god? They argue that the first word on the whore’s head, ‘mystery’ is the answer to the question, seemingly backing up this interpretation of the word ‘mystery’ by referring to the book ‘Handbook for Today’s Catholic’, p.16, which states that ‘the mystery of the Trinity is the central doctrine of the Catholic faith. Upon it are based all the other teachings of the Church’.

These proponents then go on to present at some length pagan trinities in non-Christian cultures, e.g. Babylon, Greece, Egypt, Rome, Buddhist theology, etc. The ‘triquestra’ symbol, or 3 interlocking 6s, represents an equilateral triangle which has three equal inner angles of 60 degrees, from which some extrapolate to get to 666. They then go on to argue that the triquestra symbol, in various forms, is found throughout Christendom, in books, on Bibles, and in church architecture, reflecting the alleged and unconscious worship of the false gods of Babylon by the overwhelming majority of Christians since the apostolic era. In conclusion, the call to true worship in Rev. 14.6-7 is not primarily a call to worship God as Creator (which is the ostensible and obvious meaning of the text), but to worship God as Creator and as Father, not as the Triune God of apostate christianity.

The nexus of these arguments revolves around the argument that the ‘mystery’ of Rev. 17.5 = the quotation from ‘Handbook for Today’s Catholic’ which refers to the doctrine of the Trinity being the ‘mystery’ on which all Catholic doctrine is based. If this nexus holds, then such proponents may have an argument, albeit tangential and weak in terms of Scriptural support, that flows logically from the first half (true church / apostate church) to the second half (the Trinity is a pagan doctrine, reflecting the gods of Babylon, and Satan has deceived the overwhelming majority of Christians from the apostolic era on in worshipping the false gods of Babylon rather than the True God).

What then may we say of the central nexus (‘mystery’ written on the whore of Babylon’s head, reflecting the god worshipped by the apostate church = the Roman Catholic doctrine of the Trinity)?

Firstly, at this crucial point the proponents of these newly resurrected heresies depart from the recognized hermeneutical principle of interpreting Scripture with Scripture. They appear to have an *a priori* belief that the Trinity doctrine is of Satan, so without any reasons given other than ‘I don’t believe this is a coincidence’ the crucial leap of logic is made to equate the ‘mystery’ written on the whore’s forehead with the Trinity of Catholic doctrine. They are now interpreting Scripture from non-Scripture, which as an

hermeneutical principle is wide open to abuse, and through interpreting Scripture in the light of non-Scripture, one is interpreting that which is inspired and from God in the light of that which is not inspired and of sinful humanity.

Any serious interpreter of Scripture who believes in the unity of Scripture, the inspiration of Scripture, and the uniqueness of Scripture, would not even consider making this hermeneutical leap. However, these proponents of these ancient heresies are willing to make such a crucial and foundational theological statement about the very character of God by interpreting Scripture from non-Scripture....i.e. the true essence of God is to be found not in Scripture, but in non-Scripture.

Secondly, it is unclear whether the word 'mystery' is actually written on the whore's head. Rev. 17.5 literally reads 'And on the forehead of her a name having been written, (a) mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of the prostitutes and of the abominations of the earth'.

The Greek syntax suggests that the word 'mystery' is not actually the title of the whore, but is descriptive of her title, which is 'Babylon the great' etc. The whore's name is a mystery, for sin in and of itself is a mystery. If one could explain the origin of sin, one could justify sin. Sin however has neither justification nor rational explanation, and is therefore a mystery. Babylon the Great refers to apostate spiritual forces at the end of time, which on the basis of Revelation 13, 16 and 17 would include the papacy, apostate Protestantism, and spiritualism / the occult.

Thirdly, as already hinted above, the call to true worship in Revelation 14.6-7 calls for humanity to worship God as Creator. There is not the slightest hint in the text of a dichotomy between the Creator God and the Triune God, and the proponents don't even attempt to show the allegedly false doctrine of the Trinity in the call to true worship in Rev. 14.6-7. The proponents are silent on this matter because the text in question simply says nothing about the Trinity, and to impose an anti-Trinitarian understanding on the text is pure eisegesis rather than exegesis.

Fourthly, when we analyze the actions of the fourth beast of Daniel 7, and the false plan of salvation portrayed in Daniel 8, we find that an anti-god power will indeed arise, which will rule for 1,260 prophetic days, will obscure the true plan of salvation with a false plan of salvation, will arrogate unto an earthly priesthood the power to forgive sins, will obscure the heavenly sanctuary with an earthly system of auricular confession through an earthly priesthood, will be a persecuting power, will be a blasphemous power, and will ultimately be destroyed following a heavenly judgment. There is no word anywhere in the clear and systematic revelation of this anti-god spiritual power of the propagation of a 'false' doctrine of a Triune God.

Fifthly, if we were to interpret Scripture in the light of Scripture, how would we interpret the word 'mystery'? When we analyze the use of the word 'mystery' in the New Testament, we find the following meanings as laid out in the following table:

Text	Meaning of 'mystery'
Romans 11.25	The plan of salvation.
1 Corinthians 2.1.	The Gospel of Jesus Christ.
1 Corinthians 15.51.	The transformation believers experience at the 2 nd Coming.
Ephesians 1.9.	The plan of salvation.
Ephesians 3.3.	The Gospel and God's grace to sinners.

Ephesians 5.32.	The union between Christ and the Church.
Ephesians 6.19.	The Gospel of Jesus Christ.
Colossians 1.26.	Christ in you, the hope of glory.
Colossians 4.3.	The mystery of Christ, the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
2 Thessalonians 2.7.	The mystery of lawlessness, propagated by Satan as part of his end time deceptions.
Revelation 1.20.	The items before Jesus Christ in John's vision on Patmos.
Revelation 10.7.	The mystery of God.
Revelation 17.5.	Linked to the whore, either descriptive of her name, or part of her name itself.
Revelation 17.7.	Linked to the whore herself and the 7-headed beast with 10 horns she rides.

An analysis of the above exhaustive list of the uses of the word 'mystery' in the New Testament would indicate two primary points: firstly, 'mystery' is used overwhelmingly to refer to the plan of salvation, God's grace to sinners, and God's purpose for sinners; and secondly, 'mystery' is only referred to in a negative sense in three locations, one of which (2 Thess. 2.7) refers to the 'mystery of lawlessness' or the 'mystery of iniquity' as the KJV translates the Greek.

Nowhere in the New Testament is there the slightest hint that the word 'mystery' refers to the doctrine of the Trinity. Rather, when used in 2 Thess. 2.7, the word refers to a basic hostility to the law of God, an antinomian attitude, already manifest in the time of the Apostle Paul.

For these proponents of ancient heresy dressed in new clothes therefore to interpret 'mystery' as referring to the doctrine of the Trinity is without any support from Scripture, and is imposing a non-Biblical interpretation on the clear Word of God. They don't provide a single text, or imply in any way whatsoever any Biblical support to back up their assertion that the 'mystery' of Rev. 17.5 is the Roman Catholic doctrine of the Trinity. Thus the interpretation of 'mystery' as being the Roman Catholic doctrine of the Trinity is to be rejected out of hand as having no Biblical merit whatsoever.

Having revealed the un-Biblical (and untrue) interpretation of 'mystery' being the Roman Catholic doctrine of the Trinity, we will turn next week to the attacks in Adventism today on the eternal deity of Jesus Christ.

May God grant us wisdom and understanding as we grow in grace and truth during these coming Sabbath hours!

Best wishes,

Conrad.