

**"The Revelation of God's Mystery"**

**Ephesians 3:1-21**

**Part 2**

**Introduction:** Today as we return to our study of Ephesians, we are going to enter into a portion of Scripture in which God uses the pen of the Apostle Paul to explain to us deep spiritual Truth concerning our salvation.

The message we are going to look at today will help us to better understand what it is that God has done for us. I want to take a moment and review God's salvation just for a moment.

When we were born, we were born into sin. We were born sinners and for that reason the Bible tells us we are born spiritually dead.

**Ephesians 2:1**

*And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;*

This means that we were separated from God because of our sin.

**Isaiah 59:2**

<sup>2</sup> *But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.*

The Bible also tells us that all our sin MUST be paid for before we die, or we will be separated from God for all eternity in the Lake of Fire and there each person will suffer forever for their sins.

**Romans 6:23**

<sup>23</sup> *For the wages of sin is death;*

**Revelation 20:11-15**

<sup>11</sup> *And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.*

<sup>12</sup> *And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.*

<sup>13</sup> *And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.*

<sup>14</sup> And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

<sup>15</sup> And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

Man is lost in his sin and has no power at all to save himself.

### Isaiah 64:6

<sup>6</sup> But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

But long before man ever sinned even before God created man, He had a plan. God knew man would sin and so He planned to send His Son into the world to pay the price for our sins. So, 2000 years ago Jesus came into this world and at the end of His life He was nailed to the cross and it was upon the cross that He shed His blood for the payment for our sins.

### 1 Corinthians 15:3-4

<sup>3</sup> For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;

<sup>4</sup> And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:  
Jesus gave His life for us. Through His sacrifice God presents forgiveness of sin as a free gift.

### Romans 6:23

<sup>23</sup> For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

When we place our faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ then we are saved.

### Ephesians 2:8-9

<sup>8</sup> For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

<sup>9</sup> Not of works, lest any man should boast.

So, through the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross we are forgiven, and we never again need to worry about facing the fires of God's judgment.

But there is so much more that is ours in Christ and we are going to see consider some of the blessings today in our study.

**I. The Mystery Entrusted to Paul**

**Notice Ephesians 3:1**

Last week we looked at how Paul was in prison because of what he preached. He preached that God had sent him to the Gentiles and salvation was offered to them. He preached that IN CHRIST the Jew and the Gentile became ONE. It was this message that the Jews hated. They wanted to kill him for this message. In Acts 21-22 he was arrested and sent to Rome to stand before Caesar. When he wrote this letter, he was a prisoner in Rome. But he did not see himself as a prison of Nero or of the Jews. He was a prison of Jesus Christ FOR the Gentiles. The next verse helps us to understand a little more about this.

**Notice Ephesians 3:2**

The word "dispensation" here means "stewardship". The idea is that Paul was entrusted with something that did not belong to him and he was accountable for how he dispersed it. Listen to the words of Ray Stedman on this verse:

*"A steward was a servant to whom a certain responsibility was committed, certain goods were given, that he might dispense them, might give them out to other people. This is the biblical idea behind the word dispensation. It is not a period of time at all; it is a responsibility to dispense something, a stewardship."*

That which was entrusted to Paul was the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It is referred to here as the dispensation of grace because it was all grace. The message was that God in His grace was reaching out to the Gentiles and offering eternal life which was a personal relationship with Him.

**John 17:3**

*<sup>3</sup> And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.*

Not one person deserved to have a relationship with God, but GRACE has made it possible. God has extended His grace to us who are Gentiles and has offered to us a personal relationship with Him.

Paul was entrusted with this message and he knew that he needed to disperse it to as many people as he could. He knew there was coming a day when he would stand before the Lord and be held accountable for what he did with the Gospel.

**Matthew 25:14-19**

*<sup>14</sup> For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods.*

*<sup>15</sup> And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey.*

*<sup>16</sup> Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents.*

*<sup>17</sup> And likewise he that had received two, he also gained other two.*

*<sup>18</sup> But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money.*

*<sup>19</sup> After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them.*

### **Notice Ephesians 3:3-4**

God had made known to Paul by way of Divine revelation the mystery of the church. The word "mystery" simply means it was something that was previously unknown. It does not mean it was something mysterious.

### **Application:**

It is important to point out something here that we all need to know. Divine revelation does not happen today. It was through Divine revelation that the Apostles and the prophets received the New Testament Truth from the Lord so that the New Testament Bible could be written.

### **Hebrews 1:1-2a**

*God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,*

*<sup>2</sup> Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son,*

Now that the Bible is complete there is not a need for Divine revelation.

For someone to claim they have somehow received Divine revelation would be a claim they have Truth that is not in the Bible.

### **Revelation 22:18-19**

*<sup>18</sup> For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:*

*<sup>19</sup> And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.*

The book which Jesus is speaking of is the Bible. It certainly applies to the book of Revelation, but it also applies to all the Bible for this is God's Book. The words of Jesus therefore tell us there is no new Divine revelation given today. God does not speak to us through visions, dreams and revelations. Today He speaks to us through His Word and through spiritual leaders as they teach.

**Notice Ephesians 3:5**

The mystery of the church was not known in the Old Testament. It was hidden. Then when the church began God revealed this mystery to the Apostles and the prophets so that it could be taught to the church.

**II. The Mystery Revealed**

**Notice Ephesians 3:6**

Herein lies the message that caused Paul to be cast into prison. This is the message that God entrusted to him to disperse to the world. This mystery contains three main points:

**1. We who are saved are fellowheirs with the Jews - Fellowheirs.**

This does NOT mean we are fellowheirs with the Nation of Israel. This means we are fellowheirs with the Jew who has trusted in Jesus Christ. All of us who have trusted in Jesus Christ are fellowheirs together. Let me take this a little further.

**Romans 8:16-17a**

*<sup>16</sup> The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:*

*<sup>17</sup> And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ;*

We are joint heirs with Jesus Christ and Jesus will inherit all of heaven and so we will also share in that inheritance.

**1 Peter 1:4-5**

*<sup>3</sup> Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,*

*<sup>4</sup> To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,*

*<sup>5</sup> Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*

This is the complete opposite of our condition as unbelievers.

**Ephesians 2:11-13**

<sup>11</sup> Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands;

<sup>12</sup> That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:

<sup>13</sup> But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

Notice Ephesians 3:6 again.

2. We are all of one body - Fellow Members.

**Ephesians 2:15**

<sup>15</sup> Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;

**1 Corinthians 12:12-20**

<sup>12</sup> For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.

<sup>13</sup> For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

<sup>14</sup> For the body is not one member, but many.

<sup>15</sup> If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

<sup>16</sup> And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

<sup>17</sup> If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?

<sup>18</sup> But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.

<sup>19</sup> And if they were all one member, where were the body?

<sup>20</sup> But now are they many members, yet but one body.

Notice Ephesians 3:6 again.

**3. We are partakers of His promise in Christ - Fellow Partakers.**

This makes me ask the question, "What is THE PROMISE"?

The PROMISE spoken of here is the promise of eternal life and all that comes with it. In Christ we are:

- a. Redeemed
- b. Justified
- c. Accepted
- d. Forgiven
- e. Sealed
- f. Complete
- g. Blessed with all spiritual blessings

**Conclusion:**

There is much more to being saved than just being forgiven of our sin and freed from the judgment of God. We are now spiritually rich in Jesus Christ. All the spiritual blessings of heaven are accessible to us.