

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

**Ephesians 3:1-21**

**Part 5**

**Introduction:** Today in our study of Ephesians we have come to the 2<sup>nd</sup> prayer which Paul offers on behalf of the believers at Ephesus. Paul has taught us about the riches we have in Jesus Christ, he has reminded us of who we were before salvation, he has taught us how we are a NEW MAN in Jesus Christ. He went on to explain how he was made a minister of this revelation that was given to him and he was more than willing to suffer to get the message out.

Now as he offers this prayer it is Paul's desire and let us remember it is God's desire, for Paul is inspired, that we understand that we understand just what God has done for us. Paul desires that we be strengthened and that we understand the love which God has for us.

Paul is going to make 4 requests in this prayer and each one begins with the word "THAT".

**Notice Ephesians 3:14-19**

Paul prays for:

1. **Them to be strengthen in the inner man.**
2. **Jesus to dwell within their hearts by faith.**
3. **The believers to have a solid foundation.**
4. **Them to be filled with the fulness of God.**

Now as we look at these 4 requests, we must keep in mind they are each connected. They are like extending a telescope or a pull-out antenna. We shall look at each of these and at the same time we will keep them connected.

**Paul's Prayer**

**Part 1**

**I. The Invocation**

**Notice Ephesians 3:14**

The words "for this cause" point back to all that Paul has taught but specifically to the previous verses.

**Notice Ephesians 3:11-13**

Paul made it known here that as he understood the eternal purpose of God, that is, before the foundation of the world, He had determined that He would have a church/a bride for His Son, this understanding had given to him a boldness and a confidence. This knowledge caused him to live in a way that he was able to suffer and even die for the cause of Jesus Christ.

**Philippians 1:21**

<sup>21</sup> For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

**Galatians 2:20**

<sup>20</sup> I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and **the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.**

It was God's love that had changed him. This is what he desired for the Ephesians also.

**Application:**

This is what God desires for us also. We are saved but there is so much more to the Christian life. God desires that we live in a way that others can see Jesus Christ within us. He desires that we live surrendered lives.

**Romans 12:1-2**

*I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.*

<sup>2</sup> *And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*

It was Paul's desire for these believers to be surrendered over to the Lord that caused him to bow his knees and pray for them.

**Notice Ephesians 3:14-15**

Paul prays to the Father and he submits to the Father as the source of all blessings. I need to point out that Paul is NOT saying that God is the Father of all in verse 15. Some people would want to use this verse and teach that we are all one big family and God is the Father of all.

There are two families of people in the world.

**John 8:41-44**

<sup>41</sup> *Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God.*

<sup>42</sup> *Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.*

<sup>43</sup> *Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word.*

<sup>44</sup> *Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.*

The two families are Satan's children who are the unsaved and God's children who are believers. There is only one way to become a child of God.

### **John 3:7**

<sup>7</sup> *Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.*

So, what is Paul saying in these verses? He is simply pointing out that all Fatherhood comes from God. He is the ultimate Father.

## **II. The Request for Strength**

Before we get into this first request let me just say that this prayer is so important for the time in which we live in today and this we shall see.

### **Notice Ephesians 3:16**

Paul prays for these believers at Ephesus to be strengthened by might in the inner man by the Holy Spirit. The inner man is the new man. It is our spirit that has been made alive by grace through faith. It is interesting that he is not praying for our physical bodies, but he is praying for our spirits to be strengthened.

Many people spend so much effort on strengthening the physical body and very little time on strengthening the spirit.

### **2 Corinthians 4:16**

<sup>16</sup> *For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.*

There is nothing wrong with taking care of our physical bodies for we should. But eventually the outward man is going to die. We are not in a physical battle, but we are in a spiritual battle and it is important that our inner man be strengthened.

Ephesians 6:10-12

<sup>10</sup> Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

<sup>11</sup> Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

<sup>12</sup> For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

Notice Ephesians 3:16 again.

Listen to what Barnes says concerning this verse:

He says to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man means "to give you abundant strength to bear trials; to perform your duties; to glorify his name. The body needs to be strengthened every day. In like manner the soul needs constant supplies of grace. Faith needs to be constantly invigorated, or it withers and decays. Every Christian needs grace given each day to enable him to bear trials, to resist temptation, to discharge his duty, to live a life of faith."

I want to share with you an illustration of being strengthened in the Lord:

In 1934, when Adolf Hitler summoned German church leaders to his Berlin office to berate them for insufficiently supporting his programs, he was surprised when Pastor Martin Niemoller stood up to him. That evening his Gestapo raided Niemoller's rectory, and a few days later a bomb exploded in his church. He was later arrested and placed in solitary confinement. Dr. Niemoller's trial began on February 7, 1938. That morning, a green-uniformed guard escorted the minister from his prison cell and through a series of underground passages toward the courtroom. Niemoller was overcome with terror and loneliness. What would become of him? Of his family? His church? The guard's face was impassive, but as they exited a tunnel to ascend a final flight of stairs, Niemoller heard a whisper. At first, he didn't know where it came from, for the voice was soft as a sigh. Then he realized that the officer was breathing into his ear the words of Proverbs 18:10

<sup>10</sup> *The name of the LORD is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.*

Niemoller's fear fell away, and the power of that verse sustained him through his trial and his years in Nazi concentration camps.

Paul is praying for the believers at Ephesus to be strong in the power of the Lord. He is praying that whatever they face they will be true to their calling. He desires that they are

able to live in a way that others can see Jesus Christ within them no matter what they face.

I need to take a moment to help you to see just how important this is for our lives today. We are living in a rapidly changing world. I believe that God is giving many warnings for people to see that the Kingdom of the Anti-Christ is fast approaching. There are many ways in which we can see this:

1. Push for globalism.
2. Manifestation of evil. - God did the same thing in Noah's day.
3. Attacks against the USA - we stand in the way of globalism.
4. Attacks against the Constitution - the constitution suppresses sin
5. Attacks against the police force - they are used to suppress sin.
6. Preparation for the Mark of the Beast
7. Push for a Marxist society which will exist under the Anti-Christ

With these thoughts let me show you something that Daniel recorded.

#### **Daniel 7:1-8**

*In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed: then he wrote the dream, and told the sum of the matters.*

<sup>2</sup> *Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea.*

<sup>3</sup> *And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another.*

<sup>4</sup> *The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it.*

<sup>5</sup> *And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, and it raised up itself on one side, and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it: and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh.*

<sup>6</sup> *After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it.*

<sup>7</sup> *After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns.*

<sup>8</sup> *I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them **another little horn**, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things.*

<sup>9</sup> *I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire.*

There are 5 kingdoms mentioned here.

- ✓ Babylon
- ✓ Medo-Persian
- ✓ Greek
- ✓ Roman
- ✓ Jesus Christ's Millennial Kingdom

This revived Roman Empire is what the Anti-Christ rises out of. This tells us that it will exist before he rises to power. Now we know that he cannot come on the scene until the church is Raptured away.

## **2 Thessalonians 2:3-8**

<sup>3</sup> *Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;*

<sup>4</sup> *Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.*

<sup>5</sup> *Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?*

<sup>6</sup> *And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time.*

<sup>7</sup> *For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.*

<sup>8</sup> *And **then** shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:*

Once the church is gone the Anti-Christ will rise to power. This means one of two things:

- 1. The terrible Roman Empire will develop quickly after we are gone.**

This is entirely possible because we seen how quickly things have changed since early spring. This is one possibility.

2. The terrible Roman Empire will be established while the church is still here which means we could very well see some very difficult times.

This also is very possible.

**2 Timothy 3:1**

*This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.*

This is why it is so important for us to focus on spiritual strength.

**Conclusion:**

We need to pray that our inner man is strengthened. How does this happen?

Time in prayer and time in the Word.

**Psalms 119:28**

<sup>28</sup> *My soul melteth for heaviness: strengthen thou me according unto thy word.*

**Philippians 4:11-13**

<sup>11</sup> *Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.*

<sup>12</sup> *I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.*

<sup>13</sup> *I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.*