

**Paul's Mystery: Part 2** (Ephesians 3:1-13)

Water of Life

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**Review of the Exposition:**

- 1:3-14: Gentile believers in Ephesus ought to praise the Father because: (1:3)  
a. the Father prepared Jewish (and Gentile) believers' inheritance (1:4-6),  
b. the Son acquired Jewish (and Gentile) believers' inheritance (1:7-12)  
c. protects Jewish and Gentile believers' inheritance (1:13-14)
- 1:15-23 Thus, Paul also thanks God for the Ephesian Gentile believers when praying that the Father would grant for these enlightened believers to know the Father better by knowing: (1:15-18a)  
a. the hope entailed by the Father calling them, (1:18b)  
b. their rich corporate inheritance, and (1:18c)  
c. that the Father works on behalf of believers with His same power that raised Christ above any and every angelic power and made Him head of the church (1:19-23).
- 2:1-10 And God made us (and you) alive together with Christ, raised (us and you) together with Christ, and seated (us and you) together with Christ, though you and we were dead in trespasses, for God's purpose in the by-grace-through-faith salvation being an unmerited gift is that no one should boast, for the church is God's artifact, created in Christ Jesus to do good works pre-designed for it to accomplish.
- 2:11-13 [In light of God having made Gentile and Jewish believers alive together with Christ by grace through faith] Gentile believers (who are called "uncircumcised") should remember that they formerly were w/o Christ, because: they were aliens from Israel, estranged from the Covenants, and were w/o God; BUT now they have been brought near.
- 2:14-22 [The explanation formerly-distant Gentile believers now being near to God is that] Christ reconciled Jews [& Gentiles] by abolishing in His flesh (on the cross) the Law which put them at enmity, so He might create in Himself one new man (the Created New Man = the Church) from the two and reconciling both to God; so both have equal access to the Father by one Spirit, **with the result that** Gentiles are no longer strangers and aliens, but are built together with other [Jewish] saints upon Christ (the cornerstone) and upon the foundational [ministry] of the apostles and [New Testament] prophets into a holy temple [the universal church] indwelt by God in the Spirit.
- 3:1-7, 13 Paul [asks them not lose heart at his imprisonment] on behalf of Gentiles, because he assumes that they know of the grace (spiritual gift) given to Paul, namely that God revealed the previously unrevealed mystery to the apostles & NT prophets [e.g., that some Gentiles would be fellow heirs, of the same body, and fellow partakers (with some Jews)]

**REVIEW FROM 10 JULY**

- Ephesians 3:1 **For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus** for you Gentiles—  
3:14 **For this reason I** bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ  
4:1 **I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord,** beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called

What is going on in Ephesians 3?

**3:2 if indeed you have heard of the dispensation (e.g., dispensing) of the grace of God which was given to me for you,**

What does Paul mean **here** by the term *grace*?

**Therefore I ask** (if indeed you have heard of the dispensing of God's grace... to me for you) **that you do not lose heart at my tribulations for you, which is your glory.**

**3:3-4 how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I wrote briefly already, by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ),**

Paul previously wrote briefly about the mystery in Ephesians 1:9-12

**3:5 which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets:**

A mystery is a truth not previously revealed (e.g., not revealed in the OT)

the holy apostles of Him and (holy) \_\_\_\_\_ prophets (of Him)

**3:6-7 that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and fellow partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel, of which I became a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given to me by the effective working of His power.**

It was no mystery that Gentiles would be saved

The mystery is that Gentiles would have high level administrative roles in the kingdom

Fellow heirs (*sunklēronoma*) = *sun* + *klēronoma*,

of the same body (*sussōma*) = *sun* + *sōma*,

and fellow partakers (*summetocha*) = *sun* + *metocha*

English analogy *syn* + *thetic* = *synthetic*, but *syn* + *metry* = *symmetry*, *syn* + *stem* = *system*

#### NEW EXPOSITION

**3:8 God gave undeserving Paul grace (apostleship) for (A) proclaiming to Gentiles the rich (inheritance) Christ gives to the Church**

*Lesser than least = elachistoteros (elchus = less, elachoteros = lesser, elachistos = lessest = least)*

**3:9 [God also gave undeserving Paul grace (apostleship) for (B) enlightening] everyone concerning the mystery dispensation—the Church—that has been hidden in God (who created everything through Christ) ever since the ages began**

How complete was the mystery?

*oikonomia* (economy, stewardship, dispensation): *oikos* = household *nomos* = law.

Uses of this word in Ephesians:

Ephesians 1:9–10

Ephesians 3:2 2

Ephesians 3:9

**3:10-12 The purpose for God giving Paul a gift for enlightening all concerning the mystery dispensation—the Church—is that the Church would be the instrument for enlightening the demonic powers about God’s great eternal plan accomplished by Christ who gives us boldness and access through faith in Him**

**3:13a [In light of God giving Paul apostleship for preaching to Gentiles the rich inheritance Christ gives to the Church and for enlightening everyone concerning the Church] the Ephesians should not lose heart over Paul’s imprisonment**

**3:13b [The reason the Ephesian Gentiles should not lose heart over Paul’s imprisonment is] because (his message, that resulted in) imprisonment relates to their glory**

A parallel in Colossians (a sister book to Ephesians) relates three key concepts pertinent to Ephesians 3:13:           mystery           Gentiles           glory

**CONCLUSION**