



## ABUNDANT LOVE CHURCH

### Ephesians - Chapter 3

#### OBJECTIVES IN STUDYING THE CHAPTER

1. To understand the "mystery" so long hidden that is now revealed, and the role of the church
2. To examine Paul's prayer for the Ephesians' enablement, what it means for us today

#### SUMMARY

In this chapter Paul reminds his readers of God's grace that has been shown him regarding the revelation of the "mystery". By reading what he had written earlier, they would understand how the "mystery" pertained to Gentiles becoming fellow heirs in Christ, and Paul felt privileged to preach among the Gentiles what for ages had been hidden. Knowing that what he did was part of God's eternal purpose in Christ to make His manifold wisdom known by the church, he asked his brethren not to be discouraged by any tribulations he experienced on their behalf (**1-13**).

The chapter also contains Paul's second prayer for the Ephesians. He prays for their enablement, that the Father would strengthen them by His Spirit, that Christ might dwell in their hearts through faith, that they be able to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge, and so be filled with all the fullness of God. He concludes his prayer and this chapter by ascribing that glory be given to God in the church by Jesus Christ for all eternity (**14-21**).

#### OUTLINE

##### I. THE REVELATION OF THE MYSTERY (1-13)

##### II. Prayer for Spiritual Strength

**Eph 3:1** For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles,

2 If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward:

3 How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words,

4 Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)

5 Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;

6 That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:

7 Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.

**A. A MYSTERY ONCE HIDDEN, NOW REVEALED (1-7)**

1. Interrupting himself, Paul makes mention of God's grace (1-2)
  - a. A measure of grace given to him
  - b. Given for the benefit of his readers
2. That by revelation God made known to Paul the "mystery" (3-4)
  - a. Concerning which he wrote previously
  - b. Which as they read, they will understand his knowledge in the mystery of Christ
3. A "mystery" once hidden, but now revealed (5)
  - a. In other ages it was not made known to men
  - b. But has now been revealed
    1. By the Spirit
    2. To God's holy apostles and prophets
4. The "mystery" involved the Gentiles (6)
  - a. That they should be fellow heirs, of the same body
  - b. That they should be partakers of God's promise through the gospel
5. Paul's role as a minister of this "mystery" was a gift from God (7)
  - a. A gift of God's grace
  - b. A gift given to him by the effective working of God's power

Eph 3:8 Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;

9 And to make all *men* see what *is* the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:

10 To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly *places* might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God,

11 According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord:

12 In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.

13 Wherefore I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory.

#### B. PAUL'S TASK AS A MINISTER OF THIS "MYSTERY" (8-13)

1. To preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ (8)
  - a. Even though he was "less than the least of all the saints"
  - b. Yet this grace was given to him
2. To make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery (9-13)
  - a. Which from the beginning was hidden in God who created all things
  - b. But with the intention of now making God's wisdom known
    1. Made known by the church
    2. Made known to principalities and powers in heavenly places
  - c. According to God's eternal purpose which He fulfilled in Christ Jesus
    1. In whom we have boldness and confident access through faith in Him
    2. For which Paul does not want them to lose heart over his tribulations in their behalf, which was for their glory

#### III. PAUL'S SECOND PRAYER: FOR THEIR ENABLEMENT (14-21)

Eph 3:14 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

15 Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,

##### A. HIS INVOCATION (14-15)

1. In view of God's grace to the Gentiles, Paul bows his knees in prayer (14a)

2. He addresses the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named (**14b-15**)

**Eph 3:16** That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;

**17** That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,

**18** May be able to comprehend with all saints what *is* the breadth, and length, and depth, and height;

**19** And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.

#### B. HIS PETITION (16-19)

1. That they would be strengthened by the Spirit of God (**16-17**)
  - a. According to the riches of His glory
  - b. With might through His Spirit in the inner man
  - c. So Christ may dwell in their hearts through faith
2. That they might comprehend the love of Christ (**18-19a**)
  - a. Being rooted and grounded in love
  - b. To know the love of Christ which passes knowledge
3. That they might be filled with all the fullness of God (**19b**)

#### C. HIS DOXOLOGY (20-21)

**Eph 3:20** Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,

**21** Unto him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

1. Glory to God, for what He is able to do! (**20**)
  - a. Able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think
  - b. According to the power that works in us
2. Glory to God, in the church! (**21**)
  - a. By Christ Jesus
  - b. Throughout all ages, world without end