

The Jewish Final Solution to the World's Problem - From Prophecy to Mystery, Part 1

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Date: 27 September 2015

Preacher: Marvin Wiseman

[0 : 00] Please open the Word of God to Ephesians chapter 3. While you are finding it, I have a few introductory remarks for the content that will follow.

We are talking about from prophecy to mystery. And the very prepositions from and to should indicate that there is a change that is taking place.

There is a progression, and we have long since taken the position that the Bible is a progressive revelation. The events that are recorded in it transpired over a period of centuries.

Actually, the Bible was 1,500 years in the making. And each time a new edition was added to the canon, it included something new, something that was not there before.

And it was not until the inspired Apostle John on the Isle of Patmos put down his pen, after having written what is commonly referred to as the book of the revelation of Jesus Christ, the last book in the New Testament, that we consider the canon complete.

[1 : 17] And because we have doctrine on the move, doctrine that is developing, there are changes that are taking place. Some of these are so dramatic and so obvious that they do not need much elaboration, but perhaps one with which everyone is familiar and I don't think anyone could argue.

And by the way, that is being able to say something, that this is something that people couldn't know. I just stand corrected. I was going to say, wouldn't it be nice to have just one thing in the Bible that people couldn't argue over?

And I thought I had found a safe one. And that is animal sacrifices. We no longer make animal sacrifices. That's something upon which everyone can agree.

Well, not quite. Because I saw a documentary a couple of years ago about this particular tribe in Ethiopia that was still offering goats as an animal sacrifice.

So that blows that through. There isn't anything people can't disagree on, I suppose. But while you were in Ephesians 3, let me preface our study with some remarks.

[2 : 31] We have considered the historical transition in the book of Acts from the Jew, exclusively from the Jew, to the Jew and Gentile.

Be reminded that the Jew, those bloodline descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, comprise two-tenths of one percent of the world's population.

All others are Gentiles. We have carefully noted the distinctiveness and the separation of the Jewish people from all the rest of the world.

In fact, part of the identity of the Jewish people was found in their separation from all others. They were peculiar and monotheistic.

And monotheism was an oddity. Monotheism simply means you acknowledged and worshipped just one god. Polytheism, which was what just about everybody else was, worshipped multiple deities, all kinds of idols and statues, etc.

[3 : 49] We have also noted that this oddity and all else that comprised Judaism was deeply, very deeply, entrenched into the fiber of the Jewish people.

The very idea that this exclusive nature and status of the Jew could ever be disbanded was unthinkable. To Jews today, at least among the Orthodox in Judaism, this distinctiveness of being Jewish and all that entailed could never and would never come to an end.

There is, however, something rather unusual that is happening in many Jewish circles today, and it is of great concern, particularly to Orthodox Jewry, and that is there is a great deal of intermarriage. More and more Jewish boys are marrying Gentile girls, and Gentile Jewish girls are marrying Gentile boys, and it's just one of those, I call it just an item of human nature, being what it is in boy

meets boy, but they are greatly concerned about it, because the more their Judaism is compromised with Gentiles, then the more they tend to lose those distinctions. So, to Jews today, at least among the Orthodox, the distinctiveness of being Jewish and all that entailed could never and would never come to an end.

[5 : 32] However, however, the God who established Jewishness and made them his peculiar and chosen people had other ideas.

But he never let them in on it. Until all at once, it was sprung on them.

And it was not well received. Simply because they were so deeply embedded and enculturated in traditional historic Judaism.

Enter. The Gentile. Enter. All the rest of the world. From which the Jew had always taken pains to be separate from.

Now, in a never before thought of way, the Gentile, the Goyim, they call them, the uncircumcised, the heathen, the Jew, the Jew, the Jew, the Jew, the Jew, in a combination kind of way, that actually blended Jews and Gentiles.

[6 : 58] And this blending is called the church. church. It is the church, which is the spiritual body of Christ.

And he, Christ, is the head of this spiritual body. I've explained this before, but I must do so again, lest we be laboring under some kind of erroneous assumption.

When we talk about the body of Christ, the spiritual body of Christ, we have nothing to do, and this has nothing to do, with the physical body of Christ.

But of course, there wouldn't be a spiritual body of Christ if there had not been a physical body of Christ. The spiritual body of Christ is not an organization.

It is an organism. It is spiritual in the sense that you cannot look at this body of Christ, which is spiritual, and say, there it is.

[8 : 02] You can, however, point to individual flesh and blood people who are believers and say, there is a member of the body of Christ.

But when we use the term body, we automatically think in terms physical. And yet, we're not talking about a physical body. But you know the Bible talks about spiritual things in other areas as well. There's physical water, and there's spiritual water. There's physical light, and there's spiritual light. Well, there is a physical body, and there is a spiritual body. And this spiritual body of Christ is that of which He is the head.

He is the spiritual head of the body. And every single believer, wherever in the world they may be, of whatever race or color, they, if they are a believer in Jesus Christ, they are a member of that spiritual body.

It is not a building, and it's not a physical body. It is a spiritual congregation, but it is made up of real flesh and blood people. By the way, angels have nothing to do with this.

[9 : 09] This is strictly for humans. The body of Christ is made up strictly of believers. And this body is consistently, day by day, hour by hour, being added to.

As one becomes a believer in Jesus Christ, even though they may not know it, or be aware of it, and even if they don't believe it, when you become a believer in Jesus Christ, you are added to that body.

You are placed in union with Christ, along with all other believers, for all over the world. This body is in process of developing, and being completed.

And when it is complete, when the last person is saved, who is going to be saved, the body is finished.

And it is removed from the earth. Because it has served its purpose. And its purpose was to function, in the interim, as regards the kingdom of God program.

[10 : 15] That was that which began, and that is where the emphasis was. And all of a sudden, that was set aside, because of the unbelief of the Jew. And this new thing, called the body of Christ, the church, was brought in.

And the church is, a parenthesis. So here, on the extreme left, your right, my left, we have an entity, which is Israel, and the kingdom of heaven, kingdom of God concept.

And over here, on the extreme right, we have the same thing. The concept of Israel, and the kingdom of heaven. But sandwiched in between, those two extremes, is where we are.

This is called the church, which is his body. We are a parenthesis. We don't belong, to either on the right, or the left. We are completely different. So God began, with this kingdom concept.

It is going to be interrupted, and the church, which is the body of Christ, is going to be inserted, in the middle. And then, when it is finished, it is removed, and then the two ends, come together again, and make a whole.

[11 : 32] There are pictorial diagrams, of this, and we'll be distributing them, in the weeks that follow, and they will give you, a lot more clarity, than what I am able, to give you. But I want you to think, in terms of the church, as being, a parenthesis.

We are parenthetical. We are also going, to be referred to, as, a mystery. And we'll define that, as we go along. So, this blending, that is called, the church, which is the spiritual body, of Christ, and Christ is the head, of this spiritual body.

This represents, the historical origin, of the church, comprised, of all believers. This, became, an, explosive, revelation, of a concept, never before revealed, or even, imagined.

And, this is why, it is labeled, a mystery. It is almost, as if, it is almost, as if, Israel, as a nation, with all of their focus, on their separation, and, the kingdom of heaven, coming to earth, and the Messiah, and all the rest.

It is almost, as if, that whole concept, was blindsided, by God, with an entirely, new thing. And, as if, they could, wake up and say, whoa, what is this?

[12 : 57] Oh, where did this come from? We don't accept this. This doesn't make, this doesn't fit. We reject this. And, that of course, was the initial response. Because, it involved, the commingling, of Jew, and Gentile, on the same level.

And, their thinking was, you can't be serious. We are the chosen people of God. We are only, we only, are the chosen people of God.

And, these uncircumcised, goyim, these Gentiles, you, you, you can't bring them in, and put them on the same level, with that. That's unthinkable. But, that was precisely, what was happening.

This became, the explosive, revelation, of a concept, never before revealed, or even imagined.

And, this is why, it is labeled, a mystery.

A mystery, is a secret. Which means, not even, the concept, or idea, of the mystery, existed, before it, actually, was revealed.

[14 : 06] Now, if you have your place, there in Ephesians 3, keep it. Put your finger there. But first, let's go to Romans 16.

Keep your finger there, we'll be right back. Romans chapter 16. I don't mind telling you, well, yes, I do mind telling you, but, confession is good, for the soul.

When I was, 20, good heavens, this was before, the earth's crust hardened. I was, 20, 22, or 23, years old.

It's, it's been a few years ago. When I chose, a verse, for my life's verse, I was a student, I think, a second year student, at Cedarville College, it's a university now, but, it was a little podunk school then, and, the verse I chose, for my life's verse, I'm embarrassed to tell you, I didn't begin to understand, but it sounded good.

And, it was a prayer, that the apostle Paul, was giving to the people, at Ephesus, and it is, as if he said, and by the way, when you think about me, and you want to pray for me, here's what I would like, for you to pray for me about.

[15 : 37] That I may open my mouth, boldly, to make known, the mystery of the gospel, for which I am, an ambassador in bonds. That I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

And I thought, that's a good verse, and I need to memorize that, and I need to take that, as my life's verse. And I did. But Paul used the term there, the mystery of the gospel.

And I never understood, exactly what that meant. And you know, this word mystery, is one of those words, in the Bible, that is so easy, when you read, in your daily Bible reading, it's so easy, to just slide right over it, without stopping, and asking yourself, what does that mean?

Mystery. What's the mystery, anyway? Because let me tell you, it is eye-popping, when you really get a handle on it. Now, first of all, let me explain this. A mystery, does not mean, something that can't be known, or can't be figured out.

The best synonym, for the word mystery, is a secret. And we are going to see, that God, had a secret. And he had not, shared that secret, with anybody.

[16:51] I mean, not anyone, at any time, in the past. It was a concept, or a secret, that was hidden, in the bosom, of our Heavenly Father, never yet revealed, to anyone, until, one day, he made it known, to one person.

Just, to one person. And he charged, that one person, for making the secret known, to everybody. And it is, God telling, Paul the Apostle, whom he raised up, and designated, as the Apostle, to the Gentiles.

He designated him, the responsible person, for taking the secret, that God had revealed to him, and go out, and tell everybody, about that secret. So it won't be a secret, any longer.

It means, something that can be known, only when, it is disclosed. Otherwise, you wouldn't have even, thought of it. It isn't that you, wouldn't be able, to figure it out. It's that, you wouldn't even know, the existence of it, so that you could apply, your brain to it, to try to figure it out.

[18:11] It wasn't revealed, at all. Nobody had a clue. It was hidden, deep, in the bosom, of God. We have, certain organizations, throughout the world, that are, well, what else shall I call, I guess you could call them, secret societies, there are certain, certain, certain, certain, certain, certain, certain, certain, certain, certain, certain, certain, certain, aspects to their being, that nobody outside of their group, knows anything about.

There's, there's a secret handshake, there's a secret code word, there's a secret this, a secret that, or something else. But once you are a member of that group, and are initiated, initiated, then you get in on it.

Then you understand it. Then it makes sense to you. But on the outside looking in, you don't have a clue. Because you're not one of the initiated. You're not one of the inside group.

That's the concept of the mystery, as it is revealed in the Bible. And it is found at least eight or ten times, most of the time, by the Apostle Paul.

And we'll see, just exactly how significant that is. And it's tremendously significant. So in Romans 16, and verse 25, look at this verse.

[19:33] He's closing out, his letter to the church at Rome, and he says, Now to him, who is able to establish you, according to my gospel.

And that's a curious phrase. And we've talked about this before. And one might wonder, what in the world gives this man, Paul, the right to call the gospel he preaches my gospel?

Where does he get off with that? My gospel. It's because it was the gospel, which means good news, it was given to him.

And the gospel that Paul preached was different from the gospel that Peter preached. What was the gospel Peter preached?

It was the same that John the Baptist preached. It was the same that Jesus of Nazareth preached. It was exclusively to the Jewish people, and it was repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

[20:40] Repent, and be baptized for the remission of sins. That's the gospel that Peter preached. That's the gospel that Jesus commissioned the twelve to go into all the world and preach.

And he told them, don't go to the Gentiles, don't go to the Samaritans, confine yourself to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, back in Matthew chapter 10. That's the gospel that Peter and the twelve preached.

That's not the gospel that Paul is preaching. Paul is preaching the secret that is referred to as the gospel of the grace of God.

Completely different from that having to do with the kingdom of heaven is at hand, repent, and be baptized, etc. And the gospel that Paul is preaching is going to be delivered to the Jew, to the Gentile, even to royalty, because God raised him up for that purpose.

So, to him who is able to establish you, establish you means to make you settled, firm, solid, unmoved, altogether.

[21:54] To be established means to be whole, to be secure, to know who you are and why you are who you are. That's established. To him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery.

And don't leave that phrase out. That's terribly important. That's part of the criteria. According to the revelation of the mystery, which has been kept secret for long ages past.

How many ages past? Well, however many there are. That's how long it's been a secret. But now, for this strategic time in the life of this one man, this secret is communicated never before known and he's charged with the responsibility of making everybody know about it.

it's been kept secret of long ages past. But now, see the contrast? But, now, as opposed to then, but now is manifested and by the scriptures of the prophets according to the commandment of the eternal God has been made known to all the nations leading to obedience of faith.

Now, if you would, please, let's return to the Ephesian passage. Ephesians 3. This is another one of those passages that is so easy to just read and re-read and you just slide right over these terms and you don't know what they mean but you know they're part of the record and it would be nice to know what they're all about but maybe sometime, some way, I'll look that up but right now I just don't know exactly and we've all been there and done that.

[23 : 48] So, chapter 3 says, for this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles and he designates them because they are the principal party to which he was called, the apostle to the Gentiles.

Indeed, if indeed you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace, now that is also translated in many renderings as dispensation, a dispensation of God's grace.

Well, what in the world is that? What does dispensation mean? Well, just think about it. Just think about it. If you are in school or you work in a shop someplace, there's probably a dispensary there. And a dispensary is kind of like an office that's a huge first aid kit that is generally staffed by a nurse and if there is an accident or somebody becomes ill at the school or the workplace, they go to the dispensary and they dispense things at the dispensary.

They dispense aspirin, they dispense band-aids, they dispense inoculations, they dole out, they dispense, they give out things. The dispensation of the grace of God means the dispensing, the giving out, the shoveling out of the grace of God, the scattering it abroad everywhere.

[25 : 16] And of course this grace is predicated upon the finished work of Jesus Christ and his merits of death, burial, and resurrection being distributed to all who believe on him.

So, he continues by saying that it was given to me for you. Who's he writing to?

Gentiles, former pagans, people who came to faith in Christ as uncircumcised Gentiles. But they were the target of Paul, who was called to be the apostle to the Gentiles.

So, when he went to Ephesus, he preached the gospel, he won many of these people to Christ, now he is writing this letter back to them, giving them additional instruction.

And he says, indeed you have heard of the stewardship or the dispensation of God's grace, which was given to me for you, that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery.

[26 : 19] Now here he is saying, what I gave you was not something I thought of. It was something I would have never dreamed of. What I gave you was given to me by revelation.

The ascended Christ, not the Jesus on earth, who gave commissions to the twelve, himself, and then later was ascended to heaven. Paul is saying, what was given to me by Christ was after he ascended.

I am on earth, Christ is in heaven, he appeared to me one day on the Damascus road, and then later over a period of time, he gave me a series of revelations or information that I otherwise, of course, not only would not have, but would never have even dreamed of.

Now listen, what we're talking about, and this is so important that you get this, Paul is saying, God has given unto me by revelation a later word that he had not given before.

What the apostle Paul was getting was an update, things had changed. What was the principal thing that had changed?

[27 : 44] The principal thing was the message of the kingdom of heaven coming to Israel, repent and be baptized for the remission of your sins. That message is now passé.

That isn't being proclaimed. It has been updated with a new message, and this new message is called the gospel of the grace of God. God. And it isn't just for Jews. It's for everybody.

Jew and Gentile. The emphasis is not on the kingdom. That has been postponed. That is held in abeyance to be brought in at a later date, but now that parenthesis of the church age in between, that is getting underway.

That's the new revelation that is called a mystery. This is what was hid in God. God had this in mind from time immemorial, but he never revealed it until now.

And the Jew always thought they had this special corner on God, and the Gentiles were just out of it. But God's intent all along was for Jesus Christ, his son, not only to die and pay the price for the loss of Israel, but for the loss of the entire world.

[29 : 07] That absolutely blew their mind. They couldn't imagine that. That's the essence of this mystery. And by referring to this, verse 4, when you read, you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets in the spirit.

Here is the plural. We've got plural prophets and plural apostles knowing this now. How did they know it? Paul told them because he was the first recipient of it.

He was the initiator of it. God gave this to him first with the responsibility of transferring it to others. And here is the mystery that he's going to reveal in verse 6.

To be specific, here it is, get ready for this, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body and fellow partakers of the promise.

That means equal, equal, equal. All the way across the board. Jew and Gentile alike. Nobody is superior or inferior to the other. Fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel, of which I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace, which was given to me according to the working of his power.

[30 : 46] To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ and to bring to light where was it before?

Well, it certainly wasn't in the light. It was in the heart of God. Had never seen the light of day. Men had never heard of it. Men had never even thought of it. And to bring to light what is the administration or the dispensation or the doling out of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God who created all things.

Now, come, if you will, while we're in Ephesians close by to that verse that I found so stunning and also so embarrassing in Ephesians 6 and verse 19.

Well, verse 18, he just talked about the armor of God and then he says in verse 18 of chapter 6, he says, With all prayer and petition, pray at all times in the spirit and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints and pray on my behalf.

And by the way, you folks there at Ephesus, when you think of Paul and you want to pray for me, here's what I would like for you to pray for me about. That utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains, that in proclaiming it I may speak boldly, not timidly, as I ought to speak.

[32 : 34] Do you realize that Paul was a citizen of Rome and he's also a prisoner of Rome? and what got him in all kinds of trouble?

Not with the Roman authorities, but with the Jewish authorities. In the book of Acts, Paul was preaching his gospel and when they learned that he was preaching and teaching Gentiles, that they were on a common footing with the Jew, how did that go over with the Jewish establishment?

Well, it didn't at all. and some of them even accused him of taking a Gentile into the holy place or into the temple area where Gentiles were forbidden to be.

Paul had not done that, but that was the accusation that was made. And they started a riot. They were going to tear the apostle Paul physically, limb from limb.

And the only thing that saved him is the big ruckus that they were making came to the attention of the Roman guards who were nearby, whose responsibility it was to keep the peace and make sure that there weren't any riots that broke out.

[33 : 44] They were, if you will, the riders on the white horse and they came into Paul's rescue and they extracted him from those Jews and these are his own countrymen who have the same opinion that he had before he came to faith in Christ on the Damascus road.

And they came in and they took Paul out of their clutches. They would have killed him right on the spot. And because they wanted to maintain the peace they started asking questions and Paul said, okay, if worse comes to work.

And the Roman soldiers, he heard it all and he said, well, there isn't anything here that is criminal or anything threatening to the state of Rome and we're going to turn you loose.

And those vicious, angry, Jewish people of Paul's says, yeah, yeah, turn him loose, turn him loose. And Paul turned to the Roman guard and said, well, I am a Roman and I appeal to Caesar.

[34 : 54] and if they had turned him loose, they would have finished what they began and the Roman soldiers would have just looked the other way. Because their idea was, let the Jews settle all of these petty squabbles among themselves.

We're not going to get involved unless it somehow involves the state of Rome. And Paul knew full well if those Roman soldiers turned him loose, they'd kill him.

and Paul being a Roman citizen, which was very rare, said to this Roman army officer, I appeal unto Caesar.

And what he did when he said that, he legally placed himself under the jurisdiction and the authority of the Roman army to assure his protection until he could present his case before the Caesar of Rome.

he immediately came under their protective custody and that took him out of the clutches of the Jews who would have killed him. This is all in the book of Acts. So, that's why, as he says here in chapter 6 and verse 21, I'm sorry, in verse 20, for which I am an ambassador in chains.

[36 : 12] That's why I'm a prisoner, because I've been proclaiming this mystery. And of course, it did not go over well at all. Now, if you would come please to Colossians chapter 4, over just a couple of pages.

Colossians chapter 4. I think you will find in Ephesians and Colossians more information given regarding the body of Christ than perhaps any place else in Scripture.

And in Colossians 4, beginning with verse 1, Master, grant to your slaves justice and fairness, knowing that you too have a master in heaven. Devote yourselves to prayer, keep alert in it, with an attitude of thanksgiving, praying at the same time for us as well, that God may open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ, for which I have also been imprisoned, in order that I may make it clear in the way I ought to speak.

It almost sounds like a repeat from what we read in Ephesians 6, and the answer is simply because this was the greatest prayer burden that he had. So this mystery was and is in a class all of its own in the same way that Israel and the kingdom message was in a class all of its own.

That pertained to Israel and is reckoned as prophecy. That pertaining to the body, the church, is mystery.

[37 : 46] These are two entirely separate concepts distinguished by the groups to whom they are addressed. Prophecy is the scope or purview of the nation of Israel.

Mystery is the scope or purview of the body of Christ. Israel, and all things Jewish, including the sacrificial system, the Sabbath, dietary restrictions, and other aspects of the law of Moses, have become passé with the revelation of this mystery, which was to displace it all.

In other words, everything that had come through Moses is now being updated. And by the way, for people who find it somehow distasteful for Paul to say, my gospel.

And for some reason, they don't want to allow that to Paul to say, my gospel, although he says it repeatedly, at least three times. But nobody seems to have any problem with the law being referred to as the law of Moses.

You see a double standard there? why can it be the law of Moses completely legitimate in the Old Testament, but it shouldn't be the gospel according to Paul in the New Testament?

[39 : 13] Well, the truth of the matter is, Moses did not originate the law. It's just that the law came through Moses. God gave the law a human dimension by funneling it through the man Moses.

And God did the very same thing with the mystery, the gospel according to the grace of God, by funneling it through this one man, Paul.

So the apostle Paul becomes to the church what Moses was to the nation of Israel. And there is a perfect comparison there. In each case, God chose one individual through whom he would communicate his word and his will at that time.

And then he updated it. And in Jeremiah's prophecy, and also in Isaiah, it is made clear that the law of Moses was never to be an eternal thing.

It was temporary. And the time would come when that covenant would be replaced by a new covenant. Jeremiah 31 makes that very clear. this mystery is called the gospel of the grace of God, and it is synonymous with the dispensation of the grace of God, or the dispensation of the mystery.

[40 : 35] So we see in a number of places that we've already consulted how that this is something that was entirely new. And it is as if God sprung this upon the Jew in that first century.

It just kind of, it seems like it came out of nowhere. But it wasn't nowhere. It was in the mind and heart of God all the while, and he waited for this specific strategic time to reveal it.

And when he did, well, people do not take kindly to change in any dispensation.

And he got all kinds of flack, particularly from the Jewish people who still held the very same positions that he held before he came to faith in Christ.

So this whole new thing is now on the scene. And it has morphed into another transition. So whereas before it was Jewish exclusively, and then in Acts 10 with the introduction of Cornelius and Peter, the Gentile became involved, and then about the same time in chapter 9, Saul of Tarsus is converted on the Damascus road and is designated as the apostle to the Gentiles.

[41 : 59] Gentiles never had an apostle. The Jews had 12. Gentiles didn't have one. And if you want to know what the state of the Gentiles was before Christ came, you can read all about it in Ephesians chapter 2, and their situation was really dire.

He says, you were without hope, without God in this present world. You were aliens, strangers from the commonwealth of problems. You were a mess. You didn't have anything going for you at all until Christ came along and provided redemption for the entire world, and that includes you.

Wow. So what we have here is a debarkation from one program to another.

But you know what? A great part of the confusion that exists today is that so many well-meaning Christians are trying to function and operate under the old program that was exclusively designed for Israel under the law.

And they give the apostle Paul short shrift almost as if he was not a legitimate apostle because the twelve originals, they're the guys that counted. No, no.

[43 : 21] They were the guys that counted for their time. And the question may be asked, didn't the twelve know anything about it? No. And it wasn't that they should have known and that they were supposed to have known.

It is that there was no way they could have known and God knew. He didn't expect them to know because he hadn't revealed it. He revealed it first of all to Paul.

And then Paul had the responsibility of revealing it to everybody else. And then we read in Acts chapter 16 where he takes this glorious gospel of the grace of God into Europe.

And that's where your ancestors heard the gospel 2,000 years ago. Most of you here in this congregation this morning have ancestors that used to live somewhere in Europe.

And they heard the gospel. Amazing. Amazing. Amazing grace. Well, we've got a few minutes and I'm sure there are probably some probably some cues.

[44 : 35] I just hope I have some A's for them. Okay. Anybody? Okay. I have a quick question. I was looking through the scriptures the other night and 1 Timothy 3.9 also talks about the mystery of faith.

If you could elaborate on that just a little bit. And then I was reading through 1 and 2 Peter and I guess I'm not exactly getting the whole kingdom message there because in 2 Peter he quotes, you know, let's see, it's 3.15.

A brother Paul according to the wisdom given to him and some things hard to understand in verse 16. So he had, Peter knew what Paul had written and it appears to have been written to the same congregations and how was the kingdom message kind of phased out when the letters by Peter were written and James and so forth.

Because it seems to mention grace also. Yeah, okay, well, grace has always been operative, but, and I'll just give you a wise man opinion regarding the mystery of faith, or I guess you could call it the secret regarding faith and I cannot help but link the mystery of faith with the subject of justification by faith because, and when we're talking about faith, we're simply talking about believing.

It is believing and the mystery of faith or the secret of faith is that God is able and willing to justify or declare as righteous and that doesn't mean that you are righteous, it means that legally you are righteous.

[46 : 45] Morally, you may be a stinker and a lot of Christians, there are a lot of Christian stinkers out there, but they are justified by grace and the mystery of that is that by simply believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, you are justified from all things.

He told his Jewish audience one time, by believing on Christ, you are justified by all things for which you were not able to be justified by the law of Moses because the law of Moses couldn't justify anybody.

And the miracle or the mystery of faith is God's willingness and ability to call unto himself in a perfect union of full free forgiveness forever for anyone and everyone who believes in Christ solely

on the basis of their believing.

That is something that is a mystery to most people. In fact, it is unbelievably by most people because most people are involved in a works kind of salvation where God rewards your good deeds with salvation and the mystery of faith is that your good deeds have nothing to do with it.

Christ's finished work has everything to do with it. And to me, that is the miracle and the mystery of faith. And as far as Peter is concerned, what he says here in verse 16 of his second epistle, and this is quite remarkable, verse 15 says, regard the patience of our Lord to be salvation, just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you, as also in all his letters, that is in Paul's letters, speaking in them of these things in which are some things hard to understand.

[48 : 46] Does Peter mean that he has real difficulty understanding some of the things that Paul has written in these letters? Absolutely. Was it because Peter was dull or stupid?

No. No. It's because it had never been revealed to Peter. There was no way that he should have known or should have been able to understand. It was an update that Peter was not included on. Now, he's going to learn about it because Peter and Paul, I think it's in Galatians 1 where he talks about having spent two weeks.

Paul spent two weeks with the apostle Peter. Man, I would have loved to have been on that.

Wouldn't that have been something to have a recording of that? Spent two weeks together? And you know, some Bible teachers, and I think this is terribly, terribly wrong and unfortunate.

They pit Paul and Peter against each other. They're not against each other. They never were.

There was no argument between Paul and Peter. They had different ministries, different commissions, and different audiences.

[49 : 59] And they were not antagonistic to each other. There's no reason to believe that they had a falling out. And we know that when Paul went to Antioch, he withstood Peter to the face because he was to be blamed, and they had that little set too, over his hobnobbing with the Gentiles, and then withdrawing when the mucky mucks came from Jerusalem.

And Paul took him to task over that. But there's no reason to believe that there was animosity or bitterness or anything like that between them. They just had different information. And Paul got the update that Peter didn't have, and Peter wasn't supposed to have.

Because Peter's message was that of the twelve to Israel. Paul's was to Israel, but was also to the Gentiles and was even to royalty. So it's just a remarkable thing here.

And what are some of these things that Paul is going to write about that are so peculiar and really different to the church that the nation Israel has nothing whatever to do with?

Well, Lord willing, that's in our next session. and it will really hit all of us where we live. Because one of them could affect you today.

[51 : 21] Today. Information that Paul was given and he reveals. Other comments or questions? We'll just take, okay, Mike? There's a verse that mentions that Paul intends to go to Spain, but he didn't get there.

Is that true? As far as we know, he didn't. Yes, that's true. Yep. I'm sure that Paul probably intended to go to a lot of places that he didn't get to.

Yes, Carolyn? Marv, could you go back for just a minute to Romans, what you were talking about before, Romans 16, verses 25 and 26. Okay. Sure. And in 26, where it says, but now is manifested and by the scriptures of the prophets.

Is it safe to say that the scriptures that they're talking about here are the teachings that Paul's friends that are preaching with him, I think you mentioned before that the word prophet means anyone who teaches or, okay, it's not referring to past scriptures and prophets, is it?

It's referring to their current ones at that time? I think so, and it ties in, you know, it's an additional support of verse 25, but is now manifested and it is being made known to all the nations because Paul was making it known and he was giving it to others like to Barnabas and to Titus and Timothy and all of these guys and then they would pick up those whom they would teach.

[52 : 56] They would each have their protégés and the message was spreading rapidly throughout the whole world at that time. So I would take it that yes, the prophets here are according to the commandment of the eternal God and Paul is a prophet too.

We generally don't think of him as being a prophet but a prophet was someone who had two different ways. A prophet was someone who foretold and a prophet was someone who told forth.

And sometimes they did both. They predicted the future and sometimes they just delivered a message that didn't particularly have anything to do with the future. And some prophets did both. A lot of them in the Old Testament did both. So there's room for both in all of those. And it's been made known to all the nations leading to the obedience of faith.

Are we done? Anybody else? Okay. I'm really excited to share with you what we've got next week because we're going to see some of these peculiarities that are applicable only to the church which is the body of Christ that virtually have nothing whatever to do with Israel.

[54 : 11] And some of these you already knew and some of them will be new to you. So would you stand with me please? Father we recognize that the gospel has an incredibly wonderful history.

This good news. Grace has always been available and we know that as far back as Noah who found grace in your eyes and was justified by faith as was Abraham.

Yet we know more about this justification today than what Abraham or Noah ever dreamed of. And we have the historical reality of Jesus Christ being made sin on our behalf so that the scales of justice for the universe could be balanced and a way of access be opened up for men and women to come to Jesus Christ solely on the basis of their belief and trust in him.

Indeed the world still looks upon this as a mystery because they just don't begin to understand it and yet it's our privilege to not only have received it but to have the privilege of communicating it to others.

How grateful we are that in this message there is the power of God through faith unto salvation.

And Father our prayer today for every person here, man or woman, young or old, if they have never really dealt with the issue of personal sin and have never been willing to admit that that's what they are because that's what we all are.

[56 : 02] And yet Jesus Christ died on our behalf despite our sin and our unworthiness and he paid the price that we could not pay so that simply by our embracing Jesus as our Savior putting our faith and trust in him we stand before you as righteous and redeemed.

Indeed this is a glorious good news, the best the world's ever heard. And if someone here needs to apply that even now, we pray you'll give them the courage and the grace to make that most important decision they'll ever make.

Thank you for the privilege of proclaiming this wonderful gospel. We want to plumb its depths to the extent that we are able. We thank you for it in Christ's name.

Amen.