

ΠΡΟΣ ΕΦΕΣΙΟΥΣ

Ephesians 3:8-13



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NASB95



- *"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 what is the administration of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God who created all things; so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places. This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and confident access through faith in Him. Therefore I ask you not to lose heart at my tribulations on your behalf, for they are your glory. "*

The wise men followed the star



A Christmas message



- *our life is a Christmas story*
- *all of us must come to Christ as Christ came to the earth*
 - humble
 - as a baby
 - dependent upon God our Father
- *we grow in confidence by God's grace*
- *we suffer for God's glory*

Paul an apostle by God's grace

- *of the tribe of Benjamin (Phil 3:5)*
- *the persecutor of the church (Phil 3:6)*
- *Chief among sinners (1 Tim 1:15)*
- *not one of the 12 disciples selected in Jesus' earthly ministry*



Like Paul, Mary was chosen -- to be a mother



- *blessed among women (Luke 1:42)*
- *descended from David but not according to the promise of Solomon (Luke 3:31)*
- *David's own lineage included a Moabite (Ruth 4:21-22; Deut 23:3) harlot (Matt 1:5), and a descendent by incest (Matt 1:3)*
- *Jeconiah was cut off (Jer22:30) the promise to Solomon could not be fulfilled (2 Sam 7:13) except by adoption by Joseph, who except for the Roman occupation would have been king of Judah*
- *Mary was pregnant, had no place to stay, no home, gave birth in a stable, and placed her baby wrapped in cloths in a feed trough (Luke 2:7)*
- *They had little money for the purification after her delivery (Lev 12:8; Luke 2:24)*



The exact birth spot according to Greek, Latin and Armenian traditions



God's wealth

- *"To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ, " (Ephesians 3:8, NASB95)*
- *Moses thought Christ greater than all Egypt (Heb 11:26)*
- *the incomparable riches we share in Christ and the gospel (Eph 2:7, Col 1:27)*
- *eye has not seen what God has prepared for those who love Him (1 Cor 2:9)*



God's wealth



- *the baby Jesus was presented worldly wealth by kings (Matthew 2:11)*
 - many see the gold representing Christ's kingly nature, frankincense His priestly function, and myrrh for His death
 - perhaps they all relate to His redemption; myrrh was used in the anointing oil of the ark (Ex 30:23); frankincense was constantly before the ark of the covenant (Ex 30:34); and the ark itself was inlaid inside and out with gold (Ex 25:11)
 - the gifts were given by kings from the East who understood the time of the coming king of Israel, this was only revealed in the book of Daniel, and these kings were probably descendants from this tradition of the Magi or Chaldeans

Christ's humiliation

- "fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. " (*Hebrews 12:2, NASB95*)
- "Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. " (*Philippians 2:5-7, NASB95*)



The light in Christ



- *John 1:1-5 Christ in the beginning created all things*
- *Genesis 1:3 light is created by God*
- *“Pay attention to Me, O My people, And give ear to Me, O My nation; For a law will go forth from Me, And I will set My justice for a light of the peoples. ”
(Isaiah 51:4, NASB95)*
- *"and to enlighten everyone about God's secret plan —a secret that has been hidden for ages in God who has created all things." (Ephesians 3:9, The NET Bible)*

The Mystery revealed



- *Proclaimed by the Angels*
 - *"But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people;" (Luke 2:10, NASB95)*
- *By Simeon*
 - *"A Light of revelation to the Gentiles, And the glory of Your people Israel." (Luke 2:32, NASB95; cf. Acts 13:47)*

The Mystery revealed



- *By the Church*

- *1:10 Concerning this salvation, the prophets who predicted the grace that would come to you searched and investigated carefully. 1:11 They probed into what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating when he testified beforehand about the sufferings appointed for Christ and his subsequent glory. 1:12 They were shown that they were serving not themselves but you, in regard to the things now announced to you through those who proclaimed the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven – things angels long to catch a glimpse of (NET 1 Pet 1:10-12).*
- Angels look in on the matters of worship in the church (1 Corinthians 11:10)
- the gospel message is a declaration to the principalities of wickedness in heavenly places (Ephesians 6:12)

The Mystery revealed



- *"The purpose of this enlightenment is that through the church the multifaceted wisdom of God should now be disclosed to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly realms."* (Ephesians 3:10, The NET Bible)
ΠΟΛΥΠΟΙΚΙΛΟΣ
[*polupoikilos*
- Multipurpose /**pol-oo-poy-kil-os**/
- Infinite, limitless, beyond all knowledge (TDNT 6:485)
- *"This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord,"* (Ephesians 3:11, NASB95)

The eternal purpose of God



- *"[God] who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity, " (2 Timothy 1:9, NASB95)*
- *"Long ago, even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes. His unchanging plan has always been to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. And this gave him great pleasure. So we praise God for the wonderful kindness he has poured out on us because we belong to his dearly loved Son. He is so rich in kindness that he purchased our freedom through the blood of his Son, and our sins are forgiven." (Ephesians 1:4-7, NLT)*
 - this eternal purpose involves the death of Christ for the redemption of all those who believe, and the resurrection that we would be justified (Rom 4:25)

Therefore we have confidence



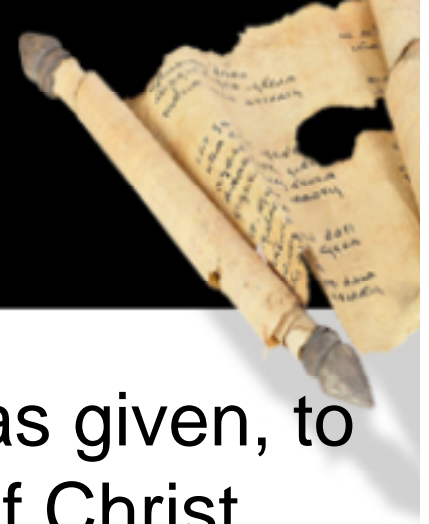
- *"For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need."* (Hebrews 4:15-16, NASB95)
- *"in whom we have boldness and confident access through faith in Him."* (Ephesians 3:12, NASB95)

Tribulations



- *"Therefore I ask you not to lose heart at my tribulations on your behalf, for they are your glory."* (Ephesians 3:13, NASB95)
- Not only should the Ephesians not loose heart over Paul's persecution, but they should take heart in various trials that they experience
- *"Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world."* (1 Peter 5:9, NKJV)

The Christmas story applied to our life



- "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 what is the administration of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God who created all things; so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places. This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and confident access through faith in Him. Therefore I ask you not to lose heart at my tribulations on your behalf, for they are your glory. " (*Ephesians 3:8-13, NASB95*)

The Christmas story applied to our life



- *Though insignificant, God has chosen me to bring the light of the Gospel to all people.*
- *The Creator with infinite riches became the creature in ultimate humiliation, so that the church may proclaim the manifold wisdom of God to the heavenly authorities.*
- *Therefore we have confidence in God through Christ, even in tribulations.*

Next Week Eph 3:13-21

- God is creator of all things, sovereign Psalm 95:6.
Isaiah 45:23.
- The Love of God Prov 8:17; 1 Cor 13

