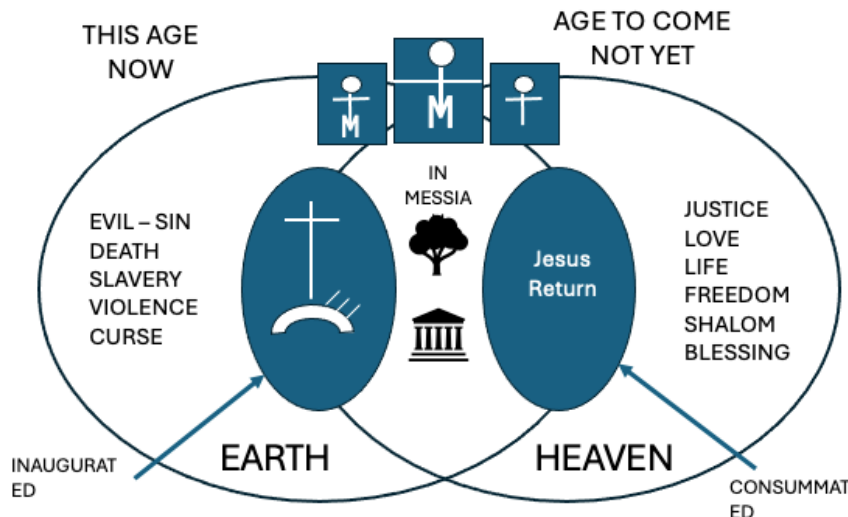




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# Paul's Letter to the Ephesians – Chapter 3

New Creation New Family



1 When I think of all this, I, Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus for the benefit of you Gentiles ... 2 assuming, by the way, that you know God gave me the special responsibility of extending his grace to you Gentiles. 3 As I briefly wrote earlier, God himself revealed his mysterious plan to me. 4 As you read what I have written, you will understand my insight into this plan regarding Christ. 5 God did not reveal it to previous generations, but now by his Spirit he has revealed it to his holy apostles and prophets. 6 And this is God's plan: Both Gentiles and Jews who believe the Good News share equally in the riches inherited by God's children. Both are part of the same body, and both enjoy the promise of blessings because they belong to Christ Jesus. 7 By God's grace and mighty power, I have been given the privilege of serving him by spreading this Good News. 8 Though I am the least deserving of all God's people, he graciously gave me the privilege of telling the Gentiles about the endless treasures available to them in Christ. 9 I was chosen to explain to everyone this mysterious plan that God, the Creator of all things, had kept secret from the beginning. 10 God's purpose in all this was to use the church to display his wisdom in its rich variety to all the unseen rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. 11 This was his eternal plan, which he carried out through Christ Jesus our Lord. 12 Because of Christ and our faith in him, we can now come boldly and confidently into God's presence. 13 So please don't lose heart because of my trials here. I am suffering for you, so you should feel honoured. 14 When I think of all this, I fall to my knees and pray to the Father, 15 the Creator of everything in heaven and on earth. 16 I pray that from his glorious, unlimited resources he will empower you with inner strength through his Spirit. 17 Then Christ will make his home in your hearts as you trust in him. Your roots will grow down into God's love and keep you strong. 18 And may you have the power to understand, as all God's people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep his love is. 19 May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully. Then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God. 20 Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think. 21 Glory to him in the church and in Christ Jesus through all generations forever and ever! Amen.

Ephesians 3:1-13 (NLT)



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## Ephesians 3:1–13 – The Open Secret Revealed

<sup>1</sup> For this reason, I Paul, the prisoner  
of the **Messiah** Jesus  
on behalf of **y'all** the nations —

<sup>2</sup> if indeed **y'all** have heard of the arranged plan  
of the **grace** of **God**  
which was given to me for **y'all**,

3 that it would be made known to me  
according to **revelation** at the open-secret,  
just as I earlier wrote about in brief,  
4 into which you are, after reading,  
able to **comprehend** my insight into the open-secret  
of the **Messiah**,

5 which in other generations was not made known  
to humanity as it is now **revealed**  
by the **Spirit** to his holy apostles and prophets,  
6 that the nations are co-inheritors  
and co-body-members and co-possessors  
of the promise in **Messiah** Jesus  
through the good news

7 of which I became a servant  
according to the gift of **God's** **grace**  
which was given to me in accordance with  
the working of his **power**  
8 To me, the lowest in status of all the holy ones,  
was given this **grace**,

to announce good news to the nations  
of the incomprehensible richness  
of the **Messiah** 9 and to **illuminate** for everyone  
what is the arranged plan of the open-secret  
which was hidden from the ages in **God**,  
who created all things,

10 in order that now would be **make known**,  
to the rulers and to the authorities in the heavenlies,  
through the church, the multifaceted wisdom of **God**,  
11 in accordance with the **plan** of the ages  
which he accomplished in **Messiah**  
Jesus our Lord, 12 in whom we have boldness and access  
with confidence through his faithfulness (or faith in him).  
13 Therefore, I request that there be no discouragement  
about my difficulties on your behalf, which are your **glory**.



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## Key Themes

- **Paul's Imprisonment:** Paul writes as a prisoner for the sake of the Gentiles, showing that suffering can be part of God's greater plan. His chains are not shameful but honourable because they are tied to the mission of revealing God's mystery (v. 1, 13).
- **The Mystery (Mysterion):** Not something unknowable but once hidden and now revealed. The "open secret" is that Jews and Gentiles are **co-heirs, co-members, and co-sharers** in the promises of Christ (v. 6).
- **Paul's Calling:** Despite his past, Paul is chosen to announce two things:
  1. The riches of Christ for all nations.
  2. God's eternal plan—through the church, God's wisdom is displayed even to heavenly rulers (vv. 8–10).
- **God's Wisdom Through the Church:** The multi-ethnic, unified body of Christ demonstrates God's victory over spiritual and social powers that divide. The church becomes a living testimony to God's wisdom (v. 10).

## Takeaway

Paul models humility, faithfulness, and courage. The Gospel is not just personal salvation but a cosmic announcement: **a new humanity in Christ.**

## Ephesians 3:14–21 – Paul's Prayer for Strength, Love, Community

14 For this reason, I bow my knee  
to the God our **heavenly parent**  
15 from whom every family-clan  
in the heavenlies and on the earth  
is named,

16 so that he would give to **y'all**,  
according to the richness of his **glory**,  
**power** to be strengthened  
through his **Spirit** in your inner human,  
17 that the **Messiah** would dwell  
in your hearts through faith,  
having been rooted and established in love

18 so that y'all would be **empowered**  
to **comprehend** along with all of the holy ones  
what is the width and length and height and depth—  
19 to know the far-beyond knowing love of the **Messiah**  
so that **y'all** would be filled up unto all the fullness of **God**.

20 Now to the one who is powerful beyond all things  
to do overabundantly more than what we would ask or conceive,  
according to the **power** which is at work **in us**,  
21 to him be **glory** in the church and in **Messiah** Jesus  
for all generations of the age of the ages, amen



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## Key Themes

- **Prayer Posture:** Paul bows before the God, recognising God as the Creator and parent of every family in heaven and on earth (v. 14–15).
- **Empowered by the Spirit:** He prays for believers to be strengthened inwardly, for Christ to dwell in their hearts (v. 16–17).
- **Rooted in Love:** The community is to be grounded like a tree and built like a temple in God's love. Growth in faith is both personal and communal (v. 17–18).
- **Dimensions of God's Love:** Paul highlights its width, length, height, and depth—love that surpasses full comprehension yet fills believers with God's fullness (v. 18–19).
- **Doxology:** Paul closes with praise to the God who can do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, working through His people (v. 20–21).

## Takeaway

Spiritual maturity is not about private experience alone but is **deepened in community**. God's love is bigger than any division and is fully known when believers live united.

## Reflection

Paul's teaching reminds us that **the Gospel is both mystery revealed and power experienced**. It unites unlikely people, demonstrates God's wisdom, and empowers us to live differently. His prayer challenges us to seek more than individual blessings—we are called into a community that embodies God's love before the watching world, even before unseen powers.

## Call to Action

- **Embrace the Mystery:** Recognise that your identity in Christ is part of God's eternal plan—don't let shame or past failures silence you.
- **Live as the Church:** Commit to unity across differences, embodying God's wisdom in how we love one another.
- **Pray Boldly:** Like Paul, pray not just for your own needs but for the strengthening and empowerment of your community in God's love.
- **Experience Together:** Seek out opportunities to worship, serve, and build with those different from you—discovering the deeper dimensions of God's love.