

Paul's "Job" Description

Ephesians 3:1-13

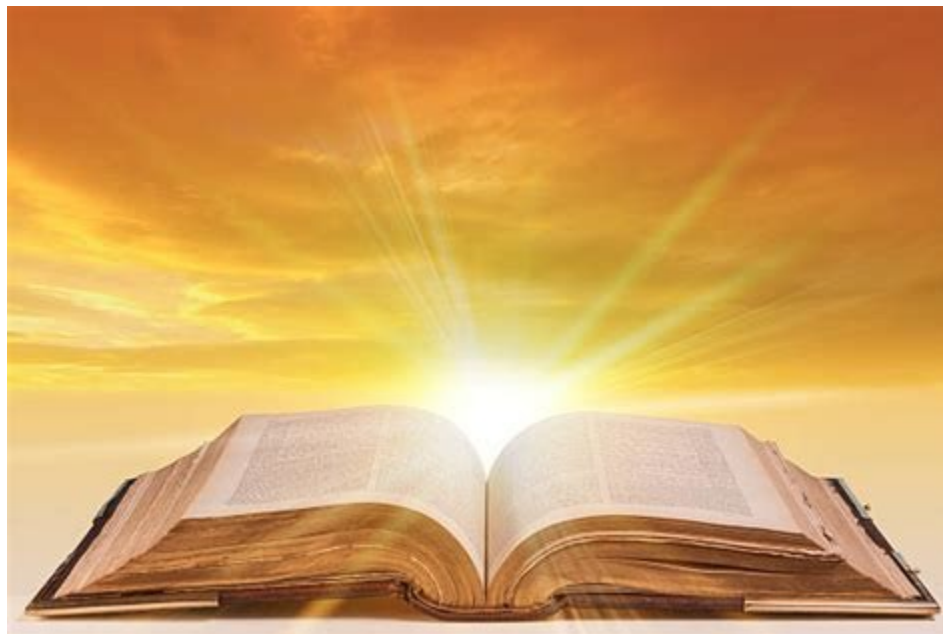


Ephesians 3:1-13

For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles-- Surely you have heard about the administration of God's grace that was given to me for you, that is, the mystery made known to me by revelation, as I have already written briefly. In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to men in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God's holy apostles and prophets. This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus.

I became a servant of this gospel by the gift of God's grace given me through the working of his power. Although I am less than the least of all God's people, this grace was given me.. to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things.

His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, according to his eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord. In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence. I ask you, therefore, not to be discouraged because of my sufferings for you, which are your glory.



For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus
for the sake of you Gentiles--

Paul was imprisoned because he was preaching the
gospel to the gentiles

But he calls himself Christ Jesus' prisoner!
Jesus had made him a minister to the gentiles



Surely you have heard about the administration
of God's grace that was given to me for you,

How far had the information about him spread?

He had received (it was given – not his own idea) a role in
the administration (economy) of God's grace

His job was to help in the distribution of grace to others



that is, the mystery made known to me by revelation,
as I have already written briefly.

To let them know what it was really all about.
Paul had learned (and had shared) what had been given to
him by revelation from God. (at the beginning and in Arabia?)
It was described as the mystery – a secret that has been
revealed but can only be understood by the Holy Spirit's
enlightenment.

He has already stated it in chapter 2 about how both Jew and
gentile have equal access into God's salvation plan.



In reading this, then, you will be able to understand
my insight into the mystery of Christ,

So this letter should help them to appreciate how God had
worked in Paul to reveal the wonderful truths about the
person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ



which was not made known to men in other generations
as it has now been revealed by the Spirit
to God's holy apostles and prophets.

This was something entirely new (although once it is
known it can be seen as partly revealed in the old
testament) .

Under the new covenant Kingdom period, in this age of the
Spirit's working, God has advanced the work of salvation
by revelation to his apostles and prophets . This was
happening before the New Testament scriptures had been
completed.



SOMETHING NEW

This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus.

This is a re-statement of what Paul had shared in chapter 2.

The good news (mystery revealed)

- 1, by means of the gospel (message of the work of Messiah)
- 2, the Gentiles and Jews stand together as one in the Israel of God
- 3, they belong together in one body (a living organism)
- 4, equally sharing all that is offered in Christ Jesus



I became a servant of this gospel by the gift of God's grace given me through the working of his power.

He was made a 'minister' (deacon – servant)

His calling was a gift of grace

He received it by God's power at work on and in him
(Damascus Road experience and beyond)

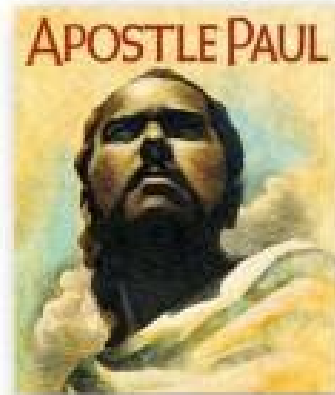


Although I am less than the least of all God's people,

A humble admission that it was God's grace since he was a persecutor

He that humbles himself will be exalted.

Taking the lowest place – the chief of **sinner**s



The Chief of Sinners

**The Glory of the Gospel
applied to the Worst of Sinners!
(1 Timothy 1:11-17)**

this grace was given me.. to preach to the Gentiles
the unsearchable riches of Christ,

He was called and enabled to preach the gospel

Its content is the unsearchable (profound – and vast)
riches of Christ – who he is, what he said and did,
what he has promised to be and do



and to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery,

It may be profound but we must try to make it plain to
people's understanding
So that they can see how it works



which for ages past was kept hidden in God,
who created all things.

He repeats his amazement in the fact that this good news was kept hidden in God's secret purposes until the time was right.

God is the creator who decided how everything should work out.



His intent was that now, through the church,
the manifold wisdom of God should be made known

The present plan revealed that the church was the means (and the glorious object) that would display God's wisdom in a multiple variety of ways.

Such a mix

Such a background of sin

Such weakness

Such a glorious outcome - transformation



to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms,

The powers ie Satan and his cohorts, plus the angel onlookers will see what God has accomplished
To the total dismay and defeat of God's enemies
We are a new creation!

“It is as if a great drama is being enacted. History is the theatre, the world is the stage, and the church members in every land are the actors. God himself has written the play, and he directs and produces it. Act by act, scene by scene, the story continues to unfold. But who are the audience? They are the cosmic intelligences, the principalities and powers in the heavenly places.” (Stott)



according to his eternal purpose
which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.

God had big plans – which he has successfully brought
to pass through His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.
Hallelujah!!!

DONE!

In him and through faith in him we may approach God
with freedom and confidence.

Here is the present, very practical benefit of what Jesus
has done.

Trusting in him and in union with him we may come
before the KING of all freely (no limited access)

Confident that we will be received, heard and blessed.



I ask you, therefore, not to be discouraged because of my sufferings for you, which are your glory.

So don't feel bad about what Paul was going through.

What might discourage them?

He saw them as sufferings for them (their benefit)

Something to be thankful for and honoured.

It was worth suffering for to see you saved.



In the next section, Paul does what he has been speaking about ... access to God in prayer.

Prayer Works

