

# Notes on Ephesians 3:7-21

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Building on the previous writing, I look at four phrases/concepts in this section. They are all inter-related, as we will see.

- Paul's administration of mystery,
- The riches we have in Christ
- Inner-man or being and
- The power that works in us

## **Administration of mystery**

*To administer you need a minister. This administration has to happen according to and to the glory of God.*

Paul is this minister. Minister translates to servant of a king, someone who executes commands of a another/master. This is used in various places as the word servant [Mat 20:26, Mark 9:35]. This usage further corroborates the analysis of the word prisoner, we looked in previous analysis. Since if your actions as you execute come from a higher source, then you are doing your master's or King's will. There is also power that need to be granted that is needed for execution of the actions as a minister. Here the power to execute comes from Him that works in Paul and eventually us. Another point to note is that reference back to Acts on Apollos, whom the Corinthians thought Saul of Tarshish to be. Apollos was a Jewish Christian leader of early church. Whether it was Paul or Apollos, it was God working through them to cause the growth.

In the case of Paul, he calls himself the least of the apostles as he persecuted the early church and was a Pharisee [1Cor 15:9]. In addition to being a minister he is also a prisoner. Paul is a prisoner of Rome. He has been imprisoned because he has been bringing the gospel to gentiles and causing the change that some merchants and powerful citizens of the cities (where he went) had issues with. [Acts 19:23]

*The mystery itself has been hidden through the ages and not revealed until when Jesus came.* We saw this in the previous analysis on [Eph 3:1-6], here.

*To receive this mystery that is administered we need an accepting mind with faith, whom God has called to be made known to [Luke 10:21]*

*And this mystery also contains spiritual blessings that are not merely earthy (to be seen below) [1Cor 15:42], which leads us to the next concept around the riches we have in Christ.*

### **Riches we have in Christ**

Riches in greek is ploutos and is used several times in Ephesians as well as in the rest of NT. Most of the time there are qualifiers of the word like riches of His grace [Eph 1:7, 2:7], of His glory [Eph 3:16, Rom 9:23], His kindness [Rom 2:4] and of Christ [Eph 3:8].

These riches are unfathomable [Eph 3:8], which means we can't fully comprehend its depth, width and length [Eph 3:18] and need enlightenment from God to know what they are [Eph 1:18].

As we will see in the power that works through us, which is one of the riches, we are strengthened and can do all things through Him [Php 4:13]. This strength in power gives us steadfastness, patience and joy [Col 1:11]

These riches are shared equally without distinction between Jews and gentiles [Rom 10:12]

A big part of the riches is the wisdom of God that is manifold - meaning varied of multiple and deep colors [Rom 11:33]

It's also His grace [Eph 1:7] which gave our forgiveness and trespasses, it also carries forward in ages to come [Eph 2:7] and this will cover all our needs as God will supply it [Php 4:19]. Hence we should not focus on the earthy things too much since the real riches are in heaven and in the eternal life to come [1Tim 6:17, James 5:2]

Finally, to comprehend the riches you need fellow saints and not just by your self [Eph 3:18]

[Eph 3:10] talks about authorities and rulers in heavenly places, which can be interpreted as follows using two different parts of this epistle. Using [Eph 1:3], it doesn't mean that these rulers and authorities are *in heavenly places* but that the wisdom of God which are the gifts in heavenly places will be made known to authorities and rulers through the church. [Eph 1:3] talks about the blessings in Christ that are in heavenly places. Using [Eph 6:11-13], it translates to a higher meaning around ministering to the larger forces referred to as principalities, powers in heavenly places. This refers to the devil and other angelic beings. Hence [Eph 3:10] could refer to using the church to spread God's wisdom by waging the spiritual warfare, as referenced in Eph 6.

### **Inner-man or being**

[Eph 3:17] has a reference to inner-man [NASB] and inner being [ESV], around the context of being strengthened with spirit in our inner-man or inner being. If there is an inner man, is there an outer man?

[2Cor 4:16] references both inner and outer man/being and sheds light on this. The outer man can decay, the physical being decay, while the inner being is renewed day by day. This agains points us to look at things which are not seen - the eternal over the temporal.

We are then given the contrasts of inner/outer, eternal/temporal, heavenly/earthly, spiritual/physical and such.

The earthly vs heavenly is given in [1Cor 15:42] which talks about inheritance being heavenly, as seen in the riches section. There is also references to perishable outer body vs raising an imperishable [inner] body. [1Cor] further explores weakness over power, dishonor over glory and natural/physical over spiritual.

[Rom 7:22-23] speaks of the law of God in inner man while law of flesh and world is in the members of the body waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members. This then is remarkable in how Paul ties this to the dead in flesh vs being born again/raised from dead in [Eph2]

Another way to look at this is to see the Greek words for inner/outer man. Inner man or being is eso anthropos. Eso actually means soul, conscience and integral to something. While Exo (for outer) means without, outer, out of doors.

Hence Paul can also be using it to show that we were outside of God/Christ, separate from Christ [Eph 2:12] and now after becoming believers we are part of the Church, integral and within the body. Again, this calls back to his references of being far and near, which was seen in [Eph 2]

### **Power that works in us**

The Greek phrase is dynamis energeo which summarizes how this power, which is a source of strength and part of the riches we looked earlier works in us. Some characteristics we can learn about this power that works in us. . .

We can do far more abundantly beyond all that we can ask or think [Eph 3:20]. It's distributed to each one individually just as He wills [1Cor 12:11] and it comes with being sealed with Holy Spirit and God [1Cor 12:6]

Power gives the patience to endure sufferings as well as comfort [2Cor 1:6]. It comes by faith and not by law [Gal 3:5] and works for His good pleasure [Philp 2:13] and gives us hope that will fill us with all joy and peace [Rom 15:13]

God used the same power, one that works in us, to raise us up as He did His Son [1Cor 6:14], it then is a testimony of and to God as He did signs and wonders [Heb 2:4]

Hence this should then give our motives to work and labor, striving to promote His glory in what is pleasing to Him in everything we do, so that we are not

doing good works using the power to be saved, but because we are saved by His grace.