

PAUL'S SUFFERING IS THE GENTILES GLORY

Paul introduces and closes this section with a reference to his being in prison specifically because of the Gentiles (v. 1 and 13). But he says that this imprisonment is good for them, it's their "glory" (v. 13). How so?

THE MYSTERY

The first three chapters of the book of Ephesians are packed tightly with a number of different images that Paul uses to describe our reconciliation with God. Paul describes this reconciliation as a mystery that was being unfolded (1:9-10). This means that throughout the OT this was being hinted at, but not directly said.

And part of this mystery was the inclusion of the Gentiles (Eph. 3:4-6 and 9). It was clearly prophesied. And yet it was so incredible, so unthinkable that the Jews who poured over these prophecies still could not see this coming. In fact, we are told that even the angels didn't see this coming (Eph 3:10).

ONE BODY

And the thing that they are brought into is one body (v. 6). Jews and Gentiles, heaven and earth, are brought together into one body. If you think about it for a moment then you start to realize that the "one body" might be more than just an image. It is actually, literally one body. It's Jesus. Jesus is God become man, heaven reaching out to earth, life having the victory over death, sinners reconciled to God.

A BOOK OF MYSTERIES

This ridiculously complex mystery was all wrapped up in this book. And you can read and read and study and study and you cannot exhaust the depth and profundity of this mystery.

A FUTURE MYSTERY

The mystery that unfolded was still a mystery until it unfolded. And that means that though it was promised, it was utterly incomprehensible until that moment that it unfolded. The mystery of how God would achieve salvation through the incarnation, death, burial, and resurrection of his Son was once a mystery and is now a clear fact.

But we live in the face of another mystery. Where do we go after we die? God has told us. He has made promises about it. And yet it is still a mystery. God record in the past should give us peace in trusting in this promise.