

EPHESIANS

ALIVE IN CHRIST

THE DOXOLOGY OF A FULL HEART

Ephesians 3:14–21

RELATED SCRIPTURES

Exodus 6:6–7 | Romans 11:11–24 | Galatians 6:15–16

STUDY FOR SERMON FROM 07.13.25

SUMMARY

Approaching the near midpoint of Paul's letter to the Ephesians, he breaks out in praise saying, "For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named" (v. 14). Paul is completing an earlier thought when he identifies his mission "to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God" (v.9). The word *mystery* refers to something that was once hidden or obscured but is now revealed. What is this mystery? It was understood for generations—for ages—that the nation of Israel was God's chosen people; he said so himself (Exodus 6:6-7). But who, exactly, is Israel? Is it all the people within the nation's borders who can claim Abraham as their genetic ancestor, or is there something else that constitutes the Lord's Israel? The answer is what has Paul rejoicing: It is the revelation that the Lord's Israel consists of "every family in heaven and on earth" (v. 14). It was the Lord's sovereign design to bring about the Savior through his chosen nation, Israel, but it was also his design and plan all along to graft in (Romans 11:17) and bless "all the families of the earth" (Genesis 12:1-3) through this Savior, Jesus Christ. As a result, all the Lord's chosen, both Jew and Gentile of all ages, are in mystical union with Jesus and are the "Israel of God" (Galatians 6:15-16). As a result, by the power of the Holy Spirit, Jesus Christ "dwells in [our] hearts" (v. 17). This mystery, though obscured for ages, is now revealed in Jesus and Paul rejoices over the fact that the Lord chose him to spread this *good news* to the Gentiles in Ephesus and beyond—the Kingdom of God belongs to them! As Paul rejoices, he also prays for the church to be "rooted and grounded" in Christ's love—that they would comprehend the dimensions of the love of Christ which "surpasses knowledge" (v. 19). In other words, Paul's prayer for the church is to have a profound understanding of Christ's love for them—one that goes beyond head knowledge and transforms the whole person after the image of Jesus.

GROUP QUESTIONS

Share something that surprises, encourages, or troubles you from the sermon or your direct reading of Ephesians 3:14-21.

When you hear the word "Israel," what comes to mind? Who is (or was) Israel? According to Paul in Ephesians 3 and the rest of the gospel, who is Israel? Why is this significant?

In verse 18, Paul conveys the multidimensional nature of Christ's love for his Church, which transforms the whole person. What areas in your life do you see the Lord's love for you at work?

If there's one thing Jesus would want you to walk away believing and receiving as a result of this portion of Scripture, what is that thing?

CLOSE IN PRAYER

As you pray, be sure to include today's themes in what you bring before God.