

Unearthing the Ephesians 3 Enigma

In the beginning, humanity was formed in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-28). Nevertheless, people turned away from the goodness and love of their heavenly Father. The sons and daughters of the Most High renounced their family and lost access to the wonder.

In time, the violence and repression grew. The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was continually only evil" (Gen. 6:5).

To counteract the darkness, God started calling a group of people to His heart. This would be a new "family" that would enable the transformation of creation.

Starting with Abraham—a childless man from a family of idol-makers (Josh. 24:2)—God initiated a new type of relationship with the goal of drawing all ethnicities to Himself. He declared, "Through your offspring all the nations of the earth will be blessed" (Gen. 22:18a).

Abraham had several children, but it was only through Isaac that the redeemed family" continued. In this, we see that God's purposes were advanced, not by bloodline alone, but by faith.

Paul reminds us "that those who are of faith are the sons of Abraham" (Gal. 3:7b).

Through obedience and relationship, the Abrahamic bloodline was distinguished as God's special possession among the nations. This "family" developed customs and ways of life that conveyed the redemptive story.

God enabled them not only to display His character but also to become receptacles of His heavenly revelation. Through them, a future Redeemer-King would emerge who would restore relationship to many. Paul makes reference to this, writing:

[They] are Israelites, to whom belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises, to whom belong the patriarchs, and from whom, according to the flesh, is Christ, who is over all, God forever blessed. Amen (Rom. 9:4-5).

The New Testament makes it abundantly clear that “salvation is of the Jews” (John 4:22). They alone were the means of God’s purposes in the earth.

Nevertheless, as important as Israel is to God’s mission, they aren’t the underlying purpose. They were merely the means. The goal was for Abraham’s blessing to be conveyed to all nations.

Whereas Israel, alone, functioned as God’s people in the Old Testament era, God’s covenant was intended to be extended to “all families of the earth” (Gen. 12:3b). The heavenly Father always intended for Gentiles to join Israel in the remarkable household of faith.

We must never forget that it is through Jesus that “the whole family in heaven and earth is named” (Ep. 3:15). He is truly bringing identity and purpose to spiritual orphans around the world. {eoa}

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