

§ 2 • Paul's God-Given Role With Respect to God's Plan

§ 2.1 • Description of Paul's Role

PART 6

12 For this cause I, Paul, am a prisoner for Messiah Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles. 2•You know this, if indeed you have heard of the distribution of God's grace that was given to me for you—most notably that, in relation to a revelation (as I have written about before in brief), the secret was made known to me. 3•By it, if you read it, you should be able to appreciate my insight into the secret concerning the Messiah. 4•This secret was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed, by the Spirit, to his sanctified apostles and prophets—its upshot being that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body and fellow beneficiaries of the promise that, in view of the gospel, is in Messiah Jesus.

3:1–6

13 Of this gospel I became a servant in accord with the gift of God's grace that was given to me, consistent with the working of his power. 2•To me, the very least of all the sanctified ones, this grace was given: (a) to convey to the Gentiles the good news about the incalculable treasure of the Messiah, and (b) to bring to light what is his plan for distributing his blessing to all (since from long ages past the secret had been hidden in God, in the one who creates all things). 3•My bringing this to light was so that the multifarious wisdom of God pertaining to his *ekklesia* (which is in accord with the purpose that he formed for the ages, to the benefit of Messiah Jesus, our lord) might now be made known to the leaders and authorities in divine matters.

3:7–11

14 In the Messiah, we have the freedom to approach God due to our reliance upon him through belief. 2•I ask, therefore, that you not lose heart at my tribulations on your behalf. 3•This imprisonment is your glory !

3:12–13

§ 2.2 • Paul's Prayer on the behalf of His Gentile Readers

PART 7

15 For this reason I bow my knees before the Father—by whom every people group “under the skies” and “upon the land” is given its name—asking

2•that, in accord with the inexhaustible abundance of his glory, he would grant you to be strengthened by his Spirit with power in your innermost self so that, through belief, the Messiah would dwell in your hearts,

3•that, being rooted in and founded upon his love, you might be able to obtain, with all the sanctified ones, what is its width and length and height and depth, even that you might come to know the love that is beyond knowing, the love of the Messiah, and

4•that you might be made complete with respect to all that is contained in the fullness of

the grace of God.⁶

3:14-19

-- (b) --

16 Now with respect to him who is able to do far beyond all that we ask or imagine, in keeping with the miracle being worked in us, may praise be to him for the *ekklesia* and for Messiah Jesus throughout all the generations through the final age of ages. Amen.

3:20-21

⁶Or, alternatively, “that you might be made complete with the entire *pleroma* of God.”

How Jesus-Believers Ought to Live: The Core Exhortations

§ 1 • Exhortation to Be What God Has Appointed You to Be As a Member of God's Eternal People

§ 1.1 • Exhortation to Respect the Oneness of the Body of the Eternal People of God

PART 8

- 17 Therefore, I urge you—I, the prisoner because of the lord—to walk in a manner suited to the calling to which you have been called. 2•With all lowliness of mind and lack of presumption, with long-suffering, putting up with one another out of love, strive earnestly to preserve the oneness which is from the Spirit, based on the mutual bond of peace. 3•There is one body and one Spirit, inasmuch as indeed you were called to one hope of your calling. 4•There is one Lord, one belief, one baptism. 5•There is one God and Father of all—he who is over all and to all and for all.

4:1–6

§ 1.2 • Exhortation to Do One's Part to Grow the Body into a Completed Monument to the Love of the Messiah By Embracing the Truth and Spreading the Truth

§ 1.2.1 • Identification of the 'All' As a Body of Individuals Captured for God by the Messiah—Destined to Grow to a Predetermined Number

PART 9

- 18 Now to each one of us grace has been given in correspondence to the measure of the Messiah's gift to God. 2•Hence, it reads, "When he ascended to the heights, he led captive a mass of captives, and he gave gifts consisting of men." [Psalm 68:18] (3•Now this "he ascended"—what does it suggest, if not that, in fact, he first descended into the lower parts of the land?) 4•The one who descended? The same one is also the one who ascended high above all the skies to the end that he might fill the "All."

4:7–10

- 19 Now, on the one hand, he gave apostles, and, on the other hand, he gave prophets, and evangelists, and pastor-teachers for the readying of the sanctified ones for the work of serving God. 2•He gave such individuals to the end that the body of the Messiah might be established (they are to serve until we all obtain the one and only true belief, even the one and only true knowledge of the Son of God), the goal being that it become a full-grown man (speaking with reference to the measure of the 'height' of the *pleroma* of the Messiah).

4:11–13

§ 1.2.2 • The Project to Which God Has Called Us Entails That We Should Embrace the Truth and Lead Others To Do So As Well

PART 10

- 20 In order that we might no longer be infants who are tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of teaching which is devised by the sophistry of men, by their cunning at deceitful trickery, we who are the "All" are to grow in relation to him who is the head, the Messiah, as we embrace the truth regarding his love. 2•In relation to him, the whole body, as it is pieced and joined together through every contact that leads to an addition in accord with the measured activity of each individual part, causes the growth of the body, into a building, made up of itself, for the acclaim of his love.

4:14–16