

The Pauline Revelations
and
Their Old Testament Connections

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INTRODUCTION

Many of the revelations which were taught by the apostle Paul, did emanate from the text of the Old Testament (OT), at least in their germinal form. It goes without saying, that the source of the revelations is God, the OT contains the subject matter. It was God, through His divine intervention upon the mind of the Apostle Paul, Who enabled Paul to perceive meanings within the text of the OT which were formerly not perceived, in their entirety, by any humans. I posit that God used Paul as the vehicle by whom He transmitted seemingly new and relevant meanings from the prior given prophecies and words of the OT, to the church today. The purpose of this paper is, to demonstrate that much of Paul's revelations, have roots in the OT text.

In light of the above, those who were familiar with the text of the OT, were not caught completely by surprise when confronted with the advanced theology as presented by Paul. Most students will admit that Paul's teachings do contain an advanced theology, a theology which did soar beyond the limitations as prescribed by the Judaistic code, a theology which did crystallize and give wonderful color to a variety of very interesting OT concepts and prophecies, some of which depended upon Paul's future manifestations for their final fulfillment or comprehension!

Paul, himself, seemed aware of the intrinsic connection his insights had with the OT. [note I Corinthians 2:9-13, Ephesians 3:4, II Corinthians 11:6, *etc.*]. For example, observe the many quotations in Romans from the OT which are used to verify and give credence to Paul's revelations and doctrines, many of which, will be noted in this essay. The OT "shadows" of many of the Pauline revelations can give us an increased perception of the actual revelations themselves. Their pristine OT contexts

can add meaning and semantic value to their usage in the Pauline corpus. This perception can help the student and faithful reader to better grasp and appreciate Paul's teachings. Too, some of the depth and the majestic proportions of God's word will become more evident.

A prerequisite, an absolute must, is some familiarity with the Pauline corpus. Awareness of: WHO Paul is addressing, WHEN his teachings are to be in effect, WHAT he is teaching, WHY he goes to such great lengths and eventually dies in service, to spread his gospel, these all should be clearly understood. Confusing the times, and audiences can promote confusion in general and pervert communication. Paul is the apostle sent to the nations (ἔθνος), he did not preach the "kingdom gospel" as preached by Jesus, John, James, Peter, Mark and Matthew. A revived earthly Israel is not his goal. Paul's converts should progress from the earthly to the heavenly position—which only they (of the redeemed) occupy. [note Ephesians 2:6, Galatians 2:7, Matthew 4:17].

The above mentioned "points" (distinctions) are mandatory for "right-division" (ορθοτομῶ) of the word from God. I suspect that much error has been, and is being generated, by joining Pauline doctrines with the doctrines of the apostles to the Jews. By "join" I mean treating the doctrines of the Jewish apostles (the "12") as doctrines for obedience rather than as examples and insights for us. Many similarities exist between the Law, Grace, and Tribulation/Millennial dispensations; such as: the faith which is always necessary, and a proper lifestyle is always expected of the believer, acceptance of a trinity (*et al*). These persistently common elements, seen throughout the Bible are "transdispensational", not limited to any one dispensation. The nature of God does not change, but He certainly changes His economies and makes clear a progressively evolving plan of salvation:

- first a salvation before Israel, (pre-Law)
- then a salvation through Israel, (from Moses to Acts 10)
- then a salvation apart from Israel (this present age)
- and finally a salvation again through Israel (the Millennium)

Paul addresses people who are to be heavenly, he prepares them for a heavenly eternity, with a heavenly Lord Jesus Christ, with heavenly bodies. The former elected earthly Israelites, and the future millennial Israelites, [including their proselytes] have earthly hopes with an earthly King Jesus Christ, and an earthly eternity—extending beyond their 1,000 year Kingdom hopes. Today, during this dispensation, God is not building the earthly nation of Israel, they have been temporarily rejected (Romans 11) they have been divorced. The name applied to believers in this age is often "Christian" which term is greatly abused, but originally it meant the followers of Paul's doctrines in Antioch—folks of any nationality. Prior to Acts 11:26, a group known as "Christians" did not exist!

By not recognizing some of the foregoing distinctions perversion has run rampant in many of the 3,600 religions in America. Yet, the other extreme presents a danger as well; that is, completely severing Paul's doctrines from their trunk. Some scholars claim that Paul's revelations do not have ANY OT foundation. Some claim that "mystery" and "prophecy" cannot coexist. This results in another scriptural perversion in that it seems to give Paul a supposed superiority, or that the apprehension of Pauline truths can only be achieved by studying those epistles which Paul co-authored [co- in that God is THE Author]! Logically, secrets *and* revelations concerning the same subject matter, do not seem to coexist, but God's word can transcend our limited logic. The known aspects and the very same aspects as unknown can coexist!

I use the word "distinction" to distinguish certain aspects of Paul's revelations, and to make clear various divisions so as to avoid confusion. But, ISOLATION, or DISASSOCIATION of Pauline features from their OT (prophetic and historic) seed-beds adds an unwarranted concept to the term "distinction". When I use "distinction" in defining the character of the Pauline revelations, it has its normal meaning of "distinguish", *not* sever.

For example, I quote Mr. Robert Brock, a fine dispensationalist, from one of his journals:¹

Old Testament prophecy and principles are not being fulfilled today... God is not working according to the Old Testament today.

In his context he is discussing the future tribulation period, and part of his statement is true, but his method of dismissing some OT prophecies seems amiss. True, God is not now dealing with the elected (historical) Israelites, but His past dealings with Israel contain types which show ineluctable designs apparent today in His dealings with us—a heavenly body part of the "Body of Christ" church. God does and is at work today using various aspects of OT doctrines and foundations. Paul's use of OT prophecies contradicts Mr. Brock (as we shall see).

For those who are familiar with the Pauline "mystery", who have been initiated or introduced to its truths, a connection with some OT prophecies is exposed. To those who have not as yet studied or grasped the Pauline "mysteries" (a product of progressive revelation), these same folks will usually not perceive an inherent connection. When one has ingested the Pauline doctrines, and perhaps "lived" them, then proper connections are established with the OT prophecies and history. I call this particular manifestation a "revelation"; as to the one who learns such truth, it is indeed a revelation!

God opened the mind of the apostle Paul to see a "secret" plan of God's intentions and to express and share these for the "Body" today. These "secret plans" were "hidden BY God" [Ephesians 3:9] in the text of the OT; even Satan did not grasp them! Paul does his best to share the special revelations given to him, we find this effort expressed or shared *only* in his 13 epistles. [keep in mind, I Peter 3:15, 16]. A number of folks [including a variety of partial dispensationalists—Chafer, Hoehner, Bock, Scofield, Ryrie, Ironside, Pentecost, Moody *et al*] declare that the revelation of the mystery was made by the Holy Spirit to the "apostles and prophets", Ephesians 3:5. The whole tenor of Ephesians chapter three, dictates that Paul was the first human to receive insight about the mystery, and the Holy Spirit used Paul to communicate his gospel (which would include its ramifications of the mystery) to the *New Testament* "apostles and prophets". When Paul taught

them these deep and new concepts, as depicted in Galatians chapter two, the Holy Spirit helped each of these New Testament apostles and prophets accept Paul's new revelations. Permit me to tangentially demonstrate Ephesians 3:4, 5 in a manner not commonly seen in most sanctioned commentaries:

whereby, when ye read, ye can perceive my understanding into the mystery of Christ; ⁵which in other generations was not made known unto the sons of men as now being revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets **in/by Spirit**;

πρὸς ὃ δύνασθε ἀναγινώσκοντες νοῆσαι τὴν σύνεσίν μου ἐν τῷ μυστηρίῳ τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ⁵ ὃ ἐτέραις γενεαῖς οὐκ ἐγνωρίσθη τοῖς υἱοῖς τῶν ἀνθρώπων ὡς νῦν ἀπεκαλύφθη τοῖς ἁγίοις ἀποστόλοις αὐτοῦ καὶ προφήταις ἐν πνεύματι,

The late Charles F. Baker correctly focuses our attention upon the little word "as" ὡς². Recall that Paul received many of his revelations directly from the Lord from heaven (Acts 23:11, Galatians 1:2). When he (Paul) shared his new revelations to the "apostles and prophets" it was Paul who appeared to and who confronted them, not the risen Lord, and it was the Holy Spirit Who helped them understand and accept Paul's message. The "as" signifies a change in the delivery method. From God to Paul, then from Paul to all as the Holy Spirit enabled each hearer/reader. Besides Paul the Holy Spirit is now a primary and necessary ingredient.

Today, in this dispensation, God via the Holy Spirit uses Paul to reveal His revelations to ALL, which is the correct reading in verse nine, "TO ALL". In OT times, God revealed information *primarily* via prophets, in person (with Moses upon the Mount), or via a Voice (His Voice). However, Paul discloses a change, in his era (when the NT was being composed) the Holy Spirit becomes the prime revealer. I repeat, as concerns the Pauline revelations, they were first revealed to Paul, and then via Paul to the "apostles and prophets". Galatians chapter two makes this quite evident!

A full study of the written Word of God should produce a clear idea of what God is saying. Distinctions can also serve to solidify the fantastic harmony and depth of God's Word. Similarities between prophecy and mystery will be better grasped. To this end this brief paper is dedicated.

Now these things happened unto them by way of example; and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages are come. I Corinthians 10:11

FOUR KEY TERMS EXAMINED

MYSTERY

REVELATION

PROSELYTE

KINGDOM

Communication is best accomplished when both parties are on common ground. My past experiences have taught me that some assumptions can lead to confusion. Hence, I shall present four words relevant to this matter of the Pauline revelations and their OT connections, defining them so that, hopefully, we can understand their usages herein and avoid any misunderstandings.

Each of the four words will be examined in light of their Biblical function(s).

MYSTERY

A fine synonym would be "secret". The Greek word is μυστηριον; it is used 21x by Paul of its 28 occurrences in the New Testament (NT). It is

used in the Septuagint (LXX) primarily in the apocryphal books, and depending on which version of the LXX one uses, it is found 8x in Daniel, 2x in Isaiah, 2x in Proverbs, 2x in Psalms, and once in Job. The Aramaic original would be ܠܗ, and it is also defined as "secret" as at Daniel 2:29, 47. This particular Aramaic word occurs only in Daniel. The Hebrew word for "secret" or "hiding place", would be סֵתֶר such as in Psalms 139:15;

My frame was not hidden from thee,
When I was made in secret, [סֵתֶר]
And curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.

Which text in the LXX is:

οὐκ ἐκρύβη τὸ ὄστούν μου ἀπὸ σοῦ ὃ ἐποίησας ἐν κρυφῇ καὶ ὑπόστασις
μου ἐν τοῖς κατωτάτοις τῆς γῆς

Here we note the Greek word κρυφή for "secret". The semantic difference between "secret" (κρυφή) and "mystery" (μυστήριον) is subtle, yet "mystery" usually means "mysterious teaching" or a "secret rite"; and as opposed to "secret", it carries the connotation of "enigma".

In Daniel (LXX), we note the Greek word μυστήριον used when Nebuchadnezzar had his dream, to him it was a "mystery"; but to an *initiated* one such as Daniel—who claimed that God gave him insight, (note Daniel 2:22, 23)—to him the veil was removed. In verse 30 of Daniel two, Daniel declares that he is not someone special, and that this "mystery" was meant to be explained to the king. Had the king gone directly to God in prayer, it is possible to assume that God may have granted him a revelation as concerns his dream. [But he probably was not a believer]. This parallels a classic definition of the term "revelation", an "unveiling". But what qualified Daniel was his trust in God, and his obedience was a primary ingredient for interpreting these dreams. This example paves the way for later usages of the term for "mystery"; only an initiated one (a child with faith) could

discern the "secret"! The revelations given to Paul expose, clearly, what was a secret; he makes clear the "mystery" to the followers of his good news about Jesus Christ. Hence, the key today—to understanding the Pauline revelations—is, faith, obedience, and old-fashioned study. Those who are ignorant of most of Paul's concepts and doctrines, will still view his "distinctions" as a mystery! One must first be "initiated" into the sphere of Paul's theology. One must be obedient, and of course have the assistance of the indwelling Holy Spirit.

In some respects, this typical definition of "mystery" is similar to that which is connected with the ancient "mystery religions" of the idolatrous Greeks and Romans, of the Masonic religion and upper levels of Mormonism. In each a secret initiation is required. A vague analogy is seen in acquiring Paul's mystery, requirements are first needed.

Paul builds upon the foundation of the OT prophets and NT apostles; though the foundation is familiar, believers do well to meditate upon and to patiently observe the process. Correctly understanding Paul's multifarious mystery, will enable the believer to clearly see God's eternal plan, Ephesians 3:11. We need to recall that the "mystery" (the Pauline doctrines of this age) was *first* made known to Paul, he then shared them. [note Eph. 3:9; Gal. 1:12].

REVELATION

A "revelation" is a revealing; very much the opposite of a "mystery". The Greek noun is ἀποκαλυψις it is a compound word; similar to the union of "un-" and "cover", hence, "uncover". Paul uses the noun form 14x, the verb form 13x. In Matthew 10:26 we note a usage wherein what is "covered" will be "revealed", and that that "which is hidden" will be known. Further, in John 12:37-40, we note that this quote of Isaiah 6:10 reveals

that the report of the prophets could be known but ONLY by those who believed. Often the truth now lies exposed in God's complete, written word; but only to those who are His children are the facts revealed or made plain. To others, the words are just letters, no nourishment is garnered, no enigma resolved.

Paul's first "revelation" did occur on the road to Damascus. There as Paul recalls: "...it was the good pleasure of God.. to reveal His Son to (or, in) me", Galatians 1:16. Christ, as the true Light, penetrated Paul's blindness; and he recognized Christ as his Savior. Along these lines I quote Romans 16:25, 26 per my own translation:

Now to the one who is able to establish you per the good-news of mine and [per] the preaching about Jesus Christ, in accordance with revelation via mystery [which] is yet silenced for times eternal, ²⁶ but now has been manifested via prophetic Scriptures per [a] commandment from the eternal God; so as to produce obedience via faith as [or, when] it is made known with reference to [or, in] the nations. (note Romans 3:21,22 also)

Note the above "yet" occurs when I contrast the perfect participle "silenced" with the following "now", this naturally generates the "yet".

Consider these passages in Romans, we will encounter them again! This junction is an ideal place for the quoting of Amos 3:7 (NASB):

Surely the Lord does nothing unless He reveals His secret counsel to His servants the prophets. (note Deuteronomy 29:29 too)

The context of this Amos quote is one wherein God makes it clear that He had warned Israel, prior, through their prophets. He did not surprise them or play games with them. His treatment of us is just as considerate.

Paul, in Ephesians 1:17, prays that God gives to them a "spirit of wisdom and of revelation" so that they could learn of the genuine knowledge (ἐπιγνώσει) of God—(verse 18 is relevant here as well). In Colossians 1:6, proper "understanding" was necessary, and in verse 26 we

note that the "mystery" did prior exist, but was not prior manifested! Colossians 2:7 appears to indicate that it was the teachings from Paul and his group which builds them up; [note too, Galatians 1:8] and in 3:16 they are to let the "word about Christ" dwell in them. Again, in Ephesians 3:9, we find that Paul "illuminates" a teaching which seems to already be in existence, but not revealed. One deduction, from some of these examples which we could infer as concerns Paul's revelations, is that "revelation" can often be the exposure of something which already exists, but is not exposed. Paul exposes, or reveals truths from the PRIOR stated OT doctrines, he sheds NEW light upon prior existing words. This is the cornerstone of many of his "revelations". These "new" references or aspects added to the OT prophecies is what enables Paul to refer to them as "revelations" which were specifically given to him:

I must needs glory, though it is not expedient; but I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. (II Corinthians 12:1)

⁷And by reason of the exceeding greatness of the revelations, that I should not be exalted overmuch, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, that I should not be exalted overmuch. (II Corinthians 12:7)

His "revelations" were "great[ness]", and they were from or about the Lord. Things were uncovered to Paul, truths were exposed to Paul, great truths!

I should like to further add that there is the eschatological use of the term "revelation" which involves future events, events which are briefly outlined in God's written word. Paul takes great pains to make clear his revelations to and for the believer today. He does not dwell much upon events which occur during the future ages (tribulation/millennium), as does the book of Revelation and many OT prophecies.

"Illumination" is subsumed *under* revelation. The Greek term used for "illumination" would be φωτισαι, as noted in Ephesians 3:9. The Greek term means to "illuminate" to "shine a light upon". Revelation does involve illumination or "light upon", but the two terms are not synonymous. Dr.

Lewis S. Chafer aptly describes the revelation which results from properly acknowledging the written word of God:³

The Bible claims to be (2 Tim. 3:16), and is, God's written word. In every particular it has proved to be His message to man. It treats faithfully and truthfully of things whether in heaven or on earth. Indeed, it discloses things otherwise unknown.

When a believer, via the action of the indwelling Holy Spirit, does grasp and perceive a Biblical fact, dogma, or truth, this *first* impression is genuine revelation. Particular points or concepts within this revelation can be further examined and illuminated. "Illumination" is seeing further details in the revealed "revelation" as a result of further study, meditation or urgings via the indwelling Holy Spirit. Today, since A.D. 98, the Bible is God's complete revelation (το τελειον, I Corinthians 13:10) to humans.

PROSELYTE

Professor Karl Georg Kuhn of Heidelberg, in his article upon this Greek word for "proselyte" (προσηλυτος), does a fine job in defining "proselyte"⁴. Two meanings are noted as concerns this Greek word as used in the Greek Bible:

(1) Proselyte is used in a *social* context for a person who is not a native of the country he/she is visiting, or residing in.

(2) The religious connotation reflects the usage wherein a proselyte is a person who completely joins the religion of another race or tribe, this is the usage focused upon in this paper.

The Greek word occurs only 4x in the NT. It is found at: Matthew 23:15, Acts 2:10, 6:5, and 13:43. In the LXX the term is used about 83x.

Upon examining the contextual semantics of most of these 83 usages, one would declare that the Jews were to treat a proselyte-to-Judaism as fully equal to a native born Jewish worshipper. At Exodus 12:48, 49, we note—as concerning the Passover—that one law applied to both the native Israelite and proselyte. Some early distinctions appear, apparently, in Deuteronomy 23:2-9, yet we see that these prohibitions were coupled or associated with specific acts of mercy and grace, as for example with Judah and his relationship with Tamar (a Moabitess, which produced Perez); this relationship illustrates an apparent "violation" of the Deuteronomic code.

However, normally, water baptism and circumcision were the primary rituals which caused a heathen to become a "proselyte"; trusting in YHWH, and accepting the Hebrew Laws would complete the transition. Naturally, faith in YHWH was first. As concerns women circumcision was, of course, not employed, but instead a ritual bath, (which both the men and women experienced).⁵ This ritual washing is actually a "baptism" and was necessary as an act of cleansing prior contaminations (even from a former heathen lifestyle).

Only in Esther 8:17 do we find language indicating that "peoples of the land became Jews", it seems that "proselytes via circumcision" is meant. As far as God is concerned, a person who is a true proselyte to Judaism is exhaustively equal to any native born Jew. In the mind of men, we note some discretions and prejudices, perhaps indicated in Acts 6:5 of Nicolas.

KINGDOM

This word, as it occurs in the Bible, seems to have suffered much abuse. It is not a rare word. Basically is it used to indicate:

(1) a physical kingdom, land, property etc. - Luke 4:5, Revelations 11:15.

(2) a spiritual kingdom - Romans 14:17, I Corinthians 15:50, Galatians 5:21.

(3) the sphere or realm of God's rule - Luke 11:20, Matthew 6:33, Colossians 1:13

(4) the prophesied "1,000 year" Kingdom - Revelation 20:4,
and Matthew 4:17.

(5) a rule or authoritative position - Luke 22:29, Revelation 17:18, I Corinthians
6:9, [and possibly Galatians 5:21], Isaiah 9:7, Daniel 7:14.

The Bible reader MUST allow the context to assist with determining the definition of this word "kingdom", the above are tentative suggestions.

The verb form "to rule" βασιλευω is coupled with various aspects such as: evil ruling, or the rule of sin, or of death, or of grace [Romans 5:21]. Each of these "subjects" can rule. It seems that some worthy saints will have a position of "authority" in the kingdom of heaven as discerned in II Thessalonians 1:5, Galatians 5:21, I Corinthians 6:3 *et cetera*.

The spiritual position and home for the saints in this age (or, dispensation) is at God's right, Ephesians 2:6, and our inheritance is in this heavenly kingdom. These wonderful promises are not ever promised to the believing Israelites who inherit earthly blessings, and look forward to a returning King upon the earth. (Revelation 20:4-6, 21:1-4, Genesis 15:18). During the "1,000 year kingdom" it appears that God controls his people, Israel and her proselytes, by force so that they serve perfectly in the new kingdom—note Ezekiel 36:26-28:

A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh.
²⁷And I will put my Spirit within you, and **cause** you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep mine ordinances, and do them. ²⁸And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.

They are controlled with the Holy Spirit and are made to do the will of God! Today we "yield" and subject ourselves to the written Word, we also dwell as aliens here, momentarily upon the earth.

Because of some of the above distinctions, novices must use patience and care when determining which meaning of "kingdom" is used in the passage being considered. Concepts presented in I Corinthians 15:39-50 [betwixt the "earthly" and the "heavenly", noting the "us" of verse 57.] should, for example, be carefully studied.

THE CONNECTIONS

In Ephesians 3:9, one should be aware that the participle which is rendered "...has been hidden" (NASB), is a perfect tense, passive voice, genitive case, αποκεκρυμμενου. Paul is beyond question inspired, and his use of the perfect tense participle is not accidental; it contrasts with the preceding aorist infinitive, "to illuminate", and the following aorist participle "created". The contrast indicates that the "mystery" (of Ephesians 3:9), was *prior* hidden, and that it remains as such—until one inspects Paul's writings. The action is not punctiliar! (for information concerning "punctiliar" see Moulton⁶). In other words, the "dispensation of the mystery" remains a shrouded mystery UNTIL one utilizes Paul's insights. Even today it remains veiled to the uninitiated or unenlightened. Hence, the perfect tense is nicely employed.

This does not mean the Bible is full of a mass of secret, magical, or hidden meanings lying behind the literal words. In the most solemn manner, God's word is to be understood in a literal sense. A literal comprehension can encompass metaphors, figures of speech, allegory, and frame various "spiritualizations". A literal parable is a parable in its purest sense, hence a wise constraint is properly placed upon conjectures and interpretations. God is not playing games with us in His word. He desires for us to truly grasp this precious communication. It is clear, plain and as direct as possible. Unbelievers, lost souls, can pick up a Bible and read it and not be spiritually nourished. Without the indwelling Holy Spirit in the bosom of the reader, the Bible would be just another "book". Analogous to this would be a follower of Judaism trying to grasp Paul's theology, while still living under the Mosaic code of Judaism. Grace and works, in this sphere, would not be compatible. There is, however, one "mystery" (a multifaceted one at that) found in God's word which has been exposed, hence it is no more a mystery to those who perceive it. This "mystery" concerns God's plans

(dispensation) for us today, and our future as believers in Christ Jesus. Paul exposed the contents of this "mystery" which was hidden "BY THE GOD" (ἐν τῷ Θεῷ), rather than the common "in the God", Ephesians 3:9. [In which case, I view the preposition ἐν as indicating the Agent, and not just the sphere.] To the initiated, mature saint, Paul's meaning is crystal clear.

It is well known that various peoples will perceive various impressions from a text of the Bible. These varying "impressions" of themselves, do not imply that the Biblical text itself is confusing; they simply indicate that readers are in various stages of growth, or not God's children, or they do not accept the word in a literal context, or they still require milk as opposed to meat. Rather than to condemn the Bible itself, one should inspect the lifestyle and the maturity of the one(s) proposing various impressions/interpretations. Mature saints are so because they feed upon the written Word, and practice it, this helps them acquire the thoughts (mind) of Christ Jesus Himself! (I Corinthians 2:15, 16, Hebrews 4:12). In addition to various impressions and interpretations stemming from disobedient saints, or pure pagans, one must be alert to perverted translations. Knowing the original Koine Greek, Hebrew, and Aramaic can prevent many textual perversions. For those not "gifted" with the time or ability to acquire these languages, I suggest using several good translations and comparing them.

As stated above, the "dispensation of the mystery" was "hidden [perfect tense!] BY God", it was hidden in the text of the OT. Satan and his agents did not discover it, it was first given to Paul to share these truths. Paul's use of the OT to verify his revelations as concerns the "mystery" enforce the rendition of "BY God"; if it (the "dispensation of the mystery") was only hidden in God, then Paul would have had great difficulty in *verifying* his doctrines! He had a difficult ministry as it was, but he was able to verify his revelations directly from the text in which God had hidden the sources for Paul's revelations, this we can and will demonstrate.

I shall endeavor to substantiate my proposition that—Paul used the OT to illuminate and give credence to his presentation of the "dispensation

of the mystery". Most "dispensationalists" would propose several aspects as the prime tenets of the mystery. We shall soon examine some of these in this order:

- the union of Jew and non-Jew (**Fellow-members and fellow-heirs**)
- the presence of Christ within a Gentile (**Christ in you**)
- that Christ died for the Gentile's sins (**Dying for Gentiles**)
- the secret "rapture" of the heavenly Body of Christ church from the earth. (**The rapture**)

The above four components are four of the primary elements used by many to attempt to define the parameters of just what Paul means when he uses the phrase "dispensation of the mystery" as seen in Ephesians 3:9,

καὶ φωτίσαι πάντας τίς ἡ οἰκονομία τοῦ μυστηρίου τοῦ ἀποκεκρυμμένου ἀπὸ τῶν αἰώνων ἐν τῷ θεῷ τῷ τὰ πάντα κτίσαντι,

φωτίσαι πάντας - to reveal TO ALL

ἡ οἰκονομία - "the dispensation"

τοῦ μυστηρίου - "of the mystery"

τοῦ ἀποκεκρυμμένου ἀπὸ τῶν αἰώνων - "that which had been hidden from the ages"

ἐν τῷ θεῷ - "by [as opposed to the usual "in"] the God"

What Paul dispenses is described in verse six, as noted in Hoehner⁷, and this "what" will clarify and define the above four aspects: the union of the Jew and Gentile (the "fellow heirs and fellow-members"), the presence of Christ within a Gentile, Christ dying for Gentiles and information about a "rapture".

We shall now examine each of these points and determine the source of these new teachings which Paul proclaimed and elaborated upon.

FELLOW-HEIRS and FELLOW-MEMBERS

The primary text for this portion of the Pauline "mystery" is Ephesians 3:4, 6 wherein he is defining the "mystery of/about the Christ":

And by referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of/about Christ, ⁶ to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow-heirs and fellow-members of the body, and fellow-partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

This "promise", in verse six, is often misunderstood. It is not the promise of the Holy Spirit, but rather is akin to the promises as seen in Galatians 3:29, Romans 9:8 and Galatians 4:28. It is related to the promise given to Abraham, that he would be the father of many nations, and that he would have a son and that he would inherit the land:

Now Jehovah said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto the land that I will show thee: ²and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and be thou a blessing; ³and I will bless them that bless thee, and him that curseth thee will I curse: and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed. Genesis 12:1-3

And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, Jehovah appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be thou perfect. ²And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. ³And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, ⁴As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be the father of a multitude of nations. ⁵Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for the father of a multitude of nations have I made thee. ⁶And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. ⁷And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee. ⁸And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land of thy

sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God. Genesis 17:1-8

These promises are the heart of the promises made to ethnic Israelites. In addition to these would be the promise of a coming (future) kingdom. However as concerns the promises made to Abraham and Ephesians 3:6, we should note that "promise" is qualified by the addition of:

...the promise **in Christ Jesus through the gospel**.

The bold portion appears thusly in the Greek:

ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ διὰ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου,

The promise of being FELLOW-HEIRS and FELLOW-MEMBERS is accomplished by and via the Agency (or, means) of the Person of Jesus Christ. This is a somewhat pregnant construction, in that "Christ Jesus" is also the sphere in which the promise is enabled. **In Christ Jesus**, or **via Christ Jesus** are both implicit; "through" with the genitive "the gospel" can indicate a secondary agency/means. This is clear and easy to grasp, but confusion occurs when students suppose that the promise to Abraham is completely applied to us today. We do inherit, yes, but our inheritance is heavenly, Abraham's is earthly. We do not inherit the physical land of Israel, that specific point is only to the ethnic descendents of Abraham—but spiritually, we do inherit in Abraham an inheritance, a heavenly one. Thus the promise is extended to us in this respect.

giving thanks unto the Father, who made us meet to be partakers of the **inheritance** of the saints **in** light; Colossians 1:12

Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with every spiritual blessing **in the heavenlies** in Christ...¹³in Whom ye also, **when** ye heard the word of the truth, the gospel of your salvation,—in Whom, also **when** ye

believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, ¹⁴which is an earnest of our inheritance, unto the redemption of *God's* own possession, unto the praise of his glory. Ephesians 1:3, 13, 14

In another respect. we are of the "seed" of Abraham, we have been adopted into the family of God, yet we represent the heavenly portion of the "Body". (There is an earthly Israel and a heavenly Israel!).

Thus, Paul can say we are "fellow-members and fellow-heirs" of the body. By "body" Paul suggests, via the context, the syncretion of two elements into ONE homogeneous composition, wherein some of the individual identities are no more. A creation of a "new (or, common) man" resulted as per Ephesians 2:15, 16.

having abolished in the flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; that he might create in himself of the two one new man, *so* making peace; ¹⁶and might reconcile them both in one body unto God through the cross, having slain the enmity thereby

The necessary "glue" for this construction is the "shed blood" of Christ Jesus - Ephesians 2:13. Though preplanned, the actual construction could not occur until after the murder of Christ Jesus. The elements being joined as depicted in Ephesians 2:11, 12 are the elect of the "uncircumcised" Gentiles, and Israelites. The literal interpretation should be very plain. All believers are contained in this union. Even those who lived before "Israel" (Jacob), as we note that it concerns those who had "hope" and those who had received "covenants", this would include Abraham, Adam, and other believers such as Noah.

Ephesians 2:19-22, from my translation of the Greek, would appear as:

So then, no longer are you aliens and temporary dwellers, but you are fellow citizens of [a partitive genitive] the saints and household of the God, since having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets. Christ Jesus, Himself being [the]

Cornerstone, in Whom every building is being fitted-together, growing into [a] sanctuary, holy in [the] Lord. In Whom you also are being built-together for [purpose] [a] habitation of the God in [or, via] Spirit.

Every "building" will be joined, and these saints, whom Paul is addressing, are also included as they are a "building". Most commercial translations render this passage in an unusual manner, my suggested translation accords also well with the theme of Ephesians which is UNITY.

Today, we still live in the era in which Ephesians is addressed, the "age of grace" or the age of the "dispensation of the mystery". This encouraging text is to us as well. In each age, God is building a portion of this great "temple". Today, a heaven-bound portion is being constructed. It will, in a concrete sense, be visibly joined with the earthly building construction at the "fullness (or, end) of the times" per Ephesians 1:10. Every building **will be** built-in together. [the "future" results from the subjunctive moods noted in Ephesians 2:15, 16, "might create" and "might reconcile"]. Though elements of the foundation are the same, and the "Cornerstone" is the same and ingredients such as faith and obedience are, in essence, the same; we should be careful to note some minor distinctions in the actual building codes or blueprints. In various portions (or, buildings) certain codes such as, law, grace, baptism, repentance, confession and commissions, do differ in certain respects. Some of these elements are more prominent in some of the buildings, some are less so.

Today, Paul is considered the "master-builder" or the architect. His foundation is not Law. In fact he is called "architect" in I Corinthians 3:10,

ἀρχιτέκτων - literally "architect"

Compare this concept with the authority given to Moses in Exodus 25:8, 9, 39:32. Moses taught what God had revealed to him, Paul taught what had been revealed to him. The messages are to different "buildings", Moses' was to Israel, Paul's is to the "Christians" or the "new [or, common] man" of Ephesians 2:15, saints outside Judaism.

Both men laid foundations, both men are architects, both men revealed new revelations from God. Moses began building an earthly construction based upon Law, Paul began building a heavenly construction based upon grace [refer to "Works Cited" #8].

It is a fact that the early Israelites were commanded to stay separate from the Canaanites (Isaiah 52:11, Ezra 9:12, 10:11, Joshua 23:7) and other idolatrous nations. Now when Paul mentions the union of the Jew and Gentile, as he does in several epistles, this would seem highly offensive to any orthodox Jew. Downright sacrilegious! How could Paul hope to persuade the Jewish mind to "fellowship" with these "uncircumcised" Gentiles? In some cases he did! He trusted God, and under inspiration he verified some of these "shocking" doctrines from the Old Testament itself! Note these Old Testament connections and concepts:

Ephesians 5:31 - from Genesis 2:24

For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh.

and somewhat more rudimentary we have: Romans 15:10 - from Deuteronomy 32:43

Be rejoicing nations [or, Gentiles] with the people of Him.

Galatians 3:8b - from Genesis 12:3

...all the nations shall be blessed in you [Abraham].

In addition to these Pauline quotes I would add Isaiah 19:25:

In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth; ²⁵for that Jehovah of hosts hath blessed them, saying, Blessed be Egypt My people, and Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel Mine inheritance.

This incredible unity occurs during the millennial reign per the context of Isaiah 19:19-25. Imagine Egypt (now full of Muslims) being referred to as "My people"!

Paul, in quoting Genesis 2:24 at Ephesians 5:31, is doing so so as to explain the union of Christ and the church, which is (a) unit of believers. This union is much more profound than the union of family members, in fact its depths are termed a "mystery" by Paul in verse 32 of Ephesians five. Yet Paul chose an example from the OT to try to convey this deep concept. Paul used a material, earthly example (Adam and Eve) to clarify a spiritual union which is occurring during this present age. Note too, that in verse 30 of the Ephesians text, that we are **a part** (no article, nominative case) "of the body"—a partitive genitive construction. Not the whole body, but some kind of a portion of something greater. I posit that members from other ages will be added. However, do note that herein, Paul uses the OT to explain an aspect of the "mystery of Christ", Ephesians 3:4, and the concept of being "fellow-bodied".

In Romans 15:10, Paul continues a string of OT quotes. His object is to make clear that from long ago God had planned for the Gentiles (nations) to also hope in Christ—"the root of Jesse" (Romans 15:12). Paul pictures an early prophecy of the co-mingling of Jews and Gentiles. Again, to verify this union which he refers to as a part of the mystery, Paul resorts to the OT. The same can be said for the quote of Genesis 12:3 in Galatians 3:8.

In addition to Paul's usage of the OT to verify this dynamic and "new" union of Israelite and non-Israelite (circumcised and uncircumcised), I would like for the reader to recall these early examples from the text of the OT:

- The Egyptian wife of Joseph (Asenath) and their children, Manasseh and Ephraim, which were incorporated into Israel.
- The odd union of Judah and the non-Jewish Tamar, and the incorporation of their son, Perez. [contrary to Deuteronomy 32:2]
- The incorporation of the harlot Rahab into the nation of Israel.
- The Moabitess Ruth and her apparent incorporation. (Matthew 1:5).

In light of these, one would be hard pressed to declare that God absolutely "hid" the union of the Jew and Gentile in His Word. Certainly the OT type would be the proselyte. However, hindsight is a much easier way to prove a current phenomenon. If it were not for Paul's explanations and revelations many students past and present would not fully understand or see the grand design of God's plan unfolding. In Isaiah 19:25, Egypt is "God's people", Assyria is the work of His hands; the "inheritance" of Israel seems to be a bit more elevated than the level of Egypt and Assyria, yet unity is manifest. A reader of the OT should, as a result, be better equipped to understand some of Paul's revelations about the union of the Jew and Gentile. Accepting these OT passages as literal, clarifies many of Paul's revelations; and conversely, Paul's insights add understanding to many OT texts! Paul lifts the veil and makes clear many OT concepts, concepts which had long stymied the Jewish sages. Paul exposes truth in the OT for us. (I Corinthians 9:10, 10:11).

Paul's analogy—of the Gentiles (nations) being grafted on to the "rootstock", which formerly had supported Israel—in Romans 11, displays a unity. He also declares that Israel will be reinstated, Romans 11:12. This "tree" represents a privileged position, somewhat political in perspective, similar to the "most favored nation status" of our era. I suspect that most nations have also been "cut off" just as Israel was. This unity is not a picture of a "body" type, but merely of one wherein God treats the nations with the same honor He once bestowed upon Israel, this is the similarity in

Romans 11, as the actual union of Jew and Gentile is not mentioned in Romans 11. [Except perhaps in 11:1, of Romans]. The context of Romans 11 demonstrates that ethnic Israel has temporarily lost her position of "most favored nation status", she has been temporarily cut off.

Prior to Romans 11, back at Romans 9:25, we find this quote of Hosea 2:23:

I shall call the people not of Me, people of Me!...

Hosea 1:10 is also involved with this text. Other parallels are noted in Isaiah 65:1, which see. This quote of Hosea assists Paul in preparing the reader for the concepts in chapter 11 of Romans, and chapter 12 [though in 12, Paul's "body" is simply that of the analogy of a human body, not the "body of Christ"]. The mercy demonstrated in the above Hosea quote was prior planned as seen in Romans 9:23. Note that Paul replaces Israel in the quote with the Gentile! In the exegesis of Hosea 2:23, "people" refers to Israel, as also noted in Hosea 1:10, Paul reveals a meaning not inherent in the usual exegesis!

In this manner, and under inspiration, God moves Paul to "expand" the original meaning of the OT quote! Indeed, this facet did not lie hidden in the text, but was in fact only within the mind of God until He moved Paul to express it! (Which *factum* supports the rendering of "εν τω θεω" ambiguously as "in/by the God" of Ephesians 3:9). Moving along, we should pay heed to Romans 10:20 in which Paul quotes Isaiah 65:1,

And Isaiah is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not; I became manifest unto them that asked not of me.

This crescendo of quotes [throughout Romans] culminates with Paul's statements in Romans 16:25, 26. Paul's revelations, and his clarifying of the same, originate from the text of the OT. In some instances, God moved Paul to "alter" the text. NO ONE can do so today—as Paul under Divine inspiration did—though many try, even Satan thrives in the business today

of adding to, or perverting the pristine text of the written Word of God. It was finished and sealed in about 98 A.D.. In Romans 16:25, 26 though, Paul gives credit to his sources; this should be correlated with Acts 26:22, 23, which is a part of Paul's speech before Agrippa and company:

And so having obtained help from God, I stand to this day testifying both to small and great, stating nothing outside of what both the prophets and Moses said was going to take place; that the Christ was to suffer, that by reason of resurrection from out of the dead, He is about to proclaim light to both the people and to the nations [or, Gentiles]. Acts 26:22, 23

As per the Greek I included the "outside of" - εκτος, as in "**nothing outside of**". Prior to this time, Paul boldly declares that he taught "nothing outside of" what was said in Moses and the prophets. Generally this is true. Paul, herein implies that his emendations were originally intended. Yet, too, we note that in this defense of Paul's, he limits his references to the death, resurrection, and preaching of Christ. He does not allude to the mysterious union of Jew and Gentile. Hence, he may not be referring to his inspired "emendations". In fact in this great speech in Acts 26, Paul is focusing upon the heart of the half-breed Jew, Agrippa, and this focus certainly affects what and how he states various matters in this speech.

Paul uses a variety of words in describing the unity of the Israelite and non-Israelite. We note: "body", "tree", "church", "children", "Israel" [Galatians 6:16], "new man", a "marriage", and perhaps a "field" [I Corinthians 3], "building", "lump" [I Corinthians 5:6, 7]. We do not find a "stone building" (or, altar), or "vine" used, as in Peter's terminology. Recall that "tree" (from Romans 11) may not be proper here, as it describes a national situation not the spiritual unity. Paul will also use the word for "holy place", ναος in referring to believers today. In fact Paul is the **only** Apostle who uses this word to describe a believer. When one reflects upon the usage of "building", or of saints being "built up", one may recall Jeremiah 12:16:

Then it will come about that if they really learn the ways of My people [Israel], to swear by My name, 'As the Lord lives', even as they [Gentiles] taught My people to swear by Baal, then they will be built up in the midst of My people.

When the "nations, "Gentiles" recognize "YHWH" as their Lord, God would bless them, and then, apparently, they could intermingle within "Israel".

So far, we have seen that the "dispensation of the mystery" seems to be a sphere, or time when the union of the genetic Israelite and the Gentile becomes a reality. However their original identities are lost, and the result is a member of Christ Jesus, no longer a "Jew" or "Gentile", hence the "**new**" [or, common] man" of Ephesians chapter 2. The embryonic concept of this union is seen in the OT, however its full impact and heavenly implications remain shrouded and vague if one remains in the OT arena. This need for epuration (from *épurer*: French, to purify or clarify) has been met by the Apostle Paul in his 13 epistles. Prior to the manifestation of Paul's revelations, the future unity seemed somewhat of an enigma. In the OT the "union" seems to occur during the millennial reign of the coming Messiah; or perhaps during the tribulation period as in Joel 2:28-32. Or perhaps in a "period" before the millennium as possibly in Isaiah 65:1-3, or during the blessing connected with the appearance of a "Champion" and the presence of an "altar" in Egypt as in Isaiah 19:16-25. All of which are subsumed under the concept of being a "proselyte", as in becoming a Jew via the Law and religious acts. As seen in the above quote of Jeremiah 12:16, whenever Gentiles trusted YHWH, they were then blessed by God. Thanks to Paul, these germinal hints, types and prophecies are given a concise substantiation as concerns the construction process of this age. [do note I Corinthians 15:39-50].

A "proselyte", as mentioned above, is an early prefigurement of the union of Jew and non-Jew. This early "type" however, was not referred to as any sort of a "new creation" or man. It simply involved the

transformation of a Gentile into a circumcised Jew in accordance to prescribed Law and religious practices. Circumcision was the seal or mark of the transformation. In the case of a woman we may recall, it is circumcision of the heart, Deuteronomy 30:6. When a person today, Jew or non-Jew, is incorporated by faith into the "body" the seal is the indwelling Holy Spirit. (Ephesians 1:13, 4:30). The "baptism" is also connected with the Holy Spirit, Who PLACES [the definition of "baptize" - to place in/into] each believer within the "body of Christ", no water is involved, nor priest, nor rituals. This "one baptism" is only found in the Pauline corpus, I Corinthians 12:13, Galatians 3:27, and referred to in Ephesians 4:5. As God treated the original native-born, genetic Israelite and their proselytes as entirely equal, so does He, today, treat as equal, all the elect in Christ. IN CHRIST, national and racial distinctions dissolve (and even gender) Galatians 3:28. Though various talents and abilities are manifest within the "Body of Christ" today, each member is equally important and needed, I Corinthians 12:12-27.

"Fellow-members" should now be clearly understood as a concept which was not totally foreign to the text of the OT. "Fellow-heirs" is not foreign to the text either; that is, a believing Gentile co-inheriting with a believing Israelite. This concept also causes many modern-day Jews and "religious folks" to become irritable. Observe Ezekiel 47:22,23:

And it will come about that you shall divide it [the land of Israel] by lot amongst yourselves and amongst the aliens who stay in your midst and who bring forth sons in your midst; they shall be to you as native-stock amongst the sons of Israel; they are to be partakers in [the] inheritance in the midst of the tribes of Israel. And [it] shall be that in [the] tribe in which the alien dwells, there you shall give their portion, says [the] Lord God.

The LXX version renders some of the terms for "aliens", in the above quote, with the Greek word for "proselytes". Yet the Hebrew original means "foreigner", or as the NASB has it "aliens". The Bible from the Jewish Publication Society, renders it as "strangers". Note this comment from Keil and Delitzsch upon this Ezekiel passage,⁹

in the future distribution of the land, on the contrary the גֵּרִים [aliens] were to receive hereditary property like native-born Israelites; and in this respect no difference was to exist between the members of the people of God born of Abraham's seed and those born of the heathen.

This event, the distribution of the land, seems to occur during the future restoration of Israel, during the reign of their Messiah when He is physically in the land of Israel during the Millennium. Ezekiel 47 has many similarities in common with Revelation chapters 21 and 22! However, the word, in the Hebrew, for our "aliens" as in the above quote, cannot be dogmatically stated as simply referring only to religious proselytes. Room exists for an interpretation and literal semantics which present these "aliens" as not "proselytes" in the technical sense. This same Hebrew word occurs at Ezekiel 14:7, and Genesis 15:13 *et cetera*. It is not the same Hebrew term as seen at II Chronicles 2:17, (which word only occurs once in the Hebrew). These words in the Hebrew are still hotly disputed by scholars, and I do not claim to settle the issue, but certainly "alien" is legitimate and not proselyte for some of these Hebrew words!

Paul declares that the believing Jew and non-Jew shall be "fellow-heirs" in Ephesians 3:6; we have seen one early type as presented in Ezekiel to under gird this facet of the Pauline revelations of the "mystery".

In Acts 15:9, Peter comes to an amazing conclusion, for a Jew! He spoke to the former God-fearer Cornelius, and the sign of "salvation" was given to Peter and his fellow Jewish witnesses (who need signs, such as speaking in foreign languages), signaling that these Italians became proselytes to the new messianic church [Acts 10]. Note Acts 15:8, 9:

And God, who knoweth the heart, bare them witness, giving them [Cornelius and family] the Holy Spirit, even as he did unto us; ⁹and he made **no distinction** between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith.

One further analogy as concerns "fellow-members" and heirs, is that in the heavenly kingdom, II Timothy 4:18 *et cetera*, it appears that the consistently faithful believers, who try to live proper lives, will be awarded a position of authority in that kingdom. In contrast to this, those believers who consistently compromise, and who consistently, knowingly, disobey, these will not be awarded a position of authority. These disobedient ones will not lose their salvation, they have been sealed, but they will not participate in the "rule or kingship" [βασιλεια] of the Lord Jesus Christ. Keeping in mind some of our prior mentioned definitions for "kingdom", we can discern this in the Greek texts of Galatians 5:16-21, and in Romans 13:11-14. One might include the notion of the awards ceremony, which occurs in heaven during the tribulation on earth, wherein the consistently obedient are to receive "crowns". [II Corinthians 5:10, and I Corinthians 3:14 with II Timothy 4:8, Philippians 4:1]. Similar concepts are noted in Job 34:30, Joshua 24:19, 20, Proverbs 12:24, Isaiah 1:23-26, II Chronicles 19:5-10, Exodus 19:6, 18:21; and as concerns King Saul in I Samuel 15:26b:

...for you [Saul] have rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord has rejected you from being king over Israel

The comparison is plain, as with Israel, so too with the present Body of Christ church, obedience can incur rewards, which can include positions of authority as in a role in which one rules ["authority" equals "a rule"].

Before moving on to the next aspect of the Pauline revelation of the "mystery"; note that the motif of a "new" creation is not foreign to the OT text neither. In Isaiah 65:17, we read of a new heavens and earth (these heavens are most likely, the atmospheres and the physical universe); too, Israel is to receive a NEW heart and a NEW Spirit as per Ezekiel 36:26 (during the millennium). In Ezekiel 36:27 God **causes** the Israelites to obey! Jeremiah contains similar descriptions of these future promises to Israelites.

These thus, are some of the pictures and types of the Pauline revelations seen in the Old Testament examples concerning the present union of elected Jews and non-Jews as "fellow-members" and "fellow-heirs".

CHRIST IN YOU [the Gentile]

The primary text for this aspect of Paul's revelation is Colossians 1:27, the following represents the usual rendition.

...what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is **Christ in you**, the hope of glory

Paul, via Epaphras, founded this assembly at Colossae, and in his ministry to it, (Colossians 1:24-29) taught them these facts from his revelations. Romans 8:10 is also parallel with our subject matter here. This phrase—"Christ in [or, amongst] you" (the nations), is in many ways the very epitome of the Pauline revelations. Separate from the direct agency of Israel, it seemed extraordinary that God would dwell in (or, with) a Gentile; a Gentile who may not even be circumcised, nor prior water baptized! The "shock" of Acts 10:45 was indeed justified.

Joel 2:28 (quoted by Peter on a certain Pentecost of Acts two), might seem to enforce the presence of the "Spirit" as being upon the non-Jew; but as S. R. Driver points out¹⁰, it is the elected remnant of genetic Israelites to whom this promise is made (which would include lawful proselytes). Driver shows in portions of Joel, God's punishment of the nations and non-elect Israelites. It seems reasonable that this fearful time of judgment is not upon His chosen! Hence, this outpouring, in Joel, of the Spirit is upon believing Israel (and her proselytes). This is reënforced by Peter's words in Acts 2:39, ONLY the "called".

Consider this inversion: YOU ARE IN CHRIST, this must also be true. Each body member has "some" of Christ, the Holy Spirit, in them, but we all are in Christ. Christ Jesus is the "Head" of the body, Ephesians 4:15, Colossians 1:18. Our connection, or unifying factor holding us within this body, is the Holy Spirit. This is a "spiritual" body with many parts.

From the perspective of our being in Christ, we find many OT types as concerns God's original children. The type would be, Israel in God, or somehow connected to God. In this mode God refers to the believing Israelites as "My people", even more poignant is as "sons" in Hosea 1:10. God is the Father, this is made plain in Isaiah 63:16. Often the descendants of Israel are called the "children" of God. All of these expressions are possible as we keep before us the fact that these unions are spiritual. They are in God, equivalent to being in Jesus Christ in many respects. The connecting Spirit must be the same Holy Spirit. Perhaps, when the elected Israelites are all visible, it could be termed the "great assembly [church]" - Psalms 22:25.

However, in the OT the Holy Spirit was not the seal, circumcision was the seal, whether of the heart or of the foreskin. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit, of this age and building, is permanent. The Holy Spirit, in the OT, often would come and go to and from various Israelites (David, Saul, and from the Temple - note Ezekiel 11:23, I Samuel 16:14, Psalms 51:11, compare Ezekiel 2:2 with Ezekiel 3:24). In early Acts we observe members of the messianic church being filled again and again with the Holy Spirit, obviously these "fillings" differ from the permanent indwelling of the Holy Spirit of which Paul speaks.

The first man, Adam, was the head of all families upon the earth, both of believers and unbelievers. The second Adam (Jesus Christ) is the "Head" of the redeemed. Outside of Christ, there is no true life. Paul's salvation, ministry and life, stems not from his human energy, rather...

I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, Who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me. Galatians 2:20

Paul does not have nail holes in his hands, nor is he of the tribe of Judah, obviously Christ lives in Paul "spiritually". The third member of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit, represents Christ in Paul and all saints of this age. It is impossible to declare that ALL OT Israelites had the Holy Spirit in them, even of all the elect. Yet, this is abundantly manifested of us, the saints in this age, note:

However you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he/she does not belong [or, is of] to Him. Romans 8:9

Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. I Corinthians 3:17

Some may, at this juncture, point out that nowhere is it clearly stated that God/Christ would indwell a Gentile in the OT, and that there seems to be no support for this facet of the Pauline "mystery". Yet we should recall Paul's inspired quote of Hosea 1:10, which text Paul declares is about us, which includes the saints in the Roman church to which this quote was originally sent and so understood.

And it shall be that in the place where it was said to them 'You are not My people.' There they shall be called sons of the living God. Romans 9:26 (NASB)

Paul refers to the uncircumcised Gentiles as "sons of the living God". As demonstrated earlier in this essay, this passage was originally spoken to Israelites via their prophet, Hosea. Readers who do not accept Divine inspiration, may discount Paul's intent here. I accept his interpretation.

Prior to Israel (Jacob), before the giving of the "Law", we have some very interesting promises. One was spoken to Abraham. Paul uses this promise at Galatians 3:8, in which it was said to Abraham, that he would be the father of many nations; and that the nations would be blessed in him, Galatians 3:14, and this same promise(s) would extend to the SEED of

Abraham. And, as the inspired Paul does so well, he argues that this SEED is singular, and is Christ Jesus Himself, Galatians 3:16. Paul then declares that the Gentile believers are: "...all sons of God through the faith of Christ Jesus." Galatians 3:26. Verse 29 of Galatians adds the *coup de grâce*:

And since you are of (or, belonging to) Christ, wherefore **you are** Abraham's seed, heirs in accordance to promise. (Galatians 3:29)

In Romans 8:9, and Galatians 2:20, Paul makes it clear that the *individual* believers can and do possess a portion of the Holy Spirit, which Spirit "indwells" ενοικεω them. [Recall that Paul is the only NT author who uses this choice verb "indwell": Romans 8:11, II Corinthians 6:16, Colossians 3:16 and II Timothy 1:5].

By investigating these two OT concepts; the promise to Abraham, and the fact that Gentile believers are called "sons of God", we can find much food for thought. One resulting thought should be that the presence of God amongst the Gentiles has its roots in the text of the OT.

Another perspective, which assists with the above "thought", is a rendering of Colossians 1:27, which is often translated as, "...Christ in you...". This pronoun "you" is plural, and I perceive Christ amongst A GROUP as presented in Galatians 4:19, and Ephesians 4:13. In these passages we note that Christ AS A WHOLE is represented in the totality of all the members, and when working together, the Christ is more potent, more viable. Each member of the body should function utilizing his/her talent(s) in obedience; when each member is doing this, a very bright light shines. The individual believers need not actually be together, but each, in their place, needs to function appropriately. Such a diversified spreading out of the "Body" of Christ reflects His corporate existence here upon the earth, in/as the church.

Before I present my translation of the Greek text of Colossians 1:27, I would like to share E. W. Bullinger's:¹¹

to whom God did will (or was pleased) to make known the glorious riches of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is, Christ (as) the glorious hope, in you.

Bullinger, in the above, places the "hope" in the believer. He treats as in apposition the phrase "the glorious hope" with "Christ", both of which are in the nominative case. Though not popular this translation is grammatically possible. It does indicate that Bullinger was thinking, and was not dogmatically cemented into a narrow religious frame of reference. My translation, however would be:

to whom God had desired to make known what [is] the richness of the glory of this mystery amongst the Gentiles (nations), which is, Christ amongst you, the hope of glory. Colossians 1:27 [now the apposition is "Christ amongst you" VS "the hope of glory"]

οἷς ἠθέλησεν ὁ θεὸς γνωρίσαι τί τὸ πλοῦτος τῆς δόξης τοῦ μυστηρίου
τουτου ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, ὃ ἐστὶν Χριστὸς ἐν ὑμῖν, ἡ ἐλπίς τῆς δόξης

The actual mystery was not so much that Gentiles would or could become sons, but it seems to be the fact that God (Christ) would be in a relationship with the uncircumcised, WITHOUT the agency of Israel. As a "group" Christ was manifest amongst them, each member seen as a part. My rendering perceives the preposition ἐν with the plural dative "you" ὑμῖν, as one denoting a locative of place, not the oft rendered "sphere" as "in you". It is the Spirit Who is in EACH individual believer, which individuals form the body (church); the "Head/Christ" is not in each body member, else He would not be the Head! As a group is in view, "amongst" seems to be the author's meaning here. The Right Reverend Ellicott concurs with my perception and renders ἐν ὑμῖν as "among you".¹²

Ephesians 3:6 does not support the mystery as stating that Christ was in them, but rather that Gentiles are partakers. Verse 12 of Ephesians two, shows the opposing position. The Gentiles were not fellow-citizens of Israel, they were without hope, that has now changed, and Christ is amongst us.

Though one needs to keep in mind, that in Ephesians two, we see the national position of the nations, a position outside the promises made to God's people at that time—Israel. The few Gentiles who did become proselytes to Judaism, were no longer considered outside: Ephesians two is not discussing election, but rather a prior status of *nations*.

God (or, Christ/Holy Spirit), being amongst His peoples is commonly read in the OT. Often He was in a cloud, or the "fire" or in the Holy place within the tabernacle. His presence amongst Israel is best described as a spiritual presence, note Haggai 2:5:

As for the promise which I made you [to the remnant of Israel] when you came out of Egypt, My Spirit is abiding in your midst; do not fear! (NASB)

The LXX renders the above as: "...My Spirit stood-by in the midst of you.". Israel, in the wilderness, is called a "church" εκκλησια per the LXX in Deuteronomy 23:2, and also in Acts 7:38; and in the "millennium" as per Psalms 22:22, 25. As mentioned, this assembly of people had God in their midst in a tent, in a cloud, in the fire. Today, God dwells within each believer via the Holy Spirit, the seal. As mentioned, only Paul uses the Greek word for "indwell"; John, James, Peter, Matthew, Mark and Luke do not use this special term. II Corinthians 6:16 is especially relevant, and again Paul interprets it as referring TO the believers of today! Note:

for we are the temple [ναος] of the living God; just as God said, 'I will dwell in them and walk among them; And I will be their God, and they shall be My people'.

This text of II Corinthians 6:16 is also a quote is from Leviticus 26:11, 12 and of Ezekiel 37:27; though in the LXX our word "indwell" is not found but is added here at II Corinthians 6:16, nor is it in the Hebrew originals, instead "with" is seen in the Hebrew. Further, **only Paul**, refers to each believer today as an individual temple-part, a ναος *the Holy Place*, which part will be united (built-in) into the future great Temple of God. However He is within each believer today, via the Holy Spirit, He is therefore

"tabernacled" amongst us as well! [in the fullest sense of the word!]. In the OT, recall, the Holy Spirit would come and go, but in our dispensation, we are each permanently indwelt.

Even, the venturing forth of Paul to the heathen, is not without OT precedence. In the OT we have a fine early "type" of part of Paul's ministry. Paul's type was also "sent out" of Israel, both were given a special message to herald, both were Israelites; neither was sanctioned by the officials of the Judaistic religion, both had received a revelation from God, both experienced a "death" and a "resurrection". The prophet Jonah is the type, who went to the Ninevites, and God showed this repenting nation His mercy (for a time anyways, until they too spurned Him). The similarities between Jonah and Paul are remarkable!

Though I have mentioned that part of Paul's "mystery" was God amongst the Gentiles, without the agency of Israel; Israel did play a role, though very indirect. We see their current function revealed by Paul in this quote from Romans 11:11,12:

Therefore I say, had they [Israel] not stumbled so as to fall [as in stay down]? Might it not be! Rather by the transgression of them the salvation [has gone] to the nations [Gentiles] for the purpose of making them [Israel] jealous. But if the transgression of them [is] enrichment of the cosmos, and the defeat [or, loss] of them [is] enrichment for nations [Gentiles] how much more the fullness of them [*i.e.* when genetic Israel is reconciled]!

Because of the *failure* (its present function!) of Israel, we have received the honor today of serving God, we have been grafted onto the rootstock which supported Israel! Thus, Israel, has a role in God being amongst us. Interestingly, their present role is similar to that of their position in Jonah's day!

Indeed, we are faced with the intermingling of prophecy and mystery. Paul amply makes this assertion valid. Note Paul's quote of Isaiah 29:1, (and Deuteronomy 29:3) at Romans 11:8,

according as it is written, God gave them [Israel] a spirit of stupor, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear, unto this very day.

He makes plain, via his inspired ability to express his revelations, that the OT supports the many facets of the Pauline revelations of the mystery!

DYING FOR GENTILES [the Christ died for Gentile sins]

This aspect of the Pauline mystery, or of the Pauline revelations, is focused upon in Galatians 1:4, with Romans 4:25 supporting. It is best to bear in mind that His death was for "humans" not things, such as "sins" [Dr. Bruce Waltke, in his 1958 PhD dissertation, clarifies the use of various prepositions (περι, υπερ) in atonement passages wherein things or persons are in the genitive, as in Galatians 1:4 *et al*]*. In one sense, Christ was a "Sacrifice" to expiate sin [a "thing"?], but the benefits were for His own, humans [not a "thing!"].

Some fine Bible teachers declare that nowhere in the OT can one read of the death of the Lord Jesus Christ (or, the Messiah) as for "Gentiles". For instance, note this quote from the work of a great Biblical thinker, Mr. Cornelius Stam:¹³

Nowhere in the Old Testament Scriptures do we read that Christ would die and be raised again in three days FOR THE SINS OF THE WORLD.

Perhaps not via Mr. Stam's precise words, but the concept is, due to Paul's insights, made plain in the OT. Paul, himself, declares in simple and clear terms that—"Christ died as concerns our sin in accord with the Scriptures" [γραφας]. These "writings" are the OT! This appears in I Corinthians 15:3. Apparently the late Cornelius Stam missed the significance of Matthew 12:40! The very core of Paul's gospel has its roots in the OT, and when it later fully crystallized it was given to Paul to fully share. Paul's gospel was bit-by-bit prior manifested as per Romans 1:1,2

* presented to Dallas Theological Seminary - *The Theological Significations of 'ANTI and 'YPER in the New Testament.*

Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, a called [one], an apostle, separated unto the gospel about [or, from] God, ²which he had prior promised through his prophets in the holy scriptures,

What a powerful statement here at the beginning of Romans! As such "the gospel about [or, from] God" did beforehand, include the Gentile, apart from Israel's intentions (or, James' intentions [Galatians 2:5] of the Jerusalem church!).

Paul presents and opens up [reveals] OT passages which do include the salvation of the Gentiles (believers from amongst the nations).

Let us begin with Galatians 3:8, which is a quote of Genesis 12:3:

And the Scripture, foreseeing that the God is making righteous the nations from out of faith, prior announced good-news to the Abraham that 'All the nations [Gentiles] will be blessed in [sphere] you'.

Note the universality in Psalms 32:1,2 as quoted by Paul at Romans 4:7,8 in support of his argument:

Blessed are those whose lawless deeds have been forgiven and whose sins have been covered. Blessed [is the] man whose sin the Lord will not reckon.

Also note Romans 9:15, a quote of Exodus 33:19,

I [God] will have mercy toward whom I might have mercy, and I will have compassion toward whom I might have compassion.

Further, Romans 10:11,13, which stems from Isaiah 28:6 and Joel 2:32,

Everyone who believes in Him shall not be shamed All who might call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Also, this interesting quote at Romans 10:18 of Psalms 19:4,

But I say did they not hear? Yes indeed, 'Into all the land the voice of them had gone out, and into the extremities of the inhabited earth—the words of them'.

Is not Paul's use of the OT rather amazing! It is suggested that, since the written Word of God, is complete (τελειον - I Corinthians 13:10) that it would be a gross error to try to imitate Paul's inspired "emendations" of the OT text. Today, only fools, and deviates do so. [Note I Corinthians 4:6, in the NASB; *nota bene*, good translation is not emendation!].

Some of Paul's quotes may not read verbatim with our commercial English OT texts, as Paul usually uses the Bible which the Greek speaking world used, the LXX version [though he will occasionally follow the Hebrew]. His quotes typically match this text, at times Paul emends the text, as he himself is inspired especial to do so.

In Romans, we see Paul abundantly use the OT text to verify his revelations. This avalanche of OT quotes, in Romans, is capped with these tidbits found in Romans 15:9-12 and in verse 21.

Therefore I will give praise to Thee among the Gentiles [nations]. (from Psalms 18:49, and II Samuel 22:50)

Rejoice, O Gentiles [nations] with His people.
(from Deuteronomy 32:43)

Praise the Lord all you Gentiles [nations], And let all the peoples praise Him. (from Psalms 117:1)

There shall come the Root of Jesse, Even He Who arises to rule over the Gentiles [nations], in Him shall the Gentiles [nations] hope. (from Isaiah 11:10)

They who had no news of Him shall see, And they who have not heard shall understand. (NASB) (from Isaiah 52:15)

Paul seems to stress that the gentile nations were included in God's salvation plan. However, in the OT, the plan was for Israel to be the agent via which the gospel was to be proclaimed. In Paul's (our present) dispensation Paul's gospel is sent out to the world without the agency of Israel!

Akin to Paul's "emendation" of a few quotes, we note a similar inspired "emendation" at Matthew 2:15, wherein Matthew takes a historical passage (Hosea 11:1) and turns it into a prophecy concerning Jesus of Nazareth! As Author, God of course, is free to progressively express His written Word within His written Testaments.

Pressing on, we note that Jesus chided the two gentlemen on the road to Emmaus in Luke 24, as they did not perceive or understand the resurrection of Jesus. Shortly, thereafter at Luke 24:45, we see Jesus opening the Apostle's minds so as to UNDERSTAND the Scriptures. Paul laboriously, and via many examples, shows us the many OT verifications, he "opens our minds". "Open minds" might see more, such as insights which are connected with the non-Jewish "wise men" from the East; who came to worship the Baby Jesus, and hence had prior anticipated certain events. Perhaps these "wise men" connected Numbers 24:17, with meanings in Jonah, and joined these with Isaiah 53 and Daniel 9, by which they could perceive of a coming Savior! Perhaps.

In Hebrews ten, the writer, at 10:5, quotes Psalm 40:6. Note the words in Hebrews 10:5: "...but You did prepare a body for Me." Which words are also found in the majority of manuscripts of the LXX text. In Hebrews 10:10, this "body" is further identified as the "body of Jesus Christ" which was offered for a sacrifice. My point, however, lies in the fact that Psalms 40 nowhere mentions "Israel", we instead note the phrase: "...the great congregation [ἐκκλησια, church]; a "congregation" and a "body" are therein mentioned.

Consider too, the "goat" of Leviticus 16:10, the one which went out into the "deserts", perhaps like out in the wilderness, as Israel once was. The death of Christ, as being for the Gentiles, is clearly manifested in the universality of many of the Pauline quotes: note the general terms, such as

"those" and "all" and "man" [Romans 4:8], and the open concept of election as presented in Romans 9:15, and the "every one" of Romans 10:11, 13. These are not accidental, the applications seem to extend to all believers.

Consider this: the declaration—that via Isaiah 53 we can ONLY affirm that Christ died for Israel, would be equivalent to saying that Christ died ONLY for Paul, as this is what Galatians 2:20 says:

...the Son of God, who loved me (Paul) and delivered Himself up for me.

I am indebted to Lewis S. Chafer for the above example.¹⁴ The lesson is, to note the context. The OT context throughout, intimates the salvation of the Gentile believers, and this is not always based upon Law, or circumcision, nor deeds, but rather upon election. Before Israel existed, Abraham did believe, this faith was all he needed. And through Abraham the Gentiles (nations) were to be blessed via his Seed. Habakkuk 2:4 is clear [especially as it appears in the LXX], as quoted in Romans 1:17 and Galatians 3:11, and Hebrews 10:38. Before the birth of Israel (Jacob) God had begun provision (in His predetermined will) for the future nations in this Seed, Christ.

Jonah ventured to the Assyrians, Elijah was sent to a woman in Zarepahtah (between Sidon and Tyre), and Elisha cured Naaman, a Syrian. None of these early examples presented the will of the Jewish nation. Note that in Isaiah 42:1-10, the "Servant" is best seen as an individual, He is Light to the "nations"! This Light is salvation as is made clear at Isaiah 49:6. So, in the Old Testament, we find examples of God showing His grace to non-Jews, healing them, saving them, giving life to them. Thus, Paul effectively quotes Psalms 32:1, 2 (at Romans 4:7, 8):

Blessed are those whose lawless deeds have been forgiven and whose sins have been covered. Blessed [is the] man whose sins the lord will not reckon.

However, clear thinking will cause one to consider the concepts found in Romans 4:25. Paul seems to refocus Isaiah 53:5, 11 here!

Observe them side-by-side.

Romans 4:25

He was given for the transgression
of ours, and He was raised for the
justification of ours.

Isaiah 53:5,11

But He was traumatized for the
transgression of ours...¹¹ My
Servant will justify the many.

As Professor Everett F. Harrison has noted:¹⁵

One can hardly fail to notice the carefully balanced character of this final statement, relating as it does the death of Jesus to our sins and his resurrection to our justification. Beyond question, the statement owes much to Isaiah 53.

THE RAPTURE [Ἀρπαζω]

This aspect of the Pauline revelations is termed a "mystery" as indicated by Paul in I Corinthians 15:51. The actual word ἀρπαζω is found at I Thessalonians 4:17, and II Corinthians 12:2, 4, and it means "to seize" or "to snatch". The term "rapture" stems from the Latin translation of the original Greek term.

As is well known, Enoch of Genesis 5:21-24 and Hebrews 11:5, is an early type of this portion of the Pauline revelations. Apparently, Enoch bodily ascended, that is he was translated up to heaven, and IF he went to heaven, and not paradise, he must have been "changed" (I Corinthians 15:51) so as to be able to dwell or reside in such a realm. In Hebrews 11:5, the word for "taken up" is actually μετετεθη and it literally means: "to change or alter the placement of", or "to translate". This same word occurs at Galatians 1:6, and Hebrews 7:12, which see, and at Jude 4.

The "changing" of a person is not foreign in the OT, note the change which occurred to King Nebuchadnezzar! (Daniel 4:30), and the change

which occurred to Ahab via Jezebel, (I Kings 21:25 [LXX]), to the princes of Judah, (Hosea 5:10), of the hypocritical Israelites of Isaiah 29:14, and the change which occurred to King Saul.

Before the flood of Noah's day, Enoch was removed. *Before* the wrath of God poured down upon the earth, Enoch (like the church of today) was removed. Enoch was "snatched" prior to the judgment. Noah too, was "saved" but Noah's salvation, *in the Ark*, was earth oriented, a type of the remnant of Israel during the tribulation. Enoch's salvation was heavenward (apparently). Enoch did not enter into the realm of death. Paul quotes Isaiah 25:8 in demonstrating the "change" in I Corinthians 15:51-54. "Death" is defeated, there are some of the elect who will not taste of death! They escape via a translation, they will be snatched, and changed mid-air!

CONCLUSION

There are other aspects of the Pauline revelations which can be noted in the written word of God. I have shared some of the more basic. One might consider the implications of the construction of the tabernacle, and of Solomon's temple—and correlating these with the "Holy-place" (ναός) of this age; consider the grace of God shown to Hagar and Ishmael; the taking of the wives from Paddan-aram, and many more parallels. The command to "inspect the things that **differ**" (Philippians 1:10, **not** "things that are excellent") is beneficial to obey. It is a fact that when one has gained and meditated upon the aspects of the Pauline revelations of the mystery, the "roots" of many of the concepts are apparent in the text of the OT! Hindsight is very sharp. We now see what the prophets of old could not clearly see, they were missing parts; Paul's revelations, and John's revelation via design, fill any true deficiencies which existed in the OT prophecies.

Not only is the interpretation of the OT revolutionized since the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, but also since the manifestation of the Pauline revelations, which did first appear in his 13 epistles (51 A.D. - 68 A.D.).

Several aspects of Paul's revelations still seem to be very vague, as far as seeing them in the text of the OT. One such aspect is the heavenly position of the saints of this age, nowhere in the OT are Israelites promised a home in heaven [Enoch as a type is rather indeterminate]. The length of this age [though Daniel's seventy-seven's provide hints], and the length of Israel's rejection too, is not clearly manifested in the OT. Perhaps some diligent students will discern these, just as some wise men discerned the birth, time, and place of Christ, and His star!

I presented Pauline usages of several terms: "mystery", "revelation", "proselyte" and "kingdom" (though Paul never used the word "proselyte", he labored with them, Acts 13:43). I correlated these terms with the revelations of Paul as concerns various aspects of his revelations. I quoted many passages, as did Paul, to verify his dependence upon the text of the Old Testament to illuminate his revelations. I attempted to stimulate the readers to think about Paul's revelations in light of the OT. Paul's usage of the OT, uplifts and solidifies the notion that the entire Word of God—Old Testament and New Testament, is harmonious.

In closing, I treat "Scriptures" of II Peter 3:16 as both Old and New Testaments. At I Corinthians 15:3,4, and Romans 16:25, "Scriptures", obviously are the OT, as the New had not then been written γραφω. The "prophets" of Romans 1:2, 3:21, and Ephesians 2:20, are those of the OT. At Ephesians 3:5 "apostles and prophets" are the New Testament apostles and prophets;—a differing construction when compared to the Greek of Ephesians 2:20. A person who is sent out with authority by God, to speak a message, is not only an Apostle, but also a prophet—as one who speaks forth God's Word; Paul is thus a prophet, I suggest considering him as one similar to those of Amos 3:7!



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