

MacArthur Daily Bible

Reading for Today:

- Isaiah 49:1–50:11
- Psalm 112:1-4
- Proverbs 26:13-15
- Ephesians 1:1-23

Notes:

Isaiah 49:8 acceptable time...day of salvation. The Messiah is represented as asking for the grace of God to be given to sinners. God gives His favorable answer in a time of grace (61:1) when salvation's day comes to the world (Gal. 4:4, 5; Heb. 4:7). At His appointed time in the future, the Lord will, by His Servant, accomplish the final deliverance of Israel. Paul applied these words to his ministry of proclaiming the gospel of God's grace to all people (2 Cor. 6:2). **a covenant to the people.** When the Lord saves and regathers Israel, they will return to the land, to which Joshua brought their ancestors after their exit from Egypt, now restored and glorious (44:26; Josh. 13:1–8).

Isaiah 50:6 My back...My cheeks...My face. The Servant remained obedient though provoked to rebel by excessively vile treatment. Jesus fulfilled this prophecy by remaining submissive to the Father's will (Matt. 26:67; 27:26, 30; Mark 14:65; 15:19; Luke 22:63; John 18:22).

Isaiah 50:7 set My face like a flint. So sure was He of the Lord God's help that He resolutely determined to remain unswayed by whatever hardship might await Him (Ezek. 3:8, 9). Jesus demonstrated this determination in setting His face to go to Jerusalem to be crucified (Luke 9:51).

Ephesians 1:13, 14 sealed with the Holy Spirit. God's own Spirit comes to indwell the believer and secures and preserves his eternal salvation. The sealing of which Paul speaks refers to an official mark of identification placed on a letter, contract, or other document. That document was thereby officially under the authority of the person whose stamp was on the seal. Four primary truths are signified by the seal: 1) security (Dan. 6:17; Matt. 27:62–66); 2) authenticity (1 Kin. 21:6–16); 3) ownership (Jer. 32:10); and 4) authority (Esth. 8:8–12). The Holy Spirit is given by God as His pledge of the believer's future inheritance in glory (2 Cor. 1:21).

Ephesians 1:19, 20 exceeding greatness of His power. God's great power, that very power which raised Jesus from the dead and lifted Him by ascension back to glory to take His seat at God's right hand, is given to every believer at the time of salvation and is always available (Acts 1:8; Col. 1:29). Paul therefore did not pray that God's power be given to believers but that they be aware of the power they already possessed in Christ and use it (3:20).

Paul actually uses the word “mystery” six times in this letter (1:9; 3:3, 4, 9; 5:32; 6:19). By comparison, the word appears twice in Romans, once in 1 Corinthians, four times in Colossians, once in 1 Timothy, and nowhere else. Contrary to our use of “mystery” as a series of clues to be figured out, Paul’s use of the word points to mystery as a heretofore unrevealed truth that has been made clear. The word “mystery” preserves the sense that the revealed truth has such awesome implications that it continues to amaze and humble those who accept it.

Ephesians introduces various aspects of the “mystery.” Paul explained his use of the word in 3:4–6 by saying, “that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel.” When the unsearchable riches of Christ are preached among the Gentiles, one result is an understanding of the “fellowship of the mystery” (3:9). And when God’s plan for human marriage is used to explain the unique relationship between Christ and His bride, the church, Paul reminded his readers that the real subject is a great mystery (5:32). And finally, Paul asked the Ephesians to pray for him that he would be able “boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel” (6:19). The gospel is not mysterious because it is hard to understand. It is mysterious because it is unexpected, unmerited, and free. Though Paul didn’t use the word in this passage, his summary of the mystery for the Ephesians can be found in 2:8,9: “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.”

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