

**EPHESIANS – THE MYSTERY OF GOD’S CHURCH –
OUR IDENTITY, OUR WALK, OUR WARFARE
PROGRAM 21 (#912201)
WEEK 5 (912345)
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**SERIES: Ephesians – The Mystery Of God’s Church –
Our Identity, Our Walk, Our Warfare**

TITLE: Program 21 – You Are No Longer Without God Or Without Hope

MONDAY

OPEN

Can you imagine my friend being cut off from God, not having hope, not having a knowledge of God, just living life as if there is no God as if there is no future, just grabbing for today and clutching what you can and hoping that tomorrow could be better. O Beloved to know the glorious truth of the mystery of Jesus Christ is to know hope. It’s to know God and we’ll talk about it today.

PART ONE

I am so thankful that you Precious One have chosen to study the book of Ephesians with us to discover the hope that is ours as Gentiles as “Goyim,” as the Jews would say, the hope that is ours because we have latched on to the promise, the promise of the Messiah. This is what we want to look at as

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we study Ephesians chapter 2 and this last segment of this chapter. From chapter 2 verse 1 to 10 is one sentence and now we're in the middle of another. And what he says is this speaking to the Gentiles in verse 12. He says **“Remember [at that time you were] separate from Christ, [you were] excluded from the commonwealth of Israel... [you were] strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.”** (Ephesians 2:12) This was your status. Now remember one of the key words that we are marking is the word “formerly” as we look at Ephesians chapter 2. And I had you in our other programs draw a straight line which we had as a time line for what God was doing. But now I just want you to draw a straight line and I want you to put the cross on that straight line. Make it very very big. Then on the straight line to the left of the cross I want you to put BC. And then after the cross I want you to put AD. This is the way that we count the years, BC, before Christ or the Jews will say BCE, “Before the Common Era,” because they do not believe that Jesus is the Christ, but some do. All right then AD is for the year of our Lord, “Anno Domini,” the year of our Lord. Well when you look at the Gentiles and this is who God is writing to through the apostle Paul, the Gentiles that are living at Ephesus. He wants them to see what they were formerly before they came to believe in Jesus Christ, before God actually brought them into His family, before God adopted them. Before God adopted them they were part of the mass of mankind that would be categorized by God into two categories, Jews and Gentiles. Now before the cross as you look at your page on the left hand side of the cross you want to write formerly and you want to make a list of what they were formerly. Well we just read in verse 12 that they were **“...separate from Christ...,”** (Ephesians 2:12b) that they were **“...excluded from the commonwealth of Israel...”** And because they were **“...excluded from the commonwealth of Israel...,”** (2:12c) and because they were **“...strangers to the covenants of promise...,”** (2:12d) they have no hope. He says **“...having no hope....”** (2:12e) It means day

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after day after day they're having no hope and they are **"...without God in the world."** (2:12f) You know so many times I love a good movie. And I'm the kind of woman, I mean you can analyze me later, but I love war movies. I learn so much about obedience and a commander and strategies and leadership by watching war movies. I guess there's a warrior inside of this woman. But anyway I love war movies. And when I look at those war movies like "A Bridge Too Far" and I saw them trying to cross that river because that whole operation Market Garden, which was a true story, was a failure because people broke the principles of warfare. They thought that they could break those laws and get away with it and everybody didn't do what they were supposed to do. One of the things that they were ah doing was they were supporting Montgomery's ego and let him take over, I mean it was a disaster. And the British insisted on going when things were not right. But I'm watching that movie and I'm thinking, what are they going to do? They don't know God. And so many times I think they don't know God. They don't know where to run. They don't know who to call on. Well this was the state of all mankind apart from the Jews. The Jews knew where to run. The Jews knew what to do with their sins. The Jews had, now listen, **"...the covenants of promise...."** (Ephesians 2:12d) Now what were the covenants of promise? Well first of all a covenant is a solemn binding agreement. The word "beriyth" means a solemn binding agreement made, now watch, by passing through pieces of flesh. And what you see in Genesis chapter 15 is you see God making a covenant with Abraham, 'cause Abraham says ["How am I going to know that I'm going to have a son? How am I going to know that we're going to have a land?"] And so God says "You get these animals. You take the animals you cut them down the middle so you have one half of the animal on this side and one half of the animal on this side, so you have half a head and two legs on this side and a tail on one side or the other and the same on the other."] (Paraphrased, Genesis 15) You lay them down on the ground and what you have is you have a wall of

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blood from all this killing of this animal and then Abraham goes into a deep sleep. God comes down in a smoking oven and a flaming torch and God passes between the pieces. It's a solemn binding agreement made by passing through pieces of flesh. And that day there were only two that passed through the pieces, the smoking oven and the flaming torch and then the pieces. I believe you have a picture of the Trinity because the new covenant is a covenant in Jesus' blood. And Jesus is the Lamb of God that is slain. Jesus is the animal that is separated because in Hebrews 10 it says when it's talking about the new covenant, then we come to God through the rent veil of the flesh of the Son of God. You remember when Jesus Christ died on the cross and the veil was torn in two from top to bottom, it was a picture of the rent veil of the flesh of the Son of God. Picture that veil being torn in two and then God says in Hebrews, ["Now we come to God through the rent veil of the flesh of the Son of God."] (Paraphrased, Hebrews 10:20) So a covenant is a solemn binding agreement made by passing through pieces of flesh. Well that first covenant was the promise of a seed. That seed, and I'm going to show you this in just a minute in the Scriptures, but that seed was Jesus Christ. And Galatians tells us that the seed was Christ. So on the day that God made a covenant with Abraham, Abraham sat on the sidelines. And you have this picture of the sacrifice which I believe is a picture of the sacrifice of the seed of Jesus Christ. And then you have two passing between the pieces, the smoking oven and the flaming torch. I believe that's a picture of the Father and the Spirit, the three, the triune God involved in covenant. And what you see is on that day God made a covenant with Abraham, a solemn binding agreement. Remember when Jesus hung on the cross and remember the Bible is talking about the rent veil of the flesh of the Son of God. When Jesus is hanging on the cross what does He cry? **"Eli, Eli... My God, My God why hast Thou forsaken Me?" (Matthew 27:46, KJV)** When Jesus hung on that cross He was forsaken by God the Father. He was forsaken by God the Spirit and He was all alone. All of this is wrapped up in

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these covenants of promise. Covenant: a solemn binding agreement made by passing through pieces of flesh. So let’s look at these covenants. And what I want to do as I’ve just explained to you Genesis, chapter 15 and you can read Genesis 15 later. But I want us to go to Genesis chapter 12 where God begins this covenant with Abraham. Now what is Abraham? Abraham is a Gentile, because before Abraham, and I want you to understand this, before Abraham all there were in the world was Gentiles. All there were were the nations. The nations came from Shem, Ham, and Japheth. And it says, [“from Shem, Ham and Japheth, the sons of Noah, all the earth was populated.”] (Paraphrased, Genesis 10:1) But God wanted a people of His own possession as we saw in our last program. God wanted a people that would be His people through whom He could bring the seed, through whom He could bring the promise of the One that would crush the serpents’ head, the promise that was made to Eve and Adam in the Garden of Eden. And so what we have is we have the promise of the Seed, the promise of the Christ, the promise of the Messiah, the promise of the anointed One. We have that coming through Abraham’s seed. Now where does Abraham come from? Well he comes from the line of Shem. And so what God does is God calls Abraham. **“Now the Lord said to [Abraham], ‘Go forth from your country... from your relatives... from your father’s house, to the land...I will show you; and I will make you....’** what? (Genesis 12:1-2a) We’ll talk about it right after the break.

PART TWO

Welcome back my friend. Let’s look at these **“...covenants of promise....”** (Ephesians 2:12d) that the Gentiles were strangers to, that they were separated from, these covenants of promise. And because they were separated from them they were without hope, because they were without God. You see it was the covenants of promise that brought salvation not

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only to the Jews, but would bring salvation to the Gentiles, which is what Ephesians is all about. What happens when salvation comes to the Gentiles? And God’s revealing to us the most incredible and awesome mystery. And we’re going to see that word used a lot in a very significant way in Ephesians chapter 3 when we get there. But what God is doing is He’s leading up to it and He’s building precept upon precept. He’s teaching us one truth after another. Well remember now in Ephesians he says you were **“...strangers to the covenants of promise....” (Ephesians 2:12d)** The first covenant of promise that was given after of course the promise of a Messiah in Genesis chapter 3, but the first covenant of promise was given to Abraham when He says to Abraham, Genesis chapter 12 verse 2, **“...I will make you a great nation, and I [God] will bless you [Abraham]....” (Genesis 12:2a)** And his name was Abram at that point. It was changed to Abraham in Genesis 17. **“And make your name great and so you [will] be a blessing. ...I will bless those who bless you....”** Remember that. **“...And the one who curses you I will curse....” (12:2-3a)** Now what he’s saying is you’re going to be My man. And if anybody touches My man and does not bless him but curses him I want you to know I’m going to curse them because they have cursed you, because I have blessed you. And He goes on to say, **“...And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you...,”** now watch, **“...all the families of the earth will be blessed.” (12:3b)** Now when He said, **“...in you all the families of the earth would be blessed,”** He is including all the families of the earth, not just this nation that God is going to make from Abraham but the Gentiles. So that eventually there will be in the body of Jesus Christ, there will be in the church men from every tribe and every tongue and every nation on the face of this earth. But until this point, until Christ comes they are strangers to the covenants of promise. Now I want to show you three covenants of promise. So on your paper where you have the cross at the top of the cross I want you to write the “Abrahamic Covenant,” okay. So we’re going to put that at the top because

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what God has just told Abraham that He’s going to make Abraham a nation, but in Abraham all the nations of the earth are going to be blessed. Well when we draw the cross let’s put Jesus on the cross. So let’s put a stick figure hanging on that cross. Now watch, the Abrahamic Covenant promises a seed and the Abrahamic Covenant promises to Israel a land, a land that He gives, a special piece of territory. It’s the land of Israel. It’s never called Palestine in the Bible. It is the land of Israel and it was given as a permanent possession to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and their descendants forever. Now we don’t have time to look at that, but I want you to see in Genesis chapter 15 this promise of the seed. In Genesis chapter 15 this is what it says. God takes Abraham outside and He says in verse 5 “...**Now look toward the heavens, and count the stars if you are able....**” Well no man can count them. He says, “...**if you are able to count them. And He [God] said to him [Abram] ‘So shall your [seed] be, [so shall your seed be].’**” Now the New American Standard translates it as “descendants,” but it’s literally “seed” singular. Verse 6: “**Then he [Abram] believed in the Lord; and He [God] reckoned it to him [Abram] as righteousness.**” Do you know that this is the day that Abraham was saved? And Romans chapter 4 tells you that Abraham was saved by faith. Abraham was saved before circumcision ever came into existence. That happens in Genesis 17. Abraham was saved before the Law because they don’t even have the Law yet. Moses hasn’t come and they haven’t gone to Mount Sinai to get the Law. So Abraham was saved by faith. Now the book that interprets this and explains it is Galatians chapter 3. So I want you to go to Galatians chapter 3. And in the light of all that I’ve read you listen to this very carefully. In Galatians chapter 3 it says in verse 6 “**Even so Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.**” (Galatians 3:6) Reckoned to him means it was put on the credit side of the ledger. Abraham believed by faith and God put righteousness to his account on the credit side of the ledger. And he quotes Genesis chapter 15 here. “**Therefore be sure ... that those who are of**

faith who are the sons of Abraham. The Scripture, foreseeing...,” now watch carefully, **“...that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel...,”** the good news, **“...beforehand to Abraham saying, ‘[In you shall all the nations of the earth be blessed].’” (Galatians 3:7-8)** He just quoted Genesis chapter 12 that we just read. Now did the Gentiles know this? No. Did they understand it? No. Did the Jews know this? Did the Jews understand that? No. But it was written and it was going to come to pass. So when He makes the Abrahamic Covenant it is a covenant that promises the seed and that seed is Christ. You say, wait a minute, wait a minute. You’ve got to show me that in the Word. I am so proud of you because that’s what I want you to know. That’s what I want you to understand. So look at Galatians chapter 3. And in Galatians chapter 3 it says in verse 16 **“Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed...,”** singular. **“...He does not say ‘And to seeds’ ...referring to many, but rather to one, ‘And to your seed,’ [and] that is Christ.”** So this seed is Christ. Beloved this is the covenant of promise. And this is what the Gentiles were separate from. This is what the Gentiles were excluded from. And because the Gentiles were separated from this and because the Gentiles were excluded from this and excluded from this commonwealth of Israel they had no hope and they were without God. But when the fullness of time came God sent the Seed. We’ll look at it later.