

**Ephesians 3:6—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,**

Paul, in Ephesians 2, began proving that born-again Jews and Gentiles are one in Christ. He expands this thought in Ephesians 3:6.

Unbelieving Jews had no quarrel with Gentiles being saved. God promised as early as Genesis 12:3 that all nations would be blessed through Abraham. God expanded this thought in Genesis 22:17-18, 26:4, and 28:14, which Paul references in Galatians 3:8. The Jews realized that Gentiles could be saved (Psalm 22:27; Isaiah 11:10; 42:1, 6; 49:6; 60:1-3; Jeremiah 3:17; Daniel 7:14; Hosea 2:23; Joel 2:28), and that this salvation would come through the Messiah. But the unbelieving Jews were not waiting for a crucified Messiah Who would unite believing Jews and Gentiles into one body, but for a Messiah Who would eliminate Roman oppression. Consequently, for Paul to say that believing Jews and Gentiles become one in Christ (Ephesians 2:11-22), with no racial distinction (Galatians 3:28), was infuriating to his unbelieving Jewish critics.

Paul's gospel (which taught that believing "*Gentiles are fellow heirs*" with believing Jews—Ephesians 3:6) greatly offended his unbelieving Jewish opponents who perceived the Hebrew people as far superior to Gentiles. Acts 22:1-22 verifies the unbelieving Jews' hatred of Paul's message. Note Paul's words to the believing Gentiles at Galatia:

*And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise. (Galatians 3:29)*

Paul even taught in Romans 8:17 that Jewish and Gentile New Testament believers are "*fellow heirs with Christ*" (Romans 8:17). He also taught that they are made part of Christ's body (Ephesians 3:6), for through the Holy Spirit both Jews and Gentiles (during the church age) are placed into Jesus (1Corinthians 12:12-13) after repenting and believing while depraved. Once in Him, they receive His kind of life, eternal life. In fact, He becomes their "*life*" (Colossians 3:4). By receiving this life in the same body, Christ's body, no racial distinction exists between believing Jews and Gentiles.

Gentile believers are also "*fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus*" (Ephesians 3:6). Paul isn't communicating that believing Gentiles are fellow partakers of promises given to the nation of Israel alone (the Old Testament is inundated with such promises). For example, God promised Israel (the nation) the territory from "*the river of Egypt*" to "*the river Euphrates*" (Genesis 15:18). This promise, to be fulfilled during the Millennium (the one-thousand-year reign of Christ on earth), was made to the Jews—not to the Gentiles. Ephesians 3:6, on the other hand, references what Gentile believers (along with Jewish believers) receive through the Person of Christ during the church age. "*The promise in Christ Jesus*" (Ephesians 3:6) was: The Father would send His Son to die for sinful mankind and raise Him from the dead (Christ's death was prophesied as early as Genesis 3:15). As a result, Jesus inhabits both Jewish and Gentile saints during the church age (Galatians 2:20). In fact: Christ is their "*life*" (Colossians 3:4), God works "*all things*" for their good (Romans 8:28), they have been blessed "*with every spiritual blessing...in Christ*" (Ephesians 1:3), and they will never be condemned by God (Romans 8:1). Paul is saying that believing Gentiles enter into promises of God not distinctly related to the physical Jewish nation.

Paul's words in Ephesians 3:6 are fulfilled "*through the gospel,*" for "*through the gospel*" believing Jews and Gentiles become "*fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow*

*partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus.”*

*Conclusion:* That Jesus Christ possesses a body (made up of believing Jews and Gentiles during the church age) through which to express Himself to the universe is the wonder of God’s “mystery” (Ephesians 3:3-4), for the mystery is “Christ Himself” (Colossians 2:2)—in Whom both Jewish and Gentile New Testament believers gain “every spiritual blessing” (Colossians 2:3; Ephesians 1:3). The mystery is also Christ’s dwelling in Jewish and Gentile church saints as the means by which God’s “glory” is manifested (Colossians 1:26-27; Galatians 2:20). Therefore, the mystery is not that Gentiles can be saved, but that born again Jews and Gentiles become one in Christ with no racial distinction:

*There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. (Galatians 3:28).*