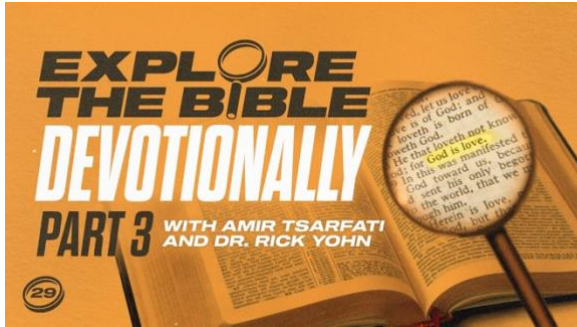




Amir Tsarfati
Explore the Bible

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=86pBwZv24To>
Devotionally Part III



AMIR: Shalom, everyone. I'm Amir Tsarfati, and welcome back to *Explore the Bible* with Dr. Rick Yohn. I'm Amir Tsarfati from CONNECT here in the Jezreel Valley, and Dr. Rick Yohn is from Parker, Colorado. Shalom. Dr. Rick, how are you,

my friend?

RICK: Shalom, Amir. I'm doing very, very well, and I'm just so excited about what we're going to look at today.

AMIR: Yes, in the last two programs, we delved into John chapter 1, in fact, the entire chapter, and we began looking into Scriptures from a devotional perspective: how to study the Bible devotionally. And remind our viewers today, what is it to study the Bible devotionally? I mean, you always talk about observation, interpretation, correlation, and application, but tell us, what is it that the devotional part of studying the Bible, where is the emphasis there?

RICK: Well, the emphasis, you're going into their world and bringing truth into your world. You are looking at the Scriptures, and you are asking the question, "Lord, what are You trying to tell me? What is it that I need to see as I read the Scriptures today? I want Your Holy Spirit to make it known to me, open my eyes to things that I have not yet seen, and help me to see how that works in my life." But those questions come after we have actually observed the Scriptures, asking, "What do I see?" and then interpreted the Scriptures, "What does that mean?" and then ask the question, "How does this passage relate to other passages of Scripture?" And that is why you have

those references maybe in the center of your Bible, or on the sides of your Bible. I encourage you to really go to those references because that will give you a much better understanding of the whole. It brings in other passages of Scripture with the one that you are reading, and that gives you a much better understanding of what God is saying throughout His whole counsel, not just this passage, but the whole counsel of God. And then applying that truth, How does this affect me? How does this affect my daily life? How does it affect my relationship with other people? How does it affect me at work? How does it affect me at school? How does it affect me in my relationships with my friends and those who are not my friends? So these are the questions that come to our minds as we are applying the Scriptures in a devotional way to our own personal lives.

AMIR: Yeah, yes. And so the last two programs, we looked into the Gospel of John, chapter 1. John the Beloved has his own style of writing. He was an eyewitness to the ministry of Jesus on earth. He was there with Him. He was one of the 12 disciples, of course. Today, you're taking us somewhere else. Where are you taking us to?

RICK: Yes, we're going to one of the Epistles, the book of Ephesians, and what a fantastic book this is. And I'll tell you, Paul's style and John's style are two different kinds of writing style. I mean, when you think of John, well, he was a follower of Christ, a disciple of Christ. He lived with Christ for three-plus years. And Paul only met Christ on the road to Damascus but his style of writing is almost like a lawyer. He knows how to defend his case. And we're going to see this as we get into this passage of Scripture. He also... you would think...

AMIR: Are you talking about a decent lawyer? [Both laughing]

RICK: Yes, the style of a lawyer. He states his case, and then he proves his case, point by point by point by point. And also with the apostle Paul, you'll find that he begins a sentence, and then he goes off-trail for a period of time, and then he comes back to what he was saying in the first

place. So we're going to see this in the book of Ephesians, and I'd like us to look at chapter 3. Because one of the things you want to do when you are reading Scripture is look at the context. The context means everything before the passage you are reading. And it's interesting as we look at this passage of Scripture, he starts out, "For this reason..." So apparently he has said something before, and then he wants to back up what it is he has just said.

AMIR: There you go.

RICK: And then he sort of goes off-trail...

AMIR: Do you want me to read from chapter 3?

RICK: Correct. Start reading, and we'll see how this comes alive.

AMIR: Okay, all right, chapter 3. **"¹ For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles— ² if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you, ³ how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, ⁴ by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), ⁵ which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets: ⁶ that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel, of which I became a minister according to the gift ⁷ of the grace of God given to me by the effective working of His power. ⁸ To me,..."** (Ephesians 3:1–8) Do you want me to continue?

RICK: Yeah.

AMIR: Okay, **"⁸ To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, ⁹ and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden**

in God who created all things through Jesus Christ; ¹⁰ to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, ¹¹ according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord, ¹² in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him. ¹³ Therefore I ask that you do not lose heart at my tribulations for you, which is your glory. ¹⁴ For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁵ from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, ¹⁶ that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, ¹⁷ that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸ may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height—¹⁹ to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. ²⁰ Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, ²¹ to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.” (Ephesians 3:8–21)

RICK: What a powerful chapter...

AMIR: ... It's a classic...

RICK: ...when you think of the theology that is in this passage of Scripture. But again, before we begin to interpret this passage, I want our viewers to underline “For this reason,” chapter 3 verse 1, “For this reason,” and then chapter 3 and verse 14, “For this reason.” And then go back to chapter 1 of the Ephesians, and in verse 15, “For this reason,” (NIV). That’s why I said he’s a lawyer. “For this reason, da-da-da-da. For this reason, da-da-da-da. And for this reason, da-da-da-da.” So when you read the epistles of Paul, recognize his style, and he is setting up certain cases, and then he proves these cases. And in chapter 3, he is talking about his ministry to the Gentiles,

and this idea of bringing Jew and Gentile together. But in order to appreciate the bringing Jew and Gentile together, we have to realize what their condition is. So let's look at chapter 2, and verse 11, chapter 2, and verse 11, he says, **"¹¹ Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called 'uncircumcised' by those who call themselves 'the circumcision' (which is done in the body by human hands)—¹² remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world."** (Ephesians 2:11-12 NIV) What a terrible situation we were in. "But now,..."

AMIR: "But now," yeah. You know...

RICK: But now...

AMIR: You know what it reminds me, by the way, before you continue, in Acts chapter 17, when Paul was in the middle of Athens, he said this to the people about the "Unknown God." In verse 30, **"³⁰ Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, ³¹ because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained..."** (Acts 17:30-31) So, "but now," you see, this is it, history changed, the world changed, everything changed. Parker, Colorado was added to the map that day. [Laughter] It's no longer just Galilee, it's also Parker, and it's also Minnesota, and it's also California, and it's Texas, and it's Greece, and it's Western Europe, and it's Australia and New Zealand, and it's Africa, and it's Russia, and it's China, and it's Japan, and the Philippines, and everywhere, He's calling all men *everywhere* to repent, but now, exactly. That is a moment in history that all has changed forever, and that's the theme of this chapter.

RICK: Yeah, when you think that the truth was confined to one group of people, one group of people, and now, boom, that's why Jesus says, "Go into all the world, Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria,

and to the end of the world.” And then that wall of hostility of Jew and Gentile has been dealt with, has been set aside. And Paul says “¹⁵ ... **His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus bringing peace** ¹⁶ **and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross by which he put to death their hostility.** ¹⁷ **He came and preached peace...**” (Ephesians 2:15-17 NIV) “¹⁹ **Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God’s people and also members of his household,** ²⁰ **built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.** ²¹ **In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord.** ²² **And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives...**” (Ephesians 2:19-22 NIV)

We are all part of a tabernacle or of a temple. God always has wanted to be with His people, with His creation, and then man separates from God. And so God reveals Himself to Moses and He says to Moses, “Make a tabernacle. I want to dwell with My people.” And then later, “Make a temple. I want to dwell with My people.” And now today, He gives us His Holy Spirit and He says, “Now I am dwelling with My people.” But there is this hostility. And again, I want our viewers to realize that when you read a passage like chapter 3 of Ephesians, there are words there that are probably unfamiliar. Now, in the King James and the New King James, we have the word “dispensation.”

AMIR: Correct. Dispensation and mystery.

RICK: Yeah. But in my translation here, the NIV, it’s “administration.” So what is a dispensation? Because we read about dispensationalism, and then we read about Reformed Theology, and pretty soon people get all mixed up. What are we talking about, dispensation? What is a dispensation?

AMIR: Well, obviously, this is...

RICK: It's a Greek word *oikonomian* and it just means household, managing a household. And when you were, you and your wife first got married, well, you had no children, and so you managed your household in a certain way. No kids, you know? When we want to go somewhere, we just go somewhere. And then, the first child came along, and here, life begins to change, and you manage your household differently. And then the second child comes, and now you're managing it even more differently than you did earlier. And then the children grow up, they get married, they go away, and guess what? You're back to where you started, and you're managing your household in another way.

Well, when we look at the Scriptures, we find that God managed His household in different ways at different times. I mean, there was a time before we ever got the Law. Now, Moses, I mean, Abraham, there was no Law, written Law at that time. And so, before the Law and after the Law, God's managing His people in different ways.

And then we have the Old Testament, and we have the New Testament. And so, in the Old Testament, you have Law, and in the New Testament, we see this grace. Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. And so, God is managing in a different way today than He did before.

And then we know that there's going to be a time when Christ is going to reign on this earth and is going to manage the earth differently than He is doing now. So, these are just different ways that God manages His household, His people. And then you have this word "mystery." Amir, tell us about a mystery. What is a mystery? Is it something that's spooky?

AMIR: No, mystery is actually the Greek word *mysterion* is basically things that were not revealed to people yet. It's things that God knows, but He hasn't yet... There's a secret and there is a mystery. And I think mystery is something that people may have seen, but never understood

fully. They never really truly understood what it means until they got to the point where it was revealed to them.

So this... I guess the mystery that we see here is that... You know, because let's face it, throughout history, there were always Gentiles that believed in the God of Israel and kind of joined the Jewish people, and wanted to be part of the nation of Israel because they believed in the God of Israel. But it was never fully understood by the people of Israel that... the mystery is that the Messiah is there not just to come to Israel, but actually to bring the Gentiles also into the family of God. And that's the mystery of the Messiah. That's the one thing they never could see. And by the way, it's very interesting because in the past programs, we talked about John chapter 1 and John [the Baptist] saw Jesus and said that the Lamb of God takes away the sins of the *world*. It was not about Israel only. So from the get-go, the appearance of the Messiah was already there and then known to be something that is on a global scale, not just for Israel.

And the Jewish people up until today, when they think about Messiah, they don't think about the whole world. They think about themselves. They think about the temple, Jerusalem. They think about all of these things. But God says this is, as we just read, "but now," something *big* changed, something *big* happened and "but now." Paul, as a Jew, could stand in the heart of Athens and tell all these pagans, "But now, He calls all men everywhere to repent." That's it. It's no longer just Israel. Now redemption and salvation are available to all people, the same way. And that's the mystery. That's the mystery that was not known before and now is revealed. And I think it's beautiful.

RICK: And it's the working of His power. Only God can bring hostility... two groups of people very hostile to one another, bring them together. And He's the same God that can bring friends who, people used to be friends, and now they're separated because of something, that He can bring

them back together. He can bring a husband and wife back together. He can bring children back together with their parents. And He is the God who has the power to bring, to break down the wall of hostility. And believe me, there's a lot of hostility in the world today, in all areas of life. People are just hostile to one another. It's hard to share your belief with some people because immediately they want to take sides and all of a sudden you have this hostility, and it's only the power of the Holy Spirit that will bring those who are hostile together.

But notice, he says in chapter 3 and verse 1, **“¹ For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles— ² Surely you have heard about the administration of God's grace that was given to me...”** (Ephesians 3:1–2 NIV) He goes from “For this reason,” and then he sort of goes off the trail, but he brings it back again in verse 14, **“¹⁴ For this reason I kneel before the Father,...”** So what he was going to say in chapter 3 and verse 1, **“¹⁴ For this reason I kneel before the Father,...”** (Ephesians 3:14) but he says, wait a minute, I haven't told you about this very important situation. **“¹ For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles— ² Surely you have heard about the administration of God's grace that was given to me for you, ³ that is, the mystery made known to me by revelation,...”** Paul didn't make this up. He says, What I am about to tell you has been given to me by revelation. **“³ ...as I have already written briefly. ⁴ In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, ⁵ which was not made known to people in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God's holy apostles and prophets. ⁶ This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together...”** (Ephesians 3:1-6 NIV)

AMIR: Yeah, amazing.

RICK: Now Amir, we talk a lot about the book of Romans and how God has brought Jew and Gentile together. Why don't you elaborate a little bit on that, just what this whole idea of bringing us together into the vine.

AMIR: Now, it's very interesting because when you read about the book of Romans, you see that Paul spoke with a great conviction that, (a) God is not done with the Jewish people, (b) they have a great role in God's plan, and (c) the fact that Gentiles were grafted in does not mean that God is done with Israel, it means that God could bring back those chopped branches, and it would be easier for those natural branches of that olive tree to be back grafted into again. And he even gives us this amazing timeline. He says, "blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And then, so all Israel will be saved." (Reference: Romans 11:25) So he's not only telling us if it's going to happen, he says it is going to happen, Israel will get saved, and I'm going to tell you when it's going to happen. But then he brings us back to the reality of the first century, which is also the reality of today, "concerning the gospel they might be your enemies right now, but concerning the election they are beloved for the sake of the fathers. For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable." (Reference: Romans 11:28-29)

So Paul is on one hand explaining that salvation is not by affiliation. You cannot be born "born-again," on one hand he's saying that. But on the other hand, he's saying, "You have not replaced Israel." In other words, God is not done with them. And I think that throughout all of his messages, he's not saying Jesus is bringing one instead of the other. But he's saying he's bringing one next to and making them one new man. He's talking about reconciliation between the two. He's talking about the wall of separation falling down. That doesn't seem to me as if he's talking about one is replacing the other and canceling the other. And I think that Paul himself was very,

very careful as an apostle to the Gentiles never to fall into the trap of not acknowledging the plan of God for Israel.

And so the book of Romans mentioned Israel so many times from the very first chapter all the way to the very last one. And even when you look at the Acts of the Apostles at the very last chapter of the book of Acts when Paul summons the leaders of the Jewish people in Rome to his house arrest, he says, “Look, not that I had anything of which to accuse my nation.” He said, “For this reason therefore I have called for you,...” And he says, I want to tell you it’s “for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain.” In other words, “I’m bound in chains because somebody complained about me and somebody asked Caesar that I will stand in trial. And now look at me, but it’s not because I am no longer a Jew, I have done nothing against my nation, our people,” he says, “our nation.” But then he says, “the hope of Israel is Yeshua, and that’s why I’m bound in these chains.” And so he made sure that not only it’s the hope of the whole world, He is still the hope of Israel.

RICK: Amen. And something that came to my mind, and I’m still amazed at it. In verse 10, ¹⁰**His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms,” (Ephesians 3:10 NIV)** It’s interesting that we sort of think that everybody in heaven knows everything.

AMIR: Nope.

RICK: And yet they are learning as they were watching, looking down from heaven. I mean, these angels must be using their wings to scratch their heads, wondering, “What is He doing now?” This is just something that was revealed at that time.

AMIR: And we have to remember, in heavens you have these authorities, but you also have principalities and powers and dark powers also in the heavenlies. For you’re not fighting against

flesh and blood, but against power and principalities in the heavenly places also. So whether it's evil forces or godly forces, they are learning a lot from what's going on, and from what God is doing here on earth through the church. I think it's phenomenal.

RICK: Only God is omniscient, only He knows all things. And just as we are living here, this side of heaven, those in the heavenly realms are also learning as, in fact, the Bible says even the angels desire to look, and the prophets of old desire to look as to what, "Lord, what are you doing, what does all this mean?" And I can just imagine, as the prophets were writing, they're thinking, "I know I'm writing this, but what in the world, how is this going to be fulfilled? What's this going to look like?" And because of everything, because of this wonderful theology in chapter 3 of bringing the Jew and the Gentile together, that's why Paul says in verse 14, **"¹⁴ For this reason..."** because of this wonderful truth that I've just shared with you, **"¹⁴ ...I kneel before the Father, ¹⁵ from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name."** (Ephesians 3:14–15) And now look at his prayer, I mean Paul's prayer, you just have to decipher.

AMIR: Yeah. But you know, Dr. Rick, I just wanted to read from **"¹⁰ Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, ¹¹ searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ..."** (1 Peter 1:10-11), So we see that all of them were searching, and looking, and trying to find, and it was all revealed to us. And now, I mean, that's what he says here, he says, **"¹² To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you..."** (1 Peter 1:12) So, I mean, it's quite amazing that so many good people, godly people, biblical figures were busy trying to find things that we can see, believe, and understand by the help of the Holy Spirit so easily, and it's... What a privilege.

RICK: We just have so much more knowledge today than those who wrote the Scriptures. And so he is praying “¹⁶... that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, ¹⁷ so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, ¹⁸ may have power, together with all the Lord’s holy people, to grasp...” He wants us to grasp something, and He wants us to grasp “¹⁸...how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ,...” (Ephesians 3:16-18 NIV)

AMIR: I want you to hold that thought, Dr. Rick, hold that thought because [RICK: Okay.] we’ve come to the end of our program for today. [RICK: Oh wow.] And this is exactly where... I know, time is flying, I know, but this is where we’re going to pick up next time in order to... I mean, this is so much to go through, and it’s so good that I don’t want to cut it short just because of time. I want us to have one more program and delve through the rest of this thing, and to see much more that we can actually extract from this wonderful portion of Scripture.

Thank you, Dr. Rick, for this amazing time in Ephesians. And again, it’s all about how to study the Bible devotionally. And again, we already had two programs earlier on John chapter 1. Now we’re delving through Ephesians 3. And next time we’re going to complete this one with so many more great things to learn from.

So until then, I want to remind all of you to go to our website, beholdisrael.org. This is where you can find a lot of material about past programs. You can find actually the presentation regarding today’s program. And there’s also a section we can leave a question for Dr. Rick regarding what you’ve learned and heard today in this program.

Thank you. And I want to remind you also when you watch this program, please subscribe to our YouTube channel, like, comment and share. So the algorithm will do its wonders and more people will be exposed to this content. Thank you, Dr. Rick, for this wonderful treasure that we’ve

studied today. Thank you, everyone, for watching. Shalom and God bless you from Galilee, Israel, and from Parker, Colorado.

* Scripture is taken from the New King James Version unless noted otherwise.

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