

One of the great confusions amid dispensationalists is the statement that Paul preached a different gospel; that is different to Peter and all other New Testament apostles and writers. Is this entirely true?

One of the problems associated with this issue is the assumption that Paul only preached one gospel. Paul wrote of many gospels such as, the gospel of the grace of God, the gospel of Christ, the gospel; the promise made to the fathers, the gospel of God, the gospel of His Son, the gospel of peace, the gospel of the un-circumcision, the gospel of our salvation, the gospel of the unsearchable riches of Christ and the gospel of the blessed God.

This will not survey all the gospels found in Paul but address the issue that Paul's "gospel" as found in Galatians, is unique and totally different in every way to that of his contemporaries.

Further complications arise when it is also claimed that this "gospel" was in fact the Mystery of Ephesians 3 or the germ of it. This is an adulteration of things that differ which blinds people from the simple dispensational distinctions of the Acts period and the post Acts period.

Remember, we must test things differing (Phils.1:9-10) and it is the DIFFERENCES in Paul which jump off the page as we study. Right division must also be applied to Paul's writings as with all other Scriptures. Paul's Acts period letters are dispensationally different from his post Acts period letters.

To begin, let us focus on Paul's claims about his gospel as found in Galatians, an early letter written during the Acts period. In Galatians we read this;

[Gal 1:11](#) And, brothers, I make known to you the gospel which was preached by me, that it is not according to man.

[Gal 1:12](#) For I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it except by a revelation of Jesus Christ.

Notice Paul does not say anything about a DISPENSATION revealed to Him. It is unwise to assume that this gospel contained the dispensational truths of his later letters written after Acts 28. Does Paul say here that this gospel was unsearchable (Eph.3:8); hidden in God (Eph.3:9); hidden away from ages and generations (Col.1:26)? On the contrary, we shall see in Paul during Acts that he was preaching a gospel found in Moses and the Prophets.

Why not allow Paul to explain in Galatians what gospel it was that he received from the Lord.

[Gal 1:15](#) But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and having called me by His grace,

[Gal 1:16](#) to reveal His Son in me so that I might preach Him among the nations, immediately I did not confer with flesh and blood;

It was a revealing about God's son, not the present dispensation of Ephesians. Paul was called to preach God's Son among the nations; again, this does not mean the present church started. Paul's commission to preach God's Son was not exclusively to the Nations or Gentiles, he proclaimed this gospel to both Jews and Gentiles, see Acts 9:15 and 26:19-20. Here are the first records of Paul's preaching which, in harmony with the Acts period, was to the Jew first;

Act 9:19 And Saul was certain days with the disciples in Damascus.

Act 9:20 And immediately he proclaimed Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God. See 26-30

God revealed to Paul the good news that Jesus of Nazareth is the Son of God, the Messiah. Later he would also preach God's Son among the nations but Paul did not start there.

Let us study further into Galatians where Paul expands about his gospel to be preached among the nations;

Gal 1:20 And what I write to you, behold, before God, I do not lie.

Gal 1:21 Then I went into the regions of Syria and of Cilicia,

Gal 1:22 and was unknown by face to the churches of Judea in Christ.

Gal 1:23-24 But only they were hearing that he who then persecuted us, **now preaches the faith which he once ravaged**. And they glorified God in me.

Faith in verse 23 is a noun and means persuasion, conviction of truth or truth itself, see Acts 13:8, 14:22, 16:5, Roms.1:5 and 2Tim.4:7

Let us ask ourselves a question. How can Paul preach the very same FAITH (belief, doctrine, truth or conviction) he once destroyed IF the gospel he received was totally different to the gospel being preached by others?

If he is preaching what others preached before him, how can it be the dispensation of the grace of God of Ephesians? This was given to him many years after Galatians and hidden in God when he wrote to them. We must not mix different revelations.

Corinthians was also written during the Acts period before Paul was given the revelation of the Mystery of Ephesians. Paul gives further light upon this gospel received by revelation here;

1Co 15:1 And, brothers, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you have received, and in which you stand;

1Co 15:2 by which you also are being kept safe, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain.

1Co 15:3 For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received, that Christ died for our sins, **according to the Scriptures,**

1Co 15:4 and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day **according to the Scriptures;**

Paul received a gospel by revelation; it was concerning God's Son BUT this cannot mean it was the Mystery of Ephesians and Colossians because that was unsearchable and hidden in God and not "according to the Scriptures";

Eph 3:7 **Of this gospel** I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given to me by the effectual working of His power.

Eph 3:8 This grace is given to me (who am less than the least of all saints) to preach **the gospel of the unsearchable riches of Christ** among the nations,

Eph 3:9 and to bring to light what is **the fellowship of the mystery which from eternity has been hidden in God**, who created all things by Jesus Christ;

In the Acts period, Paul preached Christ "according to the Scriptures" not according to something hidden away from ages and generations. How can Paul's revealed gospel of the Acts period be The Mystery of Ephesians? It is impossible since the gospel of The Mystery was hidden away from ages and generations, not revealed to anyone else but Paul. One gospel was

“according to the Scriptures” and the “faith he once destroyed”, the other was never before revealed. Are you beginning to see differences?

It is not right division to mix together things that are different, right division distinguishes things that are different (Phils.1:9-10 MKJV).

Let us stay in 1Cor.15 and see a harmony in this letter and Galatians regarding Paul preaching his gospel by revelation which was “the faith he once ravaged”.

1Co 15:5 and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the Twelve.

1Co 15:6 Afterward He was seen by over five hundred brothers at once, of whom the greater part remain until this present day, but also some fell asleep.

1Co 15:7 Afterward He was seen by James, then by all the apostles.

1Co 15:8 And last of all He was seen by me also, as one born out of time.

1Co 15:9 For I am the least of the apostles and am not sufficient to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.

1Co 15:10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace which was toward me has not been without fruit, but I labored more abundantly than all of them; yet not I, but the grace of God with me.

1Co 15:11 Therefore whether it was I or they, so we preach, and so you believed.

If Paul's gospel was only given to him and completely different, how can he write that whether it was I or THEY? How could the Corinthians believe the "preaching" of the “they” which included Peter & James?

The gospel given to Paul was not given exclusively to him but he was the only one called to preach among the gentiles. Paul was preaching the same message but with those variations which were revealed for the Gentile believers of that time. Jews were water baptized, Gentiles were not. Jews observed the Law, as did Paul, but the Gentiles after Acts 15 observed four necessary things. These are not the dispensational truths of Ephesians and Colossians.

In Acts 13 we have a wonderful record of Paul’s “gospel” by revelation. In this chapter he is preaching to Jews and God fearing Gentiles;

Act 13:23 Of this *man's* seed God has raised to Israel, according to His promise, a Savior, Jesus;

Act 13:26 Men, brothers, sons of *the* race of Abraham, and whoever among you fears God, the Word of this salvation is sent to you.

Act 13:29 And when they had fulfilled all that was written concerning Him, taking *Him* down from the tree, they laid *Him* in a tomb.

Act 13:30 But God raised Him from *the* dead,

Act 13:32 And we preach the gospel to you, the promise made to the fathers,

Act 13:33 this God has fulfilled to us their children, raising up Jesus, as also it is written in the second Psalm, "You are My Son, this day I have begotten You."

Here are the highlights of Paul’s gospel (given by revelation) in Acts 13.

1. God’s Son is the promised seed of David. (Remember Galatians? Reveal His Son in me.)
2. This Seed of David is the Savior Who has been “raised TO Israel”.
3. His name is Jesus

4. The Salvation proclaimed is “this salvation” found in the seed of David raised to Israel.
5. God raised His Son from the dead.
6. The good news is, the gospel revealed to Paul is, the promise made to the fathers.
7. The good news; Paul’s gospel, is that Christ was raised to sit as King on the holy hill of Zion; these are OT prophecies of promise. Please read Psalm 2, which Paul quotes in verse 33, Isaiah 55 and Psalm 16 which Paul quotes in verses 34 and 35.

Further down this chapter we read these words;

[Act 13:38](#) Therefore be it known to you, men, brothers, that through this One the forgiveness of sins is announced to you.

[Act 13:39](#) And by Him all who believe are justified from all things, from which you could not be justified by the Law of Moses.

Further elements of Paul’s gospel are;

8. In David’s seed, the promised One to sit on David’s throne is forgiveness of sins.
9. In David’s seed, the promised One to sit on David’s throne is justification (righteousness) from all things apart from the works of the Law.

Compare Peter’s gospel in Acts 2 where he proclaims identical things save the last two. He calls upon the Jews to repent and be baptized unto the forgiveness of sins found in the One resurrected to sit on David’s throne.

Some might focus on these last two elements of Paul’s gospel and claim they are unique to him but they forget the Law and the prophets where forgiveness and righteousness in the Holy One of Israel is clearly promised in type, shadow and plain statements. A reading of Romans 3:19-4:8 will furnish sufficient evidence to show that forgiveness and righteous found in the sin offering through substitution and identification was never “hidden in God”. Read Isaiah 45:15-25 & 53:7-12.

Yes it is true, Paul received his gospel by revelation and yes, he was sent to preach among the nations to Jews first then the Gentiles. But did this make his gospel markedly different from Peter’s?

When we read Paul’s gospel (given by revelation) preached to the Gentiles at Lystra in Acts 14:15-17 we search in vain for sins forgiven and righteousness reckoned but it was Paul’s gospel. Please read Acts 17:22-31 for Paul’s gospel to gentiles in another location.

Returning to Galatians we have it confirmed that Peter, James and John were Apostles to the circumcision while Paul was the Apostle to the Gentiles or un-circumcision.

[Gal 2:7](#) But on the contrary, seeing that I have been entrusted *with* the gospel of the uncircumcision, as Peter to the circumcision;

[Gal 2:8](#) for He working in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision also worked in me to the nations.

[Gal 2:9](#) and knowing the grace given to me, James, and Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, gave right hands of fellowship to Barnabas and me, that we go to the nations, but they to the circumcision.

What in that passage says their gospels were totally different? The right hand of fellowship was extended and we ask, "Fellowship in what?" The answer is the fellowship of the gospel going to the Jews and the Gentiles.

Peter proclaimed Christ raised to sit on David's throne to the Jews only in Acts 2-3, Paul proclaimed the same thing to Jews and Gentiles outside the land in Acts 13. Peter uses Joel 2 in his gospel in Acts 2 and Paul uses Joel 2 in his gospel to the Romans in 10:13. Both men refer to Psalm 16 (Acts 2:25 & 13:35) and Genesis 12 (Acts 3:25 & Gal.3:8). Paul taught righteousness reckoned and used Abraham and David in his Old Testament based gospel found in Romans 3-4 and Peter declared that God forgave sins and purified hearts through faith and grace in Acts 10:43 & 15:7-11. Peter says that the prophets give witness to forgiveness for those who believe.

Finally here again is the gospel Paul received by revelation as declared by Paul in Acts 13;
[Act 13:32](#) **And we preach the gospel to you, the promise made to the fathers,**

There are many who recognize that Galatians and Romans are not the same as Ephesians dispensationally so they invent a concept called "progressive revelation". They describe Paul's Acts period ministry as a transitory one. This error allows them the latitude of conceding Paul's gospel of the Acts does not contain the dispensational things of his post Acts letters but gives them the space to drag back into Acts the "unsearchable riches" and "hidden in God" things in their discussion of Paul's Acts ministry. This is called wrongly dividing the Word of Truth.

Paul's gospel of the promise made to the (Israel's) fathers which he preached from Acts 13 to the close of the book of Acts should prove to those ready to stand on the Word alone that Paul had no such transitory or progressive ministry.

[Act 13:32](#) **And we preach the gospel to you, the promise made to the fathers,**

[Act 26:6](#) **And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made to our fathers by God,**

[Act 26:22](#) **Then having obtained help from God, I stand until this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying no other things than those which the prophets and Moses said was going to happen;**

When Paul wrote Romans 15:4-13 a passage about HOPE, written about Acts 20 long after Galatians was written, he said this;

[Rom 15:4](#) **For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, so that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.**

Paul's gospel was the promise made to the fathers in Acts 13, years later in Acts 26 his defense before Agrippa was that his hope was the promise made to the fathers. In the same chapter his plain statement that he was declaring "no other things" proves his gospel by revelation had not "progressed" to anything previously unknown. Paul had not been given anything other than "those which the prophets and Moses said was going to happen".

The hope before the believers in Romans was found in the Scriptures written before, that is not Paul's writings but the Old Testament. Would Paul's gospel given by revelation include hope, the expectation of God fulfilling a promise? Yes of course and the hope Paul proclaimed in the

Acts period is not the hope of Ephesians and Colossians. Paul's gospel of Acts was given by revelation but this did not mean it contained anything new.

Romans 15:8 is so well known but often taken out of context;

Rom 15:8 And I say, Jesus Christ has become a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made to the fathers,

In this great Acts period letter about the hope of the called Jews and Gentiles; the elect remnant of prophecy (Romans 9:24), Paul reminds them that the Lord "confirmed the promises made to the fathers" not transferred or postponed them. This is the same theme in Paul from Acts 13 all the way to Acts 28.

The reader might like to read Romans 15:4-13 and examine every Old Testament passage Paul uses in the context of hope and the confirmed promises made to the fathers.

Romans 15:9 is Psalm 18. There is nothing about the church which is His body in Psalm 18. Please read the Psalm.

Romans 15:10 is Deut.32:43. There is nothing about the church which is His body or heaven in the Song of Moses. Please read Deut.32.

Romans 15:11 is Psalm 117. There is nothing about the church which is His body in that Psalm either. Please read the Psalm.

Romans 15:12 is Isaiah 11. There is nothing about the church which is His body or heavenly places or every spiritual blessing in Isaiah 11. Please read Isaiah 11.

In Acts 13 Paul quotes Isaiah 55. In 1Cor.15:54 Paul quotes Isaiah 25. In Romans 15 Paul quotes Isaiah 11. This is not a progression of revelation even in the most zealous of imaginings.

With all these Old Testament passages freshly penned, Paul then exhorts the Romans as follows;

Rom 15:13 And may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Spirit.

We do not hold to the hope of Romans 15 today. Those who hold to a progressive revelation have heaped unto themselves inexplicable problems and throw confusion around. The hope of Romans is nothing less than the Old Testament; there is no progression in Paul. His gospel was the promise made to the fathers in Acts 13 and in Romans. See this link

<http://bibleunderstanding.com/romansprophecy.htm>

Paul was given a gospel by revelation as written in Galatians. The word revelation must not be injected with meaning beyond the limits of the context. Yes, the Lord had to reveal Himself to Paul but this does not mean He revealed to Paul the later dispensation of the grace of God. The Mystery of Ephesians which was also given by revelation but a separate and much later one.

After Israel was set aside at Acts 28 Paul received the Mystery of Ephesians which is the present dispensation of the grace of God, much more than the gospel of the grace of God of the Acts period. To mix the two different revelations is confusion indeed. Like Paul, the 12 in Luke 24:45 received understanding at the hand of the Lord. Christ had to open their understandings so they could understand the Scriptures, and the Lord did the same for Paul. Just because Paul received his gospel by revelation does not mean it was the later truth of the Mystery.

Here are Paul's 14 books and how they are arranged internally by the statements made by Paul himself in the Scriptures.

During Acts Paul said this:

[Act 26:22](#) Then having obtained help from God, I stand until this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying no other things than those which the prophets and Moses said was going to happen;

The following letters of Paul are in perfect harmony with this statement.

Galatians, 1&2 Thessalonians, 1&2 Corinthians, Hebrews and Romans.

These letters of Paul are full of Old Testament themes and contain 190 Old Testament quotes.

AFTER Acts 28, Paul wrote this;

[Eph 3:1](#) For this cause, I, Paul, am the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you nations,

[Eph 3:2](#) if you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given to me toward you,

[Eph 3:3](#) that by revelation He made known to me the mystery.....

[Eph 3:7](#) Of this *gospel* I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given to me by the effectual working of His power.

[Eph 3:8](#) This grace is given to me (*who am* less than the least of all saints) to preach the gospel of the unsearchable riches of Christ among the nations,

[Eph 3:9](#) and to bring to light what *is* the fellowship of the mystery which from eternity has been hidden in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ;

The letters written by Paul after Acts 28, which are in perfect harmony with dispensational truth never before revealed, are;

Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1&2 Timothy, Titus and Philemon.

These letters contain about 8 Old Testament quotes and the hope of the heavenly places found within them cannot be found in any other Scriptures including the Acts period letters of Paul.

Paul received lots of revelations (2Cor.12:7) and it is our responsibility to rightly divide them.

The gospel Paul received by revelation in Galatians was the faith; the truth he previously ravaged and was nothing more than that which Moses and the prophets said was going to happen. To make it the mystery of Ephesians or the germ of it is exegetical illusionism of the most confusing kind.