

Can we unscrew the inscrutable?

I. Slide#1 **Announce:**

- A. **Reasons to Rejoice** - starts tomorrow night. You can still sign up tomorrow night ladies. **Acts**. 7pm sanct.
- B. I have 10 openings for a **photo workshop** for Tues night the 23rd. - Write down your name, cell & email & give to me afterward. Terry Wheeler prof photographer.

II. **Intro:**

- A. **Slide#2 Title:** *Can we unscrew the inscrutable?* (impossible to understand)
 - 1. **Slide#3** What do you do with mysteries in Scripture? What do you do with the biblical Gordian knots? When life itself doesn't make any sense? Nor the hand *you've been dealt*?
- B. This chapter we'll see God's reminder, **He had redeemed them** (from Egypt) **and** thus **they were responsible to obey Him**. **If** they **obeyed**, He would **ble**ss; **if** they **disobeyed**, He would **jud**ge.

III. **Slide#4 COVENANT RENEWED (1-9)**

- A. (1) **Wraps up the last chapter**...in the Hebrew text it is 28:69.
- B. (2) **Starts his 4th address** **but doesn't** address anything **new**, he just **reiterates** what has been said thus far.
- C. (4) **To this very day** suggests that Israel had not yet understood these saving events.
 - 1. **Thus apart from divine enlightening**, people always remain **insensitive** to God's work (Paul uses this text in Rom.11:8).
 - 2. **This shows us though**...if we are to be **faithful**, we need **spiritual renewal** for our **eyes, ears, & hearts**.
 - a) We need to **see** His hand at work, **hear** His word, & love Him with all our **hearts**.
- D. (5-8) For 40 years the people **saw** miracles & **heard** words, **yet** they did not perceive what God was doing.
 - 1. They saw His **acts** **but** did not understand His **ways**.
 - a) Ps.103:7 **He made known His ways to Moses, His acts to the children of Israel**.
 - 2. They had **seen** God defeat the **idols** in Egypt, **yet** they still had **idolatry** in their **hearts**.
 - a) What could have been **spiritual experiences** was only a **series of historical events** **because** they did not focus on the Lord.

IV. **Slide#5 COVENANT REVIEWED (10-19)**

- A. (18,19) Moses warned that even **one person** could defile the whole nation.

1. **No individual** should *suppose* they would **automatically** receive the benefit of **God's grace simply by living within the community of God's people**. **No, not then**, back in the wilderness. **No, not today**, in in the midst of His church.
2. Think of 1 man **Achon** in Joshua 7, effected all Israel [**Jericho, abstain from the cursed things**, they're the Lord's] **He didn't. At Ai 36 soldiers died. Hid Babylonian garments, 200 shekels of silver, wedge/gold, under his tent...saw/coveted/took]**
 - a) **Today**, 1 family member can *embarrass/humiliate* his/her whole family.

V. Slide#6 COVENANTAL REBUKE (20-29)

- A. (29) **The secret things** of the Lord refer to future details that God had **not** revealed.
 1. **Yet what He had revealed** (e.g., future judgment for disobedience, future blessing for obedience, His requirements for holiness, etc.) was enough to encourage the Israelites to **follow** all the words of the Law.
 - a) So our goal is to **obey what we know & not pry** into what we do not know.
 2. **Some of Gods secrets He can** reveal though, if he wants to...
 - a) Remember when Neb had a dream & asked for his **magicians/astrologers/sorcerers** to **both** tell him the **dream** & its **interpretation**.
 - b) Dan.2:28 **But there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets, and he has shown King Nebuchadnezzar what will happen in the future. Now I will tell you your dream and the visions you saw as you lay on your bed.**
- B. Deut.29:29 **The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever.**
 1. Was what He said not enough? Not good enough?
 2. What if He never said anything new/different?
 3. What if in Heaven Jesus just quoted what He already said?
 4. Could He have said anything better? Wouldn't He have then?
 5. Is there a stronger promise He could have given? A more endearing term for Himself?
 6. Does it get any better than...**Our Father who are in heaven. Or, The Lord is my Shepherd. For God so loved. In Your presence is fullness of joy. Abba?**
 - a) What else am I looking for?
- C. **So Moses lays out 2 classes of realities: secret & revealed.** [Awake My Heart, J. Sidlow Baxter pg.216]
 1. Evidently there are *some things* which we are **not** meant to know yet.
 2. **Slide#7** The Word of God is as **wise** in its **reservations** as it is **wonderful** in its **revelations**.

3. Enough is **revealed** to make faith intelligent. Enough is **reserved** to give faith scope for development.
4. **Let's admit it...** despite the Biblical revelation, we are surrounded by many **baffling mysteries**.
 - a) **Birth** is a mystery. **Life** is a mystery. **Personality** is a mystery. **Human experience** is a mystery. **Death, the universe, satan, eternity, & God** is a mystery.
 - b) **And other mysteries: Like, Why** are there no 'B' batteries? **If God sneezes, what should you say? Is it still illegal to park next to a fire hydrant, even if your car is on fire? If a bunch of cats jump on top of each other, is it still called a dog pile? Do Jewish vampires still avoid crosses?** And other very important questions.
5. **But** breaking through *all the mysteries* we have the **glorious transfiguring fact...the fact of Jesus Christ**.
 - a) **He** is a certified **historical** fact; a supremely **significant** fact; & an experientially **realized** fact. - **He really came, lived, taught, died, rose, & will return again.**
 - b) **Slide#8** An old Puritan said *Never let what you don't know disturb your faith in what you do know*
6. **Also**, when it comes to **wars, accidents, bereavements, & a thousand other paradoxical ironies...** let's offer **no cheap solution, but admit that they are mysteries**.
- D. God has kept back no truth that it is profitable for us to know about His counsels, **but** only that which it is good for us to be ignorant of.
- E. **Also remember** why **revelation** is given to us in the first place...To become **doers. vs.29b.**

VI. Slide#9 **ROMANS 11**

- A. Paul in **Rom.11** concludes the same way, on the same subject (prophecies of the Jews rejection)
 1. **Slide#10 - Read** vs.33-36
- B. **Ch.9** Israel's **Past** Election; **Ch.10** Israel's **Present** Rejection; **Ch.11** Israel's **Future** Reception.
- C. Rom.11:1 **Is Israel cast away?**
- D. In eschatology, some have **cast Israel away** – Using 10:12 as their argument...**For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek.**
 1. But there **isn't** a distinction in their **sins** nor **salvation**. **But** there still **is** a distinction **nationally**, as Paul speaks to in ch.11.
 2. **Don't forget the timing...** this is **after** the death & resurrection of Christ, **& yet** he's still talking about **the Nation** of Israel.
 - a) **Nationally** they have **not** been stirred into *a giant Gentile blender*.
- E. (33) He praises God's knowledge & wisdom, **yet** while at the same time saying they are **beyond human understanding**.
 1. It's unwise to try to, **"fathom the unfathomable or unscrew the inscrutable** (imp to understand)."

- F. **Depth** – Things that are hidden in **deep mystery**, so deep that no human knowledge will ever reach it.
- G. **Unsearchable & unfathomable** (past finding out; beyond tracing out)
1. **Both are hunting terms: Unsearchable = indicates an animal that is untrackable. Unfathomable = describes one that is undetectable.**
 - a) **We can't track God's thoughts.** And even if you could, it would probably be so foreign to us, that we wouldn't even recognize them.
- H. (34,35) **3 Questions that don't need answers:**
1. **[1] Can anyone explain God? [2] Anyone smart enough to tell Him what to do? [3] Has anyone done God such a big favor that God owes them now?** [Ps.50:10-12]
- I. **We cannot explain all the purposes & plans of God, but we can worship & praise Him for who He is.**
- J. (36) **Of Him** – He is the source (or, *Origin*)
- K. **Through Him** – He is the agent (or, *Channel*)
- L. **To Him** – He is the goal (or, *Destiny*, All things consist for **His Glory**)
1. The end result of all Bible study (**studying doctrines**) is **Worship.**

VII. Slide#11 **PARABLES**

- A. **Slide#12** Jesus explained these mysteries in...**Mt.13:10-17** **Read**
- B. Many have said it is a parable is an, *“Earthly story w/a Heavenly meaning.”*
- C. **The parables are both Mirrors & Windows: Mirrors** as they help us **see ourselves.**
Windows as they help us **see life & God.**
- D. **How to Study parables?**
1. **Context:** Parable of the good Samaritan's context? [It stemmed from the Lawyers evasive question, *“Who is my neighbor?”*]
 2. **Main Truth:** What's the main message? [Prodigal Son, is that God receives & forgives sinners]. You can discover in this rich parable many sp. truths, but all of them relate in some way to that primary lesson.
 3. **No Over Kill:** It's not nec. to make **everything** mean *something*.
 4. **Illustrates Doctrine, Doesn't Declare it:** Parables are windows into the house, not the foundation stones. [example: you can't build the doctrine of **good works** from the parable of the sheep & goats]
 5. **Ask God for Spiritual Perception:** For all bible study, but especially imp. in dealing with the parables. [the disciples asked for help w/them]
- E. So, *Can we **unscrew the inscrutable?*** (impossible to understand) *Only when He wants us to! :)*