

## **Ole Miss FCA Weekly Devotional: 2/15/10**

*The Power and Passion of the Master Coach, Elliot Johnson*



### **Thought of the Week:**

God's Glory is Declared in His Name, El Olam, "The Everlasting God"

### **Verse of the Week:**

The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and His understanding no one can fathom. Isaiah 40:28

Baseball's longest game (by innings played) took place on May 1, 1920. The game was finally called because of darkness after 26 innings with the score tied, 1-1. Both starting pitchers—Leon Cadore for the Brooklyn Dodgers and Joe Oeschger for the Boston Braves—were still in the game! They must have thought the game would last forever!

While no game really lasts forever, we have a God who is everlasting! The name El Olam is a seldom-used, yet very revealing name given for Him in the Scriptures. Translated everlasting or eternal in our English versions, this wonderful name reveals a special secret concerning the nature and purpose of God. As we have seen, El indicates the power of God. He is the powerful God of creation. Olam means "to cover or to hide a secret for a time." Every place El Olam is used in Scripture is either a subtle or a distinct reference to various stages of God's revelation of Himself and His plan for this universe. He is the "Everlasting God of the Ages." His plan and purposes are not worked out instantly but in distinct periods of time throughout history. There is an orderly progression in His redemptive plan for mankind, and it is all under the control of El Olam!

In the Old Testament, God was El Olam to Moses (Psalm 90:2-3), to Jeremiah (Jeremiah 10:10-13), and to Micah (Micah 5:2). In the New Testament, Paul wrote of the eternal God who progressively made known His plan (Romans 16:25-27). It is important to note that God Himself has not changed. It is man who changes. It is God's wisdom to change His methods of revealing Himself. Likewise, it is not the method of salvation which changes. The shed blood of Christ is the only basis of salvation for men of all ages. As men of long ago looked forward to God's provision of salvation, men today look backward to that which Christ provided on the cross two thousand years ago. With the coming of Christ, God revealed Himself in detail that all men might believe and be saved.

Conditions on this earth were not always as they are now, nor will they always be as today. After the fall of man, God promised that the "seed of the woman" (the Lord Jesus Christ) would one day come to suffer and to "crush the head of the serpent" (Satan). God promised the Savior in Genesis 3:15. For a long time, men knew few details of His eternal plan. God selected Abraham and made a covenant to bless all nations through him (Genesis 12:1-3), but until Moses and the Ten Commandments (law), men were led to God via conscience. When God gave the law to Moses on Mt. Sinai, He revealed how far men had strayed from His plan. The law's purpose was to show us how sinful we are, so we would see the need for a Savior. The Old Testament sacrifices were to picture the ultimate sacrifice Jesus would one day provide when He died on the cross for all men. God revealed that salvation is free to all who trust in Jesus, and He offers eternal life as a free gift to Jew and non-Jew. Paul wrote that God did not make known the mystery of Christ (the mixing of Jew and Gentile into one body called the "church") in past generations (Ephesians 3:2-12). Only after Jesus died and rose again did El Olam reveal this part of His plan!

Mankind is no longer in the dark. El Olam has revealed Himself in an understandable way throughout redemption history. He is the Everlasting God! And He has made His plan known!

Time Out:

- (1) Study Ephesians 3:2-12.
  - What is the mystery of Christ that is now revealed? (See verse 6)
  - In whom was this mystery hidden for ages past? (See verse 9)
  - What was God's intent through the church? (See verse 10)
  - What word describes the length of God's purpose? (See verse 11)
- (2) Study Romans 16:25-26
  - How is the mystery of God revealed?
  - Why was the mystery of God revealed?
- (3) Study 1 Corinthians 2:7-9. If the rulers of this age (Satanic spirits) had understood God's secret wisdom, what would they not have inspired?
- (4) Study 1 Corinthians 10:11. What does this verse say about the age in which we are living?
- (5) Study Hebrews 9:26-28.
  - How many times did Christ suffer for sin?
  - When did Christ appear on earth to do away with sin?
  - What will be His purpose when He appears a second time?