

Our exciting journey of discovery takes a new turn as we begin to focus on the hope set before us today by our God of rich grace and great love. We, the previously cast off Nations of the world; we who are the heathen, the Gentiles of the Scriptures, have received a glorious message of hope from our God through the Apostle Paul.

For recent lessons in this series please visit;

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We have seen that before the end of Acts our Apostle Paul was preaching and teaching as follows;

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 hope that Paul held and proclaimed to believers during that time was the hope of the promise made to the Fathers as these verses prove, Acts 13:23, 26, 32, 26:6, Roms.15:4, 8, 12. To read what the Prophets said was going to come, turn your Bibles to Is.11. Paul uses Isaiah 11 in Romans 15. Paul's hope in the Acts period was the kingdom of heaven on the earth. Please read Galatians chapter 3. Galatians 3 was written during Acts and is not about you and me today.

In the last chapter of Acts we find Paul continuing to teach both out of the law of Moses and the Prophets and looking for the hope of Israel;

Act 28:20 ... For I have this chain around me for the hope of Israel.

Act 28:23 And they having appointed him a day, many came to him in his lodging; to whom he expounded, testifying the kingdom of God, and persuading them the things concerning Jesus, both out of the Law of Moses and out of the Prophets, from morning until evening.

In Acts 28 Paul preaches to the Jews first as was his custom all through the Acts period (Acts 17:2). To those dispersed Israelites Paul proclaimed the Kingdom of God out of the Law of Moses and the Prophets. This also in perfect harmony with his stand in Acts 26:22. But we noticed that the Jews in Rome argued between themselves and this is not the response the Word was to bring. Thus our Heavenly Father put aside the nation of Israel for a time;

Act 28:25 And disagreeing with one another, they were let go,

After Israel was put aside and the hope of the Acts period put aside with them, The Lord descended and revealed to Paul alone, the present set of conditions in which we live today.

When we turn to Ephesians we find many different dispensational things. In Ephesians Paul is still a prisoner but now he is not bound for the hope of Israel but is bound for the nations, the Gentiles;

Eph 3:1 For this cause, I, Paul, am the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you nations,

After the Acts period, after Romans and Galatians, Paul writes about a dispensation which had been hidden in God and away from ages and generations:

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;

Col 1:24 who now rejoice in my sufferings ...behalf of His body, which is the church;

Col 1:25 of which I became a minister, according to the administration of God given to me for you, to fulfill the Word of God;

Col 1:26 the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints.

In this new dispensation which is in operation today, a new hope is revealed which cannot be found in the Law of Moses and the Prophets because it was "hidden in God" and away from them and from Paul and the other believers during Acts. This is why Paul prays that these saints and faithful brethren would know this new hope. But before we look at his prayer for these Christians we notice the incredible opening to this post Acts period epistle.

Paul opens his letter to the Ephesians by blessing God with a doxology;

Eph 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ;

Paul blesses God in the light of the incredible nature of these new blessings and incredible place where these new blessings are found. They are "spiritual blessings" and located "in the heavenlies", or "heavenly places". Further down in

chapter one he tells us we have obtained an inheritance;
[Eph 1:11](#) in whom also we have been chosen to an inheritance,

These glorious blessings which are all spiritual are not located on the earth; they are not associated with faithful Abraham, they are in the heavenlies and we have no doubt as to where “the heavenlies” are located as our following extracts from Ephesians will show.

Now we turn to Paul's wonderful prayer for the Ephesians and for you and me today:

[Eph 1:15](#) Therefore I also, hearing of your faith in the Lord Jesus and love to all the saints,

[Eph 1:16](#) do not cease giving thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers,

[Eph 1:17](#) that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him,

[Eph 1:18](#) the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that you may know what is [the hope of His calling](#)

Paul prays that they will know the hope of His calling. Why would this be if Paul had spent two years with them back in Acts 19? Paul tells the Ephesians elders in Acts 20:20, 27 that he had not failed to declare all the counsel of God and had kept back nothing that was profitable to them. Had Paul forgotten to tell them about their Hope? No, of course not, the hope had changed since he had seen them last. Previously they were to be blessed with faithful Abraham on the earth, now a new hope with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places had been revealed.

Paul wanted the Ephesians to know the hope of His calling; he wanted the Ephesians and us to have this great anchor God has given us today through Paul. He continues his prayer;

[Eph 1:18](#) the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of His calling, and what is the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,

[Eph 1:19](#) and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us, the ones believing

There are three things in this prayer that Paul wants you and me to know today and they are the hope, the riches of the glory of His inheritance (for us) and the power in us. This prayer is as much for you and me today as it was for the Ephesians. Paul prays that we:

1. would know the hope of **HIS** calling.
2. would know the riches of the GLORY of **HIS** inheritance in the saints.
3. would know **HIS** Power toward us, the one's believing.

These three things are linked together and Paul goes on to outline them. He describes this power in us and what it accomplishes and we soon begin to appreciate the riches of glory of our wonderful inheritance and the hope of His calling. Here is an outline of Paul's expansion of the prayer which I know you will find helpful. I have personalized it and given it a heading.

Let us start with the power in us today. Paul explains that the power in us is according to the working of His mighty strength which he wrought in Christ.

[Eph 1:19-20](#) and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us, the ones believing according to the working of His mighty strength which He worked in Christ

Here are the things accomplished in Christ by the power of God. Please note where our Lord is located and His new title;

1. Christ is raised from the dead. [Eph.1:20](#)
2. Christ is seated at God's right hand. [Eph.1:20](#)
3. Christ is seated In the heavenly Places. [Eph.1:20](#) (Far above all....)
4. Christ is given to be Head of The Church His Body. [Eph.1:22-23](#)

Here are the things accomplished in US by the power of God.

[Eph 2:4](#) But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love *with* which He loved us

[Eph 2:5](#) (even when we were dead in sins) has made us alive together with Christ (by grace you are saved),

[Eph 2:6](#) and has raised *us* up together and made *us* sit together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus,

[Eph 2:7](#) so that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in *His* kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

[Eph 2:8](#) For by grace you are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God,

Please note where we have been placed by God and the name of our church.

1. We have been made alive (quickenened). [Eph.2:1,5](#) (in Christ)
2. We have been seated together. [Eph.2:6](#) (In Christ).

3. We have been seated together in the heavenlies. [Eph.2:6](#).

4. We are the Church which is His BODY. [Eph.1:22-23](#)

Please note, that the Head and the Body are seated in the same place. Here is Paul's outline regarding our hope put together in a chart. This is the parallel Paul is wanting us to see. Perhaps you would like to copy this somewhere and refer to it often.

Our hope today
His glorious inheritance for us today
His power in us today

Power in Christ

1. Raised from the Dead. [Eph 1:20](#)

2. Seated at God's right. [Eph 1:20](#)

3. In the heavenly Places. [Eph 1:20](#)

4. HEAD of the church. [Eph.1:22-23](#).

Power in Us

1. Made alive with Christ. [Eph.2:1,5](#).

2. Seated together in Christ. [Eph.2:6](#).

3. In the heavenly places....[Eph.2:6](#).

4. The church. His BODY. [Eph.1:22-23](#).

The power in us raised us up to the heavenly places. Our glorious inheritance is in the heavenly places. Our hope today is to be seated together in the heavenly places where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. That is where our Heavenly Father has raised and seated us. This is the Word of Truth for you and me today.

Why did God do this? Why have we been seated in the heavenlies where Christ is seated? Certainly not because we have any worth or value and because of any good works we may or may not do, but as Paul explains, it is to show forth something in the future:

[Eph 2:7](#) so that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

What a glorious hope we have, to be seated in the heavenlies. God's Word declares we are there now and in God's good time, when faith becomes sight, we shall be seated there in wonderful reality. Why not praise and thank our wonderful God for the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness towards us right now.