

We saw last lesson the glorious new hope that was revealed for us believers today by our Lord through the Apostle Paul. Our hope is to be seated together in the heavenlies one day for God has raised us and seated us together there, in Christ.

We noticed that Paul's opening prayer in Ephesians was not that these Christians would be Christians, they were already "saints and faithful" ones, so Paul had no need to pray they would know life through faith into Christ's finished work. This was Paul's prayer for them and for all saints 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,

Eph 1:18 the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that you may know what is the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,

Eph 1:19 and (that you may know) what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us.

Here are the three things Paul wanted these Christians to know by God giving a wise and revealing spirit in the knowledge of Christ;

1. The Hope
2. The Inheritance
3. The power

The Ephesians did not need to know about righteousness by faith reckoned by grace or that the Lord Jesus died for our sins, or was buried and rose again the third day all according to the Scriptures. NO! After Israel had been cast aside at Acts 28, the Lord descended and revealed to Paul a completely new dispensation, a new administration which had been hidden away from previous generations. Such fundamental things as Christ dying for our sins were as much part of this new dispensation as the previous one. The new dispensation contained new dispensational things which are specific things for this specific time in which we live. The previous dispensational things had been put aside with Israel. Christians today are not going to be blessed with faithful Abraham on the earth and in the New Jerusalem. Paul wanted Christians to know these dispensational changes and it is important we also know them;

Eph 3:8-9 Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, was this grace given, to preach unto the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men (saints) see what is the dispensation of the mystery which for ages hath been hid in God who created all things ASV

We will not read about this new dispensation in the Gospels or any other New Testament writer nor in Paul's Acts period letters. We only read about this new dispensation in the letter written after Acts which are, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1@2 Timothy, Titus and Philemon.

Let us refresh our memories about the new hope revealed in Ephesians. Remember, hope is an earnest expectation that God will fulfill His promise. We have a promise found in these combined passages;

Eph 1:19 .. the surpassing greatness of His power toward us, the ones believing (is) according to the working of His mighty strength

Eph 1:20 which He worked in Christ in raising Him from the dead, and He seated Him at His right hand in the heavenlies,

and in us also is this ascension power seen;

Eph 2:1 And He has made you alive, who were once dead in trespasses and sins,

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.

God has declared that we have been quickened (made alive) in Christ, we have been raised together, and seated together in the heavenlies in Christ, exactly the same place where Christ has been raised and seated at the Father's right hand. The word for "sit" in Eph.2:6 is the same word "seated" in 1:20. Our Lord Christ and His Body are seated together in the heavenly places, though only Christ is at the Father's right hand. How many Christians can recite the following verses but are unaware of the salvation to which they refer;

Eph 2:8 For by grace you are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God,

Eph 2:9 not of works, lest anyone should boast.

The salvation by faith through grace in this context is not Christ dying for our sins or righteousness reckoned. It is the wonderful new

position believers have provided on the basis of grace. This new position, this new sphere was only made known at the revealing of the new dispensation given to them and us through Paul.

Ephesians and its sister epistle Colossians are full of unique words and phrases not found in Paul's earlier Acts period letters which are Galatians, 1@2 Corinthians, 1@2 Thessalonians, Romans and Hebrews. Look at the opening verse of Ephesians;

[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;

We search in vain to find "every spiritual blessing" "in the heavenlies" in any of Paul's Acts period letters. Notice that our blessings are located where Christ is seated in the heavenlies, and we have been seated in the heavenlies as well. What a brilliant Father we have, our blessings and position in the same place. Our blessings are not here on the earth to be experienced in this present life. We have been seated in the heavenlies, our blessings are in the heavenlies, and that is where our inheritance is located.

The second objective of Paul's prayer for the Ephesians and us today is that all should know "[the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints](#)". What is our inheritance, or better still where is it located? It will not surprise us that our Heavenly Father has told us all about this in the following verses;

[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;

[Eph 1:4](#) according as He chose us in Him before *the* foundation of *the* world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him,

[Eph 1:5](#) in love having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, (EMTV)

[Eph 1:11](#) in whom also we have been chosen to an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His own will,

I have underlined the small phrases which identify the location and consequently the "riches of the glory" of His inheritance for us today. Our inheritance is "[before Him](#)", we have been marked off as the heirs "[to Himself](#)" and coupled with our blessings "[in the heavenlies](#)" we are left in no doubt that our inheritance is exactly where our blessings are, that is, in the heavenlies where Christ is seated. Think about this dear reader, we have been raised and seated together in the heavenlies, our blessings are in the heavenlies, and that is the exact location of the inheritance which is ours in Christ. No wonder Paul writes in such a spirit of praise in these opening passages of Ephesians;

[Eph 1:6](#) to the praise of the glory of His grace, in which He has made us accepted (highly graced us, see Luke 1:28 ) in the One having been loved.

The original word for "[before Him](#)" in verse 4 is katenopion and as a wonderful confirmation regarding the location of our inheritance we find this word in some other great verses as follows;

[2Co 2:17](#) For we are not as many, hawking the Word of God; but as of sincerity, but as of God, we speak in Christ in the sight of God.

[Col 1:22](#) in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy and without blemish, and without charge in His sight,

[Jud 1:24](#) Now to Him being able to keep you without stumbling, and to set you before His glory without blemish, with unspeakable joy;

Ephesians 1:5 says very clearly that we have been predestined, that is "marked off beforehand" as the "sons". This does not mean that God determined who would be saved. It means God determined (through foreknowledge, cp Romans 8:29-30) who would be His heirs. You and I have been "marked off" as the heirs in the heavenlies. This is a great honor and it is not according to any works of righteousness we have done, but as Paul writes;

[Eph 1:5](#) in love having predestined us to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,

[Eph 1:11](#) in whom also we have been chosen to an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His own will,

It is not for us to reason why we are His heirs but to accept the wonderful fact that God did this "according to the good pleasure of His will", "according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His own will". Faith accepts the truth of God's Word. Our heavenly Father has a purpose for you and I, we are not a random number, we are not here because of some "big bang", we were known "before the foundation of the world" and appointed as the heirs in the heavenlies where our inheritance and blessings are located. What a God of grace.

So together we have seen and believed the threefold object of Paul's prayer for the Ephesians and us today. That prayer is this;

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,

Eph 1:18 the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that you may know .. 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

The power in us raised us and seated us together in Christ, in the heavenlies.

The riches of the glory of His inheritance for us, is the inheritance in front of God's face, in the heavenlies.

The hope is that we will be seated in our inheritance in the heavenlies in all wonderful and glorious reality. Our Heavenly Father will bring to pass these things for us in the times or the seasons, which the Father has put in His own authority. Paul writes of these future days in this verse;

Eph 1:10 .. an administration (dispensation) of the fullness of times, to head up all things in Christ, both the things in Heaven, and the things on earth, *even* in Him,

Next lesson we will begin to identify the times when we shall be literally seated together in the heavenlies. Today we are seated there so far as God is concerned, we are there "in Christ", but in the future, we will be in our inheritance in reality. We are left in no doubt as to when we take our seats in the heavenlies and as a foretaste of the coming lessons we turn to this passage of glory;

Col 3:1 If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is sitting at *the* right hand of God.

Col 3:2 Be mindful of things above, not on things on the earth.

Col 3:3 For you died, and your life has been hidden with Christ in God.

Col 3:4 When Christ our Life *is* revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.

This "appearing" of our Lord and Head is far above the clouds, trumpets and air of 1 Thess.4. This is before He begins His descent to the earth. In the day; in the moment our Lord is manifested on the right hand of power, we shall be there in our seats manifested with Him. What an honor, what a moment of unimaginable joy. Let each one of us set our affection "where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God", for there, in front of God's face, we have been raised and seated.