

After Israel were put to one side at the end of the book of Acts, Paul was inspired to write Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians 1@Timothy, Titus and Philemon.

In Ephesians we read of the wonderful new hope set before us believers today;

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, see Ephesians 1:19-21. There, where Christ is seated above all of the heavenly rulers and authorities, is our glorious inheritance in front of God's face. There our blessings are located and there we are the heirs of God. Is it any wonder Paul brings this wonderful section to a close with these verses:

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.

Many Christians love these verses thinking they only refer to Christ dying for our sin and sins, but the salvation provided by grace through faith in Ephesians 2 goes way past these foundational truths to include our glorious inheritance in the heavenlies and the unique blessings we have there. We have been raised and seated together in the heavenlies that is the context of "FOR by grace you are saved through faith". Praise the Lord, what a wonderful salvation by grace!

This salvation is not an earthly one. We, the Church which is His Body, are not destined for the earth. We are not to be blessed with faithful Abraham; nor is the Jerusalem above the mother of us all today. These things were put aside with Israel at Acts 28. Galatians, 1@2Corinthians, 1@2 Thessalonians, Hebrews and Romans which were written before Acts 28, speak of Christ dying for our sins, but they know nothing of the wonderful hope we have today by grace through faith as found in Ephesians and Colossians written after Acts 28. After Israel was put aside then the Lord gave to Paul this wonderful salvation concerning heavenly places. This hope is an element of the Mystery, the present dispensation of the grace of God which was hidden away from ages and generations and it was also hidden away from Paul during the Acts period.

We now begin to address a very important question. Since God's Word says we, in Christ, have been raised and seated in the heavenlies where Christ is seated at the right hand of God, exactly when will we literally be seated there in the heavenlies or heavenly places? In other words, when will our hope become sight? When will our faith be realized? When will God's Word regarding us come to pass? When will we be seated there in our wonderful new bodies "fashioned like His glorious body"? What is the timing of our hope?

The answer to this is found in Colossians 3:1-4 which flows wonderfully onwards from Ephesians 2;

Col 3:1 If then (or since, if does not always mean doubt) 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.

Here we are clearly told that "WHEN" our Lord, The Head is revealed, "THEN" we, the Church which is His Body, will also be revealed "WITH HIM". That is the timing of our hope; the revealing of our Lord. Here are one or two other versions:

Col 3:1 If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

Col 3:2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

Col 3:3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

Col 3:4 When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. (KJV)

And

Col 3:1 If then ye were raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated on the right hand of God.

Col 3:2 Set your mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth.

Col 3:3 For ye died, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

Col 3:4 When Christ, who is our life, shall be manifested, then shall ye also with him be manifested in glory. (RV)

These three versions use “revealed”, “appear” and “manifested” to translate the Greek word “phaneroo”. Here are some helpful definitions of “phaneroo”:

Strong's.

phaneroo; from G5318; to *render apparent* (literally or figuratively): - appear, manifestly declare, (make) manifest (forth), shew (self).

Word Study (E-Sword).

phaneroo; manifest, visible, conspicuous. To make apparent, manifest, known, show openly.

Dr Strong says that the word “phaneroo” comes from another word, G5318 which is “phaneros”.

Phaneros means “shining” and itself comes from a word which means “light, to give light”.

When our Lord appears it is a moment of revelation involving great light, a shining forth. Where is this shining forth; this appearing of our Lord? The location is very clearly identified; it is “where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God”. Our Lord will be seated at God’s right hand when He is manifested. We shall look more closely at this in a later lesson but for now we recognize this is not in the air of 1 Thess.4, where the clouds are located.

We can see a contrast in this Colossians passage. Notice, our life is “hidden with Christ in God” and while these things are hidden now, there is a time coming when they will be manifested or revealed. This moment will be a very bright one, a blazing forth as some have described it. It will be a glorious moment when our Lord and Head is manifested, but you and me and the rest of the Church which is His Body will be manifested there, in the heavenly places with Him.

What will this appearing be like? Imagine you are sitting on a chair on top of a hill which, if there was light, would be clearly visible to the city below. The hill and the city are in darkness but there comes a time when the top of the hill is illuminated with a bright light. Then you, sitting on top of the hill, will be clearly visible to all those in the city below. You on your chair have been “manifested”, you have been “revealed”, you have “appeared” to all. In a similar but far more extensive way the Lord will appear to all in a blazing forth of light. He will be seen by those in the heavenly places, and by those on the earth beneath.

Please consider the following verses as an anticipation of future lessons;

Mat 24:27 For as the lightning comes out of the east and shines even to the west, so also will be the coming of the Son of Man.

Mat 24:29 And immediately after the tribulation of those days, the sun shall be darkened and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from the heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken.

Mat 24:30 And then the sign of the Son of Man shall appear (phaino-the same family of words giving phaneroo of Colossians 3) in the heavens.

Act 2:20 The sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood, before that great and glorious (epiphaneis-the same family of words giving phaneroo of Colossians 3) Day of the Lord.

And

Mat 26:64 Jesus said to him, You said *it*. I tell you more. From this time you shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming on the clouds of the heavens.

Act 7:56 And he (Stephen) said, Behold, I see Heaven opened and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God.

And this passage;

Rev 6:12 And when He had opened the sixth seal, I looked, and behold, there was a great earthquake. And the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood.

Rev 6:13 And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, even as a fig tree casts her untimely figs when she is shaken by a mighty wind.

Rev 6:14 And the heaven departed like a scroll when it is rolled together. And every mountain and island were moved out of their places.

Rev 6:15 And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every freeman, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains.

Rev 6:16 And they said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him sitting on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb;

When the Lord is manifested in the heavenly places, the world will be morally, spiritually and physically dark and in that darkened day a light will blaze forth, our Lord shall be visible and “every eye shall see Him”. The heavens will be peeled back and they will see Him sitting on the right hand of God.

This “appearing” of our Lord and Head is far above the clouds, and the 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 God, 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 to “appear with Him”.

That moment of His appearing is when our hope will be realized.