

THE BELIEVER'S PRAISE FOR DIVINE REDEMPTION

Ephesians 1:3-14



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INTRODUCTION:

Paul has penned in Ephesians 1 a three-point message on the believer's salvation. We find three inspired stanzas, each relating to one of the members of the trinity, concluding with a doxology: 1:6; 1:12 and 1:14.

1A. THE WORK OF THE FATHER AS THE PLANNER: 1:3-6

1b. Blessed by the Father: 1:3

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:

This passage has been called scripture's greatest doxology. Three times the word bless or blessing appears in this remarkable verse.

1c. Praise for the Father:

As God, He has these spiritual blessings; as Father He dispenses these blessings, that is the Father's nature. One should note the significance of the title, Lord Jesus Christ.

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| Lord: Divine name, Jehovah, the past |
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| Jesus: the human name, Savior, the present |
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| Christ: the official name, Messiah, the future |
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2c. Provision by the Father:

"every spiritual blessing," i.e. every and every kind of blessing. The word spiritual is used as opposed to material. How different the situation in the Old Testament. There the saints obeyed in order to be blessed; we obey because we have been blessed (Rom. 12:1,2).

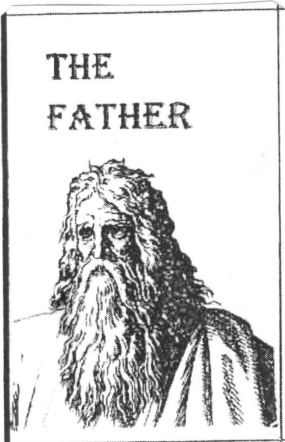
Only in Ephesians is the term "in the heavenlies" used. It refers to the suprasensory world where Christ is the ultimate authority. Because of WHAT we are in Christ, we can have our daily experience WHERE in the heavenlies Christ has dominion. The heavenlies are an immaterial region, the unseen universe.

2b. Chosen by the Father: 1:4

According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

The phrase "every spiritual blessing" in verse 3 includes the actions mentioned below.

God chose us, He predestinated us and He accepted us. Paul speaks of the wonderful work in eternity past by God the Father concerning the believer. He chose us or elected



us or selected us. The Greek word is *eklego* which means to choose or to elect, to call out of. The time: before the foundation of the world. The purpose: holy and without blame, during this life but primarily in the eternal state.

3b. Predestined to Sonship: 1:5

Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,

1c. The wisdom: God predestinated us

The word is *prooritzo*," to mark a boundary. God marks off certain individuals for a certain end. This happened before or simultaneously with the choosing, foreordaining.

1d. The effect: God marked us out.

2d. The end: to be placed as sons

Adoption was a Roman, not a Jewish practice, which makes us share Christ's destiny, a privilege involving responsibility.
--to bring glory to Himself, i.e. making Himself seen

3d. Good pleasure: God was free to do whatever He pleased, an idea especially emphasized in verse 11.

2c. The work of election:

1d. The source of election:

"He (the father) chose us"

2d. The sphere of election:

"He (the father) chose us in Christ"

It eliminates our works, focuses on Christ's work.

3d. The time of our election:

"before the foundations of the world"

The same idea is expressed even more forcefully in 2 Thessalonians 2:13. But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:

4d. The basis of our election:

'according to the kind intention of his will"

There is no condition indicated, nothing in the creature whether his faith or good works which prompted God to select him.

5d. The motive of our election:

The goodness or love of God, His "kind intention."

- 6d. The purpose of our election:
 - 1e. The immediate purpose:
Salvation; 2 Thess. 2:13
 - 2e. The intermediate purposes:
 - 1f. Holy and blameless:
--holiness cannot be the ground of our election
--holiness is the evidence of election
 - 2f. Adoption
 - 3e. The ultimate purpose:
The glory of God; "for the praise of his glory."

- 3c. The words of sovereignty:
 - 1d. Election:

Election deals with the method or process, a choice from a mass.
 - 2d. Predestination or Foreordination:

The goal is always brought into the picture.
 - 3d. Foreknowledge:

This is the most crucial and, unfortunately, the most misunderstood term in the doctrine of salvation. The Greek word, translated foreknowledge, is much more profound than the English word. It relates not to God knowing beforehand or His omniscience but His desire to establish a personal relationship. Both the Hebrew and the Greek word for "know," speaks of a deep, intimate knowledge; thus we have the following passages:

Amos 3:2 You only have I known of all the families of the earth...
Gal. 4:9 After that ye have known God, are known of God...
1 Cor. 8:3 But if any man love God the same is known of him...
Rom. 11:2 The people which he foreknew
Acts 2:23 ...determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God...

Thus it may be said that foreknowledge is the love of God toward those whom He predestines to be saved. It should be noted that foreknowledge is not of WHAT but of WHOM. It is individuals or nations that God foreknows, with whom He establishes a loving, intimate relationship. Most crucial is the teaching of Acts 13:48, "And when the

Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed."

F. F. Bruce speaks of our being "enrolled for eternal life in the records of heaven."

4d. Calling:

It speaks of the effectual invitation to Christ. Romans 1:1, 7; 8:28, 30.

5d. Purpose:

That we be adopted into God's family and become His spiritual property for all eternity, Eph. 1:9-11

6d. Will:

It speaks of the cause. In Ephesians 1:11, Paul indicates that God works all things after the counsel of His own will.

7d. Good pleasure:

Whatever God decides is the best of all possible actions. If God is good, which He is, He would never do anything that is improper and since God is all wise, He would never do anything that would be less than perfect. Thus, whether I understand His supreme plan or not, I know that when God makes a decision it is a kind and wise decision and I as a believer I need to always keep that in mind.
Ephesians 1:5, 9

4b. Accepted in the beloved: 1:6

To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

The word grace speaks of His unmerited favor. The word glory speaks of the manifestation of any or all of His attributes. As noted above, "the praise of his glory" is a refrain separating the three persons of the trinity.

2A. THE WORK OF THE SON AS THE EXECUTOR: 1:7-13

1b. The redemption from sins: 1:7-8

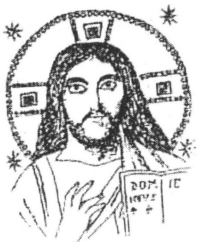
In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

⁸Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence;

1c. The redemption through the blood:

Christ carried out God's plan of salvation which included:

THE SON



Redemption—sinward
Propitiation—Godward
Reconciliation—manward

Redemption has three concepts: the price paid, the removal from the slave market of sin, and the setting free. Thus redemption speaks of the deliverance by means of a price. Here in verse 7 we have all three ideas. Why was blood necessary? There is no remission of sins without the shedding of blood (Lev. 17:11; Heb. 9:22).

2c. The riches of His grace:

God has given us wisdom—*sophia*—insight into the true nature of things. He has given us prudence—*phronesis*—practical knowledge, the application of doctrine to experience.

2b. The revelation of His will: 1:9-10

Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself:

¹⁰That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him:

Forgiveness brings us into the intimacy of fellowship. There slaves become sons.

1c. The content of His will: 1:9

The revelation of the mystery involves not something mysterious but something hitherto unrevealed. Thus, a biblical mystery is something hitherto concealed but now revealed, and His revelation is based on His will or His good pleasure or His purpose, a strong emphasis on God's sovereignty.

2c. The consummation of His will: 1:10

The program of redemption was for the primary good of God, not of man. Here is one of the references to dispensations. It means a stewardship or an administration. God treats the world as a household and man as a steward, and thus responsible and accountable to God. The dispensation of the fullness of time would be the end of an appointed period. We know from the scenario of end time events that it must refer to the millennial age.

3b. The receiving of an inheritance: 1:11-12

In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:

¹²That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.

1c. The designation of the inheritance: 1:11

The reference is not to an inheritance we have received but rather, we were chosen to be God's portion.

2c. The decree of God: 1:11

God's plan includes all things. His decree should be distinguished from His desires. Not everything God decrees fulfills His desires.

1 Tim. 2:4 – God wishes all men to be saved.

2 Pet. 3:9 – God is not willing that any should perish.

His decree includes evil as well as good. In Isa. 45:7 God says, "I create evil"

--We do not have to defend God for choosing a plan which obviously includes evil, BUT

--God always puts the responsibility on man

--Man always senses the responsibility (as did Judas)

--God never becomes involved in evil (James 1:13)

3c. The design of God's plan: 1:12

We as Gentiles should form, along with Jews, one body in the church age which brings glory to God or displays His attributes or perfections.

3A. THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT AS THE GUARANTOR: 1:13-14

1b. The sealing of the Spirit: 1:13

In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,

There are three steps in the salvation of the soul:

Election and predestination happen in eternity past, but in time there is the (1) hearing, (2) believing, and (3) sealing.

1c. The nature of the sealing:

There are only three passages in the scriptures for the believer's sealing: 2 Cor. 1:22; Eph. 1:13; 4:30.

--the agent: God, "[God] who has also sealed us"

--the sphere: Spirit. Someone else does the sealing.

--the extent: all believers

According to 2 Corinthians 1:22, there are no exceptions.

There is no command for sealing.

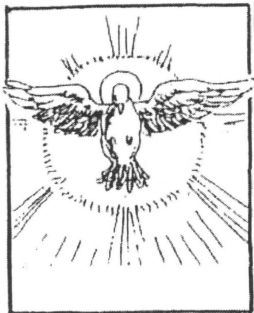
--the moment: the moment of belief

--the intent: ownership, certification and security

A seal may be open by two individuals; the one who sends the item and the one who receives the item. In our case, God sends the believer the glory and receives us in glory.

2c. The nature of the earnest of the Spirit: 1:14

**THE HOLY
SPIRIT**



Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

The main thought is pledge, that the believer will receive all the promised future blessings of his salvation. The Spirit is, as it were, our down payment that God will ultimately redeem our entire being (1 Thess. 5:23).

We are the possession that God redeems. We are what God receives.

CONCLUSION

The Ephesians 1 passage outlines six spiritual blessings. They include election, predestination, redemption, revelation, inheritance and sealing. Ephesians 1:3-14 highlight the three works of the trinity in behalf of the believer:

- the Father selects
- the Son saves
- the Holy Spirit secures

Whether we understand the full ramifications of God's work in our behalf, let us be grateful for His wise and eternal choice of believers, securing our salvation for time and eternity!