

Praise And Thanksgiving For Benefits In Christ

1:3-14

- Verses 3-14 makes one long sentence, and may be one of the longest sentences ever written. Many translations place periods in this sentence in an attempt for clarity.
- This section of this letter contains some profound truths that need to be carefully studied and appreciated.

“Every Spiritual Blessing”

1:3

EPH 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ [the anointed one], who has blessed us [as His children] with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,

- “eulogetos” [yoo lah gay **tahs**] is correctly translated “blessed.” See 2 Cor. 1:3 & Rom. 1:25.
- It is used exclusively of God in the New Testament. It is used in the sense of “eulogize, to speak well of.”
- It is different from the Greek word “markarios” [mahr **kah** ree ahs] used in the Beatitudes. (Matt. 5:3-12). It has the meaning of “blessed, happy, prosperous, fortunate.” See also Lk. 14:15; Jn. 13:17; 20:29.

1. “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” - This language is used elsewhere by Paul and Peter. (2 Cor. 1:3; 1 Pet. 1:3).

2CO 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort;

1PE 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

- a. God is spoken of as the “the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”
- b. The language here does not mean that Jesus is not “God.” (Matt. 1:23; Jn. 1:1; Heb. 1:8; Isa. 9:6,7; Jn. 20:28; Phil 2:4-8; Col. 1:15; 2:9; Jn. 14:9; 10:30).
- c. It does not mean Jesus is inferior to His Father. (Phil. 2:4-8; Col. 1:15; Jn. 1:18; 10:30; 14:9).
- d. This language does not mean that God the Father was before Jesus Christ.
- e. Both are eternal. (Jn. 1:1-3). Mic. 5:2; Isa. 9:6; 1 Jn. 1:2

MIC 5:2 "But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Too little to be among the clans of Judah, From you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, From the days of eternity."

ISA 9:6 For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, **Eternal Father**, Prince of Peace. The words “Eternal Father” in context refer to Jesus and literally mean “father of eternity.” Jesus is eternal.

1JO 1:2 and the life was manifested, and we have seen and bear witness and proclaim to you **the eternal life**, which was

with the Father and was manifested to us— “manifested” is reference to the incarnation of “the eternal life” that had been with the Father.

1) Jesus was with the Father “in the beginning.” (Jn. 1:1).

2) He is described here as “the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us.” (1 Jn. 1:2).

3) All things were created through Jesus. (Jn. 1:1-3; Col. 1:15-17; Heb. 1:3).

4) Since Jesus created everything that has been made, it means Jesus Himself was not made.

5) He has always been and always will be.

f. The language [Father and Son] denotes a very close relationship between God the Father and Jesus Christ. They lived in perfect harmony with one another. They dearly loved one another.

2. “who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing”

- “us” refers to those in Christ then and now.

- The Greek “pas” [**pahs**] means “all, every.”

a. “All spiritual blessings” come from God “in Christ.”

b. It is vain to seek them elsewhere.

c. “Spiritual blessings” are distinguished from material blessing that also come from God. (Jas. 1:17).

d. “Spiritual blessings” Paul will set forth include such things as salvation in Christ, adoption as sons, redemption, forgiveness, wisdom and understanding, the Holy Spirit.

3. “in the heavenly places in Christ”

a. Lit. the plural of “epoupanios” [eh poo **rah** nee ahs] literally means “heavenlies.”

b. The spiritual blessings have their origin in heaven and are bestowed exclusively upon those “in Christ.”

c. This expression does not refer to the church although one must be in the church to receive them. (Eph. 5:23, 25).

d. Other references to “in the heavenly” Lit. “in the heavenlies.”

- “places” is in italics and has been supplied.

- Some translators supply “realms” and translate “heavenly realms.”

EPH 1:20 which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and seated Him at His right hand **in the heavenly places** [heaven]

EPH 2:6 and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him **in the heavenly places** [heaven], in Christ Jesus,

EPH 3:10 in order that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities **in the heavenly places** [heaven] This is a reference to good angels who did not know “the manifold wisdom of

God” until God chose to make it “known through the church.” It had been hidden from them until the coming of Christ.

EPH 6:12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness **in the heavenly places** [the heavens above the earth].

- “in the heavenly places” in Ephesians 6:12 does not refer to the heavens where God is and where Jesus sits at His right hand. (Acts 2:32,33).
- It refers to the lower regions of heaven - the heaven where the birds fly, where the clouds are, and at most where the celestial bodies are.
- It is equivalent to Ephesians 2:2, “according to **the prince of the power [authority] of the air**, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.”
- The devil and his angels are represented as living in the regions above the earth. There is no way to know their exact location and it is immaterial. The main point is that they are a constant threat to believers. See Eph. 6:10-18.

4. It is significant that “all” spiritual blessings are “in Christ.”

- a. This means there are none [zero] outside of Christ.
- b. Those who want God’s spiritual blessings must be “in Christ.”
- c. Christ is the only way to heaven and He is the only avenue to God’s spiritual blessings. (Jn. 14:6; Acts 4:12).
- d. Those who are not attached to Christ [the Vine], as branches, are lost. (Jn. 15:1-6).

“He [God] Chose Us In Him”

1:4

EPH 1:4 just as He [God the Father] chose us in Him [Jesus] before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless [above reproach] before Him [Jesus]. In love

- NIV translates “katabole” [kah tah bah lay] “creation” rather than “foundation.” This is interpretation, but in context correctly interprets what Paul is setting forth here.
 - The word “katabole” literally means “a throwing or laying down.”
 - It describes God throwing down a universe into space, speaking the universe into existence. It speaks of the act of God creating the world out of nothing.
1. “just as He [God] chose us in Him” - God predestined that men would be saved through His Son, and they would “be conformed to the image of His Son.” (Rom. 8:29). He wants us to imitate Christ. Jesus lived to please the Father and so should we.
 - a. This is not an arbitrary choosing or a choosing from favoritism or merit. (Jn. 3:16; Acts 10:34, 35; 1 Tim. 2:4).
 - b. God chose that those who come to Christ and trust and obey Him would be saved. (Jn. 3:36; Heb. 5:9).
 - c. All are invited to come to God. (Mk. 16:15; Matt. 11:28-30; 28:19, 20).

- d. God wants all to be saved. (1 Tim. 2:4; Heb. 2:9; 2 Pet. 3:9; 1 Jn. 2:1,2).
- e. Sadly, the majority of people reject God's Son and salvation in Him. (Matt. 7:13,14).
- f. They judge themselves "unworthy of eternal life." (Acts 13:46).
- g. Men can choose and are required to make a choice. (Josh. 24:15; Acts 2:40).
 - 1) We can choose to believe or not believe, to repent or not to repent, to be baptized or not to be baptized, to live daily for Christ or to reject Him.
 - 2) God wants us to choose Him, but He will not force us to serve Him.
 - 3) We become a part of the "elect" (chosen) by obeying the gospel. (2 Thess. 2:13, 14).

Note: There are a number of false doctrines in regard to salvation.

- Some teach **universalism** that all will be saved. This doctrine makes the way one lives a matter of indifference. See Matt. 7:13, 14, 21.
 - Others teach **individual predestination**. This doctrine also makes the way one lives a matter of indifference. You are either saved or lost and you have no choice in the matter. It is a form of the doctrine "once saved always saved." Under the doctrine of individual predestination one chosen cannot be lost.
 - Others teach "**once saved always saved.**" This doctrine also means that even if you turn from Christ you will still be saved. It ignores the warnings of God about falling from grace. (1 Cor. 10:12; 9:27; Heb. 3:12; 6:4-6; Jas. 5:19, 20).
 - Others teach that **God is a respecter of persons**, and has excluded certain races, classes, etc. from salvation. It ignores Acts 10:34,35 and 2 Peter 3:9. See also Jn. 3:16; Matt. 11:28-30; Heb. 2:9.
 - Others teach **there is no hell**, and if one is not saved he will remain in the grave without any consequences for a sinful life. (Matt. 10:28; 25:30, 31; Rev. 21:8).
 - Others teach **the soul goes to purgatory**, but one can get out of purgatory over a period of time. The word "purgatory" is not found the scriptures, and is a teaching of men - not God. Purgatory over a period of time becomes universalism or near universalism.
 - Others teach **ignorance is bliss**. They contend that those who do not hear the gospel will be saved. This means we do a great disservice to men by preaching the gospel to them. If they never hear the gospel, they are saved. If they hear it and reject it, they are lost. This means the best way to assure the salvation of others is to let them remain ignorant.
2. "before the foundation of the world" - Lit. "before [the] foundation of [the] world."
- a. The scheme or plan of redemption was not an after thought of God.
 - b. He decided before the world came into existence that He would save men in Jesus.
 - c. In His omniscient He knew men would sin and would need a Savior.
 - d. The all-knowing God has no surprises. They knows all things past, present, future.

- e. Men could not save themselves for their righteousness is as filthy rags before God.
3. “that we should be holy and blameless before Him.”
- “holy” is from “hagios” [**hah** gee ahs] - meaning “holy, clean sacred.” The word can also mean “saint.” (Eph. 1:1; Rom. 1:7). It is used of “angels” in Jude 14.
 - “blameless” is from “amomos” [ah **mah** mahs] meaning “without blame or blemish.”
- a. Men are all sinners (Rom. 3:23), and there is no way they could ever be “holy” or “blameless” on their own.
 - b. Only by coming to Jesus and being washed in His blood could anyone be saved and stand “holy and blameless before Him.”
 - c. This condition applies to now and eternity as long as Christians “walk in the light” and confess their sins. (1 Jn. 1:7, 9).
 - 1) In heaven there will be no sin. We know this from the things that will not be there. (Rev. 21:4).
 - 2) Furthermore, the Bible teaches that Satan and his angels will be in hell. (Matt. 25:41; Rev. 20:10).
 - 3) There will be no tempter or temptation in heaven.
 - d. God will cleanse us as long as we keep ourselves “in the love of God.” (Jud. 21).

4. “In love”

- a. These words can modify the words “blameless before Him” and be translated “blameless before Him in love,” but most believe the words “in love” modify the following words “in love He predestined us to adoption as sons”
- b. Out of God’s immense love He predestined we would become His spiritual children and enjoy His rich , bountiful spiritual blessings.

The Predestination Of God

EPH 1:5 He [God] predestined us to adoption as [His] sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention [good pleasure] of His will,

- “proorizo” [prah ah **ree** zoh] means “I decide beforehand, predestine.”
- “huiiothesia” [hwee ah theh **see** ah] - “adoption” - See Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:5.

1. “He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself.”

- a. God did not predestined or predetermined individuals who would be saved.
- b. He predestined or predetermined beforehand that men would be saved through Jesus Christ.
- c. Jesus died for His body, the church. (Eph. 5:25; Acts 20:28).
- d. He is “the Savior of the body.” (Eph. 5:23).

2. All men are children of God by creation (Gen. 1:26, 27), but this alone means nothing spiritually.
3. What really counts is being born again into God's spiritual family. (Jn. 3:1-5; Gal. 3:26,27).
4. All of this requires we come to God through Jesus. (Jn. 14:6).
5. This is the only way we can be reconciled to God and be members of God's spiritual family.
6. This was not forced on God, but was done "according to the kind intention of His will."
 - a. The Greek is "eudokia" [yoo dah kee ah] meaning "good pleasure, kind intention, gracious purpose."
 - b. He chose to adopt sons "through Jesus Christ to Himself" because it pleased Him.

EPH 1:6 to the praise of the glory of His [God's] grace [unmerited grace], which [grace] He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved [Jesus His Son].

- "charitoo" [kah ree tah oh] - "I bestow favor upon, favor highly, bless"
 - Lit. "in the [one] having been loved" is translated "Beloved." NIV has "in the One he loves." See Col. 1:13 "Beloved Son" - Lit. "of the Son of the love of him."
1. The word "Beloved" [in the One having been loved] is a reference to Jesus Christ. (Matt. 3:16; 12:18; 17:5).
 2. "Grace" is "freely bestowed on us in the Beloved" meaning it is not earned (Rom. 6:23; Eph. 2:8-10), but it came from a loving and gracious God.

EPH 1:7 In Him [Christ] we have redemption [deliverance and salvation] through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses [sins], according to the riches of His grace [unmerited favor],

- "aphesis" - [ah feh sees] "forgiveness, deliverance, remission."
- "paraptoma" [pah rahp toh mah] - "false step, trespass, transgression, sin, offense, wrongdoing"
- "riches" and "rich" are used a number of times by Paul in this epistle in regard to God or Christ.

EPH 1:18 I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are **the riches of the glory** of His inheritance in the saints,

EPH 2:7 in order that in the ages to come He might show **the surpassing riches of His grace** in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

EPH 3:8 To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles **the unfathomable riches of Christ,**

EPH 3:16 that He would grant you, **according to the riches of His glory,** to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man;

EPH 2:4 But God, **being rich in mercy,** because of His great love with which He loved us,

1. Our "redemption" is "through His blood."
 - a. "apolutrosis" [a pah loo troh sees] meaning "release, redemption."
 - b. It essential that it be observed that "redemption" is "through His blood," not apart from it. See 1 Jn. 1:7; Heb. 9:22; Rev. 1:5).

2. “Redemption” is defined as “the forgiveness of our trespasses.”
 - a. “Trespasses” and “sins” are basically synonyms. See Eph. 2:1,2.
 - b. God’s children have been released from the penalty of sin, and have been forgiven of all their sins.
 - c. They no longer have to fear condemnation as long as they “keep” themselves “in the love of God.” (Rom. 8:1; Jud. 21).
 - d. God forgives and ceases to hold our sins against us. (Heb. 8:12). See also Heb. 10:17

HEB 8:12 "For I will be merciful to their iniquities, And I will remember their sins no more."

HEB 10:17 "And their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more."

3. Once again Paul exclaims that all of this is “according to the riches of His grace.”
 - a. “riches” has the idea of God’s overflowing kindness. “ploutos” [**ploo** tahs] means “riches, wealth.”
 - b. God has a wealth of grace for those who accept His Son in faith and obedience.
 - c. The “riches” of God’s grace is unlimited to all living for Christ in trustful obedience.

EPH 1:8 which [grace] He lavished [made to abound] upon us. In all wisdom and insight

- “lavished” is from “perisseuo [peh rees soo oh] “to abound, to be over and above.”
 - “insight” is from “phronesis” [frah **nay** sees] meaning “way of thinking, understanding, insight.”
 - The words “in all wisdom and insight” refer to God making known “the mystery of His will.”
 - It is possible to understand the words “in all wisdom and insight” to refer to what God has “lavished upon us.”
1. God’s marvelous grace has been “lavished upon us.”
 2. The words “in all wisdom and insight” seem to modify verse 9.

EPH 1:9 He made known to us the mystery [secret] of His will, according to His kind intention [good pleasure] which He purposed in Him

- “eudokia” [yoo dah **kee** ah] - “good pleasure, kind intention, gracious purpose.”
1. [“in all wisdom and insight”] “He made known to us the mystery of His will”
 - a. “Mystery” has the idea of something that was in the mind of God, and could not be known until God chose to reveal it to man. It comes from the Greek “musterion” [moo **stay** ree ahn] meaning “secret, the hidden thing, mystery.”
 - b. God’s will is not something mysterious in the sense it cannot be understood.
 - c. God’s will has been revealed [it was a secret hidden in the mind of God] and it is knowable and doable. (Eph. 5:17; Matt. 7:21; 12:46-50).

2. “according to His [God’s] intention which He purposed in Him [Jesus].
 - a. It was all according to God’s plan. There were no surprises or accidents. No one could change or influence God’s plan.
 - b. God’s will was completely carried out in Christ’s death and the revealing of His will through Jesus, the apostles, the prophets and others.

EPH 1:10 with a view to an administration [plan, arrangement] suitable to the fulness of the times, that is, the summing up of [centering, heading up] all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things upon the earth. In Him

1. “With a view to an administration suitable to the fulness of the times”
 - a. Lit. “for a stewardship of the fulness of the times”
 - b. The Greek “oikonomia” [oi kah nah mee ah] means “management, arrangement, order, plan, training, office.”
 - 1) RSV “as a plan for the fulness of time” McCord “even the plan of salvation in the fullness of the times”
 - 2) The idea is that the plan is to be dispensed in the fulness of time.
 - 3) This is when Christ came. (Gal. 4:4). Jesus came at the perfect time - the time God had planned.
 - 4) We are not sure why it was the perfect time, but here are some things that may be involved.
 - Many were looking for the Messiah. Both John the Baptist and Jesus were able to draw great crowds.
 - The world was mostly at peace. It is easier in such times to spread the gospel.
 - Most could speak a common language - Greek.
 - The Romans had built a road system that made travel easier.
 - The time had come for the Old Testament prophecies to be fulfilled.

2. “That is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things upon the earth.”
 - a. Lit. “to head up the all things in the Christ.”
 - b. This is another way of saying Christ has “all authority.” (Matt. 28:18).
 - c. He is “exalted” at God’s right hand. (Acts 2:33; 1 Pet. 3:22; Heb. 1:3).

EPH 1:11 also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel [plan, decision] of His will,

- “boule” [boo lay] - “purpose, counsel, resolution, decision, plan, ”
1. “In Him” modifies verse 11 - “In Him [Christ] also we have obtained an inheritance”
 - a. We have been made heirs in Him.
 - b. We are heirs to all the great promises and blessings of God.

2. “having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel [plan] of His will”
 - a. The One who predestined us to be saved in Christ always acts according to His own will.
 - b. Nothing that men or angels say or do can change the will of God to save men through His Son.
 - c. This was a plan that was fixed even before the creation of man.

EPH 1:12 to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.

1. All of this was that those “who were the first to hope in Christ” should live “to the praise of His glory.”
 - a. This is an encouragement to his readers to live godly lives.
 - b. “first to hope in Christ” suggests there would be others “to hope in Christ” and Paul and others were laboring to that end.
 - c. God intends that believers throughout the ages should live “to the praise of His glory.”
2. God’s plan is for His glory and for our salvation.
3. God’s plan is not an after thought of God or an accident, but it was perfectly and fully formed in eternity.
4. God wants all to live “to the praise of His glory.”
 - a. This is why we were created.
 - b. God wants to be glorified by creatures of choice. See Matt. 5:16.

“Sealed In Him With The Holy Spirit Of Promise”

1:13,14

EPH 1:13 In Him [Christ], you also, after listening to [hearing] the message [word] of [the] truth, the gospel [good news] of your salvation-- having also believed, you were sealed [certified] in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise,

- Greek has “in whom you having heard the word of the truth.”
 - “the word of the truth” is defined by Paul as “the gospel of your salvation.”
 - “The gospel of your salvation” is also known as: (1) the gospel - Rom. 1:16 (2) the gospel of God - Rom. 1:1 (3) the gospel of peace - Eph. 6:15 (4) the gospel of His Son -Rom. 1:9 (5) the gospel of Christ - 1 Cor. 9:12; 2 Cor. 2:12, etc.
 - “Holy Spirit of promise” is also called “the Spirit of God” or “the Spirit of Christ.” (Rom. 8:9).
1. “The word of [the] truth” is defined as “the gospel of your salvation.” See Rom. 1:16; Jas. 1:21.
 2. “You were sealed in Him”
 - a. “sealed” is from “sphragizo” [sfrah gee zoh] meaning “I put a seal on, seal, mark, certify.” By giving believers the Holy Spirit, God seals, stamps, certifies them as His own possession.

- b. The Holy Spirit certifies we are in Christ and have the assurance of salvation in Him. (Rom. 8:16; 2 Cor. 1:22; 2 Tim. 2:19).

ROM 8:16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,

2CO 1:22 who also sealed us and gave us the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge.

2TI 2:19 Nevertheless, the firm foundation of God stands, having this seal, "The Lord knows those who are His," and, "Let everyone who names the name of the Lord abstain from wickedness." The noun "sphragis" [**s**fr**ah** gees] means "a seal, the seal placed upon a book, a signet ring, the inscription or impression made by a seal."

- c. The Holy Spirit, through the word of truth, produces "the fruit of the Spirit" in us. (Gal. 5:22, 23).

- d. It is possible for the Christian to "quench" the Spirit by sinful conduct.

1) "Do not quench the Spirit;" (1 Thess. 5:19). Gr. "sbennumi" [**s**ben noo mee] means "to quench, extinguish."

2) In this letter Paul warns against grieving the Spirit. (Eph. 4:30).

EPH 4:30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

- 3. "Holy Spirit of promise" refers to the Holy Spirit who has been promised to believers. (Jn. 7:37-39; Acts 2:38; 5:32; Gal. 4:6; 1 Jn. 3:24).

EPH 1:14 who is given as a pledge [promise, guarantee, earnest, first installment] of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory [splendor].

- 1. "who is given as a pledge of our inheritance"

- a. "pledge" is from "arrabon" [ar rah **boh**n] meaning "earnest, first installment, deposit, down payment."

- b. The presence [indwelling] of the Holy Spirit is a down payment assuring our later inheritance.

- c. As long we listen to the Holy Spirit and obey Him, He is the guarantee of our salvation.

- 2. "with a view to the redemption of God's own possession" is literally "till redemption of the possession."

- a. McCord has "for redemption of the purchased possession."

- b. We are God's children now, we have been purchased by God, and will spend eternity with God.

- c. We will be raised "unto the resurrection of life." (Jn. 5:28, 29). See Jn. 11:25

- d. We are God's children and are owned by Him.

- e. We were purchased with the blood of Christ. (1 Cor. 6:19, 20; Eph. 1:7,13; 1 Pet. 1:19).

- 3. "to the praise of His glory" - See Eph. 1:12.

EPH 1:12 to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.

- a. Everything has as its goal the praise of the glorious God.

b. We are to live to God's glory. (Matt. 5:16; 1 Cor. 10:31)

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