

The Book of Ephesians

Chapter 1

Background

- Written by Paul around 60 A.D. while he was imprisoned in Rome (see Acts 28:30-31)
- Paul had visited Ephesus twice (Acts 18:19-21; 19:1-41), met its church leaders on another occasion (Acts 20:17-38), and would write letters to its young pastor (I and II Timothy).
- Written at the same time as Colossians and covers similar topics
- Can be divided into two sections
 - The Blessings for Christians – Doctrinal – Chapters 1-3
 - The Behavior of Christians – Practical – Chapters 4-6
- Purpose seems to be to prevent future issues (see Acts 20:29-30 and Revelation 2:4)

Chapter 1

- I. Introduction – vs. 1-2
 - Note the name and title of the author, the addressees, and the invocation.
- II. The Blessings from God in Salvation – vs. 3-14
 - vs. 3 - J. Vernon McGee – “He has blessed us. We praise Him with our lips because He first made us blessed. Our blessing is a declaration. His blessings are deeds.”
 - Chosen – God chose to specially bless those in Christ
 - Why? – So that we should be free from sin’s effects
 - Predestinated – decided beforehand the destiny of those He chose
 - Adoption – being placed in God’s family – Galatians 4:6-7
 - Why? – For God’s pleasure and glory
 - Accepted – not on our own merit, but in Christ
 - Redemption – purchase back, Christ paid our sin-debt
 - Forgiveness – that sin-debt is forgotten
 - Grace – unmerited favor
 - His will – God’s purpose and plan
 - vs. 10 – looking forward to the day of Christ’s reign and Eternal Kingdom
 - vs. 11-14 – there is a shift in pronouns here. Paul goes from talking about *us* to speaking of *we* and *ye*. This appears to emphasize the Jewish believers as *we* and the Gentile believers as *ye*. We will revisit this subject in the next chapter. Romans 11:11-24

- Inheritance – Webster’s 1828 – “an estate given or possessed by donation or divine appropriation” or “that which is possessed or enjoyed”.
- Sealed – Carroll – “the object of the seal is to indicate ownership and to safeguard what is sealed unto its destination”.
- Earnest – Webster’s 1828 – “First fruits; that which is in advance, and gives promise of something to come.”

III. Paul’s Prayer of Thanksgiving – vs. 15-23

- vs. 15 – Many scholars note that Paul is writing to a church he is quite familiar with but here seems to know them only by reputation. He also does not give his usual list of personal greetings, as we see in Romans 16. Another reasonable explanation is that Paul is a *persona non grata* in Ephesus after the events of Acts 19 and is being careful because of safety and security.
- Wisdom, revelation, understanding, enlightened – that truth be made known to our hearts and minds (John 16:13). The purpose of this is threefold knowing:
 - Hope of His calling – the substance of the Gospel
 - Riches of the glory of his inheritance – the depth of the Gospel
 - Exceeding greatness of His power – the effective power of the Gospel
- vs.20 – the power of God displayed in the resurrection and exaltation of Christ. We will see this applied to us in the next chapter. Christ is exalted in:
 - Resurrection – “raised him from the dead”
 - Coronation – “set him at his own right hand”
 - Elevation – “Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named”
 - Duration – “not only in this world, but also in that which is to come”
 - Subjugation – “hath put all things under his feet” – Hebrews 2:8
 - Designation – “gave him to be the head over all things to the church”
- The church as the body of Christ – I Corinthians 12-27, Colossians 1:18,24