

WE WERE MADE AN HERITAGE

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In the first chapter of Ephesians, Paul discussed the glorious blessings that Christians possess in Christ Jesus. Verse 3 reads, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ” (Eph. 1:3). Take now just a small glimpse of the blessings Paul develops.

We are ‘chosen in Him’ (v. 4).

We are made “Accepted in the Beloved” (v. 6).

We have redemption and forgiveness of sins in Him (v. 7).

Even after a light reading of Ephesians chapter one, we would proclaim “There is consolation in Christ” (Phil. 2:1).

Of the great blessings Paul proclaims in this chapter, we will take time and focus our attention on verse 11 at this time. “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” (Eph. 1:11 KJV). When we were born again, God, added us, to the Lord’s church (Acts 2:47), which is the “house of God” (1 Tim. 3:15). We became members of God’s family. God is our Father, and Christ is our Brother. Paul wrote,

For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together (Rom. 8:15-17).

Peter also wrote of this marvelous inheritance. “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you” (1 Pet. 1:3-4). Those who fashion themselves after the standard set by our Lord in the beatitudes (Matt. 5:3-11) have a great reward reserved in heaven (Matt. 5:12). This is the consummation of the inheritance.

Certainly, these are biblical thoughts. However, they may not be the thought that the apostle Paul has in mind in this passage. In the reference to verse 11 above, we quoted from the King James Version. Notice now the same verse from other versions.

In whom also we were made a heritage, having been foreordained according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his will (Eph. 1:11 ASV).

In Christ we were also chosen when we were predestined according to the purpose of the one who does everything according to the intention of his will (Eph. 1:11 ISV).

As we can see from comparison, the thought is different than that expressed in the King James Version. Where the KJV says that we are receiving an inheritance, these versions indicate that we **are** the inheritance or a heritage. The Greek word, εοκληρω/ghmen, in this form is found only here in the New Testament. It is from the Greek word, κληρω/w, and it means “to be appointed by lot, to be destined, to be chosen” Various translators note the connection with the assignment of territories by lot to the various tribes of Israel (Deut. 4:38 & 15:4). Salmond adds: “Thus the idea of *lot* or *portion* passed over into that of *inheritance*.” “Ellicott, in his commentary on the Greek text of Ephesians, adopts: ‘in whom we were also chosen as His inheritance’ The idea is that we, the children of God, have become the possession of our God and Father. That is the exact thought of the word found in both Titus 2:14 and 1 Peter 2:9 which describes the people of God as “a

peculiar” people. We are God’s own possession. We are the possession, which should “walk in good works” (Eph. 2:10). There are other results of our being the possession of God, which reflect on our God. In Ephesians 3:9-11 Paul highlights one of these results.

And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: (Eph 3:9-11).

We as God’s possession become a monument of sort to the “multi-colored” wisdom of our God. There is another interesting thought introduced by the apostle Paul in Ephesians 2:7. “That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus” (Eph. 2:7). Our being the possession of our God as a heritage and recipients of His bounty proclaims that our God is a gracious and a kind God.

When we, the Lord’s church, are careful to present ourselves before our God in such a way that pleases Him we become a herald to the character and nature of our God. If we fail to be the church that is pleasing to our God, then we become silent to the glory of God. What a tragedy it is that so many among the Lord’s church have compromised and denominationalized the church to the point that her most glorious message is thwarted. May we ever strive to be what God wants us to be as we study our Bibles much, much more.

ENDNOTES

¹ Fritz Rienecker, *Linguistic Key To The Greek New Testament*, p. 522.

² Ralph Earle, *Word Meanings in the New Testament*, p. 292.

³ *Ibid.*