

THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS

"The Glory of His Inheritance" Ephesians 1:18

Introduction

1. Paul's prayer for the Ephesians was occasioned by his hearing of their faith and love (v. 15). The enormous blessings received in Christ also prompted his prayer (vv. 3-14).

2. Specific to the prayer is Paul's concern for an enlightened heart so as to know (v. 18). The three factors to know are: a. The hope of His calling; b. The glory of His inheritance; and c. The exceeding greatness of His power (vv. 18b-19a). The key word to distinguish these factors of prayer is "what" which occurs three times.

3. While the hope of His calling is pivoted in Christ (Col. 1:24), the glory of His inheritance fixes upon the future. Five statements are made about the inheritance in a blessed description:

1. IT IS COMPARED.

It appears that twice in the context believers are considered belonging to God: a. They are God's heritage (v. 11) and b. They are God's purchased possession (v. 14). It may well be that it is again Paul's purpose to underscore God's incalculable investment in believers. They are His everlasting portion. The context, however, would seem better to view the inheritance as what is yet to be for the believer. That will indeed be glorious. The future seems to be more the concern than the present. God through Paul would have the Ephesians look forward and not around (cf. Rom. 8:28, 29; 2 Cor. 4:17, 18; 1 Pet. 1:7).

2. IT IS CONCEIVED.

The personal possessive pronoun "His" clearly shows the origin of the inheritance. It originates with God and is given by Him to His people. This is truly a great thought, for it sees the inheritance in terms which can only be viewed divinely. Peter does this elsewhere (1 Pet. 1:4). There the infinite God gives an inheritance which has: a. Quality (incorruptible), b. Purity (undefiled), c. Longevity (unfading), and d. Security (reserved in heaven).

3. IT IS CONSTRUED.

The word "glory" is used to speak of the inheritance. Eight times this word is found in Ephesians (1:6, 12, 14, 17, 18; 3:13, 16, 21). It may be defined as the exhibition of His essence and attributes. Simply, it speaks of the reflection of all that He is. The inheritance is shining, bright, full of splendor, and reflects God's very essence. Magnificent!

4. IT IS COMPOUNDED.

"Glory" is qualified by the word "riches." This is also repeated several times in the book (1:7, 18; 2:7; 3:8, 16). The point is that the glory of the inheritance is inconceivably great. "Riches" is used of external possessions (Matt. 13:22; 1 Tim. 6:17) and spiritual ones (here; Col. 1:27).

5. IT IS CONCERNED.

The prepositional phrase "in the saints" must refer to the manner in which the inheritance is distributed. The inheritance will be enjoyed among them (cf. Acts 20:32; 26:18; Col. 1:12). The chosen predestinated group (saints) will ultimately have their own blessings to enjoy. Oh glory.

Conclusion Paul's prayer for spiritual vision is vindicated. Unless God opens the eyes of the heart, one will never understand the riches of the glory of the inheritance which awaits the saints. Hallelujah.