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# The Summation of All Things in Christ

## Studies in Ephesians with a Local Church Emphasis

LESSON VIII : OPENING EULOGY PART TWO: REDEMPTION IN CHRIST (1:7-12)

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### Greeting

<sup>1</sup> Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God,

To the saints who are in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus:

<sup>2</sup> Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

### Spiritual Blessings in Christ

#### God the Father

<sup>3</sup> Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, <sup>4</sup> just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, <sup>5</sup> having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, <sup>6</sup> *to the praise of the glory of His grace*, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved.

#### God the Son

<sup>7</sup> In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace <sup>8</sup> which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, <sup>9</sup> having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, <sup>10</sup> that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth — in Him. <sup>11</sup> In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, <sup>12</sup> that we who first trusted in Christ should be *to the praise of His glory*.

#### God the Holy Spirit

<sup>13</sup> In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, <sup>14</sup> who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, *to the praise of His glory*. (NKJV)

## The Sacrifice of the Son (1:7-12)

*In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: that 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: 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: that we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.* (KJV)

*In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding. And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment — to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ. In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory.* (NIV)

*in whom we have the redemption through his blood, the remission of the trespasses, according to the riches of His grace, in which He did abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, having made known to us the secret of His will, according to His good pleasure, that He purposed in Himself, in regard to the dispensation of the fulness of the times, to bring into one the whole in the Christ, both the things in the heavens, and the things upon the earth — in him; in whom also we did obtain an inheritance, being foreordained according to the purpose of Him who the all things is working according to the counsel of His will, for our being to the praise of His glory, [even] those who did first hope in the Christ,* (Young's Literal Translation)

*“The order of thought at this point descends from the pre-mundane Covenant to the actual Work of Redemption; the accomplished deliverance of the saints through the Death of Christ.” [Moule, 48f] “With these words the grace with which believers have been highly favored in the Beloved is elaborated on in terms of some of the present benefits of salvation which they have in him.” [Lincoln, 27] “The father’s plan of adoption into his family could only be accomplished through Jesus Christ. Having stated the Father’s plan, Paul naturally speaks next about Christ who made provision for that plan. In the discussion of the*

work of the second person of the Trinity, Paul shows that God provides redemption in Christ (v. 7), provides wisdom to understand the mystery of his will (vv. 8-10), and recognizes his inheritance in the believers (v. 11).” [Hoehner, 204]

**V. 7 — in whom we have redemption —** Ἐν ᾧ ἔχομεν τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν [en hō echomen tēn apolutrōsin] “in whom”, i.e., not in ourselves. The “in whom” refers back to Christ. “We have”, the present tense emphasizing that redemption is an on-going state. The present tense (“an on-going present action; the state of continued existence”) here stands out in contrast to the surrounding aorists (“a single occurring action, usually in the past”). Here are the verbs in this portion of scripture which reflect a single action in the past:

“He chose us ... He made us accepted in the Beloved ... He made to abound toward us ... He purposed in Himself ... we have obtained an inheritance ... you were sealed with the Holy Spirit ...”.

Here are more verbs of a different form which reflect a single action, most of which occurred in the past:

“who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing ... having predestined us ... having made known to us ... being predestined according to the purpose of Him ... we who first trusted in Christ ... after you heard the word of truth ... [you] having believed ...”.

Yet standing out in the midst of these verbs is our text, “we have redemption” signifying an on-going present reality. Wuest translates it as follows: “*in whom we are having our redemption through His blood...*”.

**REDEMPTION — ἀπολύτρωσις [apolutrōsis]** “A releasing by ransom (*apo* = ‘away from’ + *lutrōsis* from *lutroō* and that from *lutron*, ransom). God did not set men right out of hand with nothing done about men’s sins. We have the words of Jesus that he came to give his life a ransom (*lutron*) for many (Mark 10:45 || Matthew 20:28). *Lutron* is common in the papyri as the purchase-money in freeing slaves.” [Robertson, *Word Pictures*, vol 4 pg 347] “**‘Redemption’ means, basically, ‘liberation through payment of a price.’ Thus, in the second and third centuries B.C., ‘redemption’ often refers to the ‘ransoming’ of prisoners of war, slaves, and condemned criminals. If ‘redemption’ has this connotation here, then Paul would be presenting Christ’s death as a ‘ransom,’ a ‘payment’ that takes the place of that penalty for sins ‘owed’ by all people to God.**” [Moo, *Romans*, pg 229]

**DOES “REDEMPTION” ALWAYS SIGNIFY THE PAYMENT OF A RANSOM?** — There is a dispute among Bible students whether the word demands the connotation of ‘payment of a ransom’ or whether it only signifies deliverance. “It is true that often in their LXX usage [redemption] and its cognates retain the sense of release through paying back. This sense is also frequently clear in the nonbiblical usages of [redemption], among which are references to the manumission of slaves which involved payment. In addition, Paul does speak of believers as having been bought with a price in 1 Cor 6:20; 7:23; and he uses the verb ... in Gal 3:13; 4:5, in which this idea is also present. On the other hand, many of the LXX usages of the redemption word-group are references to deliverance from danger and especially deliverance from Egyptian bondage and Babylonian exile where no notion of a ransom price is involved.... ***It is hard to decide this issue, but it appears to be overdogmatic to insist on ransom connotations for all uses of [redemption] in the NT.***” [Lincoln, 28] “Redemption — this word and its Greek equivalent point by derivation to the idea of rescue by ransom, whatever the ransom may be. ***This meaning in usage often vanishes, or at least retires, as where in O.T. a deliverance by mere force is called a redemption (Exod vi. 6, &c.). But it is always ready to assert itself as the native meaning, and certainly so here, close to the mention of the Redeemer’s blood.***” [Moule, 48] “It is granted that the main import of this word is release or setting free rather than payment, but it does not exclude the latter as some think.” [Hoehner, 206]

**HOW COULD ONE MAN PAY FOR THE SINS OF INNUMERABLE PEOPLE?** — “In view of the fact that Christ is God, and therefore a Person of infinite value and dignity, we have no hesitation in saying that ***the crucifixion of Christ was not only the world’s worst crime, but that it was a worse crime than that which would have been committed if the entire human race had been crucified.*** Isaiah tells us that in comparison with man God is so great that even “*the nations are as a drop in a bucket, and are accounted as the small dust of the balance,*” 40:15. Christ’s Deity and Creatorship is set forth by John when he says, “*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... All things were made through Him; and without Him was not anything made that hath been made... He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world knew Him not,*” 1:1,3,10.... ***For sinful man to crucify his God was an infinitely heinous crime. Whatever may be said about the Atonement, it certainly cannot be said that the debt paid by Christ was of lesser value than that which would have been paid if all of those for whom He died had been left to suffer their own penalty.***

“In order to illustrate a little more clearly the infinite value of Christ’s atonement we should like to use a very simple illustration. Doubtless all of us, for instance, have killed thousands of insects such as ants, beetles, grasshoppers. Perhaps we have even killed millions of them if we have plowed a field or set a large brush fire. Or perhaps we have killed a considerable number of birds or animals, either for food or because they had become pests. Yet we suffer no accusing conscience. But if we kill just one man we do have an accusing conscience which condemns us bitterly; for in that case we have committed *murder*. Even if we could imagine a whole world full of insects or animals and if we could kill them all at one stroke, we would have no accusing conscience. The reason for this difference is that man was created in the image of God, and is therefore of infinitely greater value than the insects or animals. Now in a manner similar to this, ***Christ, who was God incarnate, was not only of greater value than a man but was of greater value than the sum total of all men; and therefore the value of His suffering and death was amply sufficient to redeem as many of the human race as God sees fit to call to Himself... Because He was a Person of infinite value and dignity His suffering was what God considered a just equivalent for that which was due to all of those who were to be redeemed.***”

**BLOOD = SACRIFICIAL DEATH — through his blood —** διὰ τοῦ αἵματος αὐτοῦ, [dia tou haimatos autou,] This explicitly states the cost of the ransom. “The [preposition ‘through,’ διὰ, dia] defines more precisely how redemption was accomplished. *It was not only in connection with Christ, which could refer to his life, but, more specifically, it was by Christ’s death. However, it is more than mere death because the blood speaks of sacrificial death. The OT writings very carefully indicated that the shedding of blood was involved in sacrifice. Sacrificial animals were not killed by strangulation. The shedding of blood is necessary (Lev 17:11; Eph 2:13; 1 Pet 1:19) for without it there is no forgiveness of sins (Heb 9:22), and Paul makes it clear that God has been propitiated in Christ’s redemption, which was in connection with his blood (Rom 3:24-25), and that one is justified by means of Christ’s blood (Rom 5:9). Therefore, the ransom price in connection with deliverance was the sacrificial death of Christ. Certainly, there are numerous references in the NT which refer to the blood of Christ as the ransom price for our sins (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet 1:18-19; Rev 1:5; 5:9; cf. 1 Cor 6:20; 7:23).*” [Hoehner, 207] “Through, by means of, His death, viewed as the ransom-price. Cp. for the supremely important thought, Matt xxvi. 29; Acts xx. 28; Rom iii. 25, v. 9; Heb ix. passim; 1 Pet i. 18, 19; Rev v. 9, &c. We are now on the level of the actual state and needs of the persons contemplated in vv. 3, &c. *They are found to need redemption, rescue by ransom, and the ransom must be death. In other words, their lives are forfeit, for they are sinners; and a sacrificial Death is needed, and is provided.* On this great subject it is enough here to say that a careful review of N.T. passages under the word Blood will shew that the prevalent and leading ideas associated with it, in religious connexions, are expiation of guilt, ransom of person, and ratification of covenant. In all these can be traced the uniting idea of forfeiture of life as the due of sin.” [Moule, 49]

**the forgiveness of sins —** τὴν ἄφεσιν τῶν παραπτωμάτων [tēn aphesin tōn paraptōmatōn,] This further defines our redemption. “*The ‘forgiveness of sins’ does not occur frequently in Paul’s writings. Normally he refers to ‘sin’ in the singular, as a power which entered the world through Adam’s action (Rom 5:12) and since then has tyrannized men and women until that power was broken by Christ’s death on the cross (Rom 8:3, etc.).* However, ‘forgiveness of sins’ is implicit in the great Pauline themes of justification (cf. Rom 4:5-8) and reconciliation, so too much should not be made of this ‘omission’. ‘Forgiveness of sins’ is mentioned with reference to John’s baptism (Mark 1:4), while in the Acts of the Apostles it is repeatedly cited as the content of salvation (Acts 2:38; 5:31; 10:43; 13:38; 26:18). Because men and women apart from Christ are ‘dead in trespasses and sins’ (Eph 2:1), divine forgiveness is essential to the restoration of a relationship with the Father.” [O’Brien, 106f]

**forgiveness =** ἄφεσιν [aphesin] was used in classical literature of the release of captives and the cancellation or release from a legal charge, financial obligation or punishment. It is used 17x in the NT, twice about the release of captives. It means “*the permanent cancellation of or release from the punishment for sin because it has been paid for by Christ’s sacrifice.*” “[T]his verse shows that as a result of redemption in Christ through his blood, God has cancelled or forgiven sins and the necessary punishment that goes with them. Redemption is the cause and forgiveness is the effect. God is not lenient with sin because sin had to be paid in order for the sinner to be set free. The effect of this payment is the cancellation of or release from all the obligations caused by sin. Christ in his sacrificial death has taken the punishment for us. The supreme sacrifice of Christ clearly shows that God does not take sin lightly.” [Hoehner, 208]

**sins =** παραπτωμάτων [paraptōmatōn] is not the usual word found in the NT for sin, harmartia. This word is used to indicate a conscious and deliberate false step, mistake, fault, or error.

**according to the wealth of his grace —** κατὰ τὸ πλοῦτος τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ [kata to ploutos tēs charitos autou] wealth = was used in Classical Greek to have the idea of “full, filled” and thus “abundance, riches, wealth.” “*Note that the Father forgives not merely of, but according to, his riches, riches of grace. Illustration: Here are two very rich persons. When asked to contribute toward a good cause, both give of their riches. The first one, however, donates a very paltry sum, far less than had been expected of him. He merely gives of his riches, not according to. The second is lavish in his support of every noble cause. He gives according to the amount of his wealth. God ever gives and forgives according to his riches. And he is rich, indeed! His favor toward the undeserving is infinite in character.*” [Hendriksen, 83f]

**V. 8 — which he lavished on us —** ἧς ἐπερίσσευσεν εἰς ἡμᾶς [hēs eperisseusen eis hēmas,] the pronoun is feminine and relates back to the previous verse, “grace.” “*The terms [wealth] and [lavished] with their connotations of abundance and extravagance help to make this notion of grace emphatic, while at the same time leaving the impression that words fail in attempting to describe the inexhaustible resources of God’s giving.*” [Lincoln, 29]

**lavished =** ἐπερίσσευσεν [eperisseusen] has the basic idea of overabundance of things or persons. It is used 39x in the NT, 26x by Paul and only this one time in Ephesians. The sense could be either “*wherein he has abounded*” (AV, Calvin) or more probable, “*which he abounded to us*” (RSV, NASB, NEB, NIV, NRSV, most commentators). “Therefore, the grace which provided redemption, God lavished on the believers.” [Hoehner, 210] “‘Abound’ is another favourite Pauline word, expressive of *the superabundance of God’s giving, the overflow as of a fountain from a deep and abundant source*” [Foulkes, 50]

**with all insight and discretion —** ἐν πάσῃ σοφίᾳ καὶ φρονήσει [en pasēi sophiai kai phronēsei,] “*God’s lavish grace has bestowed on us not only redemption, but along with this all the necessary wisdom and insight by which we should live wisely, particularly in the light of his saving plan in Christ.*” [O’Brien, 108] “[G]od’s grace which provided redemption and the forgiveness of sins also lavishes on us all insight and wisdom. One must have not only the benefits of grace but also the benefits of insight and discretion to live wisely. For example, those who receive God’s gracious redemption and forgiveness of sin gain insight into the fact that God no longer holds them guilty for their sins because they have been paid for. Furthermore,

*because of the freedom from the bondage of sin, believers will discern that their new freedom is not for self-consumption but freedom to serve the living God.*” [Hoehner, 213] “God’s lavish grace not only provides redemption but also supplies, along with this, all necessary wisdom and insight to understand and live in the light of what he has done in Christ and its implications (elaborated in vv 8, 10).... *Whatever wisdom or insight might be sought or might be on offer, there is no genuine wisdom or insight that is not included among God’s gifts of grace.*” [Lincoln, 29]

**all** = *πάση* [pasē] has the sense of “every kind of, all sorts of.” “[I]t denotes extension and not intensity, making the abstract nouns concrete, for example, not all power but every kind of power that exists, not all endurance but every kind of endurance there is. Hence, *it means not all insight and discretion but every kind of insight and discretion that exists.*” [Hoehner, 212]

**wisdom** = *σοφία* [sophia] originally meant a practical skill as a carpenter; it eventually came to mean *a wise person who united theoretical knowledge with practice; true insight of known facts.*

**discretion** = *φρονήσει* [phronēsei] is a close synonym to “sophia” wisdom. The word is rare and only used twice in the NT (Luke 1:17; Eph 1:8). The only other time it is used out of Ephesians is speaking of John the Baptist’s ministry turning hearts towards the Lord and the disobedient to “wisdom, discernment, or discretion” of righteousness. It is difficult to differentiate between these two words but if we must, it would have to be that this word emphasizes practical living in wisdom while “sophia” refers to insight. “Proverbs 10:23 sums up these emphases very well: ‘as doing evil is a sport (pleasure) to a fool, so is wisdom (sophia) to a person of understanding (phronēsis).’ *People of understanding or discretion have pleasure in wisdom because they know how it will benefit them practically.... Hence, the first is more theoretical and the latter is the more practical application of knowledge.*” [Hoehner, 211f]



**v. 11** — “Verses 11-14 continue the long sentence which began at v. 3, and their connection with the preceding (v. 10) is made by means of the relative pronoun ‘in whom’, which again focuses on Christ as the one in whom believers are incorporated. For the sake of clarity, however, translations and commentaries commence a new paragraph at v. 11, which stresses that God’s blessings belong to Jewish and Gentile believers alike. The structure of vv. 11-14 shows that both groups participate in God’s grace. There is a movement from *we* (vv. 11-12; which includes Paul and his fellow Jewish believers) to *you also* (v. 12; a reference to Gentile readers) and on to *our* inheritance (v. 14; in which both groups share equally). This anticipates the motif of the reconciliation of Jews and Gentiles in Ephesians 2:14-18, a reconciliation with God and with one another which has been effected through Christ’s death on the cross.” [O’Brien, 115]

**in whom** — *ἐν ᾧ* [en hōi] the “whom” refers back to Christ mentioned in v. 10. “One must remember that the focal point is Christ, for it is in him that God accomplishes his purposes and the believers receive those benefits. This context demonstrates that God not only purposed to unite all things in the one head, Christ, in the future ‘fullness of the time,’ but that the believers of this present age would ‘also’ be God’s inheritance.” [Hoehner, 226]

**we have obtained an inheritance / we were made a heritage** — *καὶ ἐκληρώθημεν* [kai eklērōthēmen] occurs only here in the NT. In classic literature it had two senses: (a) “*to appoint by lot, to cast lots, to obtain by lot,*” and (b) “*to allot, assign, appoint, apportion.*” Because it is used in various ways in the classical literature and is only used here in the NT, there is disagreement concerning the exact meaning here. Opinions:

- Note a variance in this verse by both the RSV (“*according to the purpose of him*”), NIV (“*In him we were also chosen*”, marginal reading, “*were made heirs*”), and the Geneva Bible (“*In whom also we are chosen when we were predestinate according to ye purpose of him*”). “It has been taken more generally to mean ‘we were destined or chosen’ (a nuance it has in the papyri), and is thus synonymous with terms of election in vv. 4 and 5. But doubts have been raised about this translation.” [O’Brien, 115]
- Used as a simple passive, some take it in the sense that God chose as though it were by lot and is translated “*we were obtained by lot*” (Vulgate, Peshitta, RSV). But this attributes God’s choice to chance rather than to His gracious will.
- It is passive with the sense that the believer receives a portion or a share of what God has and could be translated “*we were made partakers of the inheritance*” or “*we were assigned / appointed a portion / inheritance*” (NEB, JB). This goes well with the context and also coincides with the parallel passage in Col 1:12.
- It is passive with the idea that the believer is viewed as God’s inheritance and could be translated “*we were made a heritage (of God)*” (ASV). This agrees with the OT precedent where Israel is called God’s possession (Deut 4:20; 7:6; 14:2) or heritage (Deut 9:26, 29; 32:9). “*For the Lord’s portion is his people, Jacob his allotted inheritance.*” (Deut 32:9).
- It is used in the sense of “to obtain by lot” and is translated “*we have obtained an inheritance*” (KJV, NKJV, YLT, NASV, ESV, NRSV). “What then is the nature of the inheritance which Christians receive? If that of Israel was physical Palestine that of the Christians might well be ‘heaven’, but it is more probably their adoption, forgiveness, sealing with the Spirit, that is to say all the blessings intended in v. 3.” [Best, 146] Some commentators argue however that the rest of the verbs in this immediate passage are passive verbs.

The commentaries are split between the last two views but our English versions favor the last interpretation.

**having been predestined** — προορισθέντες [prooristhentes] is the same as v. 5 meaning “to determine beforehand, mark out beforehand, predestine.”

**according to the purpose** — κατὰ πρόθεσιν [kata prothesin] this shows the standard by which the predestination was done: it was done according to the standard of the purpose of the one who is working all things. The word itself can have two different senses: (1) something that is public or open before the public, such as a body lying in state or a public notice; and (2) plan or purpose. It is used 11x in the LXX in the same two ways. It is used of the showbread that was laid out before the Lord (e.g., Exod 40:4, 23) and it was also used of purpose. It is also used in the NT the same two ways: it is used 12x, four times in reference to the table of showbread (Matt 12:4; Heb 9:2) and the other eight times it means purpose (Rom 8:28; 9:11; Eph 1:11; 3:11; 2 Tim 1:9). In this verse it has the idea that *the predestined inheritance as God’s possession was according to the purpose, or decision of the one who is working all things.*

**who is working all things** — τοῦ τὰ πάντα ἐνεργοῦντος [tou ta panta energountos] the word for “working” comes from the Greek word from which we get our English word “energy.” It is used 21x in the NT, always by Paul except for three times. Predominantly it refers to the working of God’s will in the life of believers. It is used four times in Ephesians (1:11, 20; 2:2; 3:20) and is used of God’s power except 2:2 where it speaks of the devil’s power which is now working in the unsaved. Here it is in the present tense, referring to God’s continual activity toward the purpose that he resolved in eternity past. “All things” considers all God’s providential workings, not just the plan of redemption.

**according to the counsel of his will** — κατὰ τὴν βουλὴν τοῦ θελήματος αὐτοῦ [kata tēn boulēn tou thelēmatos outou] this refers to the standard; i.e., “*God who works all things always does it according to the standard of the counsel of his will.*” “*His will may be disobeyed, but his ultimate purpose cannot be frustrated, for he overrules the disobedience of his creatures in such a way that it subserves his purpose. So in Acts 4:27-28 the apostles in their praise and prayer acknowledge before God that Herod and Pontius Pilate and the other enemies of Jesus conspired together, all unwittingly, ‘to do whatever thy hand and thy plan had predestined to take place.’*” [Bruce, 263f] “[T]his clause heavily underlines that believers’ appointment in Christ to their destiny is part of God’s sovereign purpose. It repeats the earlier emphasis on predestination and the divine will (cf. v 5). Here this notion is reinforced with the additional nouns πρόθεσις [prothesis, ‘purpose, plan, will’] and βουλή [boulē, ‘purpose, intention’] and with the description of God as the one who carries out or works all things according to his own will. *God’s unconditional freedom is affirmed, for whatever he has purposed is sure to be fulfilled.*” [Lincoln, 36] The relationship between counsel [βουλὴν, boulēn] and will [θελήματος, thelēmatos] is difficult to determine. The latter has the sense of “desire, will, resolve” and has been used in vv. 1, 5, 9 and 11. The word for “counsel” carries along with it the idea of “determination, will, deliberation.” In the LXX this word may be seen in four categories: inward deliberation; the final result of inward deliberation for the purpose of advice or counsel; the gathering of people to serve on a council in order to deliberate and make a resolution; and divine counsel. The word is used in the NT 12x in similar manners. The term therefore gives a sense of deliberation; therefore, decisions and plans are not based on a whim but on careful thought and interaction. “In conclusion, [counsel] describes the intelligent deliberation of God and [will] expresses the will of God which proceeds from the deliberation.... The idea that God acts capriciously is completely foreign to the context. His will is carefully thought out. Therefore, we are God’s heritage because it was predestined for us and this is according to the purpose of God who continually works out his purpose in his entire providence according to his will after deliberation.” [Hoehner, 230]

**v. 12** — This marks the end of the second strophe according to the division proposed by Hoehner. **In order that we might be to the praise of his glory** — εἰς τὸ εἶναι ἡμᾶς εἰς ἔπαινον δόξης αὐτοῦ [eis to einai hēmas eis epainon doxēs autou] this relates back “we were made a heritage” and expresses purpose; therefore, “we were made a heritage in order that we might be to the praise of his glory.” “As in v 4 the purpose of God’s choice is that believers be holy and blameless before him in love, and as in vv 5, 6 the purpose of his predestination is that believers be in relationship with himself and to the praise of the glory of his grace, so in vv 11, 12 the purpose of his appointing is that they be to the praise of his glory.” [Lincoln, 36]

**the ones who already hoped in Christ** — τοὺς προηλπικότας ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ [tous proēlpikotas en tō Christō] “Hope before” [προηλπικότας, proēlpikotas] is a rare word in classical literature, not used in the LXX and only used here in the NT. It literally means “to hope for before.” Depending upon how one understands this verse (see below), it refers to all believers who have hope in Christ because of salvation and could be rendered “the ones who already hoped in Christ” (Hoehner, Lincoln). Or it could refer to Jewish believers, the firstfruits of God’s people in the age inaugurated by Christ’s death and resurrection, “who first hoped in Christ” (O’Brien). The tense of the word indicates completed action with continuing results.

**“WE” JEWS VS. “YOU” GENTILES”?** — Some argue that the “we” in this verse and the “you” in v. 13 are “we Jews” and “you Gentiles,” but this goes against the entire thread of Paul’s argument. Paul does not make a distinction here between “we” and “you,” both being used to speak of all believers. The “hope before” which is common of all believers is the hope we have because of their knowledge and experience of God’s redemption, revelation of his mystery, and the hope for the consummation of the times in Christ discussed in verses 7-11. “In other words ‘we believers who already have hope because of the work of God in Christ (vv. 7-11) bring praise to his glory.’” [Hoehner, 233] O’Brien disagrees: “But who are the *we* that have become God’s portion? At first glance the clause appears simply to be describing all Christians, that is, the same recipients of all the other blessings in Christ mentioned in the eulogy of vv. 3-10. However, at v. 11 the *we* is restricted, for in the following verse the same people are spoken of as those who ‘first hoped in Christ’ (v. 12). The reference is to Paul and his fellow Jewish believers. The Gentile readers of the

letter are not included in this designation, but are explicitly mentioned, in some sense by way of contrast, in the *you* of v. 13.” [O’Brien, 116] O’Brien lists Ernst, Bruce, G. D. Fee among those who agree with this interpretation.

### ***APPENDIX A: The Present and Aorist Tenses***

While both time and action are part of the tense of a Greek verb, ancient NT Greek focused more on the ‘kind of action.’ However in what is called the ‘indicative mood’ (a ‘statement of reality’; the mood of the verbs in this portion of scripture) time does play an important role in the tense of the verb. Definitions:

Present tense – The present tense usually denotes continuous kind of action. It shows ‘action in progress’ or ‘a state of persistence.’ When used in the indicative mood, the present tense denotes action taking place or going on in the present time.

Aorist tense – The aorist is said to be ‘simple occurrence’ or ‘summary occurrence’ without regard for the amount of time taken to accomplish the action. This tense is also often referred to as the ‘punctiliar’ tense. ‘Punctiliar’ in this sense means ‘viewed as a single, collective whole; a one-point-in-time’ action, although it may actually take place over a period of time. In the indicative mood the aorist tense denotes action that occurred in the past time, often translated like the English simple past tense: ‘I studied’; not, ‘I was studying.’