

Lesson 2: The Gift of Being Chosen Ephesians 1: 1-23

Gathering Song: Christ Is Made The Sure Foundation



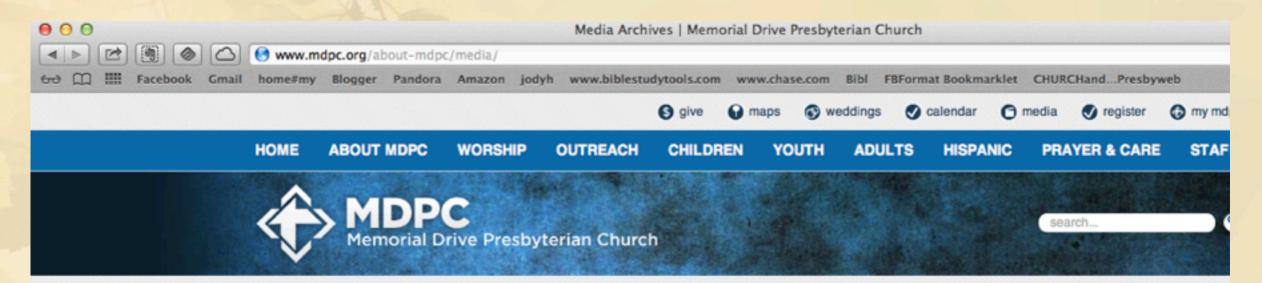


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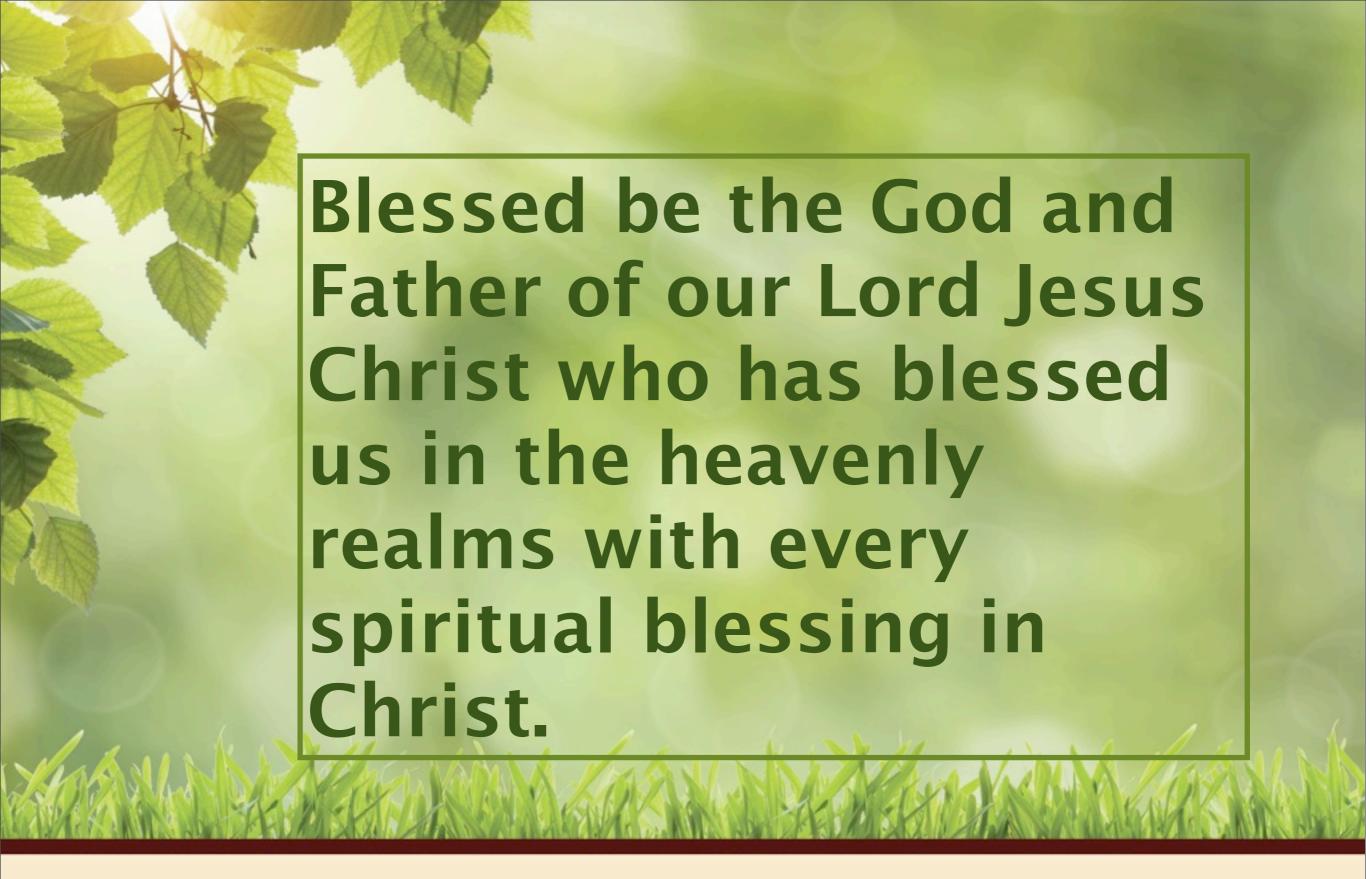
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MEMORY VERSE



Introduction To Ephesians

Ephesians is described as:

- "the purest expression of the gospel"——Martin Luther
- "the crown of Paulinism" -- Frederick F. Bruce
- "the divinest composition of man" -- Samuel Coleridge
- "the Holy of Holies of the New Testament"——Warren Wiersbe

Why the "Queen of the Epistles"?

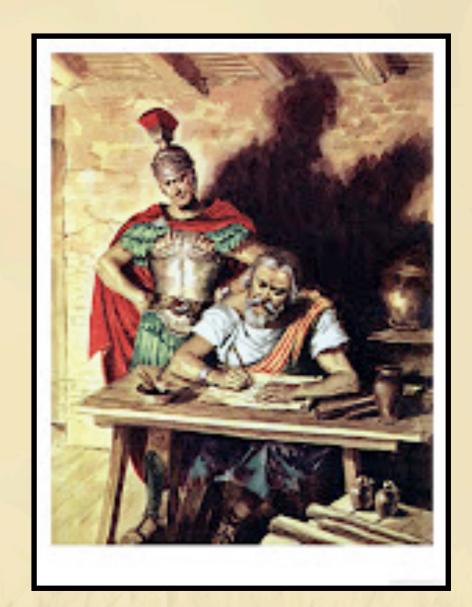
Background of Ephesians

Written during Paul's first imprisonment

in Rome, 61-62 AD

Probably a circular letter, distributed to many churches in Asia

Written to the Gentiles



How Did Paul Become a Prisoner in Rome?

After Paul's third missionary journey he traveled to Jerusalem where he was mobbed by the Jews who thought he desecrated the temple by bringing a Gentile into it. (Acts 21:27–30)

Roman soldiers took him into protective custody and he was taken to Caesarea where he was held for 2 years.

Paul asserted his right as a Roman citizen to appeal his case to Caesar in Rome.

He was sailed to Rome under guard but his ship was wrecked off the coast of Malta.

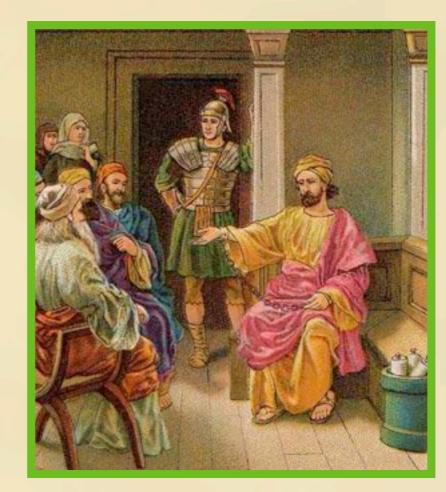
Paul arrived in Rome and was held under house arrest and guard for the next two years before being released from his first imprisonment in Rome around 63/64 AD.

Paul made another trip to Greece and Asia Minor before again being arrested and returned to Rome where he was executed about 67 AD by Emperor Nero.

What Was House Arrest Like?

*House arrest was an honorable imprisonment for those of high status or accused of minor crimes





- *Free to write letters to the churches
- *The "Prison Letters": Colossians, Philemon, Ephesians and Philippians all written around 60 to 61 AD during Paul's first imprisonment in Rome.

Paul's method of composition







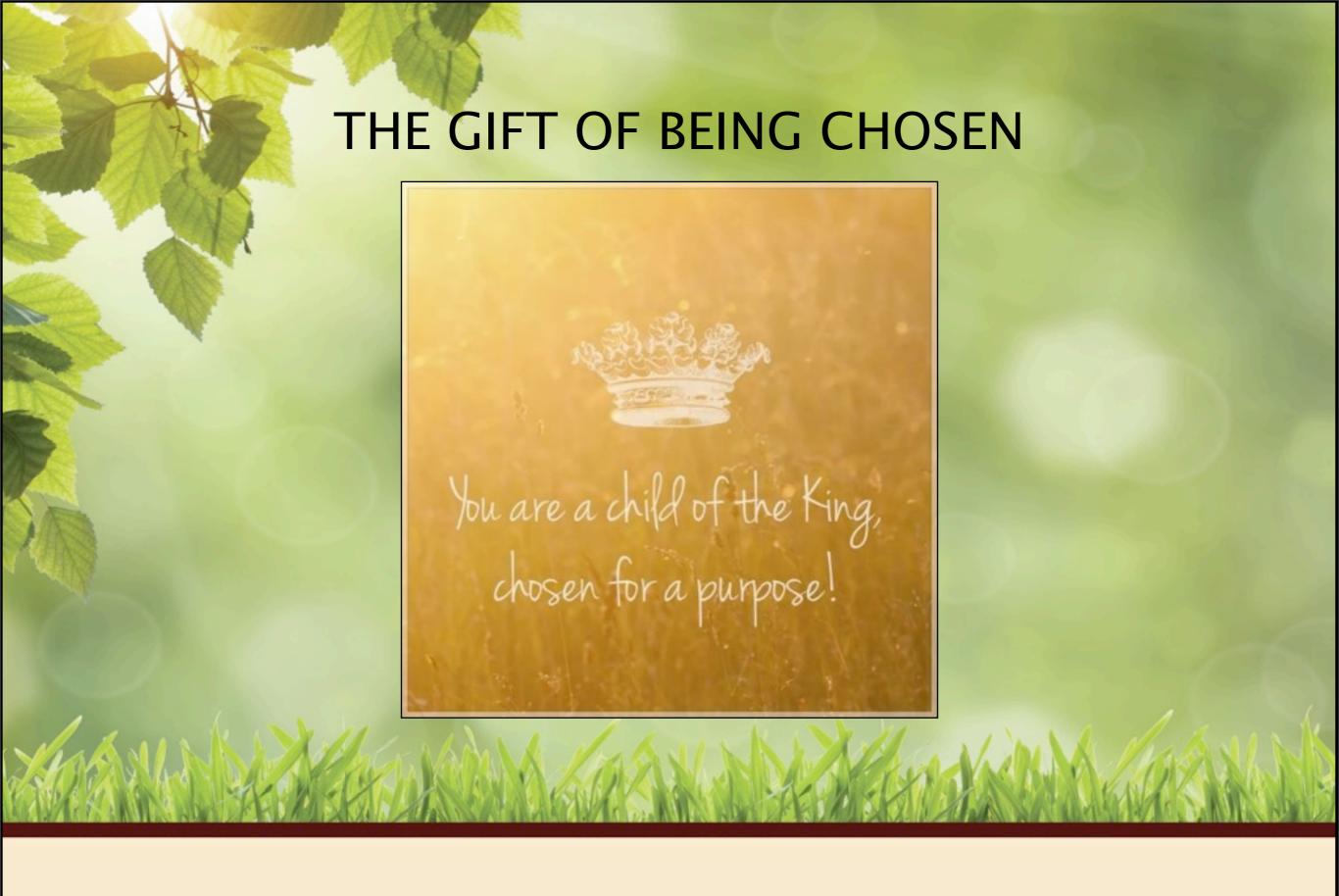
BUT THIS

Literary Characteristics

- Most impersonal letter of Paul
- Echoes many themes of earlier letter to the Colossians, also written during first imprisonment
- Long, complicated sentences
- Not written to address specific situation
- Similar to a theological statement or religious meditation

Themes of Ephesians

- The gathering together of all things in Jesus Christ
- The realization of the disunity in the universe
- The conviction that disunity will be unity when everything is united in Christ



Ephesians 1: 1-23

Ephesians 1: 4-6

For he **chose** us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he **predestined** us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.

Ephesians 1: 11–12

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 put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory.

What is predestination?

*The verb "predestine/foreordain" appears 6 times in the New Testament

*Used exclusively in reference to God and his sovereignty

*Emphasizes God's sole initiative and authority in our salvation

Predestination is for God's purpose of ADOPTION

(Peter T. O'Brien, <u>The Letter to the Ephesians</u>, Pillar New Testament Commentary)

THE GREAT DEBATE



It's All About God's Sovereignty: A. W. Tozer's Analogy



THE GIFT OF BEING CHOSEN

HE PREDESTINED US FOR ADOPTION TO SONSHIP THROUGH JESUS CHRIST, IN ACCORDANCE WITH HIS PLEASURE AND WILL, TO THE PRAISE OF HIS GLORIOUS GRACE WHICH HE HAS FREELY GIVEN US IN THE ONE HE LOVED.

Ephesians 1: 5 and 6



ADOPTION IN CONTEXT

Romans 9:4 (referring to the Jews)

Theirs is the **adoption** as sons; theirs the divine glory, the covenants, the receiving of the law, the temple worship and the promises.

Galatians 4: 4-5

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive **adoption** as children.

Old Testament Adoption

Legal adoption was not provided for in Jewish law or practiced by the Israelites. The term "adoption" does not occur in the Old Testament.

However there are adoption metaphors in the Old Testament where God declares he loves Israel as his child, tells Pharaoh Israel is His firstborn son, and tells David he will be father to him and his descendants.

(from Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology)

ADOPTION IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE

Elaborate laws and ceremonies for adoption were part of Roman society, making the metaphor of adoption particularly meaningful to the Gentiles to whom Paul was writing.

Under Roman law the father's power over his children was absolute: a Roman son never came of age during his father's lifetime. Adoption was a way that a man could obtain a male heir and so most adoptions under Roman law were of adults.

CONSEQUENCES OF ADOPTION

- •Gained all the rights of a fully legitimate son in adoptive family, no longer has any rights in birth family
- Becomes heir to adoptive father's estate even if other sons were born afterwards
- Old life is completely wiped out: all debts are cancelled
- •In the eyes of the law the adopted person was literally and absolutely the son of the new father
- Implied an elevated status

WITNESS TO ADOPTION

The Roman adoption ceremony took place in the presence of 7 witnesses. In the event the adoptive father died and a dispute arose about the right of the adoptive son to inherit, one or more of these witnesses stepped forward to swear the adoption was legal.

Paul is thinking of this part of the ceremony when he says that the Holy Spirit witnesses with our spirit that we really are the children of God.



The Little Couple: Dr. Jennifer Arnold, Bill Klein, and William, their newly adopted son

THE GIFT OF BEING CHOSEN

You did not earn it or deserve it

God in his grace adopted you

Your debts are wiped out

You inherit the Kingdom of God

The price of adoption is the blood of Christ



Why Are We Chosen?

...in order that we, who were first to put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory.

--Ephesians 1:12

God chose us to be different within the world, so that we would make a difference in the world.

--William Barclay

