

GOD'S WORK AMONG THE GENTILES | EPHESIANS 1:13-23

- Verses 13-14 included on Session 4
- Verse 15 –
 - Once again, the Ephesians could not have been the first who **trusted in Christ** (v. 12) because here Paul hears of their faith at a later date.
 - In addition to hearing of their faith, Paul heard of their **love unto all the saints**. That is, Paul is rejoicing that the Ephesian gentiles love the Jewish believers.
- Verses 16-17 –
 - Paul was so overjoyed with having **having heard of your faith...and love unto all the saints** (v. 15) that he did not **cease...to give thanks** for the Ephesian believers, also **making mention** of them in his prayers.
 - The word **mention** is *μνεῖα* [mneia], from which we get *amnesia* (the lack of memory) and *hypermnnesia* (a memory far beyond normal), thus it could be interpreted, *making effort to never forget to pray for you*.
 - His prayer was that the Ephesians would have **the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him**. Note that **the knowledge of him** is foundational, and that God would add to this knowledge a **spirit of wisdom and revelation**, that is, a proper application and understanding of the knowledge. This spirit is further explained in vv. 18-19.
- Verse 18 –
 - This verse is part of the **spirit of wisdom and revelation** of the previous verse. Having this **spirit** is a result of **the eyes of your understanding being enlightened**.
 - Once again we see that **eyes of understanding** are not opened by a mystical experience, but by the light of knowledge, which is, in this case, spiritual knowledge.
 - A spiritual mindset is required to recognize spiritual truth, but a mystical experience is not require (see 1 Corinthians 2:12-14).
 - Paul's prayer is that this enlightenment would lead the Christian to the knowledge and understanding of **the hope of his calling** as well as **the riches of the glory of his inheritance**. Do we know what these two things even are?
 - First, **the hope of his calling**:
 - It is a reference to God's calling.
 - The Greek word has a wide variety of uses, and the root is used 517 times, meaning everything from "named" (Matt. 1:21) to "invited" (Lk 14:7-24).
 - The call is something that is clearly given to church-age believers in this passage, along with Ephesians 4:1, 4:4 , and 2 Thessalonians 1:11.
 - The call is given to both Jews and Gentiles (1 Cor. 7:18-20), while election is exclusively of the Jewish *nation* (not individuals). Compare also Matthew 22:14.

- The calling of God is **without repentance** (i.e.: irrevocable) - Romans 11:29.
 - Though it lends itself to the Calvinist argument, it does not require an individual/unconditional election (see 1 Tim. 6:12, for example, which implies that there is a necessary response to the call).
 - The **hope** of the calling is blessings of the invitation.
 - Translation note: The ESV says "hope to which he has called you." This displays the Calvinistic bias given in the ESV, and is not supported by the Greek. Note that the two phrases following use the same genitive construction, "The riches of the glory," and, "the exceeding greatness of his power." To change this first phrase to meet a preconceived theological agenda is interpretive malpractice.
- Second, **the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints**.
 - Note that God's inheritance is **in the saints**. To determine the identity of the saints, allow Scripture to interpret itself. At least 38 passages speak of God's inheritance, including Deuteronomy 32:9, Psalm 28:9, and Psalm 33:12. If Israel is His inheritance, then **his inheritance in the saints** is equivalent to *His inheritance in Israel*.
 - Paul's prayer is that Gentile believers would know the **glory of his inheritance** in Israel, yet most Gentile believers do not even believe that Israel is His inheritance. Consider these quotes:
 - "Just as Canaan was Israel's inheritance, and Hebron was the best of Canaan, so it is with the church which is the greatest of all the things that Christ will inherit."
(<http://www.livingwaters.cl/magazine/19/02.htm>)
 - "Yes. We are God's inheritance. The God who created and who rules the entire universe has in inheritance in us. Let's get to work for God here on earth so we can give Him the inheritance in us that he deserves, shall we?"
(http://jannascrums.typepad.com/bread_crumbs/2007/05/gods_inheritance.html)
 - "You are a beloved child of God; you are the heir of God's inheritance." Charles Stanley
(<http://www.amazon.com/Discovering-Identity-Principles-Series-ebook/dp/B003QMLHE2>)
 - "The idea that God, by His grace, makes us into His inheritance is incredible." RC Sproul
(<http://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/providence-and-gods-inheritance/>)