

Hallelujah! Praise ye the Lord!

November 23,2001

I wanted to take time today to thank our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ for all that he has done and sacrificed for us on the cross. We have much to be thankful for because he has freed us from bondage to sin and released us to be with the Father. Hallelujah!

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.” (Ephesians 1:3)

He has blessed us abundantly and with every spiritual blessing!

“For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight.” (Ephesians 1:4)

“He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach-” Colossians 1:21,22

He has reconciled us and presents us *holy*! We cannot be *blamed* and we are without *accusation (reproach)* in his sight and presence. This is power!

However it continues...“if you continue in your *faith*^a, established and firm, not moved from the *hope*^a held out in the gospel.” (Colossians 1:23)

Isn't it amazing that even though we are sinners he presents us holy and blameless because of our *faith* in him? That's our part, faith. For “without faith it is impossible to please God.” (Hebrews 11:6) We must continue in our *faith*. God “himself” promises to perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish (us)” (1 Peter 5:10) as we remain firm in our *faith*. Oh hallelujah! “He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.” (Phillipians 1:6)

The apostle Paul says, “the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. (Galatians 5:17)

In Romans 7 he further explains,

“I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do... I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do--this I keep on doing...What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?” The answer??? “Through Jesus Christ our Lord! Thanks be to God!” (Romans 7:15,18,19,24,25)

God tells us not to be moved from the *hope* held out in the gospel. What is our hope?

In hope we have been saved (Romans 8:24) and our hope is in Christ! That God would raise us up with the same power he raised Christ. “Now God has not only raised the Lord, but will also raise us up through His power.” (1 Corinthians 6:14)

Our hope is perfection and eternal life through Christ, as sons and daughters of God (Romans 8:16,17). By His mercy and power through Christ we have an “inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven” which is “kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.” (1 Peter 1:4,5)

In this *last time*, at the end of the age, in death...“We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, “DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP” in victory. “O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY? O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING?”” The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (1 Corinthians 15:51-57)

You see as Paul put it, in this life the Spirit wars against the flesh and the flesh against the Spirit, so there is conflict even within us. But our hope is in Christ when he is *revealed in the last time*. When we see him perfect, the imperfect will disappear (1 Corinthians 13:10). Our *hope* is in the day where the *perishable* is replaced by the *imperishable*. Where mortality puts on immortality!

“For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now. And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the *first fruits*^a of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.” (Romans 8:18-23)

Our hope is in the day when our imperfect body is redeemed and we are perfected, revealed as sons (and daughters) of God. What is the assurance of our hope? God has given us his *first fruits*, a *deposit*, a down-payment...

“when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession--to the praise of his glory.” (Ephesians 1:13,14) We have the *first fruits* of His Spirit, Hallelujah!

You see, even in this present life we have victory over sin by his Holy Spirit! We have a taste of our hope because by his Spirit we can be overcomers right now! We are not perfect yet, but we can already see our perfection come because of the first fruits being made manifest in us. These first fruits or fruit of the Spirit is what enables us to be overcomers over the flesh.

“For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death” (Romans 8:2). To be “spiritually minded is life and peace.” (Romans 8:6) We are free from the law of sin and death in Christ, free from the works of the flesh which only “reap corruption.” (Galatians 6:8) The works of our corrupted flesh only lead to pain, suffering and death. But we are free by his Holy Spirit! Hallelujah! We are more than conquerors through him that loved us (Romans 8:37). If we walk in the Spirit we overcome the flesh (Galatians 5:16). The Holy Spirit in us testifies with our spirit according to God’s will enabling us to overcome! (Hebrews 10:15, Romans 8:16,26,27,28)

God’s promises are true.

“When God made his promise to Abraham, since there was no one greater for him to swear by, he swore by himself, saying, "I will surely bless you and give you many descendants. And so after waiting patiently, Abraham received what was promised. Men swear by someone greater than themselves, and the oath confirms what is said and puts an end to all argument. Because God wanted to make the unchanging nature of his purpose very clear to the heirs of what was promised, he confirmed it with an oath. God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope offered to us may be greatly encouraged. We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure.” (Hebrews 6:13-19)

Hallelujah!

Heavenly Father. I thank and praise your name for all that you have given us in your son. For in him we not only have abundant life, but hope in life everlasting with you. Father, please help us to live by your Spirit in us, so that we may accomplish the good work which you had planned for us since the very beginning. In Jesus’ mighty name we pray, Amen!

^a italics added for emphasis

TEXT

Ephesians 1 (NIV)

³ Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. ⁴ For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love ⁵ he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will--
⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.
⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace ⁸ that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding.
⁹ And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, ¹⁰ 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. ¹¹ In him we were also chosen, ^[5] having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will,
¹¹ *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: (KJV)*
¹² in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory.

¹³ And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession--to the praise of his glory. ¹⁵ For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, ¹⁶ I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers.

¹⁷ I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. ¹⁸ I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹ and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength, ²⁰ which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, ²¹ far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. ²² And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, ²³ which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

Colossians 1:21-23 (KJV) ***see NASB and NIV for above

²¹ And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled. ²² In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in his sight: ²³ If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;

Hebrews 6:13-19 (NIV)

When God made his promise to Abraham, since there was no one greater for him to swear by, he swore by himself, saying, "I will surely bless you and give you many descendants. And so after waiting patiently, Abraham received what was promised. Men swear by someone greater than themselves, and the oath confirms what is said and puts an end to all argument. Because God wanted to make the unchanging nature of his purpose very clear to the heirs of what was promised, he confirmed it with an oath. God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope offered to us may be greatly encouraged. We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure.

Hebrews 7 (NIV)

²¹ but he became a priest with an oath when God said to him: "The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind: `You are a priest forever.'" ²² Because of this oath, Jesus has become the guarantee of a better covenant. ²³ Now there have been many of those priests, since death prevented them from continuing in office; ²⁴ but because Jesus lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood. ²⁵ Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them. ²⁶ Such a high priest meets our need--one who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens. ²⁷ Unlike the other high priests, he does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. He sacrificed for their sins once for all when he offered himself.

Phillipians 1 (NIV)

⁶ being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

Colossians 2 (NIV)

⁹ For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, ¹⁰ and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority.
¹⁰ *And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: (KJV)*

Galatians 6:8 (KJV)

For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

2 Corinthians 9:8 (NIV)

And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.

Romans 5:20 (KJV)

Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:

Romans 7 (NIV)

¹⁴ We know that the law is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin. ¹⁵ I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. ¹⁶ And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. ¹⁷ As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. ¹⁸ I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. ¹⁹ For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do--this I keep on doing. ²⁰ Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it.

²¹ So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. ²² For in my inner being I delight in God's law; ²³ but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members. ²⁴ What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? ²⁵ Thanks be to God--through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law, but in the sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.

Galatians 5:17 (KJV)

For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

Ephesians 2:10 (NIV)

For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

1 Peter 1 (KJV)

³ 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, ⁴ To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, ⁵ Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

2 Peter 1 (KJV)

³ According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: ⁴ Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

1 Corinthians 15 (NASB)

⁵¹ Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, ⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. ⁵³ For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality.

⁵⁴ But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, "" DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP in victory. ⁵⁵ "" O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY? O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING?" ⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; ⁵⁷ but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

“Now God has not only raised the Lord, but will also raise us up through His power.”
(1 Corinthians 6:14, NASB)

Romans 8 (NASB)

¹⁸ For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us. ¹⁹ For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. ²⁰ For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope ²¹ that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. ²² For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now.

²³ And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body. ²⁴ For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for what he already sees? ²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it. ²⁶ In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words; ²⁷ and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. ²⁸ And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.