

Ephesians 1:11-23. *Why We're Here*. Through Yeshua the Christ we were made heirs, as planned from the very beginning to meet the objectives of His purpose. Why? So that we who were the first to hope in the Christ, might also be extant to uplift His glory. You were also included *ev* Christ—when the word of truth became part of you, the good news regarding your salvation. Having believed, you were marked; marked with a seal *ev* Him, the promised Holy Spirit.

Holy Spirit is a deposit which not only shows God's presence, but guarantees our inheritance until those who are already redeemed by God. May His glory be praised!

So, ever since I heard about your faith in Lord Yeshua, and your love for all believers, I have not stopped giving thanks for you. In my prayers I keep asking the Father of our Lord, Jesus the Christ, to give you wisdom, and knowledge so you may know Him better. I also prayed that your *raison d'être* may be enlighteningly enlarged so you may know the expectation to which He has called you, the very riches of His glorious inheritance possessed by believers, and His great power give to all who believe. Oh, that power—it's like the working of His mighty strength, the very power He demonstrated

when He raised Christ from the dead, and then put Him at His right hand in heaven. Far above all authority, power, and dominions, Yeshua the Christ was given every title that can be given, not only now, but in the future. Father God put Christ in charge of all things, and appointed Him to be the head of everything for the Church; yes, the Church, His very body, the fulfillment of Him who fills everything in every way.

- Q Why were we chosen?
- Q How do we know we are chosen, redeemed by the Christ?
- Q Your evidence of the guaranteeing seal? Examples please, not mere theological abstractions.
- Q How would you characterize Paul's prayers for the believers in Ephesus? What does it mean "to know Him better?"
- Q What is the best evidence that Christ is indeed the Lord God Almighty?

EPHESIANS 1:11-23

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, ¹²in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory. ¹³And 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, ¹⁴who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory.

¹⁵For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, ¹⁶I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. ¹⁷I 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. ¹⁸I 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, ¹⁹and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength, ²⁰which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, ²¹far 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. ²²And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, ²³which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

Ephesians 2:1-10. *Good Works?* As for you all, you were dead; your violations of God's moral code and resulting distance from Him killed you. You used to live in the ways of this world, and according to the ruler of this world—the veritable spirit of evil who works within those who fail to listen to the voice of the Lord our God.

Of course all of us once have also lived among them—we've gratified the cravings of a fleshly being, following our thoughts and aspirations to the point we became objects of God's wrath. BUT, because of His great love for us, and because of His great mercy, we were made alive in Christ, even when we were dead because of our transgressions. It is a gift, God's mercy, that you have been saved from His wrath. You see, God raised us up with the Christ, and seated us with Him in the heavenly realms $\epsilon\nu$ Christ Yeshua.

[DID HE DO THIS TO GLORIFY US? NO.]

He did this so that in the future, people will see the incomparable riches of His mercy demonstrated, as expressed in His kindness to us $\epsilon\nu$ Christ Yeshua.

Remember, you have been saved by God's gift of mercy through your trust in Him. So? It's not by what you've done—that way, no one can boast. So why? We are God's work of art [$\pi\tau\omicron\iota\eta\mu\alpha$, "a thing created, made;" 4161], created fully by Christ Yeshua—to do good things, which He determined a long time ago for us to do.

- Q What caused our failure to be redeemed? [Hint: it's who you follow, not just what you follow. You can behave well, even morally, but for evil purposes. Consider marketing as a born again to the born again.]
- Q What is the purpose of our redemption, our box seat in the heavenly realms?
- Q How can we express gratitude for this gift of mercy?
- Q What saves us according to Paul here? [mercy & trust in that mercy] Why?
- Q What makes us Christ's work of art? When were the specs for this work identified, outlined?
- Q What makes our good works, "good?"
- Q Why is it spiritually pragmatic to remember why we were given grace, rather than earning it?

EPHESIANS 2:1-10

As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins,² in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.³ All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath.⁴ But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy,⁵ made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.⁶ And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus,⁷ in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast.¹⁰ For we are God's workmanship, created in [$\epsilon\nu$] Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

