

The Epistle to the Ephesians

~ To Him be Glory in the Church ~

Eph 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus:

Part 2 The Sovereign Will, and Eternal Purpose of God

Isaiah 46. NKJV

9 Remember the former things of old, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, 10 Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things that are not yet done, Saying, 'My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure,'

What a contrast:

Cyrus invades and destroys Babylon. Carries away their idols to be burned. They put them on beasts of burden. They are too heavy to bear.

Here we see a people who carry their religion. And when you carry your religion, observe every detail of demanding law and ritual, then you go into captivity... The idol is powerless to help, and the religion is all based on what I must do to appease my god and have no guarantee of any answers

Then God speaks: and firstly he declares- **"I have carried and will carry you."**

Next He declares who is like me? I am God and there is none other.

The whole counsel of Scripture declares the absolute sovereignty of God. If we think he doesn't see, or cannot change history for His own end, we have missed the very heart of his nature.

Ephesians:

Paul declares his calling and purpose in ministry.

Eph 3:8-11 Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;.....(11) According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord:

New Living Translation

"God's purpose in all this was to use the church to display his wisdom in its rich variety to all the unseen rulers and authorities in the heavenly places."

Three points to consider:

Note: He has an eternal purpose.

- 1) That is a purpose that has existed from eternity for ever.
- 2) His purpose is fulfilled and centred in Jesus Christ.
- 3) His instrument is the Church.

Chapter 1

Summarises His Eternal Purpose. **Paul calls this the Will of God.**

This Purpose was not always seen. It was a mystery. Paul says he was made a minister of this mystery:

Col 1:25 Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God; 26 Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: 27 To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:

Moses and the eternal purpose of God.

Numbers 13: The Spies go to the land. 10 come back with an evil report, 2 come back with faith.

The people cried: Woe is us! We are doomed! We will die!

The promise was before them.

When Moses got so discouraged over the behaviour of his own people he cried out to God but even in that

situation where things looked dire, God said: These people have seen my glory, they know me, but because they have rebelled and sinned against me, they will not enter the land. They will not receive their inheritance, **but never the less.. I will fulfill my purpose.**

Num 14:20 And the LORD said, I have pardoned according to thy word: 21 But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD. 22 Because all those men which have seen my glory, and my miracles, which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have tempted me now these ten times, and have not hearkened to my voice; 23 Surely they shall not see the land which I swear unto their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked me see it:

So here it is: God's eternal purpose is in place. Nothing will change it. But he invites you and me to be a part of it and if we believe If we obey, we shall see the glory of God.

Let's have a look at some detail:

Ephesians 1:

- Verse 3 His promises are fulfilled because of and IN Christ. All spiritual blessings
- Verse 4 Chosen us IN Him BEFORE the foundation of the world. NOTE: This choosing has nothing to do with the fall and failure of man. This is before Adam and Eve were created.
- Verse 5 Predestined to be adopted as Children **According to His Will**
- Verse 6 For what purpose? **To the Praise of His glory.**
- Verse 7 How? By the redemption of His blood. To those who want to do away with the doctrine of penal substitution and the purpose of blood sacrifice – here it is redeemed by His blood.
- Verse 11 Our inheritance is **According to His Will.**
- Verse 12 He repeats: **That we should be to the praise of His glory.** That angels and principalities should look on and see this incredible grace and love of God displayed in a people made of clay, spoiled by sin, defiled by the enemy of our soul – yet redeemed and washed clean by His blood.

See 1 Peter 1: 10 -12

And now Paul reminds the Ephesians: Remember when I came to you: You had no power. You had no confidence you had nothing but a religion which you carried on your backs, and I Baptized you into the Name above all names. The Name of Jesus Christ and you were sealed with that Holy Spirit of Promise which is the earnest: "The down payment." The "guarantee" of your full redemption.

But we conclude on a most significant point Verse 1

Paul, an Apostle of Jesus Christ – by the **will of God**

Not only does God's eternal purpose extend toward the whole earth. Paul, was caught up in that same will of God.

Why did he say this all the time ? To the Collosians, the Corinthians, the Galatians...

Because many of the disciples his own people would not accept him.

As we continue our study of Ephesians, I trust we will begin to see our part – in the eternal purpose of God. His calling on your life. Your identity is in Him.

Your gift as a person to His body in this place.

Now begin to see one another: Not in a competitive way, but as members of the most fantastic movement the world has ever seen. The corporate body which the Creator of this Universe has chosen and designed to reveal to all of the principalities and powers, the angels, the demons, the powers behind the political leaders in the world, the prime minister. All of these offices are backed by spiritual beings either good or bad, and God is calling you to be a part of this glorious movement.

No wonder: he says Unto Him be Glory in the Church, both now and ever more.....