Spiritual Blessings in Jesus Christ

Key Verses: "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."
—Ephesians 1:5,6

Selected Scripture: Ephesians 1:3-14

AS THE TITLE OF OUR LES-son suggests, spiritual blessings can only come to us from God through a relationship with his son, Jesus Christ. God has "blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." (Eph. 1:3) Indeed, it was God's desire "before the foundation of the world" that a small group of chosen ones would be made "holy and without blame" in his sight, and thus have spiritual blessings bestowed upon them.—vs. 4

The Key Verses liken our relationship with God to that of an adopted child. While the adoptive parents are not the child's biological mother and father, they have all the same rights as if they were the birth parents. In our relationship to God, he "adopts" us into his spiritual family when we accept the merit of his Son's redemptive sacrifice, and present ourselves in consecration—complete dedication—to him. If our consecration is sincere, we are released from the sinful condition inherited from our "biological" father, Adam, and made "accepted [to God]

in the beloved [Jesus]." Paul continues, "We have redemption through his [Jesus'] blood, the forgiveness of sins."—vs. 7

Verses 8 and 9 of our lesson identify some of the spiritual blessings we receive when adopted into God's family: "Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself." Here Paul mentions wisdom, prudence, and the mystery of God's will. The word "wisdom" means to be clear—clear in our understanding and application of God's will in our life. The word "prudence" refers to the related actions resulting from wisdom. Having both wisdom and prudence then allows us to know and carry out the "mystery," or secret, of God's will in our lives.

Paul continues to identify more of our spiritual blessings, saying, "In the dispensation of the fulness of times he [God] might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: 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." (vss. 10,11) These verses tell us that it is God's plan to eventually bring back into oneness and harmony with him "all things." The phrase "all things" really is a reference to all mankind, whom God intends, through the coming kingdom of his Son, to restore to the perfection lost in Eden so long ago. In carrying out this purpose, God is now selecting a "little flock" to share a heavenly "inheritance" with his Son. These, having gone through suffering and sacrifice in this life, will join with the glorified Jesus in administering the blessings of the kingdom to the remainder of mankind, that they all might be gathered together "in one."

If we have "heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation," and have been "sealed" by God's Holy Spirit, then we have the blessing of the "earnest [pledge] of our inheritance." (vss. 13,14) Many are the rich spiritual