

# Spiritual Blessings in Christ

***Key Verse: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.”  
—Ephesians 1:3***

***Selected Scripture: Ephesians 1:1-14***

## **IN TODAY’S LESSON THE**

Apostle Paul beautifully describes those who have made a “covenant ... by sacrifice” with God. (Ps. 50:5; Rom. 12:1) These are identified as the “us” class mentioned in our Key Verse. Other Scriptures refer to this called out group as “the church of God,” “the bride, the Lamb’s wife,” and “the body of Christ.” (Acts 20:28; Rev. 21:9; I Cor. 12:12,27) They are “children of

God by faith in Christ Jesus, ... Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”—Gal. 3:26-29

Because Abraham, by faith, offered up his son, Isaac, in sacrifice, God promised him, saying, “In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.” (Gen. 22:15-18) The future blessing of all nations and people in God’s promised kingdom is described in Revelation 21:2-4. Here we note that the “bride” is pictured with her “husband,” Christ Jesus, dispensing the blessings to all people. In our present lesson, however, the Apostle Paul speaks of the spiritual blessings the body members of Christ receive now, in advance of the kingdom to come.

In Ephesians 1:4, Paul says that “before the foundation

of the world” God chose us “to become, in Christ, his holy and blameless children living within his constant care.” (*JB Phillips New Testament*) What a blessing to know Jesus’ footstep followers were a special part of God’s plan before creation began. This is an affirmation of God’s purpose that there are two parts to salvation. One part offers a heavenly hope and the other an earthly one. This is also borne out in the wording of God’s promise to Abraham, when he says, “I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven”—a heavenly promise—“and as the sand which is upon the sea shore”—an earthly promise.—Gen. 22:17

Another blessing we have received at the present time is that God has made his plans known to us in advance of the world in general. “For God had allowed us to know the secret of his plan, and it is this: he purposes in his sovereign will that all human history shall be consummated in Christ, that everything that exists in Heaven or earth shall find its perfection and fulfilment in him.” (Eph. 1:9,10, *Phillips*) This knowledge gives the added blessing of peace in a world out of control due to sin and its evil results.

Paul says in verse 5 of our lesson that God “decided long ago to adopt us as his children. He did it because of what Jesus Christ has done. It pleased God to do it.” (*New International Readers Version*) These words tell us that we are considered “sons of God.” (John 1:12; Rom. 8:14; Phil. 2:15; I John 3:1,2) Jesus is our “elder” brother, and consequently we have the hope of being “joint-heirs” with him.—Rom. 8:16,17

It is indeed a blessing to feel the love of God through the invitation to be his children at the present time. “Brothers and sisters, God has shown you his mercy. So I am asking you to offer up your bodies to him while you are still alive. Your bodies are a holy sacrifice that is pleasing to God. When you offer your bodies to God, you are worshiping him.”—Rom. 12:1, *NIRV* ■