Responsive Reading: adoption of sons

Eph 1:2-12

2Grace *be* to you, and peace, from God our Father, and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul’s salutation in every letter he sends.

3Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ:

“In [Ephesians 1:3-6](http://biblehub.com/context/ephesians/1-3.htm), the first section of the Introduction, the Epistle ascends at once into “the heavenly places,” naturally catching therefrom the tone of adoration and thanksgiving. It dwells on the election of the children of God by His predestinating love—an election based on His will, designed for His glory, and carrying with it the blessings of the Spirit, through which they become holy and unblamable before Him” (Ellicott’s Commentary, www.biblehub.com).

4According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

“The general sense of the passage is, that these blessings pertaining to heaven were bestowed upon Christians in accordance with an eternal purpose. They were not conferred by chance or hap-hazard. They were the result of intention and design on the part of God. Their value was greatly enhanced from the fact that God had designed from all eternity to bestow them, and that they come to us as the result of his everlasting plan. It was not a recent plan; it was not an afterthought; it was not by mere chance; it was not by caprice; it was the fruit of an eternal counsel. Those blessings had all the value, and all the assurance of "permanency," which must result from that fact. The phrase "according as" implies that these blessings were in conformity with that eternal plan, and have flowed to us as the expression of that plan” (Barnes’ Notes, [www.biblehub.com)](http://www.biblehub.com)).

**Blame** in Greek is *amomos* (Strong’s 299) which means “without blemish; morally without blemish, faultless, unblameable.

5Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,

**Predestinated** in Greek is *proorizo* (Strong’s 4309) which means “predetermine, decide beforehand, decreed from eternity, to foreordain, appoint beforehand.”

**Adoption of children** is *huiothesia* in Greek (Strong’s 5206) which means “the nature and condition of the true disciples in Christ, who by receiving the Spirit of God into their souls become sons of God.”

“The word used predestinated or prōrizō means properly "to set bounds before;" and then to "pre-determine." There is the essential idea of setting bounds or limits, and of doing this beforehand. It is not that God determined to do it when it was actually done, but that he intended to do it beforehand. No language could express this more clearly, and I suppose this interpretation is generally admitted. Even by those who deny the doctrine of particular election, it is not denied that the word here used means to "pre-determine;" and they maintain that the sense is, that God had pre-determined to admit the Gentiles to the privileges of his people” (Barnes’ Notes, www.biblehub.com).

6To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

“(Eph 1:7, 17, 18). The end aimed at (Ps 50:23), that is, that the glory of His grace may be praised by all His creatures, men and angels.

“wherein—Some of the oldest manuscripts read, "which." Then translate, "which He graciously bestowed on us." But English Version is supported by good manuscripts and the oldest versions.

“us accepted—a kindred Greek word to "grace": charitos, echaritosen: translate, "graciously accepted"; "made us subjects of His grace"; "embraced us in the arms of His grace" (Ro 3:24; 5:15).

“in the beloved—pre-eminently so called (Mt 3:17; 17:5; Joh 3:35; Col 1:13). Greek, "Son of His love." It is only "IN His Beloved" that He loves us (Eph 1:3; 1Jo 4:9, 10)” (Jamieson-Fausset-Brown, [www.biblehub.com)](http://www.biblehub.com)).

**Accepted** in Greek is *charitoo* (Strong’s 5487) which means “be highly favored, make accepted, to honor with blessings, compass with favor.”

**The Beloved** in Greek is *agapao* (Strong’s 25) which means “to love dearly, to be well pleased, to be contented at or with a thing.”

7In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

“The word redemption here, as there, denotes that deliverance from sin and from the evil consequences of sin, which has been procured by the atonement made by the Lord Jesus Christ.

“Through his blood - By means of the atonement which he has made;

“The forgiveness of sins - We obtain through his blood, or through the atonement which he has made, the forgiveness of sins. (Barnes’ Notes, www.biblehub.com).

**Redemption** in Greek is *apolytrosis* (Strong’s 629) which means “redemption, deliverance, a releasing effected by payment of ransom, liberation procured by the payment of a ransom.”

8Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence;

“And prudence - The word used here (φρονήσις phronēsis) means understanding, thinking, prudence. The meaning here is, that, so to speak, God had evinced great "intelligence" in the plan of salvation. There was ample proof of "mind" and of "thought." It was adapted to the end in view. It was far-seeing; skillfully arranged; and carefully formed. The sense of the whole is, that there was a wise design running through the whole plan, and abounding in it in an eminent degree” (Barnes’ Notes, www.biblehub.com).

9Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself:

“The word “mystery” properly signifies a thing which (see [Ephesians 3:5](http://biblehub.com/ephesians/3-5.htm); [Colossians 1:27](http://biblehub.com/colossians/1-27.htm)) “was hid from all ages, but is now made manifest.” (Ellicott’s Commentary, www.biblehub.com).

“Having made known to us the mystery of his will - The word "mystery" (μυστήριον mustērion) means literally something into which one must be "initiated" before it is fully known (from μυέω mueō, to initiate, to instruct); and then anything which is concealed or hidden. We commonly use the word to denote that which is above our comprehension or unintelligible. But this is never the meaning of the word in the New Testament. It means there some doctrine or fact which has been concealed, or which has not before been fully revealed, or which has been set forth only by figures and symbols. When the doctrine is made known, it may be as clear and plain as any other. Such was the doctrine that God meant to call the Gentiles, which was long concealed, at least in part, and which was not fully made known until the Saviour came, and which had been until that time "a mystery - a concealed truth" - though when it was revealed, there was nothing incomprehensible in it” (Barnes’ Notes, [www.biblehub.com)](http://www.biblehub.com)).

10That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; *even* in him:

“That in the dispensation - The word rendered here as "dispensation," οἰκονομία oikonomia, means properly "the management of household affairs." Then it means stewardship or administration; a dispensation or arrangement of things: a scheme or plan. The meaning here is, that this plan was formed in order (εἰς eis) or "unto" this end, that in the full arrangement of times, or in the arrangements completing the filling up of the times, God might gather together in one all things. Tyndale renders it: "to have it declared when the time was full come," etc.

“The fulness of times - When the times were fully completed; when all the periods should have passed by which he had prescribed, or judged necessary to the completion of the object” (Barnes’ Notes, www.biblehub.com).

11In 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:

“The meaning may then be, that the Jews who were believers had "first" obtained a part in the plan of redemption, as the offer was first made to them, and then that the same favor was conferred also on the Gentiles. Or it may refer to those who had been first converted, without particular reference to the fact that they were Jews; and the reference may be to the apostle and his fellow-laborers. This seems to me to be the correct interpretation. "We the ministers of religion first believed, and have obtained an inheritance in the hopes of Christians, that we should be to the praise of God's glory; and you also, after hearing the word of truth, believed;" [Ephesians 1:13](http://biblehub.com/ephesians/1-13.htm). The word which is rendered "obtained our inheritance" - κληρόω klēroō - means literally "to acquire by lot," and then to obtain, to receive. Here it means that they had received the favor of being to the praise of his glory for having first trusted in the Lord Jesus” (Barnes’ Notes, www.biblehub.com).

“predestinated. The foreordination of Israel, as the elect nation, answers to that of the spiritual Israelites, believers, to an eternal inheritance, which is the thing meant here. The "we" here and in Eph 1:12, means Jewish believers (whence the reference to the election of Israel nationally arises), as contrasted with "you" (Eph 1:13) Gentile believers” (Jamieson-Faussett, www.biblehub.com).

12That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.

“That we should be to the praise of his glory - Should be the occasion or the means of celebrating his glory; or that praise should be ascribed to him as the result of our salvation” (Barnes’ Notes, [www.biblehub.com).1:2](http://www.biblehub.com).1:2)