

Eph. 1:3-14: A Helpful Way to Be Strong in the LORD: Serving Our SAVIOR, Prepared and Equipped

A. God directed Moses to teach the people of Israel a Song (poetic verse) before they entered the Promised Land, one they were to always remember (Deut. 32).

Paul's opening Hymn of Praise that begins Ephesians is one that all Christians would do well to learn, to know, to remember, and regularly ponder. WHY?

* There are MANY spiritual truths the Spirit has packed into this "Hymn of Praise."

* Isaiah 7:9; "If you are not firm in faith, you will not be firm at all."

1. Paul's hymn comprises **one sentence**; that is, it's all contained in one unit of thought.
2. **Praise** to *God the Father* both begins and ends the Hymn.
3. All **3 Persons of the Godhead** participate in the work of Salvation (Trinity) (God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit).
4. Salvation's story stretches from **eternity to eternity**: from past (before the creation - v.4) to eternity future (*fullness of time* - v.10; and then beyond).
5. **Christ** is the center of all God has done and will do; the one "in Christ" has everything; the one who is not, has nothing.
6. God's greatest blessings and life's foremost blessings are NOT material but **spiritual blessings**; they are not earthly and temporary, but in the "heavenlies" and eternal. In the hymn Paul recounts them one after another.
7. God's glorious grace exalts His glory and issues in endless PRAISE to Him. The marvelous expanse of **God's grace** to man - poured out as a deluge of blessings - is for the "praise of HIS glory."
8. **Blessings** celebrated in the opening Hymn are the main **themes** in the rest of the book, subjects like: adoption/God's family; the gospel and its reception; holiness of life as God's purpose; Divine love becomes the Christian model; God's wisdom and insight revealed in "the mystery of His will," is now a blessing for God's children to know! These are all the basis for the worthy walk! (*After all He's done for me ... How can I do less than ... live for Him completely*)

B. A Helpful Way to Be Strong in the LORD: Prepared and Equipped for **Christ**:

1. Make this wonderful text a focus of personal study for several coming weeks
2. Pray Psa. 119:18. Memorize a phrase a day, then ponder it; write down new thoughts & questions, connect other verses to it. Share the joys with others.