

Second Coming and The Adoption

[00:00:01] In our studies in the epistle to the Colossians, we have reached chapter three. I want to read the first four verses together and then explain the process of our study afterwards. Colossians Chapter three verses 1 to 4. *“If ye then be risen with Christ seek those things which are above where Christ is sitting on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.”*

Those words with which that passage ends focuses our attention upon the peculiar phase of the hope of the church of the one body, the hope of the church of the mystery! But when we say words like that the mind immediately says; “Well, is there another hope for some other people??” Let us be very sure that we don't mislead. The Lord Jesus Christ himself is the hope of all his people, whether their hopes are going to be realized on Earth or in heaven or far above all, where Christ seeks. The very groan of creation itself is waiting for the manifestation of the Sons of God which will take place when Christ is manifested. So, from one point of view, it doesn't matter whether you're a Jew or Gentile, whether it's church or God, there's only one hope, that is to say Christ.

[00:01:51] But it's not good enough merely to sweep it all aside, all the differences, because the scripture itself, which bears a witness, that there is no other hope for any of us except Christ himself and no other hope for us except Christ himself returns again to the scene of sin and accomplishes the fruits of redemption and brings it to its glorious issue. Yet at the same time, it makes it very clear that one day his feet are to stand up on the Mount of Olives. **And yet he has a company in Colossians who are looking for the blessed hope of being manifested with Christ in glory, in association with the right hand of God, for that's where they have set their affections, that's where all their desires are!**

So, before we go very intimately into what is the hope of the church of the one body today. We are taking a wider survey. We are going to canvas the question. Are there spheres (domains) of hope?? And if so, what influence has that upon the teaching of the Scriptures concerning the second coming of Christ? Likely, most of us realize in the general that there are spheres (domains) of hope. When we read in the Sermon on the Mount that the meek shall inherit the earth, surely nobody has taken the trouble to listen to this study who says; “Well, that simply means we're all going to heaven”. No, when it says; “the meek shall inherit the earth”, then we believe God that the earth will one day be peopled by a company of God's redeemed children!

[00:03:42] And there they will find their hope in Christ as we will. But then we also remember that there was *another* company of God's people *equally redeemed*, that were told that they were going to meet the Lord in the air. And yet *another* company are said to be associated with Christ when He is manifested in glory. But before we go further into the question of the different spheres (domains) and try to prove that they are so there are these different companies, one other feature seems to be necessary for all those who approach the question of the hope that is of any use of the word example. In common parlance, that word “hope”, like so many other good words in the English language, has deteriorated. If I were to say to a man who is not a believer in

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Christ, if I were to buttonhole him and say to him; “Are you saved?” There's every probability he'd turn around and say; “I hope so!” And that means to say he isn't....

You see now in the scripture, the word hope is never used like that. It always means that you are persuaded of something and you are expecting it. **And in the New Testament, apart from one or two personal usages of the word hope, it is always connected with either the fulfillment of a promise or the realization of a calling.**

[00:05:19] Now, if we get that went into our mind that whenever we speak of the hope of the Second Coming, it is fulfilling some promise that's already been made. We shall say; “What promise then?” Or it's the realization of a calling. Would you say; “What calling?” And by so doing, we shall segregate, as it were, the teaching of Scripture and keep it in its proper place and right department!

Now, the first passage to which I will turn in order that you may have chapter and verse is the Acts of the Apostles, the 26th chapter. **This is only to just give you a passage which will illustrate my suggestion that hope in the New Testament is particularly associated with the fulfillment of a specific promise.** Acts 26. Verse six, Paul is on trial. Or really his pride is over and he is taking the opportunity of bearing a witness before King Agrippa. He says in this verse six; *“And here I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers, unto which promise our 12 tribes instantly serving God, day and night hope to come.”* Now, that's specific!

The hope of the promise made to a specific people, “Our fathers”, unto which promise a specific people, “Our 12 tribes” hope to come. **It is utterly impossible for one who believes the Scriptures to be true and given by inspiration of God, to either set aside the people of Israel from this statement or to put the church in its place.**

[00:07:12] So here is a specific promise, and the fulfillment of that promise was to hope that the Apostle entertained at that time. When he wrote in the Acts of the Apostles, when he records his last statements in the last chapter, he said to those who met him at Rome for the hope of Israel, I am bound with this chain. He could not make anything else except what he said in Acts 26. The hope of Israel. And if we put it in structural balance with chapter one, the first question which is put to the Lord in chapter one is; *“Wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?”* **So, you see, there is a price of a restoration that belongs to the people of Israel and the 12 tribes, which cannot by any possibility be retranslated to mean the hope of the church as we understand the term.**

Well, then the other aspect that hope is the realization of a calling can be illustrated by two references in the epistle to the Ephesians. Ephesians one, verse 18, a part of the prayer which the apostle put up for these believers. *“The eyes of your understanding, being enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of his calling.”* And he repeats it from another angle in chapter four. When he says in connection with the sevenfold unity of the spirit, that is one body and one spirit, even as ye are called in, one hope of your calling.

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[00:09:09] So now we have chapter and verse which can be supplemented and improved that hope in the New Testament. Very often refers to the fulfillment of a promise or the realization of a calling. **So, the question now becomes a little bit more simplified if I know my calling. I shall be better able to appreciate my hope. But if I'm in a fog with regard to my calling, if I'm not sure whether it's going to be on earth or in heaven, if I don't know whether I'm the bride or the body, the kingdom of the church, well then I shall not have a clear understanding of my hope, and I shall not be able to walk in harmony with it, neither shall I be able to teach others!**

So I think you'll agree with me. It's worth pondering. Well, now this question of the differences in the calling of God's people can be proved in many ways. We can start with Genesis and we can slowly and carefully read right through till we get to the end of the Book of Revelation. And we shall have covered every aspect of the callings of God's people. But that's rather a laborious thing, and I'm afraid this recording would be over and done with long before we got to the end of Genesis. But there's another way. We can find some term, which was is it worth paying down the truth and make us admit if once we face the issues that the use of this one term very largely indicates that there are at least I say at least because there may be more, but I say at least three distinct companies who will have the realization of their hope in three distinct spheres (domains).

[00:11:03] **And that one word is the word adoption.** So for the moment, we are turning aside from the various aspects of the Second Coming, to use this word adoption, to make it clear to us that there are three different spheres (domains) so that for the rest of our time we shall be making as far as we can this word adoption speak now in the first place. What do we mean by the word adoption? What do you say? What do we mean? Or what does the New Testament mean? Because we may mean one thing and the New Testament may mean another. To most of us today if we use the word adoption, we think about the process whereby a poor little neglected child is adopted by foster parents and so on. That you remember that we are dealing not with modern methods. We are dealing with something that was in vogue in the days of the apostle himself and that is not the meaning of the word at all in the first place. The Greek word speaks. The Greek word translated adoption is made up of two parts.

[00:12:17] The word is "*huiiothesia*". Now, the word "*huio*" in the Greek means a sign. And the word *thesia* is a part of the verb "to place" and the word *huiiothesia* or adoption means to place as a son. Now, that's not the way to speak of a person who's born into a family. When a little child is born, he's not placed as a son. He's born so that that quickens our interest. And you say, well, what does it mean when it speaks about the adoption then? Something that places you as a son? **Well, we shall discover that it means that not only have you been born into the family of faith, but that you have been chosen by God and put down in his will to be a first born one and to have an inheritance that's associated with such a distinction.** So now to the proof. First of all, we go to the epistle, to the Galatians, because there we have a reference to the very process that was going on at the time the Apostle Paul wrote this epistle. Chapter three in verse 15, the Apostle says; "*This, brethren, I speak after the manner of men*". And on 1 or 2 occasions when the Apostle uses that expression, you will

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discover that he is not talking, he's not quoting Old Testament scripture. He is speaking about something which the ordinary average man to whom he's writing knows full well.

[00:14:03] He's not going to quote scripture for a moment. He's going to quote the law that was in operation in Galatia! He said to these Galatians; *"I speak after the manner of men though it be but a man's covenant. Yet if it be confirmed, no man disannul or added thereto"*. He was only reminding them what was common knowledge that in Galatia and this has all been proved by archaeology, it's been dug out of the earth practically every item of it. But in Galatia it was rather a serious proposition for a man to make a will for two reasons. One, there were laws regulating it because the making of a will wasn't merely private, it was public. It had to do with the service of the state, the upkeep of temples, the preserving of clans and inheritance and whatnot. And secondly, when once he had made his will and it was confirmed, he couldn't alter his mind. So you see, it's very different from a will today. Some of you who are listening to me may be saying to yourself, I'll leave that man so much in my will. And by the time we get to the end of this recording, you'll say, Well, I don't. I'll cut him out. Well, you're perfectly at liberty to do that, but you couldn't do that in Galatia! Now that's the very essence of Paul's argument. His essence is that if an ordinary man, when once he makes a will, can neither add to it nor take away.

[00:15:39] How much more may we expect that God, when he makes a will, will not alter it? And now listen to the way in which he proceeds. Verse 17; *"And this. I say that the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ. The law, which was 430 years after, cannot disannul that it should make the promise of none effect."* There's the same argument. Well, now, after that, we must jump to chapter four because he picks up this Galatian will and expands it until we reach the word adoption. He said; *"Now I say, that the heir, as long as he is a child differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all. But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father."* That was true in his day. They had these pedagogues who were responsible for the child, and although he was destined to be heir of vast estates and great wealth for the time being, he most likely got a smack if he misbehaved himself. Even as we learn about our present queen when she was princess, had to be smacked by a Scotch governess.

But it says; *"When the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his son made of a woman made under the law to redeem them, that were under the law that we might receive the adoption of sons."* Now, in order that you may realize that to receive the adoption of sons does not mean to be taken into a family of which you have no connection, it immediately goes on.

[00:17:26] And because ye are sons, it doesn't say because you're adopted sons. Because you are sons. You are sound already. This man who made a will in Galicia couldn't put down anybody in his will. He was limited by law. He must keep it within certain limits. He could choose this one or that one or the other of a family, but not outside. So, if you are already a redeemed child of God, then you discover that God says; *"Now, although I redeemed you and you and you, it doesn't follow that you're all going to the same place and you're all going to have the same inheritance and you're all going to enjoy it in the same sphere (domain)"*! After once you're saved, you'll want to know what is your calling and what is your hope!

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So, he says; “This company have received the adoption of sons and because ye are sons, God has sent forth the spirit of his son into your hearts, crying Abba Father.” This word occurs only in Romans eight, Galatians four and in the Gospel where it speaks of the garden of Gethsemane. Only three times we read Abba Father and the rabbinical comment is that no slave was ever permitted by Jewish law to utter the word ABBA. It was sacred to those who were sons!

[00:18:53] So you see, the apostle is using every possible means to stress the fact that we are real sons of God! But what he is emphasizing is not only sons, but heirs. Listen. Verse seven” “Wherefore there are no more a slave as the word is, but a son. And if a son and an heir of God through Christ.” It's not merely sonship that he has in view, but the being the appointed heir. Well now the next thing for us is to notice, **that three distinct companies in the New Testament are said to be to have this peculiar privilege of “the adoption”**.

Now, I'm going to imagine that there is one of those very useful people who now raises an objection. It may have flitted through your mind as you've been listening. You say to me...: “If the word “adoption” speaks of our first born and if now you're going to turn to two several passages of Scripture where distinctly different companies are said to be the first born, well, how can a man have three or more first born sons?? And at first you may say, well, that's impossible until you have a second thought and you say; “Oh, well, no course, if that particular man had been married three times over then he could have three firstborn sons because it would then mean three different departments in his family!” Well, that's more or less a crude illustration of what they're going to discover.

[00:20:34] We're going to discover that the people of Israel, to the exclusion of everyone else, has the adoption. Well, if that's the limit of it, then we never can have it. But the epistle to the Galatians says that those to whom he spoke had the adoption. And in Galatians we are told that they the seed of Abraham, are neither the Jew nor the Gentile. It includes both, one doesn't exclude the other! So, there are two companies who have the adoption. And then those of you who know your epistle to the Ephesians, you know that in **that** calling, the calling of the mystery, where the Jew now is outside and the Gentile is dominant and the blessings there are not in the earth most certainly, but in heavenly places, again we find the adoption!

So here we've got three distinct companies who have the adoption. Now we're going to look at those three different passages, which set that out. And by so doing, I hope we've prepared the way for the next consideration, which will be now if there are three different spheres of blessing which are indicated by these three usages of the word adoption, then the second coming of Christ will be different from the one that belongs to Israel according to the flesh, from that second coming which will belong at least to the church, which is the one body where the flesh is entirely eliminated. So, shall we now turn to Romans, the ninth chapter? Romans the ninth chapter....

[00:22:13] And the apostle now is speaking about the peculiar problem that was arising during the closing of this part of his ministry that although the people of Israel were chosen by God. They were evidently becoming blind and hard. And he raises the question in Chapter 11. Hath

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God then set aside his people? God forbid, not those whom he foreknew a remnant still continue, But the bulk of the people were going into their blindness until the future day when they should look upon him whom they pierced. And then all Israel shall be saved. But now, Chapter nine, he speaks at the end of verse three of his brethren. Now, if that were unaccompanied by any other explanation, you and I could be spoken of as the brethren of the Apostle Paul. He wouldn't hesitate if he were here alive today to speak of us as his brethren. But when he says here, my brethren, he adds the words; **“My kinsmen, according to the flesh”, We’re not one of us, in this company, are kinsmen of the Apostle Paul according to the flesh. We’re only kinsmen according to the spirit!** So now he is limited himself and you know as well as I do, **there's only one people on earth who are the kinsmen of the Apostle Paul, according to the flesh, that is the people of Israel.** Well, I needn't have said all that if we'd only read on...

[00:23:49] It says; **Who are Israelites. Who-are-Israelites!** Now he gives a list of the privileges that belong to this people. And do remember, it's not a spiritual people. It's not a church. **It's the people of Israel, according to the flesh and this belongs to them!** To whom pertaineth? What's the first thing?? **The adoption.** The very first thing that he instances as their peculiar privilege above everybody else on earth is **the adoption.** Now, then, it's not unknown to you that the children of Israel were actually called by God, his firstborn. You remember when Moses went down to Egypt and demanded that the children of Israel should be set free from their bondage under Pharaoh, that he went into the presence of Pharaoh and said; “God has sent me to say to you, let my firstborn go!”

Well, now that's a useful passage because it proves that a first born doesn't necessarily mean the first one to be born. It means that the one within certain limits has been chosen by God. Ruben was the firstborn of his father, Jacob. But Jacob passed over him, although he was the “first to be born”. He wasn't given the “first born's” privileges, that was reserved for Joseph, who came a long way down the list. He had the coat of many colors. He had the double portion, you remember. But there is no tribe of Joseph. That is distributed among his two children, he gets the two!

[00:25:38] So then, long before these words were uttered that Israel were the firstborn among the nations, it was already written in Genesis chapter ten that the Earth was divided among 70 nations. And a long while after they were 70 nations in the earth God said; “Israel are my firstborn.” Well, there's no need for me to keep on with that. **That's most evident that he doesn't mean number one on the list. It means number one in the will of God.** And he passed over the whole 70 and chose this people Israel to them pertain the adoption. Well now then, we've settled one thing! That's if we believe what God says, that whoever else will not get the adoption, whoever they may be that have it in the New Testament, one people have got it as their peculiar privilege, that is the people of Israel. And as we are not the people of Israel and as the people of Israel are not the church, either of the one body or any other company in the New Testament, here we have then one sphere (domain) of blessing! And associated with that one sphere (domain) of blessing is an aspect of the hope. Now we must look at that in another meeting, but I remind you that his feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, says the

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Prophet Zechariah. And another prophet says they shall look upon him, whom they pierced, saith the Lord.

[00:27:12] All that is to do with the time when the hope of Israel will be realized. But he doesn't belong to us. **You and I are not looking for the day when the Lord's feet will stand upon the Mount of Olives. Not if we know our calling, for we shall then be with him in glory before that moment takes place!** But that, of course, is yet to be proved.

Well, now we come back to Galatians. **Just to make sure that the epistle to the Galatians is not referring to exactly the same company.** And that has already been spoken of in Romans nine. In chapter one, the Apostle Paul is going over the account of his commission and conversion, and he says in verse 16 that it included this; *"To reveal his son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen."* Now, it's unfortunate that the word "heathen" has changed its meaning. We think of the heathen today as those who are living in foreign lands. But we, those that make up the company or listening to me at this very moment.... **We** are the heathen of the New Testament! This word occurs in Galatians several times and is translated heathen, nations and Gentile. **It doesn't matter which you choose, it's all one and the same.** So here we have a man who says that he was especially set aside to preach to the heathen. And in chapter two, he goes over the ground again.

[00:28:56] And it says; Verse eight, Chapter two (of Galatians). *"For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles."* And at the end of verse nine, the same word Gentile; ...*"that we should go to the heathen."* Well, I think that's good enough, near enough to see that when we come to the Epistle, to the Galatians, those to whom the apostle is ministering there are not Israel according to the flesh. They are Gentiles. They are heathen. But then, of course, they are a certain number from the heathen, for he's speaking about those who are redeemed, redeemed Gentiles. But not excluding the people of Israel, because Israel, during Paul's ministry, they also believed and when they believed, they became incorporated into a **new company** and their affection was set a little bit higher than inheriting Palestine in the yet future. We'll come to that in a moment. But at the end of Chapter three of Galatians, we read these words, Verse 26. *"We are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, who ye are all"*. Who's the who? *"For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ, there is neither Jew nor Greek."* We mentioned this before. Don't read it like this. There is neither Jew nor Greek. There is neither bond nor free. That isn't the meaning. That's our use of the word "there". This means place.

[00:30:36] The place where. So we'll put it. We'll read it again. ***"For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ..."*** **There, in that company and in that calling, there** is neither Jew nor Greek. **There** is neither bond nor free. **There** is neither male nor female. *"For you are all one in Christ Jesus and if ye be Christ's, then are you Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise."* When it's not possible to limit statements like that to Israel according to the flesh. Nobody in this meeting is attempting to do so. But we're

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just canvassing the thought that we are now dealing with *another* company which includes the Gentile and gives **them** a very high place. Now in chapter four, our thoughts are turned.

In verse 26, not to Jerusalem, which is on the earth, which will yet be, a place of God's administration and is still the Mecca of Israel according to the flesh, Jerusalem here on the earth. **But our thoughts are turned to Jerusalem, which is above.** So that now we see:

1. That the first adoption belongs to a people who are to inherit the earth and will belong to Jerusalem, which is in the air.
2. And the second sphere (domain) of adoption are those who are **both Jew and Gentile, still reckoned as the seed of Abraham, but associated with a heavenly city.**

Now it's no news to you that Abraham represents both those people. Abraham was the father of Israel, according to the flesh.

[00:32:33] Every Israelite is a descendant of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. But Abraham is also the father of those who walk by faith in connection with the heavenly aspect of his calling. Because you see, this man, Abraham, not only was given the land of Palestine and told to "walk through the length of it and the breadth of it", but without being told. So, in the Old Testament, we know from the New Testament that he had heard about the New Jerusalem, the heavenly city, and because of that, he was willing to be a tent dweller to enter and wait for the city "*which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God.*"

Well, when you turn to that passage in Hebrews, both 11 and 12, you've got the sphere (domain) of the second calling. You've got the association of the Second Coming of Christ in relation to the entry into and the inheritance of the heavenly city. So, if you will turn to Hebrews 12, you'll discover that there is there insisted that these who occupy this high position, they have the adoption who didn't know the word adoption came in the epistle to the Hebrews. That's quite right. It doesn't. **But you see, a word may not come, but the thing it represents may be there.** I don't suppose any of us, if we were hungry, would say; "Well, I thought I was going to have bread and you're offering me a meal?" No, no, we are not going to be starving because of a word.

[00:34:10] So if the word adoption is not used in Hebrews and the word firstborn is used in Hebrews, who's going to quarrel? So, we notice in Hebrews chapter 12 in contrast with Sinai, and those of you who read as we did just now in Galatians four will remember Paul's allegory of Mount Sinai and Jerusalem bondage and free will the editors again. He says in verse 22 of Chapter 12. "*But ye are come unto Mount Zion.* In contrast with verse 18, "*for ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched.*" That is Mount Sinai. So he says; "*But come unto Mount Zion and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the General Assembly and Church of the Firstborn, which are written in heaven the firstborn.*" Now, here's another feature which this passage will help us to indicate. It's one thing to be the first born, but that rather assumes that are others, doesn't it? You know the old illustration of the person who came home, the boy who came home from school and said he had come in first for arithmetic, and his father's hand was creeping toward his pocket to get a

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little reward. And he discovered nobody else had been in for the exam. What do you see? This is not merely that your first. Because there's nobody else there!

[00:35:55] God says I've chosen Israel first and all the rest of the nations are going to be second. All this chapter and verse! When Israel are in their position, they're going to be called the priests, a kingdom of priests unto our God. But the Gentiles shall be their plowmen and their fine dressers. So that you see, the firstborn's position is a reality. He's first, and there are others who were a little bit lower. But when you come to the church in the heavenly Jerusalem, it isn't that you're going to have somebody like one of the nations above the others. No! Now you discover that these have angels beneath them. That's marvelous, isn't it? It says to the innumerable company of angels. And in this same connection and in the same dispensation, the Apostle asked the Corinthians, (is it)? What?? *"Do you not know that the Saints shall judge angels?"* And in chapter two of Hebrews is already said; *"That man made for a little lower than the Angels"*, is destined later on to be *above* angels!

But when we say those words, we're also preparing our mind for another aspect of truth. How many times are the word angels occur in Paul's epistles of the mystery Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and second Timothy? He only refers to them if he does at all, to set them aside. The one occurrence in Colossians is a reference to the fact that they were being beguiled of their position and reward by worshiping angels.

[00:37:43] When I read the exaltation of the Lord Jesus Christ in Ephesians one, I don't read that he was exalted far above angels, they're not even mentioned! What I read in Ephesians one is that he was exalted far above principality power might dominion thrones any name. Angels are not even mentioned! The only vessel which is teeming with angels and angelic ministry is the epistle to the Hebrews. But I'm not a Hebrew. **An angelic ministry has never entered into the story of my tribe and my nation. But it did in connection with Israel right from the beginning of their calling, from the days of Abraham, right up through into the Gospels and the acts of the Apostles, there was Angel Ministry and Angel intervention.** So now we've got two callings suggested. The earth with his line of calling according to the flesh who have the adoption, the first born in that company. And then we have those from among both Jew and Gentile who have exercised the same faith as their father, Abraham, and look for a heavenly aspect of that particular promise. And that's where some or many of God's people have stopped. Well, not one of us are worthy of walking the streets of the New Jerusalem. Not one of us. Have any right to enter into that city. No, no wonder none of us are going to reach glory because of any merit in ourselves. So that if there is another calling mentioned and even if it happens to be a little bit higher still.

[00:39:38] Well, there's nothing to stop us from believing what God says and taking the higher position. We might as well have the best. If it's on exactly the same terms. And that is what we are now going to do. We come to the third and last statement about this word adoption. That is the epistle to the Ephesians. Now, it would take us, of course, too far afield to try to demonstrate that Ephesians, the prison epistle, was the opening of a new dispensation. **We must assume a little bit when we have these limitations that the prison ministry of the Apostle**

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Paul differs completely from the early ministry, which he fulfilled in the acts of the Apostles, differs completely from that of Peter and James and John. If that is not accepted by you at the moment, we look forward at some other time to demonstrate that it is a fact.

So, in Ephesians one we have a new company. Let's look at some of the characteristics of this company. Chapter one. Ephesians. Verse three says, Blessed be the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. In heavenly places. Where's that? Well, we do know where in this sense, because in chapter one, at the end, when it speaks of the exaltation of the Lord Jesus Christ, halfway through verse 20, it says that when he was raised from the dead, he set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places.

[00:41:23] So according to Ephesians one, verse three, we are going to be blessed where Christ sits at the right hand of God in heavenly places! There are some who object to that and say it's one thing to read that Christ has been raised to sit there, but it's another thing for us to presume that we are going to be associated there and it **would** be a presumption **if it weren't written**. So, in Ephesians two, we read these words, verse five; *"Even when we were dead in sins hath quickened us together with Christ by grace, you are saved."* I always like that bit in brackets. Paul interrupts himself. He can't go clean through with it. He has to burst out and say; *"By grace, are you saved! And hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places, in Christ Jesus."* **Made us sit together.** So, you see. Unless we're going to smudge all these blessed things and bring them down to a common level; (such as) *"The meek shall inherit the earth, the man who is going to inherit the land of Palestine cannot possibly be at the very self-same time inheriting blessings where Christ sits at the right hand of God!* So, we are now beginning to realize here's a new sphere (domain) of blessing. When we come back to chapter one Ephesians.

[00:43:00] And we read in verse four; *"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world."* This, again, this statement "before the foundation of the world" opens up a tremendous vista and takes us back to Genesis one, verse two. But once again, that's another story. But some of you may know already that we feel justified in translating this "chosen us in him before the overthrow of the world". But whether we accept that translation or not, this is an accepted fact with us all, that **nowhere else in the New Testament is any believer associated with the period which is said to be "before the foundation of the world."** In Matthew and in Hebrews and in other parts, there is a calling which is "from" or "since" the foundation of the world. But this is the only one that goes back before! **So that of itself indicates a new calling and a new company.** And that is not all! It says in verse five; *"Having predestinated us unto the adoption."* Here is the selfsame word coming out again. **Now, is it humanly possible, quite apart from inspiration, for any person in his senses to write a book and say that "the adoption" is the distinctive and peculiar possession of three different companies unless he's directing our attention to three different callings, three different spheres (domains)?? So that we have now sought to bring before the attention that there are these three different callings.**

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[00:44:54] And in both in each case, there is an emphasis upon a citizenship. In connection with the people of Israel. We know their city and what privilege it will be in that day for your name to be on the roll of that city where they are going to boast. This man will speak about Tyre. This man will speak about Nineveh. And if we brought it up to date, this man will speak about Berlin and this one of his swanking about New York, and somebody else will be saying London. And then the scripture says that this man will say; "I was born there". The citizenship of that city despised, though it may be today, that's Jerusalem down here. And then we had Hebrews and in Galatians, the heavenly city, the New Jerusalem, the city which is above, well there's *another* citizenship.

But when we come to Ephesians and Philippians, we discover that **we** are associated with a city. So, shall we get that before we finish our story? Ephesians two, verse 11 and 12 will only provide us with the word citizenship, but it would also be a very definite and direct contrast with Romans nine. Now, Romans nine, you remember, was the distinctive blessings of the children of Israel to them pertain the adoption and the giving of the law and the glory and the covenants. And even Christ came from them according to the flesh. Now, listen to this.

[00:46:35] Ephesians 2:11, "*Wherefore remember that ye being in time past gentiles in the flesh who are called uncircumcision by that which is called the circumcision in the flesh, made by hands, that at that time ye were without Christ.*" **There's the contrast. Israel according to the flesh.** They were the ones through whom Christ came. But these were "*...without Christ being aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.*"

Now that word "commonwealth" is the word "citizenship". We were strangers from the citizenship of Israel. Have we a citizenship? Well, look down at verse 19. Now, "*Therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners but fellow citizens of the saints and of the household of God.*" **And this citizenship belongs to the place where Christ is! Your calling is associated with this.** And for that we can find a verse in Philippians chapter three...Philippians chapter three. Unfortunately, our version has buried the word "citizenship" in the word "conversation". Verse 20; "*For our conversation is in heaven.*" Politeuma P-o-l-i-t-e-u-m-a.

"Polis" is the Greek word "city" not our word metropolitan. And this particularly emphasizes a manner of life which is in harmony with being a citizen. And the Philippians would appreciate it. For the Philippians were citizens, although they were not living in Rome, they were given a distinctive prerogative. They were citizens of Rome with just one difference. They weren't there! And **we are citizens of heaven** with just one difference.

[00:48:39] **We** are not there! But, says the Lord; "walk as though you were, live as though you were citizens, even though you're not actually in the metropolis itself". So, he says; "*For our citizenship is in heaven, from whence also we look for the savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.*" And to conclude this survey with an emphasis upon that aspect, let us turn for our closing verse to Titus chapter two. Titus Chapter two. In verse nine, he is exhorting servants to be obedient unto their own masters, to please them well, in all things, not answering again, not purloining, but showing all good fidelity. You say; "What's that got to do with the second coming?" Well, the manner of

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life you live is in harmony with the hope that you have of the coming of Christ is going to lead to that. Not to him, but showing all good fidelity that they may adorn the doctrine of God, our Savior in all things. *“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts. We should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the Great God and our Savior Jesus Christ.”* Just go back for a moment. Lift out the simple sentence, the grace of God that saves us, teaches us that we should live looking. So instead of the doctrine of the Second Coming being for dreamers, it's the great incentive to a godly life.

[00:50:35] *“Adorning the doctrine of God, our Savior and we are to live looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the Great God and our Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.”* So, we end on that note this evening. Not merely a speculation concerning where the second coming will take place or what accompaniments there will be with it, whether it will fulfill this prophecy or whether it will not. But see to it that if we are among those who believe that our hope is intimately associated with the second coming of Christ in one aspect or another, that if we are entertaining that hope, there should be something in our manner of life which would make it make a harmony of it, that we should live long, live looking, and that we should seek to adorn the doctrine of God, our Savior.

We should remember that we are a peculiar people. The very last word, zealous of good works. It's good to end on that note, because there are still some who think about the Second Coming as being just a subject for those who are rather fanatics. Well, let's be fanatics in this sense that the more we believe the second coming of Christ, the more we look for his appearing, the more fanatically will we seek to walk in harmony with such a high and holy calling.