

Ephesians 1:11-14 (NIV)

¹¹ In him we were also chosen,^[a] having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, ¹² in order that we, who were the first to put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory. ¹³ And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory.

Footnotes:

- a. [Ephesians 1:11](#) Or *were made heirs*

Ephesians 1:11-14 (HCSB)

¹¹ We have also received an inheritance^[a] in Him, predestined according to the purpose of the One who works out everything in agreement with the decision of His will, ¹² so that we who had already put our hope in the Messiah might bring praise to His glory.

¹³ When you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and when you believed in Him, you were also sealed with the promised Holy Spirit. ¹⁴ He is the down payment of our inheritance, for the redemption of the possession,^[b] to the praise of His glory.

Footnotes:

- a. [Ephesians 1:11](#) Or *we also were chosen as an inheritance, or we were also made an inheritance*
b. [Ephesians 1:14](#) *The possession* could be either man's or God's

Holman Christian Standard Bible - Study Bible¹
Ephesians 1:11-14

1:11 Received an inheritance: Paul discusses the end result of redemption from a standpoint that stretches from eternity past to eternity future. The recipients of this inheritance are people whom God has chosen and predestined. They come to faith in Christ not by chance, coercion, or unaided choice, but by the enabling of God's Spirit. Building on OT themes, Paul envisioned those who have received this inheritance as standing in continuity with the covenant people of OT times.

1:13 Sealed with the promised Holy Spirit: The Holy Spirit was promised by the prophets and by Jesus ([Joel 2:28-29](#); [Jn 14:15-26](#); [16:5-16](#)). The Spirit is described as both a seal showing ownership, and as a pledge pointing to future redemption. Though believers have not yet experienced redemption in full, God will bring about final redemption (life in His immediate presence) for all who have received the Spirit ([Eph 1:14](#)).

apolutrosis

Greek Pronunciation [ah pah LEW troh sihs]

HCSB Translation redemption

Uses in Ephesians 3

Uses in the NT 10

Focus passage [Ephesians 1:7,14](#); [4:30](#)

In the NT, *apolutrosis* may refer to present or future *redemption*. When referring to future *redemption*, the term looks to the salvation of the Christian's physical body from the distresses of this world. The Son of Man's return will usher in release from suffering and persecution ([Lk 21:28](#)). In Paul's theology, the future *redemption* of our physical bodies will be accompanied both by the church's full adoption into divine sonship and by the creation being set free from decay ([Rm 8:18-23](#)). Presently, the Holy Spirit is the down payment guaranteeing the future "*redemption* of the possession" (meaning God will fully redeem His church and/or the church will possess its full inheritance; [Eph 1:14](#); [4:30](#)). Christians have *redemption*, described as the forgiveness of sins ([Eph 1:7](#); [Col 1:14](#)). Thus the work of God in Christ ensures both present and future *redemption* for His people.

1. Jeremy Royal Howard, ed., *HCSB Study Bible*, (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2010), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, Under: "Ephesians 1".

English Standard Version - Study Bible²
Ephesians 1:11-14

1:11 Obtained an inheritance seems the best rendering of the Greek verb that normally means “to allot [a portion].” Some believe the meaning is that God has claimed his own portion, the believing Jews (see [v. 14](#)). **predestined**.

Making those who believe in him heirs with Christ was not an ad hoc event; God had planned it from all eternity. By definition God is sovereign, directing all things freely according to his royal counsel. This is in sharp contrast with the pagan gods of the time, who were understood to be often fickle or bound by an inscrutable and arbitrary fate.

God’s predestination gives his people tremendous comfort, for they know that all who come to Christ do so through God’s enabling grace and appointment (see [2:8-10](#)).

Who works all things according to the counsel of his will is best understood to mean that every single event that occurs is in some sense predestined by God. At the same time, Paul emphasizes the importance of human responsibility, as is evident in all of the moral commands later in Ephesians ([chs. 4-6](#)) and in all of Paul’s letters. As Paul demonstrated in all of his remarkable efforts in spreading the gospel ([Acts 13-28](#); cf. [2 Cor. 11:23-28](#)), he believed that doing personal evangelism and making conscious choices to obey God are also absolutely essential in fulfilling God’s plan. God uses human means to fulfill what he has ordained.

With regard to tragedies and evil, Paul and the other biblical writers never blame God for them (cf. [Rom. 5:12](#); [2 Tim. 4:14](#); also [Job 1:21-22](#)). Rather, they see the doctrine of God’s sovereignty as a means of comfort and assurance (cf. [Rom. 8:28-30](#)), confident that evil will not triumph, and that God’s good plans for his people will be fulfilled. How God’s sovereignty and human responsibility work together in the world is a mystery no one can fully understand.

1:12 praise. See note on [v. 6](#).

1:13 Sealed can mean either that the Holy Spirit protects and preserves Christians until they reach their inheritance (see [4:30](#); [2 Cor. 1:22](#); [1 Pet. 1:5](#); [Rev. 7:2-3](#)) or that he “certifies” the authenticity of their acceptance by God as being genuine—they bear the “royal seal” (see [John 3:33](#); [Acts 10:44, 47](#)). The first interpretation seems best here, though both ideas are biblically true.

1:14 God pours out his Holy Spirit on all of his children to **guarantee** (or to provide a “down payment” on [ESV footnote]) their share in his eternal kingdom because he applies to them all God’s powerful working in redemption. **until we acquire possession of it**. This phrase can also be rendered “until God redeems his possession” (ESV footnote). In that case it means that, like the Levites in the OT, believers are the Lord’s specially treasured possession (see [Num. 3:12, 45](#); [8:14](#); [Josh. 14:3-4](#); [18:7](#)).

2. Lane T. Dennis, ed., *ESV Study Bible, The: English Standard Version*, (Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway Bibles, 2008), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, Under: "Ephesians 1".

NLT Life Application Study Bible³

Ephesians 3:11-14

1:11 God's purpose is to offer salvation to the world, just as he planned to do long ago. God is sovereign; he is in charge. When your life seems chaotic, rest in this truth: Jesus is Lord, and God is in control. God's purpose to save you cannot be thwarted, no matter what evil Satan may bring.

1:13, 14 The Holy Spirit is God's guarantee that we belong to him and that he will do what he has promised. The Holy Spirit is like a down payment, a deposit, a validating signature on the contract. The presence of the Holy Spirit in us demonstrates the genuineness of our faith, proves that we are God's children, and secures eternal life for us. His power works in us to transform us now, and what we experience now is a taste of the total change we will experience in eternity.

³Life Application Study Bible, (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1988), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 2000.

Life Essentials Study Bible⁴

A Principle to Live By Ephesians #2: Our Position in Christ

from [Ephesians 1:3-14](#)

Because of our eternal hope and secure relationship with God through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, we should never cease to praise and worship Him.

Paul began this letter with a glorious doxology. It describes our eternal hope when we are in Christ, a frequent theme in this letter. As true believers, we belong to Christ, we are in union with Christ, and nothing can separate us from Christ (cp. [Rm 8:39](#)). Whether Jewish or Gentile believers,

- we have been chosen in Christ ([Eph 1:4](#)),
- we are redeemed by the blood of Christ ([v. 7](#)),
- we are adopted into the family of God ([v. 5](#)), and
- we are “sealed with the promised Holy Spirit” ([v. 13](#)). (See Ps #70: God’s Eternal Covenant, [p. 760](#).)

This paragraph also introduces a great mystery. From both a divine and a human perspective, Jesus Christ died for the sins of the whole world, and the invitation to receive salvation by believing in Jesus Christ is open to everyone ([Jn 3:16](#); [Rm 10:13](#)). Yet, only those chosen by God the Father before the foundation of the world will respond to the gospel ([Eph 1:4-5](#); cp. [Rm 8:29](#); [9:18](#)). Though this sounds like two irreconcilable theological points of view, both realities are true. This is what some call a biblical antinomy. In our humanness, we cannot reconcile our freedom to accept or reject Jesus Christ with God’s sovereignty and divine election. From God’s point of view, both are true.

Reflection and Response

As we think about our blessings in Christ, why should we praise and thank God daily? (See Ps #147: Specific Blessings, [p. 823](#).)

4. Gene Getz, *Life Essentials Study Bible*, (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2011), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 1626.