

PLEASE NOTE - The references below are taken from the 86-19 Index. Many verses have additional references that have not been included due to time & space. We are encouraged to do additional personal research.

(Ephesians 1:5) 5 For he foreordained us to be adopted as his own sons through Jesus Christ, according to his good pleasure and will,

*** w09 10/15 pp. 27-28 Are You “Rooted and Established on the Foundation”? ***

Foreordained “Before the Founding of the World” Paul wrote to fellow believers: “[God] foreordained us to the adoption through Jesus Christ as sons to himself.” Indeed, Jehovah determined that he would adopt some humans into his own perfect heavenly family. These adopted sons of God would rule as kings and priests with Christ. (Rom. 8:19-23; Rev. 5:9, 10) In his original challenge against Jehovah’s sovereignty, Satan implied that God’s human creation was flawed. How fitting, then, that Jehovah chose members of that same human family to have a role in eventually ridding the universe of all badness, including the source of evil, Satan the Devil! However, Jehovah did not foreordain which individual humans would be adopted as his sons. Rather, God determined that there would be a group, or class, of humans that would rule with Christ in heaven.— Rev. 14:3, 4.

What “world” did Paul mean when he wrote to fellow Christians that they, as a group, were chosen “before the founding of the world”? He was not referring to a time before God created the earth or mankind. That would violate the fundamental principle of justice. How could Adam and Eve be held accountable for their actions if God had predetermined that they would fail even before they were created? So, then, when did God determine how he would remedy the situation that was created when Adam and Eve joined Satan in his rebellion against God’s sovereignty? Jehovah did so only after our original parents rebelled but before a world of imperfect yet redeemable humankind came into existence.

(Ephesians 1:7) 7 By means of him we have the release by ransom through the blood of that one, yes, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his undeserved kindness.

*** w16 July p. 27 Spread the Good News of Undeserved Kindness ***

SPREAD THE GOOD NEWS OF THE RANSOM SACRIFICE

6 In this permissive world, sin has all but lost its stigma, so that many are unaware of the need for redemption. At the same time, more and more people can see that a permissive lifestyle does not bring true happiness. Until they talk with Jehovah’s Witnesses, many do not understand what sin is, how it affects us, and what we need to do to be delivered from slavery to sin. Honesthearted ones are relieved to learn that Jehovah, out of his great love and undeserved kindness, sent his Son to earth to ransom us from sin and its consequence, death.—1 John 4:9, 10.

7 Speaking of Jehovah’s beloved Son, Paul wrote: “By means of him [Jesus] we have the release by ransom through the blood of that one, yes, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his [Jehovah’s] undeserved kindness.” (Eph. 1:7) The ransom sacrifice of Christ is the greatest proof of God’s love for us and illustrates the richness of His undeserved kindness. What a relief it is to learn that if we exercise faith in the shed blood of Jesus, our sins will be forgiven and our conscience will be cleansed! (Heb. 9:14) Good news indeed to share with others!

(Ephesians 1:22, 23) 22 He also subjected all things under his feet and made him head over all things with regard to the congregation, 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills up all things in all.

*** w07 4/1 pp. 21-22 pars. 1-3 Loyal to Christ and His Faithful Slave ***

Jehovah “raised him up from the dead and . . . made him head over all things to the congregation, which is his body.”—Ephesians 1:20-23. 2 Since Christ is “head over all things” with regard to the Christian congregation, he exercises his authority over all that takes place within the congregation. Nothing that occurs within the congregation escapes his notice. He closely observes the spiritual condition of each group of Christians, or congregation. This is clearly apparent in the revelation given to the apostle John at the end of the first century C.E. To seven congregations, Jesus stated five times that he knew their deeds, their strong points, and their weaknesses, and he gave counsel and encouragement accordingly. (Revelation 2:2, 9, 13, 19; 3:1, 8, 15) There is every reason to believe that Christ was equally familiar with the spiritual condition of other congregations in Asia Minor, Palestine, Syria, Babylonia, Greece, Italy, and elsewhere. (Acts 1:8) What of today?

A Faithful Slave

3 After his resurrection and shortly before his ascension to his Father in heaven, Jesus told his disciples: “All authority has been given me in heaven and on the earth.” He also said: “Look! I am with you all the days until the conclusion of the system of things.” (Matthew 28:18-20) He would continue to be with them as their active Head. In letters to Christians in Ephesus and Colossae, the apostle Paul likened the Christian congregation to a “body,” of which Christ is the Head. (Ephesians 1:22, 23; Colossians 1:18) The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges states that this metaphor “suggests not only vital union with the Head, but that the will of the Head is exercised through the members. They are His instruments.” Whom has Christ used as his collective instrument since being invested with Kingdom power in 1914?—Daniel 7:13, 14.

(Ephesians 2:7) 7 so that in the coming systems of things he might demonstrate the surpassing riches of his undeserved kindness in his graciousness toward us in union with Christ Jesus.

*** w16 July p. 29 Spread the Good News of Undeserved Kindness ***

UNDESERVED KINDNESS IN THE NEW SYSTEM OF THINGS

13 Jehovah’s undeserved kindness will reach beyond the end of the present wicked system of things. Referring to the extraordinary privilege that God has granted to the 144,000, who are called to reign with Christ in his heavenly Kingdom, Paul wrote: “God, being rich in mercy, because of his great love with which he loved us, made us alive together with the Christ, even when we were dead in trespasses—by undeserved kindness you have been saved. Moreover, he raised us up together and seated us together in the heavenly places in union with Christ Jesus, so that in the coming systems of things he might demonstrate the surpassing riches of his undeserved kindness in his graciousness toward us in union with Christ Jesus.”—Eph. 2:4-7.

14 It is difficult to imagine the wonders that Jehovah has in store for anointed Christians when they are seated on thrones to rule with Christ in heaven. (Luke 22:28-30; Phil. 3:20, 21; 1 John 3:2) Toward them in particular, Jehovah will “demonstrate the surpassing riches of his undeserved kindness.” They will make up “the New Jerusalem,” the bride of Christ. (Rev. 3:12; 17:14; 21:2, 9, 10) They will share with Jesus in “the healing of the nations,” directing obedient humans to the means to become free from the burden of sin and death and raising them to perfection.—Read Revelation 22:1, 2, 17.

15 At Ephesians 2:7, we read that God’s demonstration of undeserved kindness would occur “in the coming systems of things.” Doubtless, Jehovah’s new system of things on earth will witness

“the surpassing riches of his undeserved kindness.” (Luke 18:29, 30)

(Ephesians 3:5, 6) 5 In other generations this secret was not made known to the sons of men as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by spirit, 6 namely, that people of the nations should, in union with Christ Jesus and through the good news, be joint heirs and fellow members of the body and partakers with us of the promise.

*** w06 2/15 p. 19 par. 14 An Administration for Fulfilling God’s Purpose ***

14 Another part of the sacred secret with regard to the future Kingdom government was God’s will to include non-Jews among the small number of humans who would be called to reign with Christ in heaven. Paul explained this facet of Jehovah’s “administration,” or way of managing the fulfillment of his purpose: “In other generations this secret was not made known to the sons of men as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by spirit, namely, that people of the nations should be joint heirs and fellow members of the body and partakers with us of the promise in union with Christ Jesus through the good news.” (Ephesians 3:5, 6) The comprehension of this part of the sacred secret was revealed to the “holy apostles.” Similarly today, if it were not for the help of the holy spirit, we would not understand these “deep things of God.”—1 Corinthians 2:10; 4:1; Colossians 1:26, 27.