

The Redemption of the Purchased Possession

by Arno Clemens Gaebelein

Arno Clemens Gaebelein preaches on the truth revealed in Ephesians about the future redemption of the purchased possession, emphasizing believers being sealed with the Holy Spirit as an earnest of their inheritance. The chapter reveals God's highest revelation concerning sinners saved by Grace, including election, predestination, adoption, redemption, and the sealing with the Holy Spirit. The sermon delves into the steps leading to the verse, highlighting the importance of understanding the inheritance shared with Christ and the purchased possession acquired through His blood.

Description

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Transcript

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church" - "The final victory and redemption" faq: - q: "What is the purchased possession?" a: "The purchased possession refers to the believers' inheritance in Christ, which has been fully paid for by His blood but is yet to be redeemed." - q: "How are believers sealed with the Holy Spirit?" a: "Believers are sealed with the Holy Spirit at the moment of faith, which signifies their ownership by God and serves as a guarantee of their inheritance." - q: "What does redemption by power mean?" a: "Redemption by power refers to the future act of God reclaiming His creation from the forces of evil that currently hold it captive." - q: "What is the significance of the Book of Revelation in this context?" a: "The Book of Revelation provides a prophetic timeline and detailed events surrounding the redemption of the purchased possession, including the ultimate victory over evil." - q: "What does the term 'inheritance' imply for believers?" a: "Inheritance implies that believers are joint heirs with Christ, sharing in His eternal glory and the fullness of God's promises." quotes: - "The purchased possession, that which has been purchased for us, is yet to be redeemed." - "Every one who has believed received in the act of believing the Holy Spirit." - "The precious blood of the Son of God has not only redeemed us but has also purchased both the heavenlies and the earth." applicationPoints: - "Recognize the significance of being sealed with the Holy Spirit as a mark of God's ownership." - "Understand that our inheritance in Christ is both a present reality and a future promise." - "Live in anticipation of the ultimate redemption and the restoration of all creation." keywords: - "redemption" - "purchased possession" - "Holy Spirit" - "inheritance" - "spiritual blessings" - "future redemption" - "Ephesians" - "Satan" ---

We find in these words a truth revealed, which is quite often overlooked by readers of this great Epistle. It is this: The purchased possession, that which has been purchased for us, is yet to be redeemed. There is a future redemption of the purchased possession.

The divine statement includes this fact, that believers are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, and that He is the earnest of our inheritance until the time when the redemption of the purchased possession takes place.

And where do we find these words in this great chapter? If this chapter is at all to be divided, it must be divided into two parts. The first fourteen verses make the first part and then follows the great prayer of the Spirit of God through the Apostle. The statement which is before us for consideration is found at the end of the first part, preceding the prayer of the Apostle.

And what precious truth this chapter up to the fourteenth verse contains! It is indeed God's highest revelation concerning believing sinners saved by Grace. There is nothing higher than that, which is revealed here, and it is safe to say that God could not tell us anything better and more precious than what He has told us in this chapter.

First stands the greatest doxology of the Scriptures. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ." This takes it all together. We are as believers of Christ united to Him, One with Him and therefore we possess every spiritual blessing the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is capable of giving. Then follows the great facts connected with our redemption in Christ. Here we find election, predestination, adoption, or putting into the Son-place, Redemption, the source of redemption as well as the prize of redemption.

Let us glance briefly at those glorious steps which lead up to our verse. They are just seven.

We can only name them, much as we would like to ponder over each. 1. We are chosen in Him before the foundation of the world. He thought of us and loved us before ever a single thing had been created. 2.

Marked out for the Son-ship through Jesus Christ. According to the good pleasure of His will He has given us the place of a Son. 3. He has taken us into the favor in the Beloved. In that beloved One we are beloved forever accepted in Him. 4. We have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of offences, according to the riches of His grace. 5. Then we have the knowledge of the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself for the administration of the fulness of times, to head up all things in the Christ. 6. In Him we have obtained an inheritance; and then the last step, the seventh, we are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, the earnest of that inheritance which we have obtained.

Now let me just say this little word on the last great fact. The authorized version reads "after that ye believed ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise." This translation is misleading and gives ground to an error which is becoming more and more widespread. It is the error that the Holy Spirit is not given at once when the sinner believes, but that the Holy Spirit is received in a definite experience after we have believed. It is an error; the passage before us does not teach this but the very opposite, for it reads, "in whom also believing, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit." Every one who has believed received in the act of believing the Holy Spirit. And this blessed gift, not an influence, but the person of the Holy Spirit, is both the seal and the earnest. A seal makes secure and denotes safety. By that seal we are owned by God. We are His property, we belong to Him. Then the Holy Spirit is the earnest of our inheritance, the pledge of it. We give an earnest when we buy a property, it is an advance payment, the first installment. So is the Holy Spirit from the side of our God the earnest of the purchased possession. How happy and full of joy we should be with the knowledge of all these precious truths, with the seal and earnest of our possession.

But the earnest (not the seal) is up to a certain time and that time is when we come into the full possession of our inheritance "until the redemption of the purchased possession to the praise of His glory." This brings us to the whole matter before us.

1. In the first place what is "our inheritance" mentioned here? We find the word inheritance three times in this chapter. "In whom we have also obtained an inheritance" (verse 11). Then in the 14th verse, "The earnest of our inheritance." We find it again in the 18th verse. "So that ye should know what is the hope of His calling and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the Saints." The inheritance is, according to these passages, twofold. Believers constituting the church have an inheritance and we are His inheritance. The inheritance we have, our inheritance, is nothing less than the inheritance of the Christ. He made Him Heir of all things. He is the Heir of God. The same is said of us as believers. We are heirs of God and joint heirs with the Lord Jesus Christ. God has put us, according to the good pleasure of His will in Christ, in the place of sons and because He has made us sons He has made us heirs. The inheritance of the first begotten from the dead is the inheritance of all who are by Grace constituted sons in Him. And what is His inheritance which we shall share in all eternity? We find in it the preceding verses, "having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself for the administration of the fulness of times; to head up all things in the Christ, the things in the heavens and the things upon the earth." In other words, He is the heir of all things and these include both the heavens and the earth. All is put under His feet. And this glorious inheritance belongs to us; we shall share it with Him in all eternity. What mind and heart can grasp it! It is unspeakable and unfathomable. Our inheritance is often lowered in that people speak about the earth as being the inheritance. Certain passages from the Old Testament are quoted in support of this. "The meek shall inherit the earth," "the earth has He given to the children of men." But this does not at all refer to our inheritance, but rather to the inheritance of an earthly people in the millennium. Our inheritance assuredly includes the earth, but the heavens are the supreme place for the church. As He is now far above all principalities and power and

might and dominion, in the heavenlies, so will the church occupy the heavenlies with Him, the glorified Head, and in the ages to come God will show in this very position and possession He has given to us His exceeding riches of His Grace.

But here we read not only of an inheritance, which belongs to us, but it speaks of "the purchased possession." There is no difference at all between these two terms "our inheritance" and "the purchased possession;" they are one and the same thing. The inheritance, the possession of the heavenlies and of the earth is acquired or purchased and the purchase price is the blood of the Son of God. The precious blood of the Son of God has not only redeemed us and made it possible for us to share His inheritance to the praise of His Glory, but it has also purchased both the heavenlies and the earth. The heavenlies as well as the things on earth have been defiled by sin and needed the purchase; the blood of the Son of God alone could accomplish that. In the same sense we read in the first chapter of Colossians of the reconciliation of all things, the things in heaven and the things on the earth.

It is an interesting fact that we find the same word "the purchased possession" as it is translated here at four other places in the New Testament. Twice in Thessalonians, once in Hebrews and once in 1st Peter. Each time it refers to the future.

1 Thess. v:9. "God has not set us for wrath, but (literally) unto acquiring salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who has died for us that whether we may be watching or sleep, we may live together with Him. The "acquiring of salvation" is future and corresponds to the "purchased possession."

2 Thess. ii:14. "Unto which He called you through our Gospel, unto an acquiring of the Glory of the Lord Jesus Christ."

1 Peter ii:19.... "A people for an acquisition;" that is, a people formed for a possession corresponding to Isaiah xliii:2. "This people have I formed for myself, they shall show forth my praise." This is spoken, of course, concerning Israel. It also finds an application in the church, the royal Priesthood. In the possession of our inheritance we shall make known His excellencies, His Glory.

Hebrews x:39. The word is likewise found also relating to the future, "the preservation of the soul," the same as salvation in the future sense.

2. And now we reach the main thought of the Scripture before us. The purchased possession, the inheritance, though it has been fully paid for, is completely purchased, is yet to be redeemed. While we said that our inheritance and the expression "the purchased possession" are the same, it is not so with "purchase" and "redemption." These are two different things. The purchase is by blood, but the redemption here is by power. The purchased possession is to be redeemed by power.

Now as this is so the inheritance must be in a state of alienation from God; some power has hold of it who has no right to it. If this were not the case it would be impossible to speak of a redemption by power. It is just like the possession of some land in a frontier state. A person purchases a large tract of land. It is his, he has a perfect title to it. But now he comes and looks over his purchased possession and he finds a number of people who settled upon it. They have erected houses and make a claim that it belongs to them, but they have no right to it at all. Either by law or by force they are to be evicted from the property to which they have no right. At a certain time the owner comes and claims his ownership and casts out these people. And even so that which the Lord has purchased and which belongs to Him and to the sons of God with Him, His inheritance and our inheritance is possessed up to this time by evil, God opposing powers

and they have still control of it till the hour of eviction comes. All things are indeed put under His feet, but we see not yet all things put under Him, though we see as a pledge that it shall be so, "Jesus who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor." The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, and yet the earth is still in the grasp of that mighty being, who had shown to our Lord the kingdoms of this world claiming them as his own and offering the same to the Lord. The father of lies spoke the truth then, for the kingdoms of this world are in his possession and they are still his. He is still the god of this age, the prince of the world. The enemies of Christ seen and unseen are not yet made His footstool, nor will they be till the power of God does it in that mighty act of a future redemption. Still there is the groaning of all creation, waiting for something better to come, waiting for the deliverance from the bondage of corruption, waiting to be brought into the glorious liberty of the children of God. The deliverance of groaning creation takes place when the sons of God are manifested, and that is the time of the redemption of the purchased possession. And we also who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, the redemption of the body. And the redemption of the body belongs to the redemption of the purchased possession.

And how is it with the heavens? Surely here we cannot speak of some evil powers holding possessions, and that it is necessary to redeem that possession by power? It is exactly this which is mostly before us in this epistle of the Heavenlies.

To some Christians this is almost impossible to grasp and yet it is clearly revealed in the Scriptures that the heavenlies, the sphere above the earth and way beyond, is in the grasp of the evil tenants which under the headship of Satan form mighty principalities and powers and dominions. He himself as head reaches into heaven and has access to the very throne itself. He is not only the god of this age and the prince of this world, but also "The prince of the power in the air." How mighty he is as such, what powers are at his disposal, how vast his kingdom is, how numerous the fallen beings with him and how the demons fill the air, no saint has ever fully realized, nor shall we ever realize it, till the God of peace has Satan completely bruised under our feet.

Think for a moment of what the Scriptures say. There is the first and second chapter in the Book of Job. Some call it fiction. We call it one of the greatest revelations of the Word of God. There is the throne of God, and to that throne comes Satan as the accuser of the brethren. The New Testament verifies that this is still the case, and that at the present time this mighty being still accuses the saints of God before the throne of righteousness. And that is one of the reasons why the Lord Jesus Christ as our advocate appears in the presence of God for us.

Again we read the words of a prophet. "I saw the Lord sitting on His throne and all the host of heaven standing by him on his right and on his left.... And there came forth a spirit and stood before the Lord and said, I will persuade him (King Ahab). And the Lord said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go forth and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets" (1 Kings xxii:19-23). And furthermore here in the Epistle to Ephesians in the last chapter we read of the warfare of the Christian believer, which is not with flesh and blood but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against the wicked spirits in the heavenlies. This passage alone is sufficient evidence to show that the heavenlies are up to the present time tenanted by wicked spirits. They hold possession of the heavenlies and have control there. But Christ has triumphed over Satan and his wicked spirits and has purchased that heavenly possession. It belongs to Him and to His church, and when the right time comes the redemption of that possession will take place and the heavenlies will be cleared from these usurpers.

3. This brings us to the third thought connected with this theme. When and how will the purchased possession be redeemed by the power of God? We are not left to speculation on this matter, for while we have here just a few words concerning this great event we have in another part of the Bible a revelation, which may be termed the complete history of the redemption of the purchased possession. There we have the when and the how we have asked completely answered. That book is our great New Testament Book of Prophecy, the Revelation. The parts in which the redemption of the purchased possession by the power of God is revealed are chapters xii and xx.

The twelfth chapter is one of the great chapters in this marvelous book. It is not only a great chapter, but also an important one. In examining any exposition of the Book of Revelation one does well to turn to this chapter and read what the expositor has to say on it. If he is straight here his book is well worth reading; if not he must be wrong in the greater part of the book. The great vision is the woman travailing in pain to be delivered of a manchild. The catching away of that manchild, which the red dragon was ready to devour. The casting out of Satan after the manchild is with God and in heaven, the persecution of the woman and her seed by the serpent. The erroneous interpretation always concerns the woman. Many make her to be the church, and then the manchild is a select company of the elect church, overcomers, first fruits, or as some call them the 144,000.

The woman has nothing to do with the church. She typifies Israel and this is easily verified from Old Testament passages. The manchild destined to rule the nations with a rod of iron is Christ who, according to the flesh, came from Israel. Satan hated Him and would have devoured Him, but could not. The man-child is caught away and then after He is in the presence of God all the other events come rapidly to pass.

We notice that a number of important things are passed over entirely in the beginning of this chapter. They are implied, of course. Nothing is said of the earthly life of Christ, nothing of His death and resurrection. They are implied in His being caught away unto God. There is nothing said of this present age and nothing of the church, but she is likewise implied in this scene. The manchild does not stand for the person of Christ alone, but for the completed Christ, I mean by this the Christ, the Head and the Body, the church united to Him in Glory. What is spoken of the Christ in resurrection is also spoken of His church. The promise to rule the nations with a rod of iron is not only to Him but through Him also to those who overcome. "And he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers, even as I received of my Father" (Rev. ii:28). It is also significant that we do not read of the ascension here of our Lord. If the word were here that the man-child ascended, I doubt if then we could say the church is implied, for the word ascension is never used in connection with the church. But it reads "Caught away," and the very same word which is used here is used in 1 Thess. iv. "Caught up together with them in clouds." What follows next is the war in heaven and the casting out of Satan. This will not take place till the complete church, the Body and Bride of Christ, is taken up. Then Satan will be completely bruised under our feet. In spite of his malice, in spite of his power and accusations, in spite of his challenge to God and fearful attacks, there is not one member of that glorious body missing, all the redeemed are in the presence of the Lord and then Satan is forced down to the earth by Michael and his angels. In heaven there is a loud voice which declares: "Now is come salvation and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ, for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them day and night before our God. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto death. Therefore rejoice, oh ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them." Then Satan as the accuser has no more place in heaven and the advocacy of Christ

concerning His own, as He said in His highpriestly prayer, "I pray for them," has an end. They are all safe with Him in glory.

The heavenlies are thus cleared of Satan and his hosts when the church is brought in and the eviction is the redemption of the purchased possession. It takes place by the power of God through the mighty Being whose name is "Who is like God," Michael.

Satan the usurper cast out of the heavenly sphere goes down to the earth having great wrath. How fearful must be the wrath of that Being! Who of us can imagine it, what it will be? Surely the Lord would never leave His church, His Bride on the earth, when that awful Being with that great wrath comes down. Indeed what we have said shows clearly that the great tribulation is impossible as long as the church, the complete church, is not yet in glory. For to have the great tribulation on the earth the old serpent must be cast down on the earth.

The redemption of the purchased possession begins then with the rapture of the church to be with Christ in His Inheritance in the Heavenlies. This is followed by Satan being cast out of heaven. And then a few years more and the heavens open and the King of kings and Lord of lords appears. The Son in all His Glory is manifested bringing many sons with Him to Glory. It is then that we have the redemption of the purchased possession completed. "And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old Serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand years and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled, and after that he must be loosed a little season. And I saw thrones and they sat upon them, and the judgment was given unto them, and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years" (Rev. xx:1-5).

Then all of groaning creation will be delivered and Satan will no longer be the god of this age, the prince of this world nor the prince of the power in the air. There will be peace on earth and Glory to God in the Highest. Christ will reign and His church with Him in the Glory above. What a time it will be when it comes. What singing in heaven and on the earth. Then shall He have His full inheritance which we share and also have His inheritance in us His Saints, and He will be admired in all them that have believed. And all this is near.

Just a little while longer and we shall hear His shout which calls us and all His redeemed into His presence, with bodies redeemed by His power to enter into our inheritance, the purchased possession.

And now two things need to be mentioned in closing. Our conflict is with these evil spirits, the usurpers, both in the heavenlies and here on earth. May we be victors through the power of the Christ in us and His Spirit. The conflict is becoming hotter, especially for those who enter into their privileges and realize in faith their place and future glory.

Let us also walk worthy of our calling. Let it be seen that we are sealed by the Holy Spirit and have Him as the earnest of our inheritance. A Christian who professes to have such an inheritance and who professes to wait for the redemption of the purchased possession and who grasps after the honors of the world and runs after its riches is a sad spectacle indeed.

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