

Sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. Eph. 1: 13 (R.V.)

POSSESSED. The saints have been purchased at great cost by the precious blood of the Son of God. Not only their spirits, but their bodies, have been bought with an infinite expenditure. Is it not a wonderful thought that God should have thought it worth his while to expend so much on us! But since He has done it, we cannot suppose that He will not make all He can of us! He will bring his estate under cultivation; there will be no corner of it that will not yield Him produce.

TO BE REDEEMED. Our bodies are owned by God, but they are not yet entirely redeemed. And if we should die before the Lord's advent, they will return to their mother earth, possessed but not redeemed. Hence the apostle says that we are waiting for our adoption--to wit, the redemption of our body (Rom. 8: 23). We are under the sentence of corruption for Adam's sin; but we are to be redeemed.

SEALED. In Ezekiel's day a mark was set on the foreheads of the men that sighed and cried for sin (Ezek. 9: 4); and in the Apocalypse we read of the sealing of God's servants (Rev. 7: 2, 3). For sealing there are needed the softened wax; the imprint of the beloved face; the steady pressure. Would that the Spirit might impress the face of our dear Lord on our softened hearts, that they may keep it for evermore!

THIS SEALING IS AN EARNEST OF OUR INHERITANCE. The eternal future is all unknown, yet we may guess at it, because the work of the Spirit within us is the first fruits--the grapes of Eshcol, showing what the vintage will be; the earnest-penny, which is the pledge as well as part of the entire payment; the first streak of the coming day.

受了所應許的聖靈為印記。 弗一13

擁有。聖徒是用神兒子寶血的重價所買的。不只聖徒的靈，而且他們的身體，都是用極大的代價買的。神竟認為我們值得祂花這麼重的代價，這豈不是一個奇妙的思想嗎！祂既作了這件事，我們就無法想像祂不盡所能地造就我們！祂必定耕種祂的地業，地業上將沒有一個角落不為祂出土產。

得贖。我們的身體屬於神，但是還沒有完全被贖回。如果我們在主再來以前死了，身體仍必歸於大地的塵土，因為雖屬於神，但尚未被贖回。所以使徒說，我們等候得著兒子的名分，就是身體得贖(羅八23)。我們因始祖亞當的罪而在敗壞的刑罰之下，然而我們將要被贖。

受印記。在以西結的年代，凡是為罪歎息哭號的人，就有印記蓋在額上(結九4)。在啟示錄，神的僕人要蓋上印記(啟七2-3)。蓋印，先要有軟化的蠟，再就是所愛之人的臉作印模，然後均衡的壓力。聖靈將我們親愛主的容貌，壓在我們柔軟的心上，我們的心就可以永遠保存這印記。

印記是我們要承受產業的憑據。永遠的將來全然是未知，但我們可以猜想，因為聖靈在我們裡面的工作是初熟的果子，好像以實各谷的葡萄，顯示將來收成的葡萄是怎樣的(民十三23)；定金就是全部款項的憑據；這是即將來到之日的頭一束光線。

We are his workmanship. Eph. 2: 10

The Greek word might be literally rendered his poem. As the metre varies in the poems of a laureate, so does the course of one life differ from another; but God has a thought, a plan, a purpose for each. This lyric, that heroic, another dramatic.

CREATED FOR GOOD WORKS. How carefully the apostle defines the true position of works in the divine life. In the foregoing verses he insists that we are not saved by our works, that none should boast; but, as though to meet the objection that his system was inconsistent with holy living, he affirms that the whole intention of God was that we should manifest our new life in Christ by the holy life in which it fruits. We were created in Him unto good works. Whatever good works may be demanded of you, dare to believe that you were created in Christ Jesus to do them. There is a perfect adjustment between the two.

THE GOOD WORKS PREPARED. Our new creation in Christ Jesus and the preparation of our life-work are due to the same mind. God who made us has prepared our path for us. It may lie up hill or down dale; may be lined with grassy sward or be full of jagged stones; may be short with the years of childhood or long with those of old age; may consist in lying on a couch to suffer or in strenuous activity--but every yard has been prepared.

OUR DAILY WALK. We have not to cut or make our path; but simply to follow it, one step at a time. And when the heart or flesh fails, when the way seems too difficult, or the door too strait--we must look always unto Jesus, who has gone along the same track, asking that his righteousness may go before us, and set us in the way of his steps (Psa. 85 : 13, R.V.).

我們原是祂的工作。 弗二10

「祂的工作」按希臘文可直譯作「祂的詩」。正像一個桂冠詩人的詩，有各種不同的韻律，我們的人生過程也各不相同；然而神對每個人都有祂的心意、計畫、與目的。這個人的人生是抒情詩，那個人的人生是英雄詩，另一個人的人生是戲劇詩。

被造是為著美善的行為 [「行為」或作「工作」，下同]。使徒何等謹慎地界定「行為」在屬神生命中的真實地位。在8-9節保羅強調我們得救不是靠著行為，免得有人自誇。然而，好像為了應付有人反對他這種說法與聖潔生活矛盾。保羅確定表明，神整體的目的是要我們藉著聖潔的生命結出果子，來彰顯我們在基督裡的新生命。我們在祂裡面被造是為要叫我們有美善的行為。無論要求你的是哪種美善的行為，要勇敢相信這就是你在基督耶穌裡被造要去行的。在兩者之間有完美的調整。

所預備的美善行為。我們這在基督耶穌裡的「新造」，與「預備叫我們一生去行的」，是出於同一個心思。神造了我們，也已為我們預備道路。也許是在山上，也許是在低谷；也許沿路是如茵綠草，也許佈滿尖突石頭；也許只有短暫的童年，也許壽高年邁；也許躺臥病榻受苦，也許辛勞工作 — 然而人生的每一段路都已經被預備好了。

我們每日的行事。我們無需自行開拓道路，只要簡單一步一步沿著前行。身心疲累時，路途艱困時，門太狹窄時，我們必須一直仰望耶穌，祂沿著同樣的道路走過，請求祂的公義行在我們前頭，使我們堅定跟隨祂的腳蹤(詩八十五13)。

To make all men see what is the dispensation of the mystery. Eph. 3:9 (R.V.)

This chapter is parallel with Col. 2. To the stewardship of the apostle Paul two mysteries were entrusted, with the intention that he should unravel and explain them to our race.

THE MYSTERY. A mystery is a hidden secret. The word does not imply that there is no solution, but that the solution has not yet been communicated. God has many secrets, which unfold as the ages are ripe for them, but not before. This secret, which was hid in the divine heart from all ages, was that the Gentiles are on an equality with the Jews in the Church. Under the old covenant they were alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise; but under the new they are fellow-heirs, fellow-members, and fellow-partakers of the blessings of the Gospel.

THE STEWARDSHIP OF THE MYSTERY. The apostle felt that whatever had been communicated to him was not for himself alone, but for all his fellow-disciples. Hence he was ever accounting himself a steward of the mysteries of God (1 Cor. 4: 1). This is the clue, also, to his assertion that he was a debtor to all men for Christ's sake. What was given him was on deposit for others. See to it that you count nothing you possess or know as your own; look on all as a sacred trust.

THE EXERCISE OF HIS STEWARDSHIP. "To preach unto the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make all men know." It is not enough to proclaim, as a herald might; we must stay with the dull of wit and slow of thought, elaborating, explaining, and insisting, till we have made them see what a Saviour Jesus is, and how rich the soul may be that uses his unsearchable wealth.

又使眾人都明白... 奧祕是如何安排的。 弗三9

這章與歌羅西書第二章是平行的。託付給使徒保羅的管家職分，就是向我們這些外邦人闡明解釋兩個奧祕。

奧祕。奧祕是隱藏的祕密，奧祕不表示沒有解答，而是解答尚未被傳達出來。神有許多祕密，時機成熟才顯明，時機成熟之前就不顯明。這奧祕歷代以來都隱藏在神心裡，就是外邦人與猶太人在教會裡是平等的。在舊約之下，外邦人是在以色列國民以外，在所應許的諸約上是局外人；但在新約之下，他們(以色列人與外邦人)是同作後嗣，同作肢體，同享福音的福分。

奧祕的管家職分。使徒感到他所領受的啟示，不是單單為他個人，而是為所有與他同作門徒的眾人。所以他看自己是神奧祕事的管家(林前四1)。這也是為什麼他宣稱，他為基督的緣故，欠眾人的債。他所領受的是給別人的儲存。你要當心不可將你所有或所知道的當作自己所有；要看這一切是神的託付。

管家職分的運用。「把基督那測不透的豐富傳給外邦人，又使眾人都明白。」只像一個傳令者宣告還不夠；我們還得為著心智遲鈍、思想緩慢的人停留下來，盡心竭力的解釋，堅持直到使他們認識耶穌是何等的一位救主，並認識那取用祂測不透之豐富的人，可以成為何等富足。

He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth. Eph. 4: 9

We fill a cup or bucket from the bottom upwards. And Jesus obeyed a universal law when, in his desire to fill all things, He first descended into the place of a servant, the death of the cross, the lowly bed of a borrowed grave, and thence into the abyss of Hades. "He descended into hell," by which we mean, of course, Hades, the place of disembodied spirits. If we would sit with Him in the heavenlies, we too must be subordinated to the same law. We must also descend.

THERE IS THE LOW PLACE OF CONTRITION FOR SIN. We must go thither; lying in the dust before God; placing the leper's covering on our lips; smiting on our breasts. Be willing that the Spirit of God should reveal all the selfishness, the subtlety, the impurity, of your heart. Let your cry ever be that God would not spare your eyes and heart from the pain of knowing what you are in his sight. From this low place you shall ascend to the bosom of God. "Blessed are they that mourn."

THERE IS THE LOW PLACE OF HUMILITY. Be willing to take the lowest place with no mock modesty, but because you have learnt to esteem others better than yourself. Humble yourself under the mighty hand of God. Be willing to perform lowly deeds of service to your brethren and sisters in Christ. Reckon that you have not attained. Ascribe all that is good in you to the grace of God. God giveth peace to the humble; He raiseth up the poor out of the dust.

THERE IS THE LOW PLACE OF DEATH. The more we are delivered to the death of Jesus the more will his life be manifested in our mortal flesh. Life through death, ascent after descent, the glory after the cross of shame. "If it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."

祂先降在地下。 弗四9

我們用杯子或桶子裝東西是從底往上裝。主耶穌遵守一個通則，當祂要充滿萬有時，祂首先降卑為奴僕，死在十字架上，埋在借來的墳穴裡，再降至陰間的深淵。「祂降至陰間」[出自使徒信經Apostles' Creed, 根據彼前三19]，陰間是離開身體的靈所在之處。如果我們要與祂一同坐在天上，也必須服從同一個法則。我們必須降到：

為罪痛悔的低處。我們必須到那裡：在神面前躺在灰塵裡，好像痲瘋病患捂著嘴唇，捶著自己的胸。願意讓聖靈揭露你心中一切的自私、詭詐與不潔。但願你的呼喊好像神不讓你的心與眼免去因認識自己在神眼中真實光景的痛苦。從這低處你才可升至神的懷抱中。哀慟的人有福了(太五4)。

謙卑的低處。你要甘心接受低處，沒有虛假的謙遜，因為你已學會看別人比自己強(腓二3)。謙卑自己服在神大能的手下(彼前五6)。甘心作卑微的工作，服事在基督裡的弟兄姊妹。不認為自己已經得著了(腓三12)。將自己的良善，都歸功於神的恩典。神賜平安給謙卑的人；祂從灰塵裡抬舉貧寒人(撒上一二8)。

死亡的低處。我們越被交於耶穌的死，祂的生就越在我們這必死的身上顯明出來(林後四11)。藉死亡得生命，降下之後上升，十字架羞辱之後的榮耀。「若是死了，就結出許多子粒來。(約十二24)」

Be ye therefore imitators of God, as beloved children. Eph. 5:1 (R.V.)

Children mostly resemble their father. There is often an unmistakable family likeness, which compels the most casual observer to exclaim, "The very image of his father." Oh that in each of us there might be that which would make men think of God!

PUT AWAY YOUR FORMER MANNER OF LIFE (4: 22). The old man stands for the collection of habits, sayings, and doings which characterized our unregenerate days. The apostle says that they are to be put away suddenly, instantly. Evidently this is possible, or such a command would not be issued. Men speak of a gradual reformation, and advise the piecemeal discontinuance of evil. God, on the contrary, bids us treat the evil past as a company of soldiers would bandits and outlaws. There is the greater reason for this, as the old man waxeth corrupt. Even Martha could not bear the opening of her brother's vault.

BE RENEWED IN THE SPIRIT OF YOUR MIND (4: 23). We are reminded of Rom. 12: 2. The mind needs to be brought into daily, hourly contact with God's thoughts, as contained in Scripture, that it may be renewed; else our constant association with the men and women of the world, their maxims and practices, will inevitably and sorrowfully deteriorate it. The only source of daily renewal is fellowship with God.

PUT ON THE NEW MAN. Of this the apostle affirms that it is according to God, and has been created. Our Lord created this beautiful dress when He rose from the dead. The day of resurrection was one of creation. All the habits and dispositions of a holy, godlike life have been prepared for us in Him, and await our appropriation; and as they are according to God, so soon as we put them on we shall become imitators of God as dear children.

所以你們該效法神，好像蒙慈愛的兒女。 弗五1

兒女大多像他們的父親。家人相像常是很明顯的，就是無心的人看見，也不得不驚叫說：就是他父親的形像。願我們每個人都這樣叫人想到神！

脫去你們從前生活的樣式(四22)。舊人代表我們未重生時特有的言行習慣的總匯。使徒說，這些舊人的生活習慣應該立刻急速除去。這顯然是可行的，否則他就不會這樣吩咐了。人們都說逐漸改革，所以勸人一件一件地除去惡行。神卻相反地吩咐我們對付過去的罪惡，要像一連士兵對付土匪與不法之徒一般。更大的原因是舊人擴大腐敗。甚至馬大也受不了打開她兄弟的墳墓(約十一39)。

在你們心思的靈裡更新(四23)。羅馬書十二章2節的話再提醒我們。我們心思需要天天、時時接觸聖經裡神的思想，使它得以更新；不然我們不斷與世人來往，他們的言行準則、風俗習慣，會必然無可避免、可悲地敗壞我們的思想。日日更新唯一的源頭乃是與神交通。

穿上新人(四24)。使徒明言，新人是照著神創造的。我們的主從死裡復活時創造這件美衣。復活的日子也就是創造的日子。聖潔敬虔生命的習慣和性情，都已在祂裡面為我們預備好了，就等我們來取用；因為新人的習性是照著神造的，一旦我們穿上，就變成神可愛的兒女，像祂的模樣。

Praying at all seasons in the Spirit. Eph. 6: 18

The dying Monod regretted he had not prayed more. We should pray at all seasons. Prayer is never out of place. There is no conceivable circumstance in life where it would be inappropriate to pray. At the wedding or the funeral; as we engage in work or finish it; whether the wind blow from the cold north or the balmy south--it is wise and right to pray. "Prayer and provender," the old proverb says, "hinder no man."

We should pray in the Spirit. Reversing the order of the words, but bringing in their true meaning, we might say, "Let the Spirit pray in the soul." It is well in prayer to wait until the scum of our own choice and desire has passed off, that the yearnings of the Holy Spirit may arise and manifest themselves. We need to be in the Spirit, not only on the Lord's Day, but always, that He may be mightily in us, teaching us the will of God.

We should pray unselfishly. "For all saints," said the apostle, "and for me."

We should watch. Do not give runaway knocks. Stand at God's door till it opens. Be on the alert. Wait on the watch-tower. Many of God's ships pass in the night, and many of his gifts arrive at the wharf when those to whom they were consigned are asleep or gone.

We should persevere. God keeps us waiting that He may test and humble us, and know what is in our heart. Delays are his winnowing fan, discriminating between the chaff and the wheat. What we asked so vehemently we did not ask wisely. When we pray according to his heart, He graciously sustains us. Persevere; you do not know how near you are to the blessing you have sought for years.

靠著聖靈，隨時多方禱告祈求。 弗六18

模諾[註1] 臨終時懊悔他沒有更多禱告。任何時候都應當禱告。禱告永遠不會不合宜。在人生中，沒有任何想得到的情況是不合適禱告的。在婚禮或喪禮時；在工作中或完工時；無論風從寒冷的北方颳來，或從溫暖的南方颳來(歌四16)，禱告都是正確明智的。古諺說，「禱告和糧秣不阻礙人。」[註2]

我們應當在聖靈裡禱告。將次序倒過來，讓聖靈在我們心裡禱告，這意義必更貼切。我們可以停留在禱告中，直到我們的選擇與慾望的浮沫消失，使聖靈的願望興起並顯明。我們需要在聖靈裡，不僅在主日，且是經常的，使聖靈在我們裡面大有能力，教導我們神的旨意。

我們應當無私地祈禱。使徒說，「為眾聖徒祈求，也為我祈求。(18-19節)」

我們必須儆醒。不要像惡作劇的孩子叩了門就逃跑。要站在神的門旁，直到那門打開。要儆醒，在望樓上等候。神的船隊在晚上經過，許多恩典到了碼頭，而那時該收受的人卻睡著了或是走掉了。

我們必須堅持。神叫我們繼續等候，為要試驗我們，使我們謙卑，並認識我們心中所存的。「耽延」是神簸穀的風扇，將糠粃與穀粒作區分。我們熱烈祈求的，其實並不是智慧的祈求。我們若照著祂的心意祈求，祂必施恩扶持我們。要堅持，你不曉得你多年所求的福分，離你有多近。

[註1] 模諾可能是指Adolphe Theodore Monod,1802-1856, 法國十九世紀最著名的復原派(Protestants)牧師，出於牧師世家。

[註2] 禱告神，在祂沒有難成的事；糧秣餵馬，使馬有力，帶你去你要去的地方。此諺語馬太亨利、司布真等名牧都曾引用。