

Ephesians 13-10-06b

We resume our study now looking at Ephesians chapter 1, and we've noted that there is at least a helpful logical relationship between these manifold concepts that Paul mentions. And the prominent ones, if you look at what you have written there, you can see in your second row, having predestined us. God had a purpose before the foundation of the world.

God knew before He cranked up creation that there was going to be both a need for salvation, because we would fall, and a means of salvation. And no sooner, and we have to think of this in our chronological sequential terms, even though for God things may not be that way, but to our minds there is a logical, if not a chronological progression, that as soon as God saw that by creating creatures there was going to be the possibility in free will for rejection, therefore the need for judgment, if there is any hope of avoiding that judgment, there had to be some provision of salvation. Does this make sense? If you're going to make free will creatures, some of them are inevitably going to choose wrong, choose away, choose in a way that produces separation.

God had a choice. He could just say, well, by the process of elimination pretty soon I will only have creatures that choose me, because any time they choose away I destroy them. So sort of a selective eugenics process, any angel that disobeys, well I just snuff them out.

Here's another one that rejected me, snuff them out. Well look, here's a third of them that saw a guy and decided they'd do likewise, snuff them out. God could have done that, but instead God saw this, and we see this implied in Scripture if not explicitly stated.

God said this is a teachable moment, because I can do two things. First of all, I can offer grace before judgment. I'm well within my rights, as soon as there's a negative thought, extinguish them.

Or I can offer the chance to return, to repent, to change the mind, and I can find an alternate way of executing the judgment. It will have to be sacrificial. If the person who earned and deserves the judgment doesn't receive it, somebody who did not earn it and deserve it is going to have to bear it instead.

And this will be an expression of love. This is what raises God above your mythical man-made ideas of deity and of the gods in the heavens who are vengeful and selfish and self-involved and self-important. God is outward looking.

God is generous. God is gracious. And God says, I will essentially bear the punishment myself if you will return.

And I have a very long involved paper that a fellow seminary student of mine up in Tulsa wrote years ago, hypothesizing, which is what we have to do, about a possible angelic salvation scenario. God is consistent, and if we fail and God offers us salvation, if the angels failed, was

there some path to redemption, some path to reconciliation, some path of propitiation on the part of the fallen angels? And you can only argue by analogy because Scripture is utterly and completely silent on that point. We are not to know God's dealings with the angels.

We probably couldn't understand them anyway. We only see the angels, the angelic civilization, and even our name for them. It's kind of like when we call the indigenous population of this continent Indians.

That was a mistake. They weren't from India. You call them Native Americans.

That's inaccurate. Anybody born here is a Native American. So what's a good name for the pre-existing indigenous population of this continent? That's a long mouthful to say.

So we just call them Indians. Indians call themselves Indians. We have the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

We don't have the Bureau of People Who Were Here Before Us Affairs. In the same way, when we call the pre-existing heavenly civilization angels, it's a misnomer. Angelos and Malak before it is the job description of one small portion of that group, the messengers, those who God details to communicate with various parties, especially in the Old Testament and a few in the New.

But those are the messengers, the malakim, the angeloi. The u-angelos is the good news. These are news bringers.

These are criers and heralds of information. But that's not the purpose of the bulk of that civilization. They have many other functions, again, in realms and ways and things that are just... I like the analogy Dr. Krizzle was talking about, the evolutionist and his hubris in declaring what must be and what must not be about a creator and so on.

And he said, I look at it this way. He said, go to a nearby pond, and I'm paraphrasing somewhat, but go to a nearby pond and get a drop of pond water, and if you put it under the microscope, you can see these limitless numbers of animalcules, he calls them, little protozoa and amoebas and parameciums and so on. And he said, just imagine a conversation as the paramecium comes up to the amoeba and says, well, I see no evidence of anything beyond our unicellular existence.

Somebody's trying to tell us that there's a whole other realm where people don't swim in water and where they're made out of multiple cells and that they're far beyond us and have knowledge and abilities and comprehend... That's just ridiculous. Where's the proof? Show me the scientific evidence here in our water drop that there's such a thing as humans exist or that they could possibly be looking at us through this thing called a microscope or that they could have vast accomplishments and realms of endeavor that are completely beyond our understanding. I see no evidence of that.

Show me the proof. And the amoeba says to the paramecium, well, you know, I can't prove it. It

makes sense to me, but I just have to take it on faith.

There is no way to insert information in the tiny mind, quote unquote, of an amoeba or a paramecium. They're so far below us, there's no possible way. It's just, it is to laugh to think that they could somehow grasp what's going on.

Well, this solar system and this galaxy we have come to understand in recent decades is like a drop of water in a pond, and we are equally limited and impossibly prevented from understanding things that are above and beyond us. And so the evolutionary paramecium says to you and me as amoebas, I see no proof, I see no evidence that there's anything beyond us. Perhaps more apt analogy now, which I've suggested before and we've talked about many times since we didn't create the amoebas and the parameciums.

But you think about these computer games that we've got now, they create whole virtual worlds and there are characters that inhabit them and move around. And human beings program them and define their environment and give them their powers and their limitations and make provision for them. Here's a cache of weapons you can pick up and shoot the bad guys, and here's a wall that you can't get through, but here's a stairway you can take.

And we completely construct this whole thing. Well, if they keep claiming that artificial intelligence, eventually these things will take on a mind and a life and a sentient existence of their own, you know, Mr. Data, so to speak, and that they're going to somehow come to think. Well, within the confines of their digital world, and they look and say, well, where did we originate? And they trace back, and through their means, they realize that there's something, there's a memory core there, it's RAM, or they load it off of a storage system of some kind.

And they might be able to figure out how long the machine has been running. Maybe they find the clock and say, hey, you know, apparently this thing has been running the earliest date we can find on the stamp files. And so the Big Bang, which is when we booted the computer, that's when their universe began.

Or when we launched the game, that's when their universe began. It came into existence ex nihilo. Where did it come from? What was before the game? Well, they can't figure it out.

What could possibly be before the game? We know nothing but the environment we're in, and so on. You can make that analogy, and it's a little bit more apt, because God is in fact our Creator, and He has minions and servants who He will give the design, and they, I think, implemented it under the supervision and lordly power and wisdom of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. But we're in this environment, and you say, well, but, you know, this is reality.

This isn't reality. Everything you see, everything you hear is a construct. Our brain is taking vibrations in the air, photons passing through space, and converting into something understandable.

But what you see is an analogy. This desk is not solid. This plastic is not solid.

This paper is not solid. Well, but I can't put my finger through it. The vast majority of every solid thing is nothing but space.

And given a little bit different set of rules, the molecules of my finger could easily pass through this page, this desk, my head, anything else. That may be possible with the existing rules. But we are so arrogant in thinking we've got it all figured out.

We know what's what. We know what's important and what's not. God's Word is designed to inform us that there is a grander scheme, a greater plan.

There is a world outside, but we are forced and by design required to take it on faith. Why? Because this is an effective filter. God doesn't want people who have animus, who have a hatred, who have a negative response to His plan and purpose.

We have free will. And if we don't like service, if we don't like being reflectors of glory, we'd like to manufacture our own glory, we'd like to go our own way, we'd like to have our own purpose and destiny, we'd like to define our own path in our corruption and in our selfishness. God says, fine, you can do that, but you're not going to be a part of My purpose.

That's what this chapter is doing. When you bring this back around, what is Ephesians chapter 1? This is a condensed presentation of what's beyond the water drop, what's beyond the unicellular existence that in our limited view and our limited ability to sense and perceive, we think is all there is. It's much greater.

It's much grander. And unlike the single-celled protozoa and things that dwell in a water drop, God has the ability to take us, the essential us that currently dwells in that very primitive form and promote us up and out. This is one of the reasons I've enjoyed Star Trek.

You remember the few times the little virtual guys escaped the holodeck and took on a life outside with the rest of the people. They started out being created by computer procedures and routines, and they walked out. They escaped the holodeck.

They got promoted into reality and became flesh and blood like everybody else. And you think, wow, that's in its way an apt analogy, imaginary though it is, of what God is going to purposely do for us. I can't take an ant or an earthworm, a night crawler, and say, hey, you want to be human? Come on up here.

Let me just transplant your memories and your earthworm-y ideas into a human body. And day after tomorrow, you're going to walk out of the lab equipped to function in this world and learn all of these new things. We can't do that.

God is doing that for us. And when you think about grace, to take a worm such as I and promote

us, He has made us lower than the angels. He is going to crown mankind with glory and honor.

That's those so that's in our lines here. We can be sanctified. We can be without fault and without blame, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish.

To the praise of the glory of His grace, we are redeemed and we are forgiven so that these things are possible. I said we were going to revisit verse 12. If you look at verse 12, this is the so that in your fifth line, He has predestined us according to the purpose of His will and because of that we have obtained an inheritance so that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.

If you look at this word translated first to trust, first to hope, depending on your translation, this is a fascinating word. This is *pro alpizo*. *Alpis* is the word for hope, translated hope.

We amplify this and say confident expectation, anticipation. We look forward to something that is not yet, but we believe that it will take place. *Alpizo* is hope.

This is *pro alpizo*. What does *pro* mean? *Pro* is from *pros*, face to face with, and when you find it as a prefix, it can mean before. You have *horizo*, which means to circumscribe, that's where we get horizon.

You have *proorizo*. If you say this is the scope and this is the destiny, *proorizo* means to figure that out beforehand. If you say *ginosko*, to know, *epiginosko* is sort of a layered advanced knowledge.

When you look at it in a word study, *epinosus* is knowledge gained by experience, not just by teaching or by presentation. *Epinosus* is advanced. It is knowledge upon knowledge, so to speak.

It's upon knowledge, knowledge that has been gained by experience. *Pro ginosko* means to know beforehand. He knew before.

So what does *pro alpizo* mean? Because here we have the perfect active participle, perfect participle, you know what a perfect is, that's having done a thing. We having hoped before, or we having first hoped. We as first hoppers, since it's a noun, the participle turns the verb idea into a noun, but this whole strung out thing we have here, we who were the first to hope, or we who first trusted, trust isn't really the right translation here, is it? Because this is not *pistuo*.

If it was *propistuo*, it would either be to believe before or to first believe. But this is *alpis*, the first hoppers, or the before hoppers. And you can see where first and before are related, because if you're the first, it's because you're before the others who are eventually going to have the same hope.

If you are a one who knows first, others are going to know, but you know first. You are a *pro*

ginosko. God knows things first, and then He reveals them to us later.

Now other people know them, but He knew them first. Pro ginosko. There is a purpose, a horizon, there is a scope, there is a horizon out there, but if you establish that first or beforehand, other people are eventually going to get there and see it and find it, but it was first done by God.

So our only real debate here is, in Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being the having before hoped ones, is the awkward literal translation. Who is the we that has obtained an inheritance? Let me ask you this, who is expecting an inheritance? How many people in human history expect an inheritance? Let's take Abraham. Does Abraham expect an inheritance? Abraham dwelt in tents, it says in Hebrews.

Why? He was waiting, he was looking for a city whose founder and builder is God. Is Abraham expecting and looking forward to an inheritance? He is. Is David? Remember the last words of David, we went through there, not all of God's purposes were accomplished, but I am confident that He will.

What about Job? I know that my Redeemer lives, and I will see Him, even though the worms eat my flesh, I will see Him on the last day. There is an expectation, there is a hope, and those people were hoping before we did because they were here before we were, right? So could they be called before hoppers, pro-L.P. Kotas? They could. So we've got to know which hope we're talking about.

Well what does it say here? First or before hope being ones in Christ, in Christ. Now, did Abraham hope specifically in Christ? Did he see the God-man? Did he see the fully revealed Savior? More specifically, was he designated to be in Christ, in Him? All of the in-Him blessings we've seen in this chapter, is Abraham in Christ? Is Jacob in Christ, David in Christ, Job, these others of the Old Testament age? Are they in Christ? It's sort of a shocking thing to say, but the Bible does not say so. The Bible never says Abraham is in Christ.

Never says Israel is in Christ. Never says King David was in Christ. It says you and I are in Christ.

Hebrews 11.6 Without faith it is impossible to please Him. He that comes to God must trust, must believe, must pisteo what? That He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. The one who comes to God, it doesn't say, must believe in Christ.

I've been taught since I was a child in Sunday school, that even the Old Testament saints had personal faith in Jesus Christ. And I don't find it in Scripture. Jesus was not revealed in the Old Testament, except in shadow form.

In type. In adumbration. In prophecy.

But you can't be in a prophecy. You can't be the body and bride of a prophecy. You can only be in Christ once He comes.

And He comes at the incarnation. I have come to do Thy will, O God. A body You have prepared for me, He says.

Well, we are now that body and that bride, and we are in Christ. And we are the first in human history. Not Adam, not Seth, not Noah, not Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Not the twelve tribes. Not Moses, Joshua, the judges. Not the kings of Israel.

Not the prophets, major and minor. We are the first to have the expectation of what? Expectation of what? What have we seen? Adoption as sons. Acceptance.

Blessed with every spiritual blessing into heavenlies. And inheritance. Sealed by the Holy Spirit.

Marked and guaranteed as a purchased possession. The church which He purchased with His own blood. Doesn't pertain to Israel.

Wonderful blessings. Salvation comes to Israel through the Lord Jesus Christ. Takes nothing away from that.

But we are unique. And we are the first to have the privilege of claiming and experiencing these blessings. We are the first to hope.

To have this expectation, not only of our present blessings, but everything in the future. We are the first. Pro-el-pi-ko-tas.

Pro, attached to E-L-P-I-K-O-T-A-S. It's from pro-el-pizo. And this is something of a unique word.

Let me read you a little bit from the theological dictionary of the New Testament. If the we indicated Jewish Christians as a special group, this is the other common understanding. Paul says, we Jews, we were the first generation of the church.

When the Holy Spirit came down at Pentecost, the assembled ones were all in Jerusalem for the feast. They were the Jews. And we are the first to hope in Christ, we Jewish Christians.

And so the pro would mean before the Gentiles. That would be possible grammatically. But I don't see it contextually.

Do you see any reference to the difference between Jews and Gentiles anywhere in this chapter? No. Jew-Gentile distinctions aren't even mentioned. This is in Christ and not in Christ.

That's the distinction. If we are all Christians, the pro refers to the present in relation to the eschatological consummation. And Boltman here in the TDNT says, this is less likely.

The word is not found in the post-apostolic fathers or the apologists. The one place, this is a

hapax legomena, legomenon actually. It's the only place you find it, pro el picontas.

We are to the praise of His glory, the ones having first or having uniquely hoped in Christ. So, that's how we take it. It is a reminder that we are the first.

We are unique to hope in Christ. We won't be the last. Israel will catch up in the Millennial Kingdom.

This is where they are going to see the fully revealed Lord. And where their hope and faith, so to speak, will be in Him. Not so much faith since everything is revealed.

And faith is what you don't see, trusting what you don't see. But they will be ones to hope, to expect, to receive inheritance and the full-orbed salvation that we already are beginning to partake of now. Having said that, you have this connection between verses 3-9 and verses 11-14.

The two sides of our branches. I said this is sort of a chiastic structure. What is the importance of this? We can connect all of the dots.

We can do the details and do the A's and the A primes and the B's and the B primes. However, I think conceptually the purpose of it is this. There are things that are emphasized on each side of these branches.

In that section before verse 10 and in the section after verse 10. What are those things? You have inheritance. Look at verse 6. What does adoption entail? That means possession and inheritance.

When you adopt, now that person has rights of possession and rights of inheritance. That is mirrored down in verse 11. We have obtained an inheritance.

In verse 14, we have been sealed and marked as a possession. We belong to God. When you adopt a child, it belongs to you.

This idea of entrance into close personal relationship with God. He has purchased us. He has adopted us.

Because of that, we have possession and we have inheritance. These are strong themes running through on each side of this. What's another one? How about God's purpose? In verse 5, He has pre-purposed us, pre-destined us, marked us out in advance in Christ.

Verse 9, this is according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself. This isn't just a thing God is doing on a lark. He's got a purpose in it.

Verse 11, He has pre-purposed us according to His purpose, His will. These are strong corresponding themes on each side of verse 10. God's glory.

Verse 6, we should be to the praise of the glory of His grace. Verse 12, be to the praise of His glory. Verse 14, to the praise of His glory.

You also see inheritance again in verse 14. So what are the main themes? Our being united to God the Father in and through Jesus Christ and the results of that being possession. So what? Got a life to live here.

Got things to do, places to go, people to see, stuff to get done. Got responsibilities, bills to pay. So what? You are not your own.

You have been bought with a price. Therefore, glorify God in your body, which is in your life, in your physical daily functions. You are not your own.

You are bought with a price. What happens to the servant who sees that his master delays his coming and begins to accomplish his own purposes? Eat the master's food, beat the master's other servants, take advantage of them. The master is going to return at an hour that is unexpected and is going to deal with that selfish, disoriented servant.

That's not us. That is not to be us. We have no intention of being that servant.

You are not your own. You are bought with a price. Therefore, glorify God.

Purchase, possession. Is that a strong theme here in Ephesians? Yes, it is. Purchase and possession in and through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Is that a theme here in Ephesians 1? Yes, it is. Glory of God reflected in and through us. Is that a theme here in Ephesians 1? Yes, it is.

So, beyond our seven-branch lampstand, beyond the structure and the chiasm, which as its primary purpose focuses us on verse 10. This is the dispensation of the fullness of the times. What is the fullness of the times? Can time be empty? Well, sit in a waiting room for an hour and a half where there's nothing but car racing magazines.

I care as much about car racing as I do about ballet. I have an equal interest. You could just as well put ballet magazines out there as put stock car racing magazines.

I just don't care. I could not care less if I tried. Can time be made empty and void of accomplishment, void of utility, void of... How about watching cheaply made television? Can time be expended to no purpose? Can it be wasted? Can it be expended on that which profiteth nothing? It can.

But I see in Ephesians 1 a strong reflection of what the same author says, what the Apostle Paul says in 1 Corinthians 6, verse 20. You have been bought with a price. Therefore, glorify God in your body.

If you've got an old King James that says, and in your spirit which are God's, you can cross that out. It's not in there. Somebody incorporated a marginal note later.

All it says is, you have been bought with a price. You are not your own. Therefore, glorify God in your body.

1 Corinthians 6, 19 and 20. Right before that he mentions the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have received from God. Is that what we have here? You've been sealed, the spirit, marked as a purchased possession.

It all ties together. So it ought to make a difference. What are you going to do this afternoon? I'm going to watch football, among other things.

However, I have weighed my responsibilities. I know that there is a time to rest my mind. There is a time to refresh and restore by getting away from things that normally occupy my diligent attention and take up my energy.

It is irresponsible to not rest, to not refresh, to not get some variety, to not enjoy things that you enjoy. I sat and played my guitar last night. That is always a great therapy for me.

I think it's acupuncture. I don't know what it does. But I can come away from spending 10 or 15 minutes with an instrument of strings, thinking about the Lord and why He gave us music.

Why music? It's varying frequencies of sound hitting the ear in some form of, what seems to us, orderly manner. What is it? What does it do? What is it for? People who spend their lives in the music business, who travel around like Gordon Lightfoot, devoting their whole lives to it. You get to the end of your life and you think, well, I made some good songs, but now I'm about to die.

What difference does it make? Well, there is a time and a place for many things. God invented music. The angelic hosts sang together when God created the physical universe, tells us over in Job.

Music is a part of God's harmonious structure and the symmetrical beauty of His creation. And it's a wonderful thing. So we take time to enjoy it and appreciate it and try to find good examples of it.

We do the same thing when we refresh and restore ourselves by engaging in entertainment. We do it in a balanced way. We don't overdo it.

We don't do it with things of low quality. But you need to rest. You need to refresh.

You need to charge your batteries so that when you return to pursuing goals and priorities and values that are higher and greater and grander, you get the energy and the strength to do so and to do it creatively. Many times we get ideas as we rest and refresh and entertain ourselves. Nothing wrong with that.

God in its place allocated the appropriate amount of time, balance, and good judgment, self-control, sobriety. You have been bought with a price. Therefore, glorify God in your body.

That really sums up the first part of this entire chapter. You get more details here. You can look at it and study it and unpack it for literally hours at a time.

But the themes that emerge are really distilled as God's possession, as His children. We have been given many things, and they have a purpose. Are we fulfilling that purpose? It's a simple question to ask ourselves.

Look at our life. Look at the way we spend our time. Look at the way we think.

Look at the way we speak. Is it to the praise of the glory of His grace? Do we regularly avail ourselves of the cleansing blood of Christ for redemption and forgiveness? Do we, in fact, hope in Christ? Is the expectation of His return and His kingdom and the opportunity to serve and reflect that glory, is it real to us? Does it make a difference? Is it motivating enough to change what we do day by day? That's really the question. Well, next time we are going to pick up with the content of Paul's prayer.

He says in verse 16, Now do not cease to give thanks and make mention of you in my prayers, so that, with a view toward, this is my goal, this is my desire, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, we're back to that glory purpose, the Father of glory may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the epinosis of Him. Full knowledge, experiential knowledge of Him. God wants to give us something.

Are we qualified? Are we prepared? Are we able to receive it? That's Paul's prayer. And the details of how we can qualify and how we can be the recipients and the beneficiaries of the things he prays for and about here is what we will take up next time. Let's close here in a word of prayer.

Father, thank you so much for your grace and your wonderful mercy expressed to us in, by, and through the Lord Jesus Christ. We pray that we will find these things encouraging and motivating. God, the Holy Spirit, will keep us mindful of them, so that we do not live an ordinary life, but an extraordinary one, as those who uniquely hope in Him for all that you have for us now and in the ages to come.

We pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen.