

Ephesians 1:1-14

New English Translation Bible 2019

Fifth century or earlier manuscript variants: [inserted] [~replaced] [–omitted]

Working Outline of the Epistle to the Ephesians

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|---------------------------------|------------------|
| I. Greeting 1:1-2 | E Ephesus |
| II. Praise 1.3-14 | P Praise |
| III. Prayer 1:15-23 | H Hope |
| IV. Teaching 2:1 – 3:21 | E Edification |
| V. Exhortation 4:1-32 | S Spiritual life |
| VI. Warning 5:1-21 | I Instruction |
| VII. Counsel 5:22 – 6:9 | A Attitudes |
| VIII. Spiritual warfare 6:10-20 | N Negotiation |
| IX. Closing 6:21-23 | S Salutation |

Salutation

¹ From Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, to [all] the saints [in Ephesus], the faithful in Christ Jesus. ² Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!

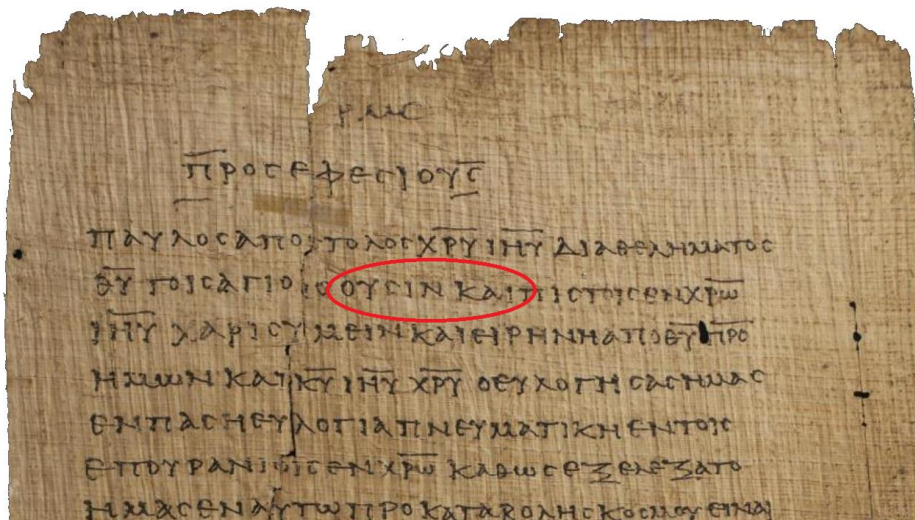
Query: When did Paul decide to become an apostle?

Saints: 'Holy ones' = dedicated to, belonging to God.

[in Ephesus]: One 3rd and two 5th century manuscripts omit it.

Query: Does God honour every body's faith?

Query: Where can one get grace or peace from God?



Greek Papyrus 46, Ephesians chapter 1, circa 200 CE
University of Michigan Library

Spiritual Blessings in Christ

³ Blessed is the God [–and Father] of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms in Christ.

Blessed: (eulogétos, adjective) 'praised' BDAG

Blessed: (eulogéō, verb) '3 to bestow a favor, provide with benefits' BDAG

Blessing: (eulogia, noun) '3 act or benefit of blessing' BDAG

Spiritual: 'given by [God's] Spirit' BDAG, non-material

Heavenly realms: 'a locale for transcendent things and beings ... in heaven'

In Christ: by means of, or in union with Christ.

Query: Who all bless God?

Query: Why should anyone bother praising God?

Query: Of what good are invisible blessings up in heaven, whilst we are suffering and dying down here?

Query: How does one get in union with Christ who resides safe up there in heaven?

Query: How far away are God, heaven, Christ and our spiritual blessings?

Seven spiritual blessing from God for those who enter into union with Jesus Christ

1. God chose us in Christ 4
2. God predestined us in Christ 5-6
3. God redeemed us in Christ 7-8
4. God made known his will to us in Christ 9
5. God administers everything in Christ 10
6. God called us in Christ 11-12
7. God sealed us in Christ 13-14

1. God chose us in Christ 4

⁴ For he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and blameless before him...

Chose: mid voice = chose for himself.

Query: Does chose guarantee salvation?

Psa. 78.68 God chose the tribe of Judah. (Many or most became apostate.)

Psa. 105.6 The sons of Jacob were his elect. (Many or most became apostate.)

Theology 1: God chose whom to save and rejected all others before they were born.

Theology 2: God has chosen to save those who are/ remain in union with Christ.

Hendiadys: Holy and blameless.

Query: What is their difference?

Holy = pure character; blameless = inoffensive behaviour.

Query: How can this be? For we have all defiled ourselves, and we have all violated God's laws?

2. God predestined us in Christ 5-6

In love ... ⁵ He did this by predestining us to adoption as his legal heirs through Jesus Christ, according to the pleasure of his will— ⁶ to the praise of the glory of his grace that [~by which] he has freely bestowed on us in his dearly loved Son.

In love: See netbible.org note 12(*). 'In love... loved Son' form a balanced couplet.

Query: God predestined us before what?

Theology 1: Before we were born.

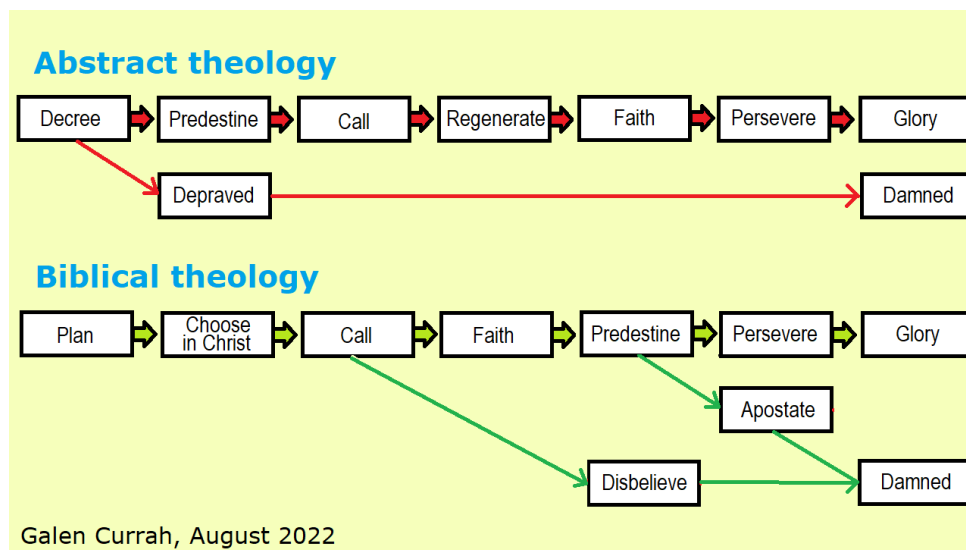
Theology 2: Before he adopted us.

Query: What motivates God to offer us sonship?

Query: What would God like to receive in return?

Query: How much does this cost us?

Query: Who makes this happen?



3. God redeemed us in Christ 7-8

⁷ In him we [shall] have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our offenses, according to the riches of his grace [~kindness] ⁸ that he lavished on us...

Redemption: “‘making free’ by payment of a ransom ... 2 release from a captive condition ... acquittal” BDAG.

Offense: ‘a violation of moral standards ... ordinarily of offenses against God’. BDAG.

Grace: (charis), kindness (créstotés, see 2:7). ‘3 practical application of goodwill’. BDAG.

Blood: ‘blood and life as an expiatory sacrifice’ BDAG

- New covenant, Luke 22.20
- Propitiation, Rom 3.25
- Justification, Rom 5:9
- Redemption, Eph 1.7, Heb 9:12
- Reconciliation, Col 1.20
- Cleansing, 1 John 1:7

4. God made known his will to us in Christ 9

⁹ He did this [in all wisdom and insight] when he revealed to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, ...

Hendiadys: wisdom and insight.

Mystery: For pagans, 'secret teachings, ... customs and ceremonies.' BDAG

For Christians: 'secrets thoughts, plans, and dispensations of God.'

Will: (*theléma*) '1 what one wishes to happen.'

Good pleasure: (*eudokia*) 'being kindly disposed.'

5. God administers everything in Christ 10

... ¹⁰ toward the administration of the fullness of the times, to head up all things in Christ—the things in heaven and the things on earth.

Query: Why not also 'under the earth' (Phil 2.10)?

Previous administrations:

- Adam ► Fall to flood
- Noahide ► Disobedience to dispersion
- Angels ► Corruption to Torah
- Kings ► Idolatry to Messiah
- Nations ► Tyranny to Antichrist

6. God called us in Christ 11-12

¹¹ In Christ we too have been claimed [*~called*] as God's own possession, since we were predestined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to the counsel of his will ¹² so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, would be to the praise of his glory.

Alternative: 'we who have hoped beforehand'.

Query: Who makes sure that we in Christ get glory?

Query: What is our part in getting future glory?

Query: What will be our action after getting glory?

7. God sealed us in Christ 13-14

¹³ And when you [*~we*] heard the word of truth (the gospel of your salvation)—when you believed in Christ —you were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who [*~which*] is the down payment of our inheritance, until the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of his glory.

Ephesians 1:1-14

Query: What is the apparent order of the divine actions and our responses, from this text, not from abstract theology?

My best guess...

Divine actions and our responses:

1. We heard the Good News.
2. We believed in Christ.
3. Christ saved/saves/will save us.
4. God sealed us with the Holy Spirit.
5. God will redeem us, his own possession.
6. We shall receive our inheritance.
7. We shall praise his glory.

Closing

Let several of us praise the Lord Jesus for the great salvation that we enjoy now, and that we will enjoy after he comes to redeem us from death.

For next time:

- Let us read a chapter of Ephesians each day in versions that you trust.
- Let us study Ephesians 1:15-23, preparing comments and queries.

(* netbible.org Ephesians 1:5 note 12

The prepositional phrase ἐν ἀγάπῃ (*en agapē*, “in love”) may modify one of three words or phrases: (1) “chose,” (2) “holy and unblemished,” both in v. 4, or (3) “by predestining” in v. 5. If it modifies “chose,” it refers to God’s motivation in that election, but this option is unlikely because of the placement of the prepositional phrase far away from the verb. The other two options are more likely. If it modifies “holy and unblemished,” it specifies that our holiness cannot be divorced from love. This view is in keeping with the author’s use of ἀγάπη to refer often to human love in Ephesians, but the placement of the prepositional phrase not immediately following the words it modifies would be slightly awkward. If it modifies “by predestining” (v. 5), again the motivation of God’s choice is love. This would fit the focus of the passage on God’s gracious actions toward believers. In Eph 3:17 the same prepositional phrase, ἐν ἀγάπῃ (*en agapē*, “in love”), occurs in the Greek text ahead of the participles it modifies, presumably for emphasis, and the same could be the case here.