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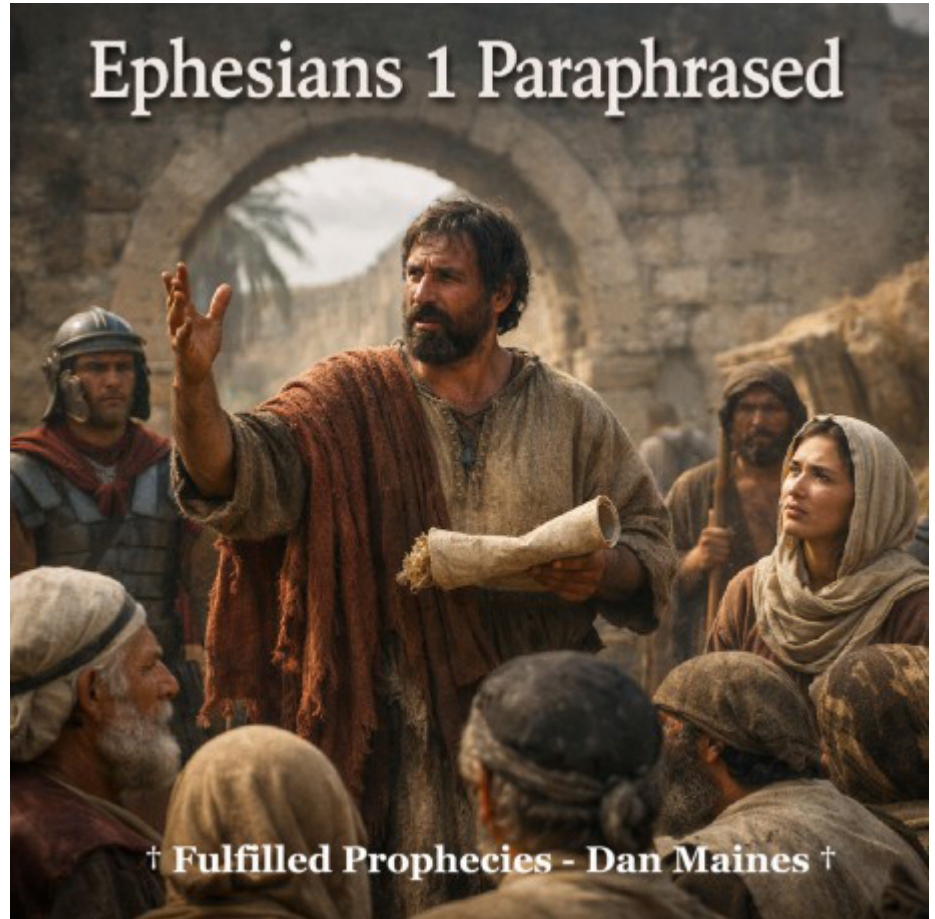
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Ephesians 1 Paraphrased



By Dan Maines

Ephesians 1 Paraphrased

Introduction

† Paul opens this letter reminding believers that everything we have in Christ came from God's purpose and plan, not from human effort (Romans 8:28-30).

† The chapter explains how God planned redemption before the destruction of Jerusalem and brought Jews and Gentiles together in Christ (Ephesians 2:11-16).

† Early Christians understood this chapter as describing the fulfillment of God's covenant promises through Christ and the

establishment of His spiritual kingdom (Irenaeus, Against Heresies 3.16).

Ephesians 1:1

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by God's will, writes to the faithful people in Ephesus who are living in union with Christ.

† Paul's authority came directly from Christ, not from human appointment (Galatians 1:1).

† The phrase faithful people describes those who remained loyal to Christ during a time of persecution and covenant transition (Revelation 2:10).

† Clement of Alexandria noted that Paul constantly reminded believers their identity came from Christ, not from their past life in the world (Clement of Alexandria, Stromata).

Ephesians 1:2

Grace and peace come to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

† Grace refers to God's undeserved favor shown through Christ's redemptive work (Romans 3:24).

† Peace refers to reconciliation between God and His people through the new covenant (Colossians 1:20).

† Early church writers frequently explained that grace and peace together summarize the entire gospel message (Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 3.37).

Ephesians 1:3

Praise belongs to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has already blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realm.

† Spiritual blessings refer to covenant privileges given through Christ rather than earthly promises tied to the old covenant system (Hebrews 8:6).

† The heavenly realm refers to the spiritual kingdom Christ

established through His resurrection and authority (Matthew 28:18).

† Irenaeus taught that these blessings describe the restoration of mankind through Christ after the failure of Adam (Irenaeus, Against Heresies 3.18).

Ephesians 1:4

God chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world so that we would stand holy and blameless before Him in love.

† The plan of redemption existed in God's purpose long before the events unfolded in history (2 Timothy 1:9).

† Being holy and blameless describes covenant standing before God through Christ's righteousness (Romans 5:1).

† Early Christians believed this verse shows God's long prepared plan for salvation through Christ (Justin Martyr, Dialogue with Trypho).

Ephesians 1:5

He determined ahead of time that through Jesus Christ we would become His adopted children according to the good pleasure of His will.

† Adoption describes believers being brought into God's covenant family through Christ (Romans 8:15).

† The adoption promise fulfilled what God intended when He called Israel His son in the Old Testament (Exodus 4:22).

† Clement of Alexandria explained that adoption means believers receive the privileges of God's household through Christ (Clement of Alexandria, Stromata).

Ephesians 1:6

This brings praise to the glory of His grace which He freely gave us through the One He loves.

† The One He loves refers to Jesus Christ, the beloved Son (Matthew 3:17).

† Salvation highlights God's grace rather than human achievement (Ephesians 2:8-9).

† Irenaeus wrote that redemption through Christ demonstrates the glory of God's mercy toward mankind (Irenaeus, Against Heresies 4.20).

Ephesians 1:7

Through Christ we have redemption by His blood and the forgiveness of our sins according to the riches of His grace.

† Redemption refers to deliverance from the curse of the law and the power of sin (Galatians 3:13).

† Forgiveness came through Christ's sacrificial death which replaced the temple sacrifices (Hebrews 10:12).

† Early Christians taught that Christ's blood ended the old sacrificial system forever (Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 1.10).

Ephesians 1:8

God poured out this grace on us with wisdom and understanding.

† God's wisdom reveals His plan of redemption that had been hidden for generations (Colossians 1:26).

† Understanding refers to spiritual insight given through the gospel message (1 Corinthians 2:12).

† Clement of Alexandria taught that divine wisdom reveals God's eternal plan through Christ (Clement of Alexandria, Stromata).

Ephesians 1:9

He revealed the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure which He planned in Christ.

† The mystery refers to God's plan to unite Jews and Gentiles together in Christ (Ephesians 3:6).

† This mystery had been hidden in the Old Testament but

revealed through the apostles (Romans 16:25-26).

† Irenaeus wrote that the mystery of Christ is the fulfillment of God's long hidden plan of redemption (Irenaeus, Against Heresies 3.17).

Ephesians 1:10

At the right time God planned to bring everything together under Christ, things in heaven and things on earth.

† The right time refers to the fulfillment of God's redemptive timeline in the first century (Galatians 4:4).

† Bringing everything together describes the unification of God's people under Christ's authority (Colossians 1:18).

† Early Christian teachers explained this as Christ's rule over the restored covenant kingdom (Justin Martyr, First Apology).

Ephesians 1:11

In Christ we also received an inheritance because we were chosen according to the purpose of the One who works all things according to His will.

† The inheritance refers to the kingdom promises given through the gospel (Hebrews 12:28).

† God's sovereignty ensures His plan of redemption cannot fail (Isaiah 46:10).

† Irenaeus described this inheritance as the restored life given through Christ's victory over death (Irenaeus, Against Heresies 5.36).

Ephesians 1:12

We who first hoped in Christ were chosen so that we would bring praise to His glory.

† The phrase we who first hoped refers to Jewish believers who first received the gospel message (Romans 1:16).

† Their faith demonstrated the beginning of the new covenant community (Acts 2:41).

† Early church historians noted that the gospel first spread through Jewish believers before reaching the nations (Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 2.3).

Ephesians 1:13

You also believed when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and when you believed you were marked with the promised Holy Spirit.

† The message of truth refers to the gospel proclamation of Christ's death and resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:1-4).

† The Holy Spirit marked believers as belonging to God under the new covenant (Romans 8:9).

† Clement of Alexandria taught that the Spirit confirms believers as members of God's household (Clement of Alexandria, Stromata).

Ephesians 1:14

The Spirit guarantees our inheritance until the redemption of God's possession to the praise of His glory.

† The Spirit served as a pledge confirming the future completion of redemption (2 Corinthians 1:22).

† Redemption of God's possession refers to the full establishment of the new covenant kingdom (Hebrews 9:15).

† Irenaeus wrote that the Spirit is the assurance of the life believers receive through Christ (Irenaeus, Against Heresies 3.24).

Ephesians 1:15

For this reason, after hearing about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints,

† Faith in Christ and love for believers were the defining marks of the early church (John 13:35).

† Paul's reports about the Ephesian believers show the spread of the gospel through Asia Minor (Acts 19:10).

† Eusebius recorded that the Ephesian church became a strong center of early Christianity (Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 3.31).

Ephesians 1:16

I never stop giving thanks for you while remembering you in my prayers.

† Paul's prayers show the importance of spiritual encouragement within the church (Colossians 1:9).

† Early Christian communities regularly prayed for one another during persecution (Acts 12:5).

† Clement of Alexandria noted that prayer united believers across distant congregations (Clement of Alexandria, Stromata).

Ephesians 1:17

I ask that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, would give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation so you can truly know Him.

† Knowing God requires spiritual understanding given through the Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:10).

† Revelation refers to insight into the completed work of Christ (Colossians 2:2-3).

† Irenaeus explained that true knowledge of God comes through Christ alone (Irenaeus, Against Heresies 4.6).

Ephesians 1:18

I pray that the eyes of your heart will be enlightened so you may understand the hope of His calling and the riches of His inheritance among the saints.

† Spiritual enlightenment refers to understanding the promises fulfilled through Christ (2 Corinthians 4:6).

† The hope of His calling describes the kingdom life believers receive through the gospel (Titus 1:2).

† Early Christian teachers often described salvation as the

illumination of the soul through Christ (Justin Martyr, First Apology).

Ephesians 1:19

I also pray that you will understand the immeasurable greatness of His power toward us who believe according to His mighty strength.

† God's power was revealed through Christ's resurrection and authority (Romans 1:4).

† This same power sustains believers in the spiritual kingdom (Colossians 2:12).

† Irenaeus wrote that God's power was revealed when Christ overcame death (Irenaeus, Against Heresies 5.1).

Ephesians 1:20

He demonstrated this power in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly realm.

† Christ's resurrection proved His authority as Messiah and Lord (Acts 2:32-36).

† Being seated at God's right hand symbolizes ruling authority over the kingdom (Psalm 110:1).

† Eusebius recorded that early Christians proclaimed Christ as reigning King from heaven (Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 1.2).

Ephesians 1:21

He placed Christ far above every ruler, authority, power, and dominion and above every name that can be named not only in this age but also in the age to come.

† Christ's authority surpasses every earthly and spiritual power (Philippians 2:9-11).

† This rule began with His resurrection and continues through His kingdom (Daniel 7:14).

† Early Christian writers consistently affirmed Christ's universal authority (Justin Martyr, First Apology).

Ephesians 1:22

God placed everything under Christ's authority and appointed Him as head over all things for the church.

† Christ as head means He governs and directs His people (Colossians 1:18).

† The church represents the covenant community under His rule (Hebrews 12:22-23).

† Irenaeus taught that the church lives under the authority of Christ as its head (Irenaeus, Against Heresies 3.24).

Ephesians 1:23

The church is His body, the fullness of Him who fills everything everywhere.

† The body imagery shows the close relationship between Christ and His people (1 Corinthians 12:27).

† The fullness refers to the complete expression of Christ's presence among His people (Colossians 2:9-10).

† Clement of Alexandria explained that the church reflects Christ's presence in the world (Clement of Alexandria, Stromata).

Historical References

† Early Christian writers consistently interpreted Ephesians as describing the fulfillment of God's covenant plan through Christ.

† Irenaeus emphasized that Christ restored mankind and united believers under one spiritual kingdom (Irenaeus, Against Heresies).

† Eusebius recorded how the early church spread this message across the Roman world after the fall of Jerusalem (Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History).

† Clement of Alexandria wrote that the church represents the

visible community of those transformed by Christ (Clement of Alexandria, Stromata).

How It Applies To Us Today

† This chapter reminds us that salvation comes from God's plan, not human effort.

† Believers today live under Christ's authority just as the early church did.

† The church remains Christ's body, continuing the mission of spreading the gospel.

† Our hope and inheritance are secure because they come from God's eternal purpose in Christ.

Q & A Appendix

Q What is the main theme of Ephesians 1

A The chapter explains God's eternal plan of redemption through Christ and the unity of believers in His kingdom (Ephesians 1:9-10).

Q What does adoption mean in this chapter

A Adoption describes believers being brought into God's covenant family through Jesus Christ (Ephesians 1:5).

Q What is the mystery revealed by God

A The mystery is that Jews and Gentiles are united together in Christ through the gospel (Ephesians 1:9).

Q What role does the Holy Spirit play

A The Spirit confirms believers as belonging to God and guarantees the inheritance promised through Christ (Ephesians 1:13-14).

Q What does it mean that Christ is head of the church

A Christ governs His people and directs the church as its living head and authority (Ephesians 1:22-23).

† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

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Source Index

† Ephesians 1

† Irenaeus, Against Heresies

† Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History

† Clement of Alexandria, Stromata

† Justin Martyr, First Apology

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