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Ephesians 1 - A Big-Picture Prophecy Passage



By Steven J. Hogan

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You would never think **Ephesians 1 is about prophecy**, but it is. In fact, it's one of the best and most important big-picture prophecy passages in the Bible, going from eternity past to eternity future. It says you will be forever blessed (vs. 3), that you will always be in God's presence (vs. 4), that all things will be summed up in Christ (vs. 10), that you will receive an inheritance (vs. 11), that you will be glorified (vs. 15), and that Christ has all authority in this age and the next (vs. 21). God wants you to have hope, to be looking forward to *"the surpassing riches of His* (God's) *grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus"* (Eph. 2:7). Your short life on this earth is only the very beginning of a magnificent eternal life. Let's look more closely at Eph. 1, and as you do, I'm convinced you will be more hopeful and excited about the life God has planned out for you.

Ephesians 1:3. As a heavenly citizen, you have a heavenly Father who has and will continue to lavish you with indescribable blessings (1 Cor. 2:9). These spiritually based blessings affect every aspect of your present and future life, and result in you gladly and greatly blessing your Father.

Ephesians 1:4-8. In eternity past, God chose to make you perfectly holy so He could adopt you as His child, and so you could continually and always be in His sight, in His presence. Everything about your life on earth and in heaven was predestined, precisely and perfectly planned out by God. By the will of God, the grace of God, the wisdom of God, and for the glory of God, and through the work of Jesus Christ you were redeemed, and forgiven of all your sins. God sent Jesus, His only begotten Son, to this world because He deeply loved you, and because He was determined to show you His love by blessing you on earth and in heaven, now and forever.

Ephesians 1:9-12. Your life on this earth is an infinitesimally small fraction of the glorious future God has for you. Not long from now, at the end of this age and in the fulness of the times, Christ will return to earth to rapture the church, punish the sinners, save a number of Jews, and begin His reign over this world. At that time, all things will be summed up in Christ, for He will be King over all the earth. *"God is the King of all the earth... God reigns over the nations."* Psalm 47:7-8

God predestined that you be justified, and that you receive eternal life, a special relationship with Him and His Son that lasts forever. He also predestined that you receive an inheritance, an extremely satisfying eternity of serving Him, and the most incredible spiritual, relational, and physical blessings you could ever imagine. *"In your presence is fulness of joy; in your right hand there are pleasures forever"* (Ps. 16:11). At the coming of Christ, which occurs in the fullness of the times, you will *"obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled"* (1 Pet. 1:4), and begin to experience what God planned out for you in eternity past.

Be assured that God *“works all things after the counsel of His will.”* God, by His power, wisdom, sovereignty, and in accordance with His eternal purpose, is working out all the details, every single aspect of your life. Not leaving anything to chance, He will make sure that you receive all that He has promised and planned out for you, that you will be spiritually, wonderfully, and eternally blessed. This results in *“the praise of His glory”*, in you eternally glorifying God.

Eph. 1:13-14. God continues to share His plans about the future, specifically as it relates to you. He says that if you have believed in Christ to save you from sin and death, if you have been born again, then you have been sealed with the Holy Spirit. God did this, not just to establish and ensure His ownership of you, but to assure you that His plans for you will be fully carried out, that you will be physically redeemed, be delivered from your earthly body and glorified (1 Cor. 15:40-42), and that you will be given an eternal inheritance. The Spirit dwelling in you is a pledge, a guarantee from God that you will be completely saved, that you will receive your brand-new body at Christ’s coming, and that you will be a richly rewarded child of God.

Ephesians 1:15-19. As a Christian, you have been justified and you will be glorified. But at this time, you are being sanctified, and are to be spiritually growing and fulfilling God’s purpose for your life on this earth. Knowing this, Paul prays for three specific things, our relationship with God, and not surprisingly, our hope, and finally, the power we need to live the Christian life.

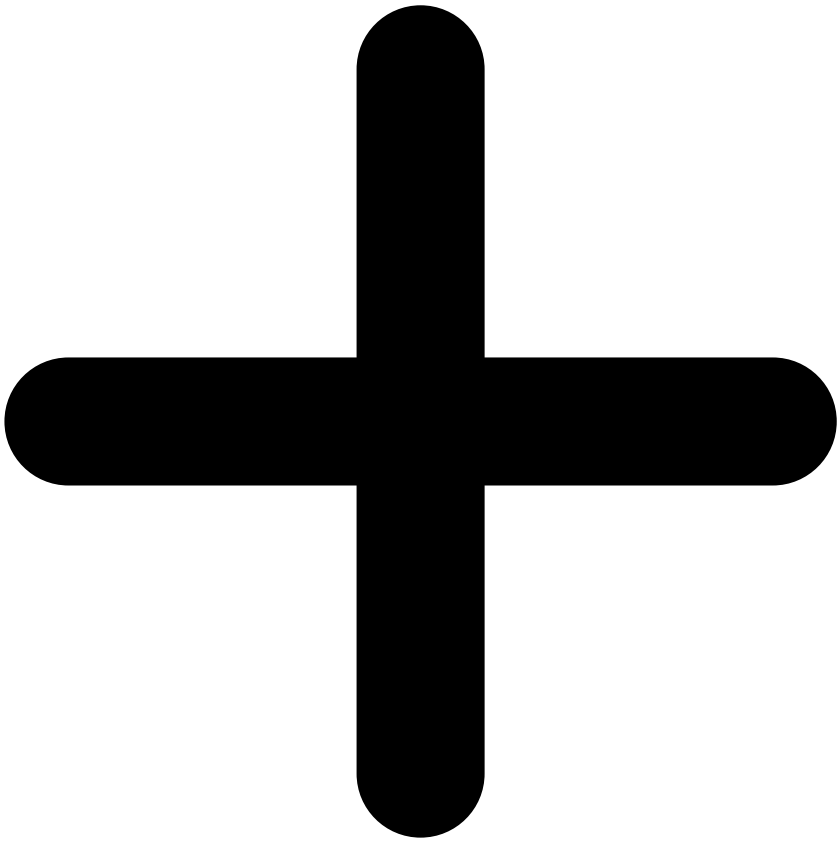
These three things are vitally important, and so pray this for yourself and others. Pray that you grow in your knowledge of Jesus, that you have a close relationship with Him. Pray that you have hope, that you understand and are excited about the glorious future God has planned out for you, *“the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints.”* (Eph. 1:18). And pray that you are experiencing and utilizing the power of God which is in you through the Holy Spirit. *“All who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.”* Romans 8:14

Ephesians 1:20-23. God's power was most clearly seen when He raised Jesus from the dead, then seated Him at the right hand of the Father. And so Jesus is now in charge – He is Lord and ruler over all powers and authorities, visible and invisible, including the devil and his demons. Thus, you have nothing to fear, nothing to worry about. Jesus is ruling and reigning, and not just in this age, but in the coming age, the 1000-year kingdom age when He will visibly, righteously, powerfully, and gloriously be *"King over all the earth."* Zech. 14:9

When you look at this chapter it's obvious that God's plans for this world, the church, and you, are being carried out. You were justified, you are now being sanctified, and you will be glorified. (Rom. 8:28-30). That we are living in the end-times means it won't be long before all things are summed up in Christ, and every knee will bow and *"every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."* Phil. 2:9-11

God wants you to have this hope that's described in Eph. 1. Be excited about the unimaginable and untold blessings God has in store for you; be serving Him with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength; and be giving Him all the glory. *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ."* Ephesians 1:3

P.S. I can't overstate the importance of having an eternal perspective, of seeing the big picture of your life. Here are two other posts that will help you understand God's overall plan for your life – *"The Big Picture: The Present Age and the Ages to Come"* and *"An Overview of Your Christian Life."* One more thing – this past week, Marv Rosenthal, a dear friend and mentor to me for the past 27 years sped off to heaven to be with the Lord. Marv's primary ministry was Zion's Hope – one that focused on end-time's prophecy and reaching the Jewish people with the gospel. I really encourage you to look at it – "Zion's Hope" – it is most instructive and encouraging.





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