

PLACE OF PAUL'S GOSPEL IN GOD'S ELECTING DECREES

The Pauline Bootcamp: Session III

Trinity Grace Fellowship

§0. Introduction. This session documents the distinctive place of the content of Paul's gospel in the logical ordering of the decrees of election within the Godhead. There are two distinctive, closely interrelated, aspects of this issue:

1. The Body of Christ, the subject of Paul's gospel, has a distinctive place in the order of God's decrees *vis-a-vis* the houses of the Elect—chosen first of the Redemptive Elects, chosen in Christ as the Ancient of Days, chosen prior to the decree to create the universe, revealed historically last., and glorified first.
2. Paul's gospel, the declaration of God concerning the Body of Christ, has a distinctive place in the order of God's decrees *vis-a-vis* all Biblical revelation—its content was decided first of all and revealed last of all.

There are immediate implications of these claims:

1. The Body of Christ is absolutely and eternally distinct from any other house of God's Elect. By symmetry, Elect Israel and the Elect Gentile nations are absolutely and eternally distinct from the Body of Christ.
2. The Pauline epistles are fundamentally distinct from any other part of Scripture—the Law, the Writings, the Prophets, the Synoptics, the Third Generation epistles (Hebrews, James, Petrine, Johannine, Jude, and the Apocalypse).
3. Paul's gospel, as the declaration of the mind of God concerning the Elect of this present dispensation, is the gospel of salvation for today.
4. A murky, general, non-specific gospel concerning the Person of Christ is not the gospel of salvation for today, but rather the gospel concerning Christ as the non-earthly, non-ceremonial, non-ritualistic, non-symbolic, third heavenly, above angels, righteous, and divine Head and Savior of the Body of Christ is the gospel of salvation for today.

An outline of this session is as follows:

- §1. Triune Godhead and Trinal Covenant of Grace
 - §§1.1. Statement of Trinity
 - §§1.2. Statement of Trinal Covenant of Grace
 - §§1.3. Inheritance for each Person of Trinity
 - §§1.4. Role of each Inheritance in Creation
- §2. Place of Body of Christ in God's Electing Decrees—before Decree to Create
 - §§2.1. Ancient of Days as Firstborn of Creation
 - §§2.2. Before and From Foundations of the World
 - §§2.3. "Pre" Vocabulary Used of Body of Christ (cf. §5. Appendix)
 - §§2.4. Logical "Problems" and Basic Conclusions
- §3. Place of Body in Final Created Order—in Christ above All
 - §§3.1. Christ and Body in Third Heaven
 - §§3.2. Body's Position over Angels
 - §§3.3. Angels over Israel
 - §§3.4. Israel over Gentiles
 - §§3.5. Gentiles over Natural Order
- §4. Place of Body and Paul's Epistles in Order of Revelation—Last of All—and Glorification—First of All
 - §§4.1. First Declared in God's Mind Before the Kosmos
 - §§4.2. Hidden within God during Human History
 - §§4.3. Revealed to Pauline Apostleship at end of Revelatory History
 - §§4.4. Glorified First of All
- §5. Appendix: Correlation of Body's "Pre"-Vocabulary in Romans and Ephesians (cf. §§2.3)

Most of this session derives from TGF November 1996 Conference Session IV, there is significant overlap with Pauline Bootcamp Session II (March 1997 / February 2005), and [DS7] is referred to frequently as in Pauline Bootcamp Session I (February 1997 / January 2005).

THE PLACE OF PAUL'S GOSPEL IN GOD'S ELECTING DECREES

§I. Triune Godhead and Dispensationalism. The student should see the outline "Biblical Creation and the Godhead" [BCG] of Session II of the TGF November 1996 Conference for additional details.

§§I.1. Statement of Trinity. There is One God in Three Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and in each is seen the attributes of Deity: "Person" means self-aware personality and not merely manner or mode. Even the Oxford English Dictionary [*The Oxford Universal Dictionary on Historical Principles*, Oxford University Press, 1933] contradicts itself by saying (under "person") that in the Doctrine of the Trinity, "person" refers to "mode" [*op. cit.*, 1267], and then saying (under "mode"), that modalism is not the same as the Doctrine of the Trinity since modalism asserts that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are merely modes of manifestation [*op. cit.*, 1479].

- (1) In the Father is personally centered the Source of Deity and hence the Will of God as desire/impulse (*θελω-θελημα*) from inclination and nature.
- (2) In the Son is personally centered the Wisdom/Articulation of Deity and hence the Will of God as decree (*βουλομαι-βουλη-βουλημα*) through articulation and deliberation.
- (3) In the Spirit is personally centered the Power of Deity and hence the Will of God as knowingly understood and implemented (*φρονεω/φρόνημα + ενεργεω-ενεργεια-ενεργημα/δυναμαι-δυναμις*).

The Son is of the Father's Essence, and the Spirit proceeds out of the Father through the Son (Is. 40:5,7, Rom. 8:9, I Pet. 1:11). The Father continually generates the Son to be the personal decreer/articulator/expressor of His desires, and the Son continually spirates the Spirit to be the personal interpreter/worker of His decrees (Matt. 11:27, Eph. 1:1, Rom. 11:34, plus more texts and discussion in [BCG]).

§§I.2. Statement of Trinal Covenant of Grace.

- (1) There is One Redemptive Elect in Three Households—the jewless/gentileless Body of Christ, the Nation Israel, and the Righteous Gentiles—and toward each God grants an unconditional, yet distinctive electing, atoning, and saving grace. The Body oversees the angelic ministry to, and restoration of, Israel; Israel ministers to, and mediates for, the Gentiles; and the Gentiles minister to, and fill, the earth.
- (2) There is One Redemptive Covenant in Three Dispensations—the dispensations of the Body, Israel, and the Gentiles—and in each dispensation is distinctively exhibited God's electing, atoning, and saving grace. The consummation of the Body dispensation secures that of the heavens and of Israel's dispensation; that of Israel's dispensation secures that of the Land and of the Gentiles; and that of the Gentiles secures a renewed earthly order.
- (3) Restated, the Triune God unconditionally chooses, redeems, regenerates:
 - (a) a household of sinners to jointly-sit in the Third Heaven as the extended humanity or Body of Christ to fully express God's authority in Christ over all angels and hence over the entire created order (e.g. I Cor. 6:2–3, Eph. 3:10);
 - (b) a household of sinners to rule the earth, under angelic control, as the priestly Nation or Israel of God (e.g. Is. 14:1–4; 60–61, Amos. 9:12; Rev. 2:26).
 - (c) a household of sinners to fill and subdue the earth, under Jewish control, in righteous ethnic units as the righteous Gentiles (e.g. Gen. 1:28; 9:7, Rev. 21:24).

§§I.3. Inheritance for each Person of the Trinity. There are three households in the redemptive Elect because there are Three Persons in the Godhead, each household is the inheritance of a Person of the Godhead, and each household is stated as sitting upon the Throne of the Person inheriting it.

- (1) The Father inherits the Body of Christ, including its Head, Christ: Eph. 1:11a [Greek *καλέω*]; 2:19–22 [Greek *αγιων* = **Holy of Holies** = Third Heaven]; 1:18 (see 2:19–22); 4:4–6 (Body is paralleled with the Father), Col. 1:12 (**Holy of Holies in the Light**); and the Body sits with Christ on the Father's Throne (Eph. 2:6 (cf. 1:20–21), Phil. 3:20 (Greek text: **politeuma** = seat of authority, **which** refers to *politeuma*)).
- (2) The Son inherits Israel directly (and the Gentiles indirectly): Ex. 19:5–6 / I Pet. 2:9 (note it is the Logos/Son Who speaks with Moses), Is. 19:23–25 (spoken by the Memra, the Word); and Israel sits upon the Son's Thrones: Rev. 3:21 (generally), Ezek. 37:24–25 (David on Executive Throne), Ezek. 43:7, 18–19 (Ezekiel + sons of Zadok upon Ceremonial Throne), Is. 32:1/Matt. 16:19; 18:18; 19:28/Luke 22:28–30/John 20:23/Acts 5:1–11, 12–16/Rev. 21:14 (Peter and 12 upon Judicial Throne as Sanhedrin with Peter as Nasi).
- (3) The Spirit seems to inherit Gentiles as the means by which the Son inherits them (Ps. 2:7, Rev. 2:26, etc); and Gentiles seem to sit in their respective Nations on Thrones distributed by the Spirit (Rev. 21:24).

THE PLACE OF PAUL'S GOSPEL IN GOD'S ELECTING DECREES

§§1.4. Role of each Inheritance in Creation. To reiterate the above:

- (1) Body oversees the angelic hosts and the renewed/recreated heavens.
- (2) Israel, under angelic supervision, oversees the Nations in the renewed/recreated earth.
- (3) Gentiles fill Pangea and oversee its fauna and flora.

§2. Place of the Body of Christ in God's Electing Decrees—before the Decree to Create.

Since the reformation, there has continued the dispute over the **logical** order of God's decrees concerning the Elect, particularly in relation to the fall of Adam. If one sees the decree concerning election as prior to that permitting the fall of Adam, then one is **supralapsarian** ("above the lapse"); and if one sees the decree concerning election as subsequent to that permitting the fall of Adam, then one is **infralapsarian** ("below the lapse"). Calvin's disciple Beza at Geneva was one of the first formulating the supra point of view; but the majority of the "reformed" community has continued to uphold the infra point of view.

If one examines Beza's arguments, as repeated by his opponents (such as Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology*), they are based on Scriptures such as Eph. 3:10. Our surmise, without having examined Beza directly, is that all his arguments are based on Pauline scriptures (a project for the future is to run this down precisely).

If one presumes that the Elect is unitarian and monolithic (of one hope and eternal end, e.g. without a distinctive place for Israel *vis-a-vis* the Body of Christ), as the reformed community generally does, and given that Paul is one-sixteenth of Scripture by volume, then the decision of the reformed community against the supra point of view seems reasonable under the following conditions:

- (1) the Body of Christ as described in Paul is indeed supra, i.e. the decision to elect the members of the Body is prior to that to permit the fall of Adam;
- (2) Israel and the Gentiles, as described outside Paul, are indeed infra, i.e. the decision to elect the members of Israel and the Nations is subsequent to that to permit the fall of Adam; and
- (3) the merits of an issue are decided by calculating which position has more Scriptures on its side.

In this study, the truth of (1) and (2) is proved: the decree to choose the Body of Christ is prior to the decision to create the universe—i.e. the correct logical position for the Body is "**supracreation**" (which *ipse facto* implies supralapsarian!); the correct position of Israel and the Nations is "**infra-creation**" and even infralapsarian. Accordingly, we disavow both the presumption of a meaningless, unitarian Elect (see §5 of [BCG]) and that issues are decided by attempting to divide the Scriptures against themselves. We shall use **pre-creation** as an alternative to supracreation and **post-creation** as an alternative to infracreation .

§§2.1. Ancient of Days as Firstborn of Creation. This is developed at length in §§4.3 of [BCG], which we here abstract and add to.

- (1) The Son eternally proceeds out of the Father and yet resides within the Bosom of the Father.
- (2) The relationship between the Father and Son became partly subject to creature-like constraints of space and time when the Son was manifested as the Ancient of Days, and this act is called "birth" and initiated the Creation. Hence the Son became the Firstborn and Beginning of Creation.
- (3) The decree to manifest the Son as the Ancient of Days must be prior to the decree to create the universe: Prov. 8:22–31. John 17:5,24.
- (4) It follows from the union of the two natures in the One Person of Christ (e.g. Rev. 1:13–18) that Christ as the Incarnate Son was decreed prior to the decree to create the universe.
- (5) It follows from the identification of the Body of Christ with Christ as the fulness of His humanity (Eph. 1:23, Col. 2:10 [Greek: **you are His fulness**]) that the Body of Christ was decreed prior to the decree to create the universe.

We now build these latter conclusions in an alternate way: comparing the language of the decrees concerning the Body of Christ with that used of Israel and the Gentiles.

THE PLACE OF PAUL'S GOSPEL IN GOD'S ELECTING DECREES

§§2.2. Before and From the (Foundations of the) World. We first review the uses of “before” and “from” passages concerning the three redemptive households of the Elect, and then draw the unavoidable logical conclusions; these conclusions will be reinforced in the next subsection. The bottom line is that the Body of Christ is pre-creation in God's thinking.

(1) Christ and His Body are chosen **before the (foundation of the) kosmos**.

(a) Christ is described as before the (foundation of the) kosmos: Prov. 8:22–31, John 17:5,24, I Pet. 1:20.

(b) Body is described as chosen before the (foundation of the) kosmos or eternal ages (Eph. 1:4 (cf. 4–23), II Tim. 1:9) and hence its peculiar Scriptures—the Pauline Mystery—which are the revealed record of said decrees, are also ordained before the (foundation of the) kosmos (I Cor. 2:7) and before the eternal ages (Tit. 1:1–3 (note middle voice in 2)).

Such expressions occur **only** of Christ and the Body described in Paul's gospel. Body members are usually called **mature sons**, and are officially labeled **mature sons** in the decree of their election (Eph. 1:5).

(2) Israel is chosen **from the (foundation of the) kosmos** (Heb. 4:3; 9:26, Rev. 13:8; 17:8) and hence her peculiar Scriptures—the First Generation Law, Writings, Prophets, Second Generation Gospels/Acts, Third Generation Epistles/Apocalypse—which are the revealed record of said decrees, are also ordained from the (foundation of the) kosmos (Matt. 13:35–36; 24:31, Luke 1:70; 11:50, Acts 3:21).

Those of Israel are usually called **children** (or **infants** in the case of the Third Generation), and are officially labeled **children** in the decree of their election (John 1:12, I John 3:1).

(3) Gentiles are chosen **from the (foundation of the) kosmos** (Matt. 25:34, Amos 9:9–12, Luke 11:50 (**from Abel**)).

Gentile saints are officially labeled **slaves** in the decree of their election (Amos 9:12); cf. Is 14:1–3; 54:3; 60:1–22; 61:4–6, Matt. 15:21–28, Rev. 2:26–27.

(4) For completeness sake, note the elect angels are apparently decreed post-heavens and pre-earth: Job 38:4–11.

Logical Points. **IF** we insist on interpretating **(foundation of the) kosmos** in these passages consistently—and we should, and **IF** we believe that God knows ahead of time what He will do in His Creation—and we should (e.g. Is. 14:27; 46:9–11), **THEN** we are forced to conclude the following:

(Foundation of the) kosmos in the references cited under (2,3) above is not a point in time, but rather a **point in logical order**; and these references refer to the **logical order in the decrees**—in His own thinking, the Father decided the Creation first, and the Elects of Israel and the Gentiles.

(Foundation of the) kosmos is therefore a point of logical order in the references cited under (1); and these references must also refer to the **logical order of the decrees**—in His own thinking, the Father decided Christ and His Body first, and then the Creation.

§§2.3. “Pre”-Vocabulary Used of the Body of Christ. Certain “pre”-words or their equivalents are used of the Body of Christ, and only used “otherwise” of Christ, where at times the “pre” is part of the clause containing the word or is an actual prefix of the verb. In other words, there is a collection of unique words used exclusively of Christ and/or His Body which express His/their logical place in God's thinking of His Elects. Cf. Appendix in §5.

(1) **pre-propitiated**—literally **pre-placed propitiation**: Rom. 3:25. Cf. **propitiation** for Israel (I John 2:2).

(2) **pre-sinned**—literally **having-pre-occurred sins**: Rom. 3:25. That **pre** signifies logical order is indicated by the verb already being in the perfect tense!! See our comments below which use this verse to resolve the so-called “logical problems” of any supra position.

THE PLACE OF PAUL'S GOSPEL IN GOD'S ELECTING DECREES

- (3) **pre-passed-over**: forced by the context of Rom. 3:25. Since the passing-over of the Body is logically between **pre-sinned** and **pre-placed propitiation**, it follows that **passed-over** has the logical place of **pre-passed-over**. It also follows that the Body is logically **pre-propitiated**.
- (4) **pre-fathered**—literally **Abraham our pre-father according to flesh**: Rom. 4:1. Unique in Scriptural, LXX, and apochryphal usage. Abraham is the Body's father **before** he was Israel's father, i.e. he is our **pre-circumcision father**, so the Body is **pre-circumcised**. This fits the logical order of Rom. 8:22–23 *vis-a-vis* the logical order of Christ's pre-birth/pre-travailing (Is. 66:7, Rev. 12:2,5 cf. Prov. 8:23–30(25)) and Israel's birth/travailing (Is. 54:1–5; 66:6–13, Matt. 24:8(Greek), Mark 13:8(Greek), Rev. 12:1–5), namely the Body is **pre-birthed/pre-travailed**. Further, the Body is **pre-seen** to be the mature sons of Abraham (Gal. 3:8)—cf. Israel being the sons of Abraham (Matt. 3:9, John 8:33)—and hence **pre-confirmed/established** according to its covenant (of the Father with Christ) as the **pre-seed/heirs** according the promise of Paul's fundamentally distinctive gospel (Gal. 3:29).
- (5) **pre-destined/pre-marked**—when used of individuals, used only of those in the Body: Rom. 8:29–30, Eph. 1:5,11. Its other two occurrences concern the ordination of the Spirit's charismatic ministry during the Pentecostal period (Acts 4:28) and the ordaining the Body Mystery (1 Cor. 2:7) before the kosmos. It also follows in the context of Rom. 11:29 that the Body is **pre-known as the pre-placed Body**, and in the context of Eph. 1:4–11, the Body is **pre-chosen** (1:4), **pre-willed**—actually, **pre-secret-willed** (1:9,10)—cf. 1 Cor. 2:6–8, and **pre-lotted** (1:11).
- (6) **Pre-called, pre-justified, pre-glorified**—forced by the context of Rom. 8:29–30.
- (7) **Pre-loved, pre-redeemed, pre-forgiven**. Since **loved** is sandwiched in logical order between **chosen before the foundation of the kosmos** and **pre-destined/pre-marked**, it follows that it is **pre-loved**. Thus the logical order in Eph. 1 is: pre-choose, pre-love, pre-destine. That the other terms are equivalent to “pre”-words similarly follows from context.
- (8) **Pre-hoped**: Eph. 1:12. Reading this as time order results in nonsense; it must be logical order. The Body was ordained to its hope of the Third Heaven before God decided the created order; so it can be said to be **pre-hoped**.
- (9) **Pre-promised/pre-declared**—literally **promised before the eternal ages**: Tit. 1:1–3.

Pre-known, *προγνωσκω*, is not a Body exclusive, yet is always dispensationally specific—see detailed analysis in Rom. 11:2 notes—with the context of the particular usage making perfectly clear which redemptive elect household is intended as pre-known. It is used of the pre-placed Body in Rom. 8:29 and of Christ in 1 Pet. 1:20; and its use of Israel in Rom. 11:2 is a pre-knowing with regard to the Hebrew prophets. Likewise, the noun form *πρόγνωσις*, **pre-knowledge**, is mixed, though dispensationally precise: it is used of Christ (Acts 2:23) and of Israel (1 Pet. 1:2)—again, see the analysis in Rom. 11:2 notes.

§§2.4. Logical “Problems” and Basic Conclusions. The objection—how can God ordain a group of creatures for anything, and not already have in mind the Creation; or how can God ordain a group of sinners, and not have in mind the Fall of Adam—was answered by Beza (according to his critics) by using terms like **creable**, i.e. **creatable**, which would seem to beg the logical question.

It seems that the solution is rather simple, once we realize there are logical orders other than deductive, and that God thinks other than only deductively (as can be seen in the Case-Law of Scripture). As an illustration, let's say I make the following sequence of decisions:

- (1) I want surround speakers;
- (2) I want surround speakers satisfying certain requirements of power-handling capacity, bandwidth, radiation pattern, upgradability, etc;
- (3) I want surround speakers with specific enclosure type, enclosure dimensions, drivers, driver configuration, crossover design, etc;
- (4) I want surround speakers to be built a specific way using specific materials and specific drivers and specific crossover components, over a specific period of time, installed a specific way, voiced a specific way, etc.

This is called **top-down design**, and its use is commonplace in engineering. The Lord decreed the Body as His redeemed, creaturely fullness BEFORE He decreed the creation of this particular universe, the creation of a particular man Adam, or the Fall of this particular man Adam; in other words, He decreed the Body before He

THE PLACE OF PAUL'S GOSPEL IN GOD'S ELECTING DECREES

decreed all the specific means to bring about the Body. The logical order of His decisions regarding the Body seems to be roughly the following:

- (5) The Beloved One is to be manifested in an uncreated, creature-like appearing way as the Ancient of Days, Who then becomes the Third Heaven (see §§3.1 below).
- (6) The Ancient of Days is to be given a personal, created nature, i.e. incarnation, to inhabit the Third Heaven.
- (7) The personal incarnation of the Ancient of Days is to be extended via a group of redeemed creatures who jointly inhabit the Third Heaven with the incarnate Ancient of Days.

These decisions can be made before specifying this universe and the Fall of Adam, etc. To decree the Body of Christ, though, requires having specified the sphere of their eternal hope, namely the Third Heaven. It would generally seem the case that a specific hope is ordained, and THEN that part of the Elect which inhabits/possesses that hope; e.g. the second heaven is ordained before the holy angels are ordained, making the angels post-second heaven, pre-earth in logical position.

It is clearly the case that Israel is post-creation, indeed post-earth, in logical position. But is Israel infralapsarian? Heb. 4:3 (condition of the second class by ellipsis (cf. 3:11)—**since they shall [not] enter into My rest, though these works have been finished from [the] foundation of [the] world**) seems to put the entering in of Elect Israel as logically subsequent to, or at the same point as, the refusal to let reprobate Israel enter in, making Israel's position infralapsarian.

The Gentiles seem clearly to be infralapsarian since they are viewed as the elect remnants of sinful lines in the decrees of their election (e.g. Amos 9:12). So they are logically after the Fall of Adam and his Gentile descendents.

Based upon the proof-texts of §§2.2, the "pre"-vocabulary of §§2.3, and the logical issues discussed just above, our basic conclusions regarding the logical ordering of the five parts of the Elect, including the three redemptive parts, are as follows:

Christ in His humanity is supralapsarian in position. He was ordained pre-creation.

The Body of Christ is supralapsarian in position. It was ordained pre-creation within Christ (*ἐν χριστῷ*, dative of sphere in Eph. 1:4).

The holy angels were ordained post-second heaven and pre-earth. Hence they are supralapsarian in logical position.

Israel was ordained post-earth and post-reprobate-Israel and so is infralapsarian in logical position.

The Gentiles were ordained subsequent to the decision to allow sinful lines and so are infralapsarian in logical position.

It is interesting to note, w.r.t. the redemptive elect, that the principle of "last shall be first, first shall be last" seems to be honored: e.g. the Body was ordained first, but revealed historically last.

THE PLACE OF PAUL'S GOSPEL IN GOD'S ELECTING DECREES

§3. Place of Body in Final Created Order—in Christ above All. The position of the Body of Christ over the eternal created order mirrors its being ordained first among the Redemptive Elects. Much of the following is abstracted from [DS7].

§§3.1. Christ and Body in Third Heaven.

- (1) Christ and the Body inhabit the Third Heaven: II Cor. 12:1–4—**paradise** by parallelism is the Third Heaven. Note “paradise” for Israel is Abraham’s Bosom in the upper part of Hades: compare Luke 16:19–31, Rev. 6:9–11 with Luke 23:43. The notion of the Third Heaven is implicit in Ps. 68:33, I Kings 8:27, II Chron. 2:6; 6:18
- (2) The form of the Ancient of Days appears to be the Third Heaven for the following reasons:
 - (a) Christ is in the Third Heaven ((1) above), yet not even the angels knew the Mystery being given to Paul (I Cor. 2:6–10). So the Third Heaven would seem to encompass nothing of the created heavens and be beyond all of the angelic realm.
 - (b) If the Third Heaven is uncreated, then it is part of God Himself. But since it is visible to creatures, e.g. Christ in His humanity and Paul, then it must be that Person of the Godhead Who is visible. As established in [BCG], this Person must be the Son Who manifests Himself as the Ancient of Days (Prov. 8:22–31, John 1:1–3, 14, 18; 5:22, 27, 37; 6:46; 14:9, Col. 1:15–17, Rev. 1:13–18, etc).
 - (c) If the Third Heaven be what is beyond the angelic realm, then it is obviously the form of the Ancient of Days (Ex. 24:10, Is. 6:1–8, Ezek. 1, 10, Dan. 7:9–13–22, Rev. 4, 5); it is He Who is enwrapped by the Cherubim as His inner tallith. Recall that the Throne itself, contrary to [DS7], is made up of angelic beings—the canopy of seraphim, the sides of zoa, and the base/wheels of ophanim (see [BCG] or our notes on the angelic hierarchy), and so is the highest portion of the angelic or second heaven.
 - (d) Body is the joint-citizenship of the Holiest Place (Eph. 2:19 [Greek]; 1:18, Col. 1:12)—the reading if we take *ἁγιων* as the plural neuter, which seems to be the Ancient of Days; and the Body is the joint-citizenship of the Holiest One—the reading if we take *ἁγιων* as the masculine plural of majesty, which would again be the Ancient of Days.
 - (e) Note neither the form of the Ancient of Days nor the Third Heaven contains all of God’s Infinite Essence (Ps. 68:33, I Kings 8:27, II Chron. 2:6; 6:18, cf. Col. 2:9).
- (3) Thus Christ and His Body “inhabit” the Ancient of Days, the personal manifestation of the Logos on the Throne of the Father.
- (4) This explains many passages “avoided” by some:
 - (a) The Body is jointly-seated with Christ (*ergo* on the Throne of the Father) (Eph. 1:20–1; 2:6, Phil. 3:20 [Greek text], II Tim. 2:12).
 - (b) The Body jointly-ascends with Christ to the Throne (I Thess. 4:16–17, Eph. 2:6).
 - (c) The Body is jointly-glorified with Christ (Rom. 8:17, II Cor. 3:18; 4:4, Col. 3:4, II Thess. 2:14).
 - (d) The Body is the fulness of the glory of Christ (Eph. 1:23; 2:22; 4:13, Phil. 3:20–21, Col. 2:10).
 - (e) The Body is heirs of God, joint-heirs of Christ (Rom. 8:17), yet the inheritance of the Father (Eph. 2:19; 1:18, Eph. 4:4–6 (Body paralleled with Father)).

§§3.2. Body’s Position over Angels. See I Cor. 6:2–3, Gal. 1:8–9, Eph. 1:20–21; 2:6; 3:10, Phil. 3:20–21, Col. 3:1, I Thess. 4:16–17. See [DS7] for arguments and more passages.

§§3.3. Angels over Israel. Hundreds of passages attest to this; e.g. Gal. 3:19 / Acts 7:53, Ps. 138:1–2, Dan. 10:16–19; 12:8, Zech. 1:9; 4:4, 13, Matt. 28:5–8, Luke 1:19–20, Acts 1:10–11; 5:19–21; 10:4; 12:7–10, Heb. 2:2, Rev. 1:1; 7:14; 21:12. See [DS7] for more passages and arguments.

§§3.4. Israel over Gentiles. See Is. 14:1–4; 60–61, Amos. 9:12; Matt. 15:21–28, Rev. 2:26, and [DS7] for more passages and arguments.

§§3.5. Gentiles over Natural Order. See Gen. 1:28; 9:7, Rev. 21:24 and [DS7] for more passages and arguments.

THE PLACE OF PAUL'S GOSPEL IN GOD'S ELECTING DECREES

§4. Place of Body and Paul's Epistles in Order of Revelation—Last of All—and Glorification—First of All. The Biblical principle of “the first shall be last and the last shall be first” (cf. Matt. 19:30, Mark 10:31) seems to describe God's dealings with His Redemptive Elects—the Body is ordained **first**, revealed historically **last**, and glorified **first**.

§§4.1. First Declared in God's Mind Before the Kosmos.

- (1) Logical consequence of §2 and §3 above.
- (2) God declared Paul's gospel first to Himself before anything else: Tit. 1:1–3.
 - (a) *πρὸ χρόνων αἰωνίων*—**before ages of times**, i.e. before the eternalities of eternalities.
 - (b) *επηγγειλατο*—middle voice: either God Himself declared it (“intensified” indicative in force) or God declared it to Himself (true reflexive). Context forces the latter:
 - (i) Before the eternal ages, there was no one else to say it to.
 - (ii) It was kept secret until Paul's apostolic ministry.
 - (c) Note in Verse 3 the verbs **enfaithed** and **super-command**.
- (3) God decreed Paul's gospel before He decreed the universe: I Cor. 2:7—**pre-determined before the kosmos**.
- (4) God pre-determined the Mystery **within Himself before the foundation of the kosmos**: Eph. 1:4–9.

§§4.2. Hidden within God during Human History. The declaration within God and hiding within God of the Pauline gospel explains why it is designated the Mystery so often in Paul, and that it was kept secret the longest—it was decreed first and revealed last—explains why it is called the **Great Mystery** (Eph. 5:32, I Tim. 3:16).

- (1) Hidden within the Godhead:
 - (a) Hidden within God (Eph. 3:9).
 - (b) Hidden within Christ (Col. 2:2–3).
- (2) Hidden during all human history until revealed to Paul and Body:
 - (a) **absolutely-not known to other generations** (Eph. 3:5, indicative Greek negative);
 - (a) **from the ages** (Eph. 3:9);
 - (a) **from the ages and from the generations** (Col. 1:26).
- (3) The wisdom of the Mystery was hidden:
 - (a) from the angelic princes (I Cor. 2:7);
 - (b) from the angels (Gal. 1:11–12);
 - (c) from the angelic hierarchy (Eph. 3:10).

§§4.3. Revealed to Pauline Apostleship at the end of Revelatory History.

- (1) **The Mystery of the Silent Eternal Ages** is Paul's gospel (Rom. 16:25).
- (2) The hidden wisdom of I Cor 2:7 is now the revealed wisdom of Eph. 1:9,17 (hendiadys).
- (3) Mystery revealed to Paul and his apostleship (see Session IV of the Bootcamp on the Pauline Apostleship):
 - (a) Eph. 3:3–5—**His truly prophetic apostleship** (hendiadys) must be different from the Kingdom apostleship (i.e. the Twelve plus their extensions) by Gal. 1:2–7, to wit, the Mystery concerning the Body of Christ was revealed to Peter and the Kingdom apostleship *εν Παύλω*, while the Mystery was revealed to Paul and the apostleship *εν πνεύματι*, unless the Holy Spirit is inefficient, which He is not.
 - (b) Through Paul and his apostles, the whole Body has the Mystery revealed (Col. 1:26–7).
- (4) The revealing, confirming, and completion of the Mystery was the reason for the charismata in the Body and the reason for the ceasing of the charismata: I Cor. 1:7; 13; 14:37.

THE PLACE OF PAUL'S GOSPEL IN GOD'S ELECTING DECREES

§§4.4. Glorified First of All. The Body entering into its hope sets in motion the purification of the angelic realm and the restoration of Israel's kingdom and the Righteous of the Nations. This is an immediate consequence of the dispensational overstructure of Scripture. But we also have:

- (1) I Thess. 4:14–16; 5:1–5 / II Thess. 2:5–7–15. Israel's Last Generation initiates with the ascension of the Body of Christ.
- (2) Rom. 8:16–23.
- (2) Rom. 11:25. When the full number of the Body is saved, then blindness is lifted from Israel, i.e. her Last Generation begins.
- (3) I Tim. 3:16. This order cannot be true of Christ personally, but it is true of Christ and the Body corporately. No other program has these characteristics. Note that there is no hint of a delay between the period of Body members believing and the time they are received up onto glory—and the Mystery is complete (cf. I Cor. 13, Eph. 1:9; 5:32, Col. 1:25).

THE PLACE OF PAUL'S GOSPEL IN GOD'S ELECTING DECREES

§5. Appendix: Correlation of Body's "Pre"-Vocabulary in Romans and Ephesians

Here is an attempt to correlate the pre-vocabulary concerning the Body of Christ occurring in Romans and Ephesians, with verbs directly opposite each other being viewed as synonymous and having the same logical place in God's thinking. Those verbs not written explicitly in the Greek with a prefix "pre" (πρo), but where the context requires it—e.g. logically sequenced between or placed logically prior to explicit "pre" words, aorist tense for actions viewed as logically consequent to explicit "pre" words and still future in fulfillment, verbs which are paralleled with explicit "pre" verbs, etc.—are written with "(pre-)". Further, a "pre-" word in brackets "[]" in one column means that its placement there is inferred by its occurrence in the other column. And in either column a reference without a book is assumed to be in the book heading that column. Finally, we occasionally augment the Ephesians column from Galatians*. The following chart, with modifications, is taken from the Romans 8 notes.

Body "Pre"-Vocabulary in Romans

- (1) **Pre-known** as the **pre-placed** Body (8:29–30), while Israel is only spoken of as known (Matt. 7:21–23, John 10:14–27) or as pre-known in accordance with the Hebrew prophets to be an ethnically distinct nation (Rom. 11:2). In context, this is key to the final redemption of the whole created order (8:19–21). **Pre-knowing** is always dispensationally specific with the context of the particular usage making perfectly clear which redemptive elect household is intended as **pre-known**.
- (2) **[(Pre-)loved]**, inferred consequence of being **pre-known** as the Body. See opposite column and compare with 8:37,39
- (3) **Pre-marked** to be the jointly-formed image of the Son (8:29); cf. Phil. 3:20–21 (Greek text), which includes being mature sons and joint-heirs with Christ (8:15,17,19) as a consequence of being **pre-known** [and then **pre-loved**] as Body. This includes:
 - (a) **Pre-(circumcision)fathered** by Abraham (4:1), in contrast with Elect Israel being fathered by Abraham (Matt. 3:9, Luke 1:73; 3:8; 16:24,30, John 8:39, 53,56, Acts 7:2, James 2:21, etc).
 - (b) **(Pre-)travailed/birthed** (8:22–23), even as Christ is **(pre-)travailed/ birthed** (Prov. 8:23–30 (25), Is. 66:7, Rev. 12:2,5), in contrast to Elect Israel being travailed (Is. 54:1–5; 66:6–13, Matt. 24:8 (Greek), Mark 13:8, Rev. 12:1–5).

Body "Pre"-Vocabulary in Ephesians*

- (1) Two equivalent verbs here:
 - (a) **(Pre-)chosen** before the foundation of the kosmos (1:4), same as Christ (Prov. 8:22–31, John 17:5,24, 1 Pet. 1:20), and prior to Elect Israel (Heb. 4:3; 9:26, Rev. 13:8; 17:8), Israel's Scriptures and Law (Matt. 13:35–36; 24:31, Luke 1:70; 11:50, Acts 3:21), and her Elect Gentiles (Matt. 25:34, Amos 9:9–12, Luke 11:50).
 - (b) **(Pre-)willed** by the Father according to the secret will (cf. 1 Cor. 2:6–8) according to his good pleasure which He **pre-places** within Himself concerning the dispensation of the fullness of the times (1:9–10), in which He **pre-marks** us to be His personal inheritance (1:11).
- (2) **(Pre-)loved** as the Body of Christ in the Third Heaven (1:3–5) within the Beloved One (1:6) as the logical antecedent to being **pre-marked**, even as Christ is **(pre-)loved** before the foundation of the cosmos (Prov. 8:23–30, John 17:24).
- (3) **Pre-marked** to be the Father's personal, mature sonship through Christ, and hence to be Christ's personal fullness as a consequence of being **(pre-)loved** (1:5), **(pre-)willed** and **pre-marked** (1:9,11). This includes (from Galatians):
 - (a) **Pre-seen** to be mature-sons of Abraham, i.e. the **(pre-)mature-sons** of Abraham (Gal. 3:8), in contrast to Israel being sons of Abraham (Matt. 3:9, John 8:33, etc).
 - (b) **Pre-confirmed/established** to be heirs (cf. mature sons) according to the covenant made by the Father to Christ (Gal. 3:17), literally the **having been pre-confirmed** covenant in which there is neither Jew nor Gentile (Gal. 3:28). Hence, Body of Christ is **(pre-)seed** of Abraham and **(pre-)heirs** according to promise of Paul's gospel (Gal. 3:29).

THE PLACE OF PAUL'S GOSPEL IN GOD'S ELECTING DECREES

- (4) **(Pre-)called** according to the Body's **pre-placement** (8:30) in consequence of being **pre-marked**.
- (4) **(Pre-)lotted**, i.e. **(pre-)called**, to be the Father's personal inheritance as a consequence of being **pre-marked** (1:11).
- (5) **(Pre-)justified/declared** in consequence of being **pre-placed** (8:30), in which case:
- (a) **(pre-)propitiated**, literally Christ is **pre-placed** as our propitiation (3:25); and
- (b) **(pre-)passed** over in regard to (Greek text) the having **pre-occurred** sins (3:25).
- (5) **(Pre-)graced** (1:6), in which case:
- (a) **(pre-)redeemed** through His blood (1:7); and
- (b) **(pre-)forgiven** according to the riches—another Body distinctive word (He is rich toward Israel and the Gentiles, but RICHES toward the Body (cf. 2:7, etc))—of His grace.
- (6) **(Pre-)glorified** to be jointly-glorified with Christ (8:17–18,30) in the Third Heaven (II Cor. 12:1–4, Eph. 1:3; 2:6), even as Christ is **(pre-)glorified** before the foundation of the cosmos (John 17:5).
- (6) **Pre-hoped** within the Christ, literally **the having pre-hoped ones in the Christ** (1:12). The hope of the Body of Christ,—to be seated with Christ in the Third Heaven and govern the angelic hosts (I Cor. 6:3, Eph. 2:6, Phil. 3:20–21 (Greek text), Col. 1:12, etc)—is logically prior to the hopes of the holy angels, Israel, the Gentiles.

Open Question. Still lacking is a detailed check of "pre"-vocabulary of Galatians, as well as the other Pauline epistles besides Romans and Ephesians.

Open Question. Still lacking is a comparable, comprehensive analysis of the "joint"-vocabulary of the Pauline epistles.

Open Question. Still lacking, after the above two questions are finished, is a careful analysis of how the "pre"-vocabulary and the "joint"-vocabulary reinforce each other in the Pauline epistles in setting forth the fundamental distinctiveness of Paul's gospel and the Body of Christ. For example, it is clear that **jointly-glorified** in Rom. 8:17–18 reinforces **(pre-)glorified** in Rom. 8:30.