EXEGESIS AND EXPOSITION OF EPHESIANS 3:20

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Original Text of Ephesians 3:20

Ephesians 3:20 Τῷ δὲ δυναμένῳ ὑπὲρ πάντα ποιῆσαι ὑπερεκπερισσοῦ ὧν αἰτούμεθα ἢ νοοῦμεν κατὰ τὴν δύναμιν τὴν ἐνεργουμένην ἐν ἡμῖν. (NA28)

Paul's Doxology

Ephesians 3:20 Now to him who by the power that is working within us is able to do far beyond all that we ask or think. (NET)

This verse is composed of the following: (1) conjunction *de* (δέ), "**Now**" (2) articular dative masculine singular present middle participle conjugation of the verb *dunamai* (δύναμαι), "**to him who is able**" (3) preposition *hyper* (ὑπέρ), which is not translated (4) accusative neuter plural form of the adjective *pas* (πᾶς), "**all**" (5) aorist active infinitive conjugation of the verb *poieō* (ποιέω), "**to do**" (6) adverb of degree *hyperekperissou* (ὑπερεκπερισσοῦ), "**far beyond**" (7) genitive neuter plural form of the relative pronoun *hos* (ὅς), "**that**" (8) first person plural present middle indicative conjugation of the verb *aiteō* (αἰτέω), "**we ask**" (9) particle *ē* (ἤ), "**or**" (10) first person plural present middle indicative conjugation of the verb *noeō* (νοέω), "**think**" (11) preposition *kata* (κατά), "**by**" (12) articular accusative feminine singular form of the noun *dunamis* (δύναμις), "**power**" (13) accusative feminine singular form of the relative pronoun *hos* (ὅς), "**that**" (14) accusative feminine singular present middle participle conjugation of the verb *energeō* (ἐνεργέω), "**power he exercised**" (15) preposition *en* (ἐν), "**within**" (5) dative first person plural form of the personal pronoun *egō* (ἐγώ), "**us**."

The conjunction *de* (δέ) means "now" since it is functioning as a marker of transition. This indicates that it is marking a transition from Paul's second intercessory prayer to the Father on behalf of the recipients of this epistle in Ephesians 3:14-19 to the doxology portion of this prayer in Ephesians 3:20-21, which is on behalf of the Father.

The verb *dunamai* (δύναμαι) means, "to possess the capacity or power to do something." The referent of the masculine singular form of this verse is the Father because he is the nearest referent (v. 19) and because Christ is mentioned in verse 21.[1]"[2] In context, this verb speaks of the exercise of the Father's divine omnipotence on behalf of each one of the recipients of the Ephesian epistle, who we noted were Gentile church age believers residing in the Roman province of Asia.

[1] Best, 349.
[2] Hoehner, H. W. (2002). *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (p. 492). Baker Academic.

The verb is modified by the complementary infinitive clause *hyper panta poiēsai hyperekperissou hōn aitoumetha ē nooumen* (ὑπὲρ πάντα ποιῆσαι ὑπερεκπερισσοῦ ὧν αἰτούμεθα ἢ νοοῦμεν), "**to do far beyond all that we ask or think**," (NET) which is modified by the prepositional phrase *kata tēn dynamin tēn energoumenēn en hēmin* (κατὰ τὴν δύναμιν τὴν ἐνεργουμένην ἐν ἡμῖν), "**by the power that is working within us**." (NET) Therefore, this verb *dunamai* (δύναμαι) expresses the idea that the Father "possesses the capacity or power" to accomplish far beyond anything that the church age believer could ask the Father in prayer or imagine according to His power, which is working in their lives.

The participle conjugation of this verb is functioning as a substantive participle which is indicated by the articular construction of this word, which functions as a substantiver which means that the article converts this word into a substantive. Therefore, the article should be translated with a relative pronoun clause whose referent is of course, the Father.

The participle conjugation of this verb *dunamai* (δύναμαι) is in the dative case and functions as a dative of interest or advantage, which indicates that the dative substantive indicates the person who benefits from the verbal action. It expresses the idea that Paul's doxology or declaration of praise in Ephesians 3:21 is "for the benefit of" or "on behalf of" the Father who is able to accomplish far beyond anything that the church age believer could ask the Father in prayer or imagine, which corresponds to His power which is working in their lives.

The present tense of the verb *dunamai* (δύναμαι) is a gnomic present used to make a statement of a general, timeless fact. Therefore, it is expressing the idea that the Father "as eternal spiritual truth" is able to accomplish far beyond anything that they could ask Him in prayer or imagine, which corresponds to His power which is working in their lives.

The present tense of this verb is also a customary present signaling an ongoing state. Therefore, it is expressing the idea that the Father "exists in the state of" being able to accomplish far beyond anything that the church age believer could ask the Father in prayer or imagine, which corresponds to His power which is working in their lives.

The middle voice of the verb *dunamai* (δύναμαι) is an indirect middle, which indicates that the subject act for or sometimes by himself or herself or in his or her own interest. Therefore, it is expressing the idea that the Father "for His own benefit" is able to accomplish far beyond anything that the church age believer could ask Him in prayer or imagine, which corresponds to His power which is working in their lives.

The accusative neuter plural form of the adjective *pas* (πᾶς) means "anything" since the word not only pertains to a totality of kinds or sorts[3] but is also used in a distributive sense emphasizing no exceptions. In context, the referent of this word is used in relation of the church age believer presenting urgent prayers to the Father in prayer as indicated by Paul's use of the verb *aiteō* (αἰτέω). It is also used of the church age believer "imagining" the fulfillment of a seemingly impossible prayer request, which is indicated by Paul's use of the verb *noeō* (νοέω).

The adjective *pas* (πᾶς) is the object of the preposition *hyper* (ὑπέρ), which means "beyond" because it functions as a marker of degree which is beyond that of a compared scale of extent.[4] Therefore, the prepositional phrase *hyper panta* (ὑπὲρ πάντα), "**beyond all**" (NET) expresses the idea of the Father possessing the ability to accomplish "beyond anything" the church age believer could urgently request of Him in prayer or imagine.

At this point in the verse, we must address a textual problem because many witnesses contain the preposition ὑπέρ (א A B C I^{vid} Ψ 075 0150 0278 0285 6 33 81 104 256 263 365 424 436 459 1175 1241 1573 1739 1852 1881 1912 1962 2127 2200 2464 *Byz* [K L P] *Lect* it$^{ar, o}$ syr$^{p, h, pal}$ cop$^{sa, bo}$) while some omit the word (𝔓^{46} D F G *l* 593 it$^{b, d, f, g}$ vg). The former is the most difficult reading because of its redundancy and it has greater and superior external evidence.

Merkle writes "Although the prep. ὑπέρ is lacking in some mss. (𝔓^{46} D F G), because of its stronger external evidence (א A B C), as well as it being the more difficult rdg. due to the redundancy (ὑπερ εκπερισσοῦ), it should be included (Metzger 536)."[5]

William Larkin writes "There is wide support for the inclusion of ὑπέρ (א A B C Ψ 33 𝔪 *pm*), though some manuscripts (𝔓^{46} D F G *pc*), apparently in an attempt to eliminate the redundancy (Metzger 1994, 536), omit ὑπέρ, making πάντα the direct object of ποιῆσαι. The longer and more difficult reading is preferred."[6]

The verb *dunamai* (δύναμαι) is modified by the aorist active infinitive conjugation of the verb *poieō* (ποιέω), which means "to cause something to be accomplished, to cause something to be executed " because in this context it pertains to causing something to be carried out fully, to cause something to brought about by

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[3] Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). In *Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains* (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 588). United Bible Societies.
[4] Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). In *Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains* (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 687). United Bible Societies.
prep. preposition(al)
mss. manuscript(s)
rdg. (textual) reading(s)
Metzger B. M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft / New York: United Bible Societies, 1994; original ed. of 1971 based on UBS^{3})
[5] Merkle, B. L. (2016). *Ephesians* (A. J. Köstenberger & R. W. Yarbrough, Eds.; p. 109). B&H Academic.
pm a great many other manuscripts
pc a few other manuscripts
[6] Larkin, W. J. (2009). *Ephesians: A Handbook on the Greek Text* (p. 65). Baylor University Press.

effort, i.e., a result. The referent of this verb is of course the Father. In context, the word is related to blessing the church age believer because in context and in particular in Ephesians 3:14-19, Paul's Spirit inspired intercessory prayer for the recipients of this epistle is that the Father would bless them by means of the Spirit inspired contents of this epistle in knowing experientially the Lord Jesus Christ's love for each one of them. Therefore, this verb *poieō* (ποιέω) expresses that the Father is able "to accomplish" far beyond what the church age believer could ask the Father in prayer or imagine. In context, this would be the church age believer experiencing the blessing of knowing experientially the Lord Jesus Christ's love for them, which is infinitely beyond what they could ever ask the Father in prayer or even imagine.

The verb *poieō* (ποιέω) functions as complementary infinitive which means that it is completing the thought of the articular dative masculine singular present middle participle conjugation of the verb *dunamai* (δύναμαι). This is indicated by the fact that the former identifies what the Father is able to do on behalf of the church age believer.

The aorist tense of this verb *poieō* (ποιέω) is a consummative aorist, which is used to stress the cessation of an act or state. Here it is emphasizing the cessation of the act of the Father accomplishing far beyond anything that the church age believer could ever ask Him in prayer or imagine.

The active voice of the verb is a simple active voice which means that the Father as the subject performs the action of the verb. Therefore, it expresses the idea that the Father as the subject is able to perform the action of accomplishing far beyond anything that the church age believer could ever ask Him in prayer or imagine.

The verb *poieō* (ποιέω) is modified by the adverb of degree *hyperekperissou* (ὑπερεκπερισσοῦ), which means "far, infinitely, exceedingly" because it pertains to an extraordinary degree, involving a considerable excess over what would be expected.[7]

Therefore, this word *hyperekperissou* (ὑπερεκπερισσοῦ) expresses the idea that the Father is able to accomplish "infinitely beyond" what the church age believer could ever ask Him in prayer or imagine in the sense of being do this to an extraordinary degree for them and involving a considerable excess over what they could ever expect. In context, this again would be the church age believer experiencing the blessing of knowing experientially the Lord Jesus Christ's love for them, which is infinitely beyond what they could ever ask the Father in prayer or even imagine.

The genitive neuter plural form of the relative pronoun *hos* (ὅς) means "which, that" since it pertains to a relative reference to any entity, event, or state, either

[7] Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). In *Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains* (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 688). United Bible Societies.

occurring overtly in the immediate context or clearly implied in the discourse or setting.[8] In context, the referent of this word is a hypothetical prayer request which the church age believer presents to the Father in prayer since the word is used in relation to the verb *aiteō* (αἰτέω), "**we ask**," which refers to the church age believer presenting a prayer request to the Father for the benefit of themselves.

It functions as the genitive direct object of the first person plural present middle indicative conjugation of the verb *aiteō* (αἰτέω), "**we ask**," which means that it is receiving the action of this verb. This would indicate that this hypothetical prayer request offered up to the Father receives the action of being asked by the church age believer. The relative pronoun is in the genitive case because it has been attracted to the case of the unexpressed antecedent τούτων, which is a genitive of comparison with ὑπερεκπερισσοῦ.[9]

The verb *aiteō* (αἰτέω) means "to ask for" or "request" something with urgency, thus it speaks of an urgent request. The referent of first person plural form of this verb is Paul and the recipients of this epistle and every church age believer. Therefore, this verb expresses the idea of Paul and each one of the recipients of this epistle "urgently requesting from" the Father in prayer a blessing.

The present tense of the verb *aiteō* (αἰτέω) is a gnomic present, which can be used to make a statement of a general, timeless fact or to describe something that it is true any time. In context, the latter is in view. Therefore, the present tense of this verb expresses the idea that the Father is able to accomplish on behalf of the church age believer infinitely beyond what they "at any time" could ever ask Him in prayer.

The middle voice of this verb is an indirect middle, which takes place when the subject acts for and sometimes by himself or herself. Therefore, this expresses the idea that it is "for the benefit of" Paul and the recipients of this epistle that they present this hypothetical urgent prayer request to the Father in prayer.

The indicative mood of this verb is a potential indicative, which is used with verbs of obligation, wish or desire, followed by an infinitive. Therefore, the indicative mood of this verb expresses a hypothetical "desire" presented to the Father by the church age believer.

The particle *ē* (ἤ) means "or" since it functions as a particle of an alternative meaning it joins the first person plural present middle indicative conjugation of the verb *aiteō* (αἰτέω), "**we ask**" with the first person plural present middle indicative conjugation of the verb *noeō* (νοέω), "**think**." Therefore, it expresses the alternative between the church age believer urgently requesting in prayer a particular desire be fulfilled by the Father and that of the church age believer imagining this desire being fulfilled by the Father.

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[8] Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). In *Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains* (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 815). United Bible Societies.
[9] Merkle, B. L. (2016). *Ephesians* (A. J. Köstenberger & R. W. Yarbrough, Eds.; p. 109). B&H Academic.

The verb *noeō* (νοέω) means "to imagine" since the word pertains to a mental image of something that is not present or that is not the case. The referent of first person plural form of this verb is Paul and the recipients of this epistle. Therefore, this verb expresses the idea of Paul and each one of the recipients of this epistle "imagining" a particular desire being fulfilled by the Father.

The present tense of the verb *noeō* (νοέω) is also a gnomic present, which is used to describe something that it is true any time. Therefore, the present tense of this verb expresses the idea that the Father is able to accomplish on behalf of the church age believer infinitely beyond what they "at any time" could ever imagine.

The active voice of this verb is stative which indicates that the subject exists in the state indicated by the verb. Therefore, this verb expresses the idea of Paul and each one of the recipients of this epistle "existing in the state of" imagining a particular desire fulfilled by the Father.

The indicative mood of the verb is declarative meaning that it is presenting this assertion as a non-contingent or unqualified statement.

The articular accusative feminine singular form of the noun *dunamis* (δύναμις) means "power" and contains the Father's power or omnipotence. The articular construction of this word functions as a possessive personal pronoun whose referent is the Father and thus it expresses the idea that this power "belongs to" or is "the possession" of the Father. This word is the object of the preposition *kata* (κατά), which functions as a marker of correspondence. Therefore, this preposition marks the correspondence between the exercise of the Father's omnipotence in the lives of the church age believer and the Father's ability to accomplish infinitely far beyond what they could ever ask from Him in prayer or imagine.

The verb *energeō* (ἐνεργέω) is the verbal cognate of the noun *energeia* (ἐνέργεια) and pertains to putting one's capabilities into operation.[10] It pertains to doing something or performing some activity. The referent of the third person singular form of this verb is the Father's omnipotence. Therefore, this verb speaks of the exertion of the Father's His omnipotence or divine power in the life of the church age believer.

The dative first person plural form of the personal pronoun *egō* (ἐγώ) means "each and every one of us" because it not only emphasizes the recipients of this epistle as a corporate unit but is also used in a distributive sense emphasizing them as individuals expressing the Father's concern and love for each of them. This word is the object of the preposition *en* (ἐν), which means "within, in" since it functions as a marker of location, which means that it is marking each the lives of each one of the recipients of this epistle as the location in which the Father performs His activity by means of the exertion of His omnipotence.

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[10] Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., Bauer, W., & Gingrich, F. W. (2000). In *A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature* (3rd ed., p. 335). University of Chicago Press.

The participle conjugation of this verb *energeō* (ἐνεργέω) functions as a substantive participle which is indicated by the articular construction of this word, which functions as a substantiver which means that the article converts this word into a substantive. Therefore, the article should be translated with a relative pronoun clause whose referent is of course, the exercise of the Father's omnipotence on behalf of the church age believer.

The present tense of the verb is a gnomic present used to make a statement of a general, timeless fact expressing the idea that the Father "as eternal spiritual truth" is working in the lives of the recipients of this epistle by means of His omnipotence.

The present tense of this verb *energeō* (ἐνεργέω) is also a customary present signaling an ongoing state. Therefore, it is expressing the idea that the Father "exists in the state of" working in the lives of the recipients of this epistle by means of the exercise of His omnipotence.

The middle voice of the verb is an indirect middle, which indicates that the subject act for or sometimes by himself or herself or in his or her own interest. Therefore, it is expressing the idea that the Father "for His own benefit" is working in the lives of each one of the recipients of this epistle by means of the exercise of His omnipotence.

The participle conjugation of this verb *energeō* (ἐνεργέω) functions as an accusative of simple apposition, which means that it stands in apposition to the articular accusative feminine singular form of the noun *dunamis* (δύναμις). Therefore, the former is identifying the location in which the Father's omnipotence is working, namely in the lives of Paul and the recipients of this epistle.

Translation of Ephesians 3:20

Ephesians 3:20 Now, on behalf of the one who for His own glory possesses the ability to accomplish infinitely beyond anything that we at any time could urgently request for the benefit of ourselves or at any time could imagine corresponding to His power, which for His own glory is working within each one of us. (Author's translation)

Expanded translation of Ephesians 3:20

Ephesians 3:20 Now, on behalf of the one who for His own glory as an eternal spiritual truth, exists in the state of possessing the ability to accomplish infinitely beyond anything that we at any time could urgently request for the benefit of ourselves or at any time could imagine corresponding to His power, which for His own glory, as an eternal spiritual truth, exists in the state of being exerted within each one of us. (Author's translation)

Exposition of Ephesians 3:20

Ephesians 3:20-21 constitutes the closing of Paul's second intercessory in this epistle on behalf of the recipients of this epistle who were Gentile church age believers living in the various cities and towns in the Roman province of Asia. These verses contain a doxology, which is on behalf of God the Father.

Ernest Best writes "Doxologies normally appear towards the end of documents but they can come at important breaks in the argument (Rom 11:36; Gal 1:5; 1 Pet 4:11; 1 Clem 20:12; 38:4; 58:2); they also form a suitable ending to a hymn or prayer (Rom 11:33–6; 1 Tim 6:16)."[11]

The term "doxology" is from the Greek *doxologia* and is derived from the Greek noun *doxa*, "praise, glory, honor" and denotes a brief ascription of praise to members of the Trinity. It was used in both song and prayer. It was sung by angels to shepherds the night the Lord Jesus came into the world (Lk. 2:14).

The doxology was commonly employed in various parts of the New Testament epistles: (1) Salutation (Gal. 1:5). (2) Opening thanksgiving (2 Cor. 1:3f.; Eph. 1:3; 1 Pet. 1:3). (3) Final exhortations (1 Tim. 6:15f.; 1 Pet. 5:11; 2 Pet. 3:18). (4) Closing (Heb. 13:20f.; Jude 24f.).

The basic formula is the blessing formula "**Blessed be the Lord**" or "**Blessed be the God and Father**…" (Heb. Baruk; Greek: *eulogetos*; Gen. 24:27; Ex. 18:10; 1 Ch. 16:36; Lk. 1:68; 2 Cor. 1:3f.; Eph. 1:3; 1 P. 1:3), followed by a statement of the attributes motivating the utterance, primarily God's activities in the lives of His people. Variants are "**worthy is the Lamb**" (Greek: *axios*, Rev. 4:11; 5:9, 12) and "**Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty**" (Greek: *hagios*, Rev. 4:8).

Doxologies may begin with an imperative verb, challenging the hearers to "**ascribe to the Lord glory and strength**" or "**the glory of His Person**" (Heb: *yahab*, Ps. 29:1ff. par. 96:7-9; 1 Ch. 16:28f.) or "**ascribe power**" (Ps. 68:34), "**praise the Lord**" (Heb: *halal*, Ps. 150f; cf. Greek: *aineo*, Rev. 19:5, "worship the Lord" (hithpalel of *saha*; Ps. 29:2) or "**glory in His Holy Person**" (hithpael of *halal*; 1 Ch. 16:10).

In doxologies, the following qualities are attributed to God: (1) Glory (Rom. 16:27; Gal. 1:5). (2) Honor, dominion (1 Tim. 6:16; 1 Pet. 4:11). (3) Salvation, power (Rev. 19:1). (4) Majesty and authority (Jude 25). These are all "**forever**" (Rm. 11:36), or "**forever**" and "**ever**" (2 Tim. 4:18; 1 Pet. 5:11).

In the New Testament, doxologies may begin with exclamations of "**Hallelujah**" (Rev. 19:1), "**Glory to God in the highest**" (Lk. 2:14), or "**Hosanna to the Son of David**" (Mt. 21:9, 15; Mk. 11:9f.; Jn. 12:13).

[11] Best, E. (1998). *A critical and exegetical commentary on Ephesians* (p. 349). T&T Clark International.

Although God the Father is the primary focus of New Testament doxologies, there are others that are the objects of praise such as Christ (Mt. 21:9; Rev. 5:12) and His kingdom (Mk. 11:10). A frequent Christological doxology exclaims "**Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord**" (Mt. 21:9; 23:39; Mk. 11:9; Lk. 19:38; cf. Ps. 118:26).

In doxologies, to the Lord Jesus Christ is ascribed: (1) Salvation and power (Rev. 19:1). (2) Blessing and might (Rev. 5:18). (3) Glory (Heb. 13:21). (4) Dominion (Rev. 1:6). (5) "**Both now and to the day of eternity**" (2 Pet. 3:18).

Praise is offered up "**through Jesus Christ**" (Rom. 16:27; Heb. 13:21; Jude 25) or "**in Christ**" (Eph. 1:3; 3:21). Rarely are doxologies expressed in the second person, as "**Blessed are You**" and "**Yours**" is the greatness, power, glory, victory and majesty (1 Chron. 29:11).

Originally doxologies were voiced by the congregation at the conclusion of hymns and prayers (1 Chron. 16:36; Rom. 11:33-36), in connection with the response "**Amen**" (Mt. 6:13; Rev. 1:6; cf. Rom. 9:5; 16:27; 1 Pet. 4:11; 5:11). However, praise and thanksgiving do occur in the opening line of prayers (1 Chron. 29:10-13; Dan. 2:20-23; Lk. 1:67-69). As in Jewish ritual, they may have been uttered in response to the mention of God's name (cf. Rom. 1:25; 2 Cor. 11:31).

Frank Thielman writes "Paul brings the first major section of his letter to a close with a liturgical form that has often been called a doxology.[12] Doxologies are expressions of praise to God that speak of his glory, honor, or might. They appear in the OT as part of temple worship (1 Chron. 16:28–29; Pss. 29:1–2; 96:7) and also show up occasionally in the literature of Hellenistic Jewish piety (e.g., Pr. Man. 15 [Odes 12:15 LXX]; 4 Macc. 18:24). They became common in early Christian literature, where they tend to occur at the end of a section (e.g., 1 Pet. 4:11; 1 Clem. 20.12; 58.2; Mart. Pol. 21; 22) or near the end of a document (e.g., 1 Pet. 5:11; Heb. 13:21; 1 Clem. 64; Mart. Pol. 20.2). Paul frequently uses doxologies to conclude a section of a letter (Gal. 1:5; Phil. 4:20; Rom. 11:36; 1 Tim. 1:17; 2 Tim. 4:18). Once he places a doxology near the end of a letter (1 Tim. 6:16), and once, if Rom. 16:25–27 is genuine, at the very end (cf. Pr. Man. 15; 4 Macc. 18:24).

Hellenistic Jewish and Christian doxologies tend to follow a four-part pattern (Aune 1997: 44): (1) a reference to the one who receives the glory, (2) a reference to the glory itself, (3) a reference to the eternal duration of the glory, and (4) the term "amen." Paul's doxology in Eph. 3:20–21 has all four parts."[13]

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[12] On the doxology as a liturgical and literary form, see Delling 1962: 62–66; Deichgräber 1967: 25–40; and Aune 1997: 43–46.
Odes Odes following Psalms in LXX
Odes Odes following Psalms in LXX
LXX Septuagint (the Old Testament in Greek)
Mart. Pol. Martyrdom of Polycarp
Mart. Pol. Martyrdom of Polycarp

[13] Thielman, F. (2010). *Ephesians* (pp. 240–241). Baker Academic.

Now, in Ephesians 3:20-21, the apostle Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit is expressing his worship of the Father with this doxology.

There are four English words, "reverence," "respect," "awe," and "wonder," which express the concept of worshipping God.

Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary defines the noun "reverence": "A feeling or attitude of deep respect tinged with awe; veneration."

Therefore, paraphrasing this definition and applying it to the Father, we would say that Paul's response to the Father's ability to accomplish on behalf of himself and every church age believer far beyond that which they could urgently request from the Father in prayer or imagine, which corresponds to His power, which for His own glory is working within each one of us was to possess an attitude of deep respect and awe for Him.

Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary defines the noun "respect": "esteem for or a sense of the worth or excellence of a person, a personal quality or trait, or something considered as a manifestation of a personal quality or trait."

Thus, in Ephesians 3:20-21 Paul esteemed the excellence of the Father as manifested through His personal qualities or attributes of glory, majesty, sovereign power and authority.

Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary defines the noun "awe": "an overwhelming feeling of reverence, admiration, fear, etc. produced by that which is grand, sublime, extremely powerful or the like."

Thus, Paul possessed an overwhelming feeling of reverence, admiration for the Father.

Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary defines the noun "wonder": "to be filled with admiration, amazement or awe; marvel."

Paul was filled with admiration, amazement and awe in response to the character and nature of the Father.

Warren Wiersbe writes, "True wonder reaches right into your heart and mind and shakes you up. It not only has depth, it has value; it enriches your life. Wonder is not cheap amusement that brings a smile to your face. It is an encounter with reality, with God, which brings awe to your heart. You're overwhelmed with an emotion that is a mixture of gratitude, adoration, reverence, fear-and love. You're not looking for explanations; you're lost in the wonder of God."[14]

Therefore, paraphrasing this comment by Wiersbe on wonder we would say that the Father's ability to accomplish on behalf of Paul and every church age believer far beyond that which they could urgently request from the Father in prayer or imagine, which corresponds to His power, which for His own glory is working within each one of us was reached right into Paul's heart and shook him up and

[14] Real Worship, page 43, Baker Books

enrich his life. It overwhelmed him with an emotion that is a mixture of gratitude, adoration, reverence, fear and love for the Father. He wasn't looking for explanations but rather he was lost in the wonder of his heavenly Father. Therefore, Paul approached the Father to worship Him by manifesting an attitude of deep reverence, respect and awe for Him for who and what He is and what He has done for them through His one and only Son, Jesus Christ.

Psalm 68:35, "O God, You are awesome from Your sanctuary. The God of Israel Himself gives strength and power to the people. Blessed be God!" (NASB95)

Warren Wiersbe defines worship, "Worship is the believer's response of all that they are –mind, emotions, will and body-to what God is and says and does. This response has its mystical side in subjective experience and its practical side in objective obedience to God's revealed will. Worship is a loving response that's balanced by the fear of the Lord, and it is a deepening response as the believer comes to know God better."[15]

If we paraphrase Wiersbe's definition, we could say the following that in Ephesians 3:20-21, the apostle Paul responded in his mind, emotion, and body to the Father's ability to accomplish on behalf of himself and every church age believer far beyond that which they could urgently request from the Father in prayer or imagine, which corresponds to His power, which for His own glory is working within each one of them.

In relation to the Ephesian epistle, Paul responded in his mind, emotion and body to the Father's ability to accomplish on behalf of himself and every church age believer far beyond that which they could urgently request from the Father in prayer or imagine, which corresponds to His power, which for His own glory is working within each one of them.

Psalm 2:11, "Worship the LORD with reverence and rejoice with trembling." (NASB95)

Psalm 95:6, "Come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the LORD our Maker. 7 For He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hand." (NASB95)

Worship is the act of paying honor and reverence to Him and affection for Him and flows from love and where there is little love, there is little worship. It is the loving ascription of praise to the Father in gratitude and appreciation for who and what He is, both in Himself and in His ways and His plan of salvation, which He accomplished through the work of both His Son and the Holy Spirit. It is the bowing of the soul and spirit in deep humility and reverence before the Father.

[15] Real Worship, 26

Psalm 29:2, "Ascribe to the LORD the glory due to His name; Worship the LORD in holy array." (NASB95)

The church's destiny is to worship the Father, as revealed in Revelation 4-5.

Revelation 4:8, "And the four living creatures, each one of them having six wings, are full of eyes around and within; and day and night they do not cease to say, 'HOLY, HOLY, HOLY IS THE LORD GOD, THE ALMIGHTY, WHO WAS AND WHO IS AND WHO IS TO COME.' 9 And when the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, to Him who lives forever and ever, 10 the twenty-four elders will fall down before Him who sits on the throne, and will worship Him who lives forever and ever, and will cast their crowns before the throne, saying, 11 'Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created.'" (NASB95)

Revelation 5:11, "Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands, 12 saying with a loud voice, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing.' 13 And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying, to Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever. 14 And the four living creatures kept saying, 'Amen.' And the elders fell down and worshiped." (NASB95)

Now, Ephesians 3:20 is transitional, which means that it marks from Paul's second intercessory prayer to the Father on behalf of the recipients of this epistle in Ephesians 3:14-19 to the doxology portion of this prayer in Ephesians 3:20-21, which is on behalf of the Father. This doxology also concludes the first three chapters of the epistle and specifically, the "indicatives of the faith," which compose these chapters.

This doxology is also composed of three parts: (1) In verse 20, a description of the Father as the one who is addressed. (2) In verse 21a, a declaration of praise of the Father. (3) In verse 21b, the period of time in which the Father will be praised by the church and all the redeemed of history.

If you recall, in our introduction, we noted that the Ephesian epistle is divided into two main sections. Chapters 1-3 contains the "indicatives of the faith" while chapters 4-6 contain the "imperatives." Therefore, the latter presents the practical application of the former. The prologue or preface of the letter appears in Ephesians 1:3-14. There are also two magnificent intercessory prayers offered by Paul to the Father for the recipients of the epistle. The first appears in Ephesians 1:15-23 and serves as a hinge to chapters two and three. Its purpose is for the recipients of the

letter to gain understanding regarding the contents of the first two chapters. The second intercessory prayer for the recipients of the letter appears in Ephesians 3:14-21 and serves as a hinge to the final three chapters. It presents the practical application of the first three chapters.

Klyne Snodgrass writes "This doxology sums up the intent of the first half of the letter. We should praise God for his astounding work in Christ Jesus. Paul's point is not merely that God is able to do beyond what we expect. Rather, this power is already at work in us (cf. the similar language in Col. 1:29, which describes God's work in Paul's ministry). God does not fit the limitations of our expectations. The language is reminiscent of Isaiah 55:8–9: God's ways and thoughts are exceedingly beyond our ways and thoughts. God is at work and eager to work in us to achieve his purposes for salvation."[16]

Now, Ephesians 3:20 is composed of the verb *dunamai* (δύναμαι), which is modified the complementary infinitive clause *hyper panta poiēsai hyperekperissou hōn aitoumetha ē nooumen* (ὑπὲρ πάντα ποιῆσαι ὑπερεκπερισσοῦ ὧν αἰτούμεθα ἢ νοοῦμεν), "**to accomplish infinitely beyond anything that we at any time could urgently request for the benefit of ourselves or at any time could imagine**." This complementary infinitive clause is modified by the prepositional phrase *kata tēn dynamin tēn energoumenēn en hēmin* (κατὰ τὴν δύναμιν τὴν ἐνεργουμένην ἐν ἡμῖν), "**corresponding to His power, which for His own glory is working within each one of us**" **(Author's translation)**

Therefore, Ephesians 3:20 describes God the Father as one who for His own glory possesses the ability to accomplish infinitely beyond anything that the church age believer at any time could urgently request of the Father in prayer for the benefit of ourselves or at any time could imagine. Paul describes this ability of the Father as corresponding to His power, which for His own glory is working within each one of us.

Grant Osborne writes "This doxology also culminates 3:14–19, as it centers on God's power to accomplish miraculous things. The verb rendered 'is able' is *dynamai*, which often means simply 'can do' something but here carries the sense of 'has the power to' and celebrates God's mighty work in our lives (as in vv. 16, 18). The addition of 'his power that is at work' later in this verse shows this to be the key theme of the doxology. The meaning is not 'He can do whatever, if he wishes' but rather, 'Our omnipotent God has the power to do amazing things for us.' There is no limit to what Almighty God can accomplish. Paul can't find the words to describe all that God is doing for his people and can only add 'more than all we ask or imagine.' It is impossible for the human mind to think deeply enough to encompass the reality of all that God can do.

[16] Snodgrass, K. (1996). *Ephesians* (p. 183). Zondervan.

I have often said the following in discussions about heaven: 'Take all the biblical portraits, use your imagination to think about the greatest situation you can possibly imagine, then multiply it a million times; and that is still inadequate to describe how wonderful it will be.' That is what Paul is saying here. Human thought cannot comprehend the extent of God's power—the same mighty power that keeps us (1 Pet 1:5)."[17]

Jude 24-25 contains a doxology which is quite similar to Paul's here in Ephesians 3:20-21.

Jude 24 Now, the one who for His own glory is able to protect each and every one of you from faults as well as to cause each and every one of you to be without defects in the presence of His glory with great joy. 25 Namely, the one and only God who saved each and every one of us through Jesus Christ, our Lord possesses glory, majesty, sovereign power and authority before each and every age as well as during the present age and in addition throughout each and every one of the ages in the future. Amen. (Author's translation)

S. M. Baugh writes "Paul concludes his prayer (mixed as a prayer report) to the Father in vv. 14–19 with a brief doxological song in vv. 20–21, which also acts to cap off all of Eph 1–3, before he moves into material that is characterized by exhortations.[18] While it is not formulaic, the song of vv. 20–21 does fit patterns found elsewhere in both the OT and NT and helps us to understand what Paul has in mind with the 'psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs' (5:19–20) with which he wants the Ephesians to occupy themselves.[19]

To give glory to God is a general description of worship, thanksgiving, acknowledgement, or confession in the Bible (Luke 17:18; John 9:24; Rom 4:20; Rev 4:9; 11:13; 14:7; 16:9; 19:7).[20] To 'ascribe' or 'give' glory is found as an exhortation a few times in the OT as a call to worship and confession of the true God (1 Chr 16:28–29; Pss 29:1–2; 96:7–8). This last Psalms text is particularly interesting for its connections with Paul's ministry, seen more clearly in the LXX version:

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[17] Osborne, G. R. (2017). *Ephesians: Verse by Verse* (pp. 104–105). Lexham Press.
vv. verses
vv. verses

[18] Cf. Jerome H. Neyrey, *Give God the Glory: Ancient Prayer and Worship in Cultural Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007). For other literature on NT "hymns" and "songs" see the Introduction to 1:3–14 above and below on 5:19–20; cf. discussions and literature in Lincoln, 200, 216; Gnilka, 191–93.
vv. verses
OT Old Testament
NT New Testament

[19] See the introduction to this section above for observations on how this "song" does not fit the metrical requirements of Greek poetry and hymns even though it has some interesting metrical features.

[20] The Ephesian believers in their former lives before coming to faith engaged in private worship of various forms, including ones not found (legitimately) in biblical religion. For example, a marble altar was found in the main marketplace area of Ephesus with the following dedication: θεῷ ὑψίστῳ Ἀλέξανδρος Ἀττάλου εὐξ[άμενος ἀνέθηκεν] (*theō hypsistō Alexandros Attalou eux[amenos anethēken]*), "Alexander son of Attalos dedicated (this) to Zeus Hypsistos ["God Most High"] in fulfillment of a vow" (*IvE* 1234). It is at least possible that worship of θεὸς ὑψίστος (*theos hypsistos*) arose from Jewish influence; cf. A. Thomas Kraabel, "*Hypsistos* and the Synagogue at Sardis," *GRBS* 10 (1969): 81–93.
OT Old Testament
LXX Septuagint version(s)

ἀναγγείλατε ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ
ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς λαοῖς τὰ θαυμάσια αὐτοῦ …
ἐνέγκατε (Heb. יָהַב τῷ κυρίῳ αἱ πατριαὶ τῶν ἐθνῶν
ἐνέγκατε τῷ κυρίῳ δόξαν καὶ τιμήν
ἐνέγκατε τῷ κυρίῳ δόξαν ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ
ἄρατε θυσίας καὶ εἰσπορεύεσθε εἰς τὰς αὐλὰς αὐτοῦ

Announce his glory among the nations
his marvelous acts among all the peoples.…
Ascribe to the Lord, families of the nations,
ascribe to the Lord glory and honor,
ascribe to the Lord glory to his name,
bring sacrifices and enter into his courts (LXX Psa 95:3, 7–8 [96:3, 7–8]; my trans.).

Paul himself ascribes glory to God in Eph 3:20–21 on behalf of 'the families of the nations,' that is, the Gentiles who have now been brought near to the Lord's courts—as themselves made into components of a new temple—with their own bold and confident access into the divine presence (2:13, 18; 3:12).

That Eph 3:20–21 is a song appears in particular parallels in the book of Revelation, where the sung (or chanted) words are part of worship accompanied by the lyre and can be identified as an 'ascription hymn,' in which virtues—especially glory—are ascribed to God and to the Lamb (Rev 1:5–6; 5:13–14; 7:12; cf. Luke 2:13–14; Psa 66:2). Other examples of this format of ascription of glory, usually concluded with 'forever and ever' and the 'amen,' are found elsewhere in Paul and other NT authors (Rom 11:36; 16:25 [textually uncertain]; Gal 1:5; Phil 4:20; 1 Tim 1:17; 2 Tim 2:18; Heb 13:20–21; 1 Pet 4:11; 2 Pet 3:18; Jude 24–25; and the Revelation texts just cited)."[21]

Now, as we noted in our exegesis of Ephesians 3:20, the verb *dunamai* (δύναμαι) in this verse pertains to the Father's "capacity" or "ability" to exercise His divine omnipotence on behalf of each one of the recipients of the Ephesian epistle, who we noted were Gentile church age believers residing in the Roman province of Asia. Therefore, this verb *dunamai* (δύναμαι) expresses the idea that the Father "possesses the capacity or power" to accomplish far beyond what they could ask the Father in prayer or imagine corresponding to the power that is working within them.

LXX Septuagint version(s)
trans. translation
cf. *confer*, compare
NT New Testament
[21] Baugh, S. M. (2015). *Ephesians* (pp. 281–282). Lexham Press.

The participle conjugation of this verb *dunamai* (δύναμαι) functions as a dative of interest or advantage, which expresses the idea that Paul's doxology or declaration of praise in Ephesians 3:21 is "for the benefit of" or "on behalf of" the Father.

The present tense of the verb *dunamai* (δύναμαι) is a gnomic present, which expresses the idea that the Father "as eternal spiritual truth" is able to accomplish far beyond that which they could ask Him in prayer or imagine.

The middle voice of the verb *dunamai* (δύναμαι) is an indirect middle, which expresses the idea that the Father "for His own benefit" is able to accomplish far beyond what they could ask Him in prayer or imagine. In other words, the Father "for His own glory" is able to accomplish far beyond what they could ever ask Him in prayer or imagine.

The accusative neuter plural form of the adjective *pas* (πᾶς), "**anything**" pertains to a totality of kinds or sorts[22] but is also used in a distributive sense emphasizing no exceptions. In context, the referent of this word is used in relation of the church age believer presenting urgent prayers to the Father in prayer as indicated by Paul's use of the verb *aiteō* (αἰτέω). It is also used of the church age believer "imagining" the fulfillment of a seemingly impossible prayer request, which is indicated by Paul's use of the verb *noeō* (νοέω). Therefore, this adjective encompasses every minute thing the church age believer might ask or imagine."[23]

This word is the object of the preposition *hyper* (ὑπέρ), which means "beyond" because it functions as a marker of degree which is beyond that of a compared scale of extent.[24] Therefore, the prepositional phrase *hyper panta* (ὑπὲρ πάντα), "**beyond all**" (NET) expresses the idea of the Father possesses the ability to accomplish "beyond anything" the church age believer could urgently request of Him in prayer or imagine.

We noted that the verb *dunamai* (δύναμαι) is modified by the aorist active infinitive conjugation of the verb *poieō* (ποιέω), which in this context pertains "to causing something to be accomplished, to cause something to be executed" because in this context it pertains to causing something to be carried out fully, to cause something to brought about by effort, i.e., a result.

The referent of this verb is of course the Father and used in relation to blessing the church age believer. This is indicated by the fact that in Ephesians 3:14-19, Paul's Spirit inspired intercessory prayer for the recipients of this epistle is that the Father would bless them by means of the Spirit inspired contents of this epistle in knowing experientially the Lord Jesus Christ's love for each one of them.

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[22] Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). In *Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains* (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 588). United Bible Societies.
[23] Hoehner, H. W. (2002). *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (p. 492). Baker Academic.
[24] Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). In *Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains* (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 687). United Bible Societies.

The verb *poieō* (ποιέω) functions as complementary infinitive which means that it is completing the thought of the verb *dunamai* (δύναμαι), which indicates that the former dentifies what the Father is able to do on behalf of the church age believer.

Therefore, this verb *poieō* (ποιέω) expresses that the Father is able "to accomplish" far beyond what the church age believer could ask the Father in prayer or imagine. In context, this would be the church age believer experiencing the blessing of knowing experientially the Lord Jesus Christ's love for them, which is infinitely beyond what they could ever ask the Father in prayer or even imagine.

The verb *poieō* (ποιέω) is modified by the adverb of degree *hyperekperissou* (ὑπερεκπερισσοῦ), which means "far, infinitely, exceedingly" because it pertains to an extraordinary degree, involving a considerable excess over what would be expected.[25]

Benjamin Merkle writes "Ὑπερεκπερισσοῦ, 'quite beyond all measure' (BDAG 1033a; cf. 1 Thess 3:10; 5:13). This is a rare form of the simple adj. περισσός with two prep. prefs. (ὑπέρ and ἐκ) which intensify the mng. (cf. ἐκ περισσῶς [Mark 14:31] and ὑπερ περισσῶς [Mark 7:37]). The double prefix communicates 'the highest form of comparison imaginable' (BDAG 1033a)."[26]

Harold Hoehner writes "The adverb ὑπερεκπερισσοῦ appears three times in the NT (Eph 3:20; 1 Thess 3:10; 5:13), it is the 'highest form of comparison imaginable'[27] and can be translated 'exceedingly, infinitely' or '"very far in excess of.'[28]"[29]

Therefore, this word *hyperekperissou* (ὑπερεκπερισσοῦ) expresses the idea that the Father is able to accomplish "infinitely" what the church age believer could ever ask Him in prayer or imagine in the sense of being do something to an extraordinary degree for them and involving a considerable excess over what they could ever expect. In context, this again would be the church age believer experiencing the

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[25] Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). In *Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains* (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 688). United Bible Societies.
BDAG *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, rev. and ed. F. W. Danker (Chicago/London: University of Chicago, 2000), based on W. Bauer's *Griechisch-deutsches Wörterbuch* (6th ed.) and on previous English ed. W. F. Arndt, F. W. Gingrich, and F. W. Danker
a Upper half of the left-hand column
cf. is used to direct the reader to: (1) a similar or relevant biblical passage, or (2) a view similar to but not identical with the view just expressed, or (3) a general treatment of the point under consideration in one or more of the grammars, commentaries, or dictionaries.
adj. adjective, adjectival(ly)
prep. preposition(al)
mng. meaning
cf. is used to direct the reader to: (1) a similar or relevant biblical passage, or (2) a view similar to but not identical with the view just expressed, or (3) a general treatment of the point under consideration in one or more of the grammars, commentaries, or dictionaries.
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a Upper half of the left-hand column
[26] Merkle, B. L. (2016). *Ephesians* (A. J. Köstenberger & R. W. Yarbrough, Eds.; p. 109). B&H Academic.
[27] BAGD 840; BDAG 1033; cf. BDF §185 (1).
[28] Moule, *Idiom Book*, 86.
[29] Hoehner, H. W. (2002). *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (p. 493). Baker Academic.

blessing of knowing experientially the Lord Jesus Christ's love for them, which is infinitely beyond what they could ever ask the Father in prayer or even imagine.

Grant Osborne writes "The term behind immeasurably more (*hyperekperissou*) is a rare compound with two prepositional prefixes (*hyper,* "above," and *ek*, "out of"). These prepositions have perfective force, meaning a superlative emphasis ("the most possible"). This force gives this word the sense of exceedingly beyond the greatest abundance,' or, as several have translated, infinitely more than, beyond all measure. There is no task too great for God, yet we regularly underestimate what he can accomplish in our lives. The title of J. B. Phillips's classic work is true of all of us: *Your God Is Too Small*."[30]

Harold Hoehner writes "The adverb ὑπερεκπερισσοῦ appears three times in the NT (Eph 3:20; 1 Thess 3:10; 5:13), it is the 'highest form of comparison imaginable'[31] and can be translated 'exceedingly, infinitely' or 'very far in excess of.'[32] It would be natural to think that the relative pronoun ἅ would be used preceding αἰτούμεθα ἢ νοοῦμεν rather than the genitive plural ὧν, with πάντα as its antecedent, but its use may be due to an attraction to the genitive of comparison ὑπερεκπερισσοῦ.[33] A similar construction with αἰτέω is found in Matt 18:19. It could be literally translated 'to the one who is able to do beyond everything, very far in excess of that which we ask or think' (cf. word study in 3:4). In other words, his ability far surpasses not only what we verbalize in prayer but also beyond our wildest imaginations. Earlier, Paul had prayed that they would be strengthened with power through the Spirit (v. 16) and now Paul gives praise to God for that power. Paul continues by discussing the means by which believers can appropriate this power."[34]

The verb *aiteō* (αἰτέω) means "to ask for" or "request" something with urgency, thus it speaks of an urgent request. The referent of first person plural form of this verb is Paul and the recipients of this epistle and every church age believer. Therefore, this verb expresses the idea of Paul and each one of the recipients of this epistle "urgently requesting from" the Father in prayer a blessing.

The present tense of the verb *aiteō* (αἰτέω) is a gnomic present, which expresses the idea that the Father is able to accomplish on behalf of the church age believer infinitely beyond what they "at any time" could ever ask Him in prayer. The middle voice of this verb is an indirect middle, which expresses the idea that it is "for the benefit of" Paul and the recipients of this epistle that they present this hypothetical urgent prayer request to the Father in prayer. The indicative mood of this verb is a potential indicative, which expresses a hypothetical "desire" presented to the Father by the church age believer.

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[30] Osborne, G. R. (2017). *Ephesians: Verse by Verse* (p. 105). Lexham Press.
[31] BAGD 840; BDAG 1033; cf. BDF §185 (1).
[32] Moule, *Idiom Book*, 86.
[33] Robertson, *Grammar*, 647; BDF §185 (1); Moule, *Idiom Book*, 42.
[34] Hoehner, H. W. (2002). *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (p. 493). Baker Academic.

The particle *ē* (ἤ), "**or**" expresses the alternative between the church age believer urgently requesting in prayer a particular desire be fulfilled by the Father and that of the church age believer imagining this desire being fulfilled by the Father.

The verb *noeō* (νοέω) pertains to a mental image of something that is not present or that is not the case. The referent of first person plural form of this verb is Paul and the recipients of this epistle. Therefore, this verb expresses the idea of Paul and each one of the recipients of this epistle "imagining" a particular desire being fulfilled by the Father. The present tense of the verb *noeō* (νοέω) is also a gnomic present, which expresses the idea that the Father is able to accomplish on behalf of the church age believer infinitely beyond what they "at any time" could ever imagine.

The articular accusative feminine singular form of the noun *dunamis* (δύναμις) means "power" and contains the Father's power or omnipotence. It is the object of the preposition *kata* (κατά), which marks the correspondence between the exercise of the Father's omnipotence in the lives of the church age believer and the Father's ability to accomplish on behalf of each of them far beyond what they could ever ask from Him in prayer or imagine.

The dative first person plural form of the personal pronoun *egō* (ἐγώ) means "each and every one of us" because it not only emphasizes the recipients of this epistle as a corporate unit but is also used in a distributive sense emphasizing them as individuals expressing the Father's concern and love for each of them. This word is the object of the preposition *en* (ἐν), which marks each the lives of each one of the recipients of this epistle as the location in which the Father performs His activity by means of the exertion of His omnipotence.

The verb *energeō* (ἐνεργέω) speaks of the exertion of the Father's His omnipotence or divine power in the life of the church age believer. The present tense of the verb is a gnomic present, which expresses the idea that the Father "as eternal spiritual truth" is working in the lives of the recipients of this epistle by means of the exercise of His omnipotence. The middle voice of the verb is an indirect middle, which expresses the idea that the Father "for His own benefit" is working in the lives of each one of the recipients of this epistle by means of the exercise of His omnipotence.

Benjamin Merkle writes "After this bold prayer, one might perhaps wonder if Paul dared to ask too much. But Paul indicates clearly with this doxology that such a prayer is not impossible for God to answer. Even more stunning is that God uses his power to bless and aid his people. God works 'according to the power at work within us' (v. 20). This is the same power that raised Jesus from the dead and exalted him to the Father's right hand, above all other powers (1:20–21). Such a statement,

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v. verse

then, offers assurance to the readers that the blessings God has promised his people (1:3–14) will be fulfilled."[35]

John Stott writes "The infinite ability of God to work beyond our prayers, thoughts, and dreams is by the 'power that is at work within us,' within us individually (Christ dwelling in our hearts by faith) and within us as a people (who are the dwelling place of God by his Spirit). It is the power of the resurrection, the power that raised Christ from the dead, enthroned him in the heavenlies, and then raised and enthroned us there with him (1:19–21; 2:6). That is the power at work within Christians and the church."[36]

Peter O'Brien writes "In the earlier petition of chapter 1, God's effective power towards believers (1:19) was said to be nothing less than 'the operation of his mighty strength' exerted in the resurrection of Christ (1:20). Now that same power which raised Christ from the dead, enthroned him in the heavenlies, and then raised and enthroned us with him, is at work[37] *within us* to achieve infinitely more than we can ask or imagine. In the doxology Paul thus praises God for the bestowal of strength by his Spirit on his people and affirms that the full realization of God's gracious purposes for them and in them becomes possible.[38]"[39]

Divine omnipotence is one of the characteristics of the divine essence (Father: Mark 14:36 and Luke 1:37; Son: Col. 1:16-17; Heb. 1:3; Spirit: Rom. 15:13). God has limitless and infinite ability to do something (Gen. 18:14a; Ps. 147:5a; Isa. 40:26; Lk. 1:37). There is power in the Word of God (Ps. 33:6a; Heb. 1:3a; 4:12a; 11:3a; 2 Co. 6:7; Heb. 4:12; 2 Pet. 3:5).

The cross of Christ is the power of God, which delivers the believer from the sin nature, the cosmic system of Satan and Satan himself (1 Corinthians 1:18). The Gospel is the power of God for salvation (Romans 1:16).

All three members of the Trinity are omnipotent since they are co-equal, co-infinite and co-eternal: (1) God the Father is omnipotent (Eph. 1:17; 2 Pet. 1:2-3). (2) Holy Spirit is omnipotent (Acts 1:8; Rm. 15:13, 19; Eph. 3:16; 1 Th. 1:5). (3) God the Son is omnipotent (John 1:3, 101; 5:21; 1 Cor. 1:23-24; Phil. 3:21; Heb. 1:3; Rev. 1:8).

The life of the Lord Jesus Christ was a life of power (Luke 1:35; 4:36). He used the power of God the Holy Spirit to cast demons out of people (Matt. 12:28). The impeccable body of the humanity of Christ was conceived by the power of God the Holy Spirit (Matt. 1:20). The Lord was brought back from the dead by three

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[35] Merkle, B. L. (2018). Ephesians. In I. M. Duguid, J. M. Hamilton Jr., & J. Sklar (Eds.), *Ephesians–Philemon: Vol. XI* (p. 66). Crossway.
[36] Stott, J., & Le Peau, A. T. (2017). *Reading Ephesians with John Stott: 11 Weeks for Individuals or Groups* (p. 80). IVP Connect: An Imprint of InterVarsity Press.
[37] Although the verb ἐνεργουμένην ('at work') may be a middle voice here and in Col. 1:29, it is more probably a passive, implying that God is the subject of the action. In the context of Colossians the reference is to the almighty power which God works in Paul. Here in Ephesians God is powerfully at work in believers generally. Note the discussion in P. T. O'Brien, *Colossians, Philemon*, 91, and Arnold, 101, 201.
[38] Bruce, 331.
[39] O'Brien, P. T. (1999). *The letter to the Ephesians* (p. 267). W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.

categories of divine omnipotence: (1) Omnipotence of God the Father sent back our Lord's human spirit to the body in the grave (Acts 2:24; Rom. 6:4; Eph. 1:20; Col. 2:12; 1 Thess. 1:10; 1 Pet. 1:21). (2) Omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit sent back our Lord's human soul to the body in the grave (Rom. 1:4; 8:11; 1 Pet. 3:18). (3) Omnipotence of God the Son raised His physical body from the grave (John 6:39-40, 54; 10:17-18). The Lord Jesus Christ has the power to raise the dead (John 5:21; 6:40; 11:25). The same power that raised Jesus Christ from the dead will raise the believer from the dead (1 Corinthians 6:14). The same power that raised the humanity of Christ from the dead has been made available to every church age believer because of their union and identification with the Lord through the Baptism of the Spirit (1 Co. 6:14; Eph. 1:18-20). Thus because of the church age believer's union with Christ, he can have a lifestyle of power and wisdom (2 Ti. 1:7).

The church age believer is the beneficiary of three categories of divine omnipotence in positional sanctification: (1) The omnipotence of God the Father in eternity past as related to the divine decree, eternal inheritance, election and predestination (Rom. 9:22; Eph. 1:3-14; 2 Pet. 1:3). (2) The omnipotence of God the Son created the cosmos through His Word in order that the Father's eternal purpose through the divine decree, the eternal inheritance, election and predestination might be carried out in time (Heb. 1:3; 4:12) and also the omnipotence of God the Son in the form of the Word of God, i.e., the Gospel provided the means of salvation (Rm. 1:16). (3) The omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit places the believer in union with Christ at the moment of salvation, thus providing in time the principle of achieving that which the Father had purposed in eternity past (1 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:26-28).

The church age believer is the beneficiary of three categories of divine omnipotence in experiential sanctification: (1) The omnipotence of God the Father as related to the principles of election and predestination (Eph. 1:3-14). (2) The omnipotence of God the Son as related to the perpetuation and preservation of human history (Col. 1:17; Heb. 1:3) and the Word of God for the execution of the plan of God for the church age (1 Co. 1:18; 2 Co. 6:7; Heb. 4:12; 2 Pet. 3:5). (3) The omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit as related to the filling of the Spirit for the execution of the plan of God for the church age (Rm. 6:4-11; 15:13; 2 Co. 6:7; 12:9; Eph. 1:19; 3:20; Col. 1:11; 2 Pet. 1:3).

The church age believer is the beneficiary of three categories of divine omnipotence in perfective sanctification: (1) Omnipotence of God the Father in relation to the believer's human spirit being placed back in the resurrection body (Acts 2:24; Rom. 6:4; Eph. 1:20; Col. 2:12; 1 Thess. 1:10; 1 Pet. 1:21). (2) Omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit in relation to the believer's soul being placed back in the resurrection body (Rom. 8:11; 1 Pet. 3:18). (3) Omnipotence of God the Son in relation to the believer's resurrection body being created (John 5:21; 6:39-40, 54; 10:17-18; 11:25).

Church age believers have been given divine power and made partakers in the divine nature (2 Pet. 1:3-4). It is the power of God that works within believers who apply the Word of God (Eph. 3:20). Church age believers have been given divine omnipotence to execute the plan of God (Col. 1:11). They have been created a new spiritual species, i.e., Christ-nature at the moment of salvation so that you can use God's divine omnipotence (2 Cor. 5:17). The Christ-nature enables the believer to have a lifestyle of power which is patterned after that which the humanity of Christ demonstrated during His First Advent (2 Ti. 1:7). The same power that enabled the humanity of Christ to execute the Father's plan for the incarnation and that raised Him from the dead is available to every church age believer as a result of the Baptism of the Spirit.

The believer's sole ambition in life must be to become like Christ in His death in order to grow to spiritual maturity. In Philippians 3:10-11, Paul informs the Philippian church that his sole ambition in life was to become like Christ by experiencing identification with Christ in His death and resurrection.

Philippians 3:10 that I come to know Him experientially and the power from His resurrection and the participation in His sufferings by my becoming like Him with respect to His death. (Author's translation)

The order of thought in Philippians 3:10: (1) The believer must come to know Christ experientially in order to attain Christ-like character and as a result to be identified with Christ as expressed by *tou gnonai auton*, "**that I come to know Christ experientially**." (2) To come to know Christ experientially, the believer must come to know experientially the power made available to him from Christ's resurrection and session as expressed by the phrase *ten dunamin tes anastaseos autou*, "**the power from His resurrection**." (3) Then the believer must experience underserved suffering in order to experience the power made available to him from Christ's resurrection, as expressed by the phrase *koinonian pathematon autou*, "**the participation in His sufferings**." (4) The manner that must be adopted by the believer in order for him to know Christ experientially and the power from His resurrection and the participation in His sufferings is by becoming like Christ with reference to His unique voluntary substitutionary spiritual death and appropriating what Christ accomplished on the cross as expressed by the phrase *summorphizomenos to thanato autou*, "**by my becoming like Him with respect to His death**."

Philippians 3:11 If somehow (by becoming like Him with respect to His death), I may attain to the exit-resurrection, namely, the one out from the (spiritually) dead ones. (Author's translation)

"**That I come to know Him experientially**" refers to experiencing fellowship with Christ after conversion by being obedient to the Lord's command to self-sacrificially love his fellow believer as Christ self-sacrificially loved the believer.

The believer who experiences fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ is enabling God the Holy Spirit to reproduce in him the life and character of Christ (Galatians. 5:22-23).

"**The power from His resurrection**" refers to experiencing divine omnipotence by appropriating by faith the Spirit's revelation in the Word of God of the believer's identification with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection, which results in experiencing identification with Christ in His resurrection.

"**The participation in His sufferings by my becoming like Him with respect to His death**" refers to experiencing identification with Christ in His death by means of underserved suffering.

The enclitic particle of indefinite manner *pos*, "**somehow**" indicates Paul's uncertainty of what manner of undeserved suffering that the Lord will employ in his life to identify him with Christ experientially in His death in order that he may be identified with Christ experientially in His resurrection. It indicates an unspecified form of undeserved suffering that will identify Paul with Christ experientially in His death in order that he may attain the exit-resurrection life of Christ, or in other words, maximum identification with Christ experientially in His resurrection.

Undeserved suffering is the means that the Lord employs in the believer's life in order to identify the believer with Christ experientially in His death.

"**I may attain to the exit-resurrection, namely, the one out from the (spiritually) dead ones**" refers to experiencing identification with Christ in His resurrection, which is accomplished by applying the Word of life, which enables the Spirit of life to reproduce the character and life of Christ in the believer.

Identification with Christ in His resurrection experientially is appropriating and experiencing the eternal life that was imputed to the believer at the moment of salvation through regeneration. Resurrection life is eternal life or the life of God.

The phrase "**namely, the one out from the dead ones**" refers to two categories of spiritual death: (1) Real spiritual death: unregenerate people (2) Temporal spiritual death: regenerate people who our consistently out of fellowship with God.

Arno Gaebelein writes "One feels like dropping the pen and leave untouched this wonderful outburst of praise given by the Holy Spirit. How blessed are these final words of the three greatest chapters of the Bible! And they are so fitting for the end of the description of God's Masterpiece. He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think. Often these words have been misapplied. Some one prays for help in earthly things and pleads this promise. Accordingly the suppliant may expect a great deal more than he asked for. But his prayer for increase in temporal things remains unanswered. We have a perfect right to make all our wants known before Him. He is interested in the smallest things in our life. We can come with all our earthly need to the throne of Grace and we shall never come in vain. The words in this doxology, however, have nothing to do with earthly needs and blessing.

We are blessed in Christ with every spiritual blessing. It is for us to claim all these wonderful blessings which belong to us because we belong to Christ. Let us open our mouth wide! Ask for spiritual blessing, for the knowledge of that love which passeth knowledge; pray to be strengthened by the might of His Spirit in the inner man; pray for being filled unto all the fullness of God, yea, ask much and He will do exceeding abundantly above all that we asked. Exhaust all imagination in thinking on the glory of Christ and your glory in Him. Think of the highest, the best, the most glorious in connection with Christ and our union with Him, as well as our inheritance. And after we have come to the end of all our thinking and expectation, He will do exceeding above all we think. Glory to His Name!"[40]

Grant Osborne writes "The basis of God's omnipotent action is 'his power that is at work within us.' There are two terms for God's strength here, and together they could be translated 'his power that works powerfully.' The verb is *energeō*, and the English equivalent is apt: 'the God who is the true "energizer."' This mighty work was displayed in his raising Jesus from the dead (1:19–20), empowering the church's mission to the world, proclaiming the reconciling work of Jesus (2:16), and uniting hostile peoples so as to produce a new humanity never before thought possible (vv. 13–15). This same world-changing power is now at work within us."[41]

Klyne Snodgrass writes "*Your God Is Too Small*. This was the title of a book written years ago by J. B. Phillips, a book that still merits attention.[42] That title could have been drawn from Ephesians 3:20. Surely this is the real problem behind the failure of Christians to understand and live their faith. The problem is *theo*logical; our image of God—the idol in our minds—does not merit contemplation, devotion, or obedience. Our God is too remote, disinterested, and inept. In fact, he is too much like us (cf. Ps. 50:21). We neither expect anything from him—unless it is a handout—nor are we engaged with him.

Our view of God can never include all that he is, and his ways and thoughts will always be far above us. But the God of the Bible is not too small. Here is the God we need for life. Our contemplation and learning always have one goal, that of the *Shema*—to love the Lord our God with all our heart, our soul, and our strength (Deut. 6:4–5). The goal is not knowledge about God, but knowledge of God, the experiential knowledge that leads to love for God. Such experiential knowledge changes behavior.

This is one reason why Ephesians is so *theo*centric. Paul wants his readers to know how great God is, how magnanimous and loving his acts are, how powerful he is, and what he has accomplished through Christ. If people understand how

[40] Gaebelein, A. C. (1913). *God's masterpiece: An Analytical Exposition of Ephesians 1–3* (pp. 143–144). "Our Hope" Publication Office.
[41] Osborne, G. R. (2017). *Ephesians: Verse by Verse* (pp. 105–106). Lexham Press.
[42] J. B. Phillips, *Your God Is Too Small* (New York: Macmillan, 1961).

mighty, loving, and active God is, then true worship and transformation of life follow."[43]

Ephesians 3:20 is not the first time that Paul has spoken of the omnipotence of God in this epistle. In fact, this is the not the first time he has referred to it in this second intercessory prayer because he refers to it in Ephesians 3:7 and 16. However, he first spoke of the Father's omnipotence in his first intercessory prayer on behalf of the recipients of this epistle, which is recorded in Ephesians 1:15-23.

Ephesians 1:15 For this reason, after I myself heard about the faith among each and every one of you in the one and only Lord Jesus as well as you are practicing divine-love, which is on behalf of each and every one of the saints, 16 I never permit myself to cease regularly expressing thanks to the one and only God because of each and every one of you. I do this while disciplining myself to make it my practice of remembering each and every one of you during my prayers. 17 I make it a habit of occupying myself with praying that God, that is, the glorious Father of the one and only Lord ruling over each and every one of us as a corporate unit, who is Jesus Christ, would cause each and every one of you to receive divine wisdom, specifically, divine revelatory wisdom provided by the one and only Spirit with respect to an experiential knowledge of Himself. 18 Namely, that the eyes of your heart are enlightened in order that each and every one of you would possess the conviction of what constitutes being the confident expectation of blessing produced by His effectual call, what constitutes His inheritance, which is characterized by glorious wealth, residing in the person of the saints. 19 Also, what constitutes being His incomparable, great power on behalf of each one of us who believe which is equivalent to the exertion of His sovereign, omnipotent power to overcome. (Author's translation)

Ephesians 1:19 continues Paul's thought from Ephesians 1:15-18. First of all, this is indicated by the fact that it contains a categorical or qualitative question which is in addition to the previous two recorded in Ephesians 1:18. Secondly, it presents the third intercessory prayer request, which Paul presented to the Father on behalf of the recipients of this epistle. Specifically, it presents the third purpose of Paul wanting the Father to cause them to receive divine revelatory wisdom provided by the Holy Spirit, which he describes as having the eyes of their heart enlightened by the Spirit.

As was the case when the word appeared twice in Ephesians 1:18, the nominative feminine singular form of the interrogative pronoun *tis* (τις), "**what constitutes**" here in Ephesians 1:19 introduces a categorical or qualitative question. Here it is expressing the idea of the recipients of the Ephesian epistle possessing the conviction regarding "what constitutes" the Father's incomparable, great power which He

[43] Snodgrass, K. (1996). *Ephesians* (pp. 190–191). Zondervan.

exercised on behalf of the church age believer, which is equivalent to the exertion of His sovereign, omnipotent power to overcome.

The referent of this interrogative pronoun is the exercise of the omnipotence of the Father through both the work of His Son and the Spirit. It was manifested through the crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session of His Son Jesus Christ. These events delivered all of sinful humanity from eternal condemnation, condemnation from the Law, enslavement to the sin nature, Satan and his cosmic system, spiritual and physical death and personal sins. This deliverance is appropriated by the sinner when they exercise faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior, which results in the Father declaring them justified. Simultaneously, at the moment of justification, the omnipotence of the Father was manifested at the church age believer's justification through the baptism when the Holy Spirit identified them with Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the Father's right hand. This identification provides the church age believer the necessary omnipotence to experience deliverance from the power of the sin nature as well as the power of Satan and his cosmic system. The omnipotence of the Father is manifested in the life of the church age believer who appropriates by faith their union and identification with Jesus Christ.

Therefore, the referent of the interrogative pronoun *tis* (τις), "**what constitutes**" here in Ephesians 1:19 is the Father's incomparable, great power, which was manifested on behalf of the church age believer through His Son's crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the Father's right hand. As we noted, Paul also describes this power as the Father's sovereign, omnipotent power to overcome. This omnipotence we also noted was also manifested at the moment of the church age believer's justification through the baptism of the Spirit, which identified them with the Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the Father's right hand.

Again, as we noted, this identification with Jesus Christ in these events in His life provides the church age believer the necessary omnipotence to experience deliverance from the power of the sin nature as well as the power of Satan and his cosmic system. In other words, these events in the Lord's life provide the church age believer the necessary power to overcome sin, Satan and his cosmic system. We also noted that the omnipotence of the Father is manifested in the life of the church age believer who appropriates by faith their union and identification with Jesus Christ. This post-justification enables the church age believer to overcome sin, Satan and his cosmic system.

We noted in our exegesis that the nominative neuter singular form of the noun *megethos* (μέγεθος), "**great**" describes the Father's omnipotence as preeminent and superior in relation to the power of His moral rational creatures, namely angels and human beings. Also, we noted that the articular nominative neuter singular present

active participle conjugation of the verb *hyperballō* (ὑπερβάλλω), "**incomparable**" describes the Father's omnipotence as eminent and beyond comparison.

The noun *dunamis* (δύναμις), "**power**" refers to the exercise of the Father's omnipotence. Specifically, it first refers to the omnipotence of God the Father which He exercised on behalf of the church age believer through the crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session of His Son Jesus Christ. Secondly, it refers to the Father's omnipotence, which He manifested through the work of the Holy Spirit on behalf of the church age believer at their justification when the Spirit identified the church age believer with Jesus Christ in these events in His life.

We also noted in our exegesis that the accusative first person plural form of the personal pronoun *ego* (ἐγώ). "**each and every one of us as a corporate unit**" since the word not only refers to Paul and the recipients of this epistle as a corporate unit but also the word is used in a distributive sense emphasizing no exceptions. This would indicate that the Father's omnipotence was manifested through both the work of His Son and His Spirit on behalf of "Paul" and "each and every one of" the recipients of this epistle. In other words, the Father's power was manifested on behalf of "each and every" church age believer without exception.

This word is the object of the preposition *eis* (εἰς), "**on behalf of**" since the word is functioning here as a marker of benefaction or marker of advantage. Therefore, this prepositional phrase is expressing the idea that the Father's incomparable, great power was manifested through both the work of His Son and His Spirit "on behalf of" each and every church age believer without exception. In other words, it was "for their benefit."

The articular accusative masculine plural present active participle conjugation of the verb *pisteuō* (πιστεύω), "**who believe**" refers to the church age believer as having been declared justified by the Father through faith in His one and only Son, Jesus Christ. This verb is expressing the idea of each and every church age believer believing in the content of the gospel at justification. Namely, they believe that Jesus Christ is both God and man and that He died and rosed from the dead on behalf of them in order to deliver them from eternal condemnation, person sin, enslavement to the sin, Satan and his cosmic system, spiritual and physical death and condemnation from the Law in the sense that they consider this as fact or true. Consequently, this word speaks of the Father's declaring the church age believer justified or other words, it speaks of their faith at their justification.

Now, in Ephesians 1:19, the noun *energeia* (ἐνέργεια), "**the exertion of**" refers to the Father's activity on behalf of the church age believer through both the work of His Son and His Spirit. Therefore, this word speaks of the "exertion of the Father's power" since it pertains to the exertion of the Father's omnipotence.

This word we noted is the object of the preposition *kata* (κατά), "**equivalent to**" which is functioning as a marker of correspondence indicating being in conformity

or agreement with something. In other words, it is marking the agreement of two things. Therefore, this prepositional phrase indicates that the Father's incomparable, great power was manifested on behalf of the church age believer through both the work of the Son and the Spirit is "in agreement with" the exertion of His immense strength. Thus, this preposition indicates that the Father's incomparable, great power which was manifested on behalf of the church age believer through both the work of the Son and the Spirit is "the equivalent of" or "identical to" the exertion of His immense strength.

They are one in the same. In other words, he is describing the Father's incomparable, great power as exerting His sovereign omnipotent power to overcome any enemy, with the implication from the contents of this epistle, that these enemies are the indwelling Adamic sin nature as well as Satan and his cosmic system.

The noun *kratos* (κράτος), "**sovereign power**" pertains to absolute, sovereign divine power that is exercised without any necessary conditioning by a finite will or wills or anyone or anything outside the exercise of this power. In other words, the Father's omnipotence is sovereign over the power of both human beings and angels.

The noun *ischys* (ἰσχύς), "**power to overcome**" refers to the attribute of divine omnipotence which belongs to the divine nature of the Father, which has overcome sin, Satan and his cosmic system. As we noted the Father's omnipotence was manifested through the crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session of His Son, Jesus Christ. It was also manifested through the work of the Spirit in identifying the church age believer with Jesus Christ in these events in His life, which provide the church age believer victory over sin, Satan and his cosmic system.

So therefore, Ephesians 1:19 is of course speaking about the Father's divine omnipotence which was manifested on behalf of the church age believer through both the work of the Son and the Spirit. This omnipotence is now available to the church age when they appropriate their union and identification with Jesus Christ. This verse describes the Father's omnipotence as being incomparable, great, absolute or sovereign, and able to overcome any enemy.

Now, thus far in our study of Paul's intercessory prayer on behalf of the recipients of the Ephesian epistle, we have noted that he wanted the Father to cause them to receive divine revelatory wisdom provided by the Holy Spirit with respect to an experiential knowledge of Himself (Eph. 1:17). He then describes this reception of this divine revelatory wisdom from the Holy Spirit as having the eyes of their heart enlightened (Eph. 1:18). He then follows this up by presenting the purpose for which he wants them to have the eyes of their heart enlightened (Eph. 1:18).

The first purpose is that they would possess the conviction of what constitutes being the confident expectation of blessing which was produced by the Father's effectual call (Eph. 1:18). This is a confident expectation of being in the presence of

the Lord at physical death as well as receiving a resurrection body at the rapture of the church and rewards for faithful service at the Bema Seat.

The second purpose is that they would possess the conviction of what constitutes the Father's glorious, rich inheritance residing in the persons of the saints. The Father's inheritance is the church age believer in the presence of the Lord at their physical death as well as receiving a resurrection body and in addition rewards for faithful service (Eph. 1:18).

Now, here in Ephesians 1:19, Paul presents the third purpose for which he wanted the Father to cause them to receive a divine revelatory wisdom produced by the Holy Spirit or in other words, the purpose for which he wanted the eyes of their heart to be enlightened. Namely, he wanted them to possess the conviction of what constitutes being the Father's incomparable, great power on their behalf which is equivalent to the Father's sovereign, omnipotent, sovereign power to overcome. This power resides the church age believer's union and identification with Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. This omnipotence is appropriated by the church age believer who appropriates by faith this union and identification with Jesus Christ, which in turn enables them to overcome sin, Satan and his cosmic system.

This power was first appropriated by the church age believer at their justification, which Paul refers to here in Ephesians 1:19 when he describes them as those "**who believe**." This faith at justification results in the Father viewing them as He does His Son, namely crucified, died, buried, raised and seated at His right hand. It results in the church age believer receiving the guarantee of being perfected in a resurrection body at the rapture of the church and rewards for faithful service at the Bema Seat. This justifying faith also sets up the potential for the church age believer to experience this power after their justification. This is accomplished when they appropriate by faith their union and identification with Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the Father's right hand. This post-justification faith involves the church age believer considering themselves as crucified, died, buried, raised and seated with Jesus Christ at the Father's right hand (cf. Rom. 6:1-14; Col. 3:1-7). Again, the appropriation of the Father's omnipotence will enable them to experience victory over the sin nature, Satan and his cosmic system.

In Paul's second intercessory on behalf of the recipients of this epistle, in Ephesians 3:7, he speaks of the omnipotence of the Father in relation to his stewardship, which involved serving the gospel.

Ephesians 3:1 For this reason, I myself, Paul, the prisoner owned by and under the authority of the one and only Christ who is Jesus for the benefit of each and every one of you as a corporate unit, who are Gentiles—2 if and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument that each and every one of you

as a corporate unit have surely heard about the stewardship, which is unique to the grace, which originates from the one and only God, which was given to me for the benefit of all of you as a corporate unit without exception. (Of course, every one of you have in fact heard about it.) 3 Namely that, the mystery was made known for the benefit of myself as revelation as I wrote beforehand in a concise manner. 4 Concerning which, that is, by each one of you making it your habit of hearing read publicly, all of you will for your own benefit become able to comprehend my insight into this incomparable mystery, which is produced by your unique union and identification with Christ. 5 This mystery was by no means made known to members of the human race in previous generations as it has now been revealed through the personal agency of His holy apostles as well as prophets by means of the omnipotence of the Spirit. 6 Namely, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs as well as fellow members of the body likewise fellow partakers of the promise because of justification by faith in and union and identification with Christ Jesus by means of the proclamation of the gospel. 7 I assumed the position and responsibility of serving this gospel according to the gift originating from the one and only God's grace, which was given to me according to the activity produced by the exercise of His power. (Author's translation)

Ephesians 3:7 concludes Paul's description of the content of the mystery, which began in Ephesians 3:1. It is composed of the relative pronoun clause *hou egenēthēn diakonos* (οὗ ἐγενήθην διάκονος), "**I assumed the position and responsibility of serving this gospel**" (Author's translation). It is modified by two prepositional phrases. The first is *kata tēn dōrean tēs charitos tou theou* (κατὰ τὴν δωρεὰν τῆς χάριτος τοῦ θεοῦ), "**according to the gift originating from the one and only God's grace, which was given to me**" (Author's translation). The second is *kata tēn energeian tēs dynameōs autou* (κατὰ τὴν ἐνέργειαν τῆς δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ), "**according to the activity produced by the exercise of His power**" (Author's translation).

Now, in this relative pronoun clause, we noted in our exegesis that the referent of the relative pronoun *hos* (ὅς) is the articular genitive neuter singular form of the noun *euangelion* (εὐαγγέλιον), "**the gospel**" which appears in Ephesians 3:6. As we noted in our study of Ephesians 3:6, the noun *euangelion* (εὐαγγέλιον) means "the proclamation of the gospel" since the word contains the figure of metonymy meaning that the gospel is put for the communication of the gospel message to the recipients of the Ephesian epistle when they were unregenerate sinners. This noun pertains to communicating the good news to the unbeliever that Christ died and rose from the dead for them and that through faith in Him they could receive the gift of eternal life and the forgiveness of sins and avoid experiencing the wrath of God.

Therefore, this is the referent and antecedent of the genitive neuter singular form of the relative pronoun *hos* (ὅς) here in Ephesians 3:7.

We also noted in our exegesis that the verb *ginomai* (γίνομαι) pertains to entering into a particular position with its accompanying responsibilities. In other words, the word pertains to assuming a particular position and responsibility. The referent of the first person singular form of this verb is of course the apostle Paul.

The noun *diakonos* (διάκονος) means "servant" and was used in a spiritual sense of the believer's function toward his fellow believer (Matthew 20:26; 23:11; Mark 9:35; 10:43; John 12:26). It is used of servants in the natural realm who wait on tables at the wedding in Cana (John 2:5, 9). In Galatians 2:17, it is used of Christ being a servant of sin in a rhetorical question that is emphatically negated by Paul. The word is used of Paul, Apollos, Tychicus, Epaphras and Timothy and describes their servanthood as pastors who communicate the Word of God to the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 3:5, 6; 2 Corinthians 3:5, 6; 6:4; 11:15, 23; Ephesians 3:7; 6:21; Colossians 1:7, 23, 25; 4:7; 1 Thessalonians 3:2; 1 Timothy 4:6). It is used to denote the office of deacon (Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:8, 12).

In Romans 13:4, the word *diakonos* (διάκονος) means "servant" and is used to describe the relationship between governmental authority and the Father. The noun means that governmental rulers whether they acknowledge it or not serve God's purpose on earth and therefore are accountable to God. Governmental authority is a servant of God the Father in that it promotes and encourages obedience to His will and discourages disobedience. The noun is used of the Lord Jesus Christ in Romans 15:8 and describes Him as a, "servant" which He manifested by fulfilling the Messianic promises and the promises made by God to the patriarchs of Israel and by redeeming Israel from the curse of the Law (Galatians 3:13; 4:4b-5a). In Romans 16:1, the noun *diakonos* (διάκονος) means "servant" and is used to describe Phoebe as one who serves both Paul and the Roman believers as an intermediary between the two in the sense that she is the courier of this epistle. The word does not denote the office of "deacon" since Paul's teaching in 1 Timothy 2:11-15 and 3:12 prohibit a woman holding this position of authority in the church. The noun *diakonos* (διάκονος) is ascribed to those who hold the office of deacon in 1 Timothy 3:8, 12 and Philippians 1:1.

In Colossians 1:7, the noun *diakonos* (διάκονος) means "servant" and is used to describe Epaphras service as a pastor who communicates the gospel of Jesus Christ and faithfully communicates Paul's apostolic teaching to the church at Colossae. It describes him as someone who serves Jesus Christ on behalf of His church. It is used in a spiritual sense of Epaphras' function toward the Lord Jesus Christ and the Christian community in Colossae. It is used to describe the relationship between Epaphras and the Lord Jesus Christ. This servanthood is manifested by Epaphras communicating to the Colossian Christian community Paul's apostolic teaching. The

word is used to describe Epaphras as one who serves both the Lord Jesus Christ and the Colossian believers by faithfully communicating the gospel which is Paul's apostolic teaching.

In Colossians 1:23, the noun *diakonos* (διάκονος) means "servant" and is used to describe Paul's service as an apostle who faithfully communicated the gospel of Jesus Christ. It describes him as someone who serves the gospel on behalf of Jesus Christ and His church. It is used in a spiritual sense of Paul's function as a communicator of the gospel. It is used to describe the relationship between Paul and the Lord Jesus Christ. This servanthood is manifested by Paul communicating to the non-Christian community and Christian community the gospel.

Now, as was the case in Colossians 1:23, the noun *diakonos* (διάκονος), "**a servant**" here in Ephesians 3:7 identifies the position and responsibility Paul assumed at justification. The latter is used to describe the apostle Paul as someone who serves the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is used to describe Paul's service as an apostle who faithfully communicated the gospel of Jesus Christ. It also describes him as someone who serves the gospel on behalf of Jesus Christ and His church. It is used in a spiritual sense of Paul's function as a communicator of the gospel to describe the relationship between Paul and the Lord Jesus Christ. This servanthood is manifested by Paul communicating to the non-Christian community and Christian community the gospel.

Therefore, this relative pronoun clause in Ephesians 3:7 expresses the idea that Paul entered into the state of assuming the position of being a servant of the gospel with its accompanying responsibilities. He entered into this position and responsibilities which are associated with it, the moment the Father imputed His Son's righteousness to Him when he exercised faith in His Son for eternal salvation and was declared justified by the Father. Simultaneously, this resulted in Paul receiving the gift of apostleship and the command to publicly proclaim the gospel to every creature on earth.

The passive voice of the verb *ginomai* (γίνομαι) indicates that Paul as the subject received the action of being entered into the position and responsibility of serving the gospel because of the gift of God's grace and the exercise of His omnipotence. This again took place at the moment of justification when Paul was not only declared justified by the Father through faith in His Son, Jesus Christ but he also simultaneously received the gift of apostleship. Therefore, this is another "divine-passive" employed by Paul in this epistle.

In Colossians 1:23, Paul employs this same term *diakonos* (διάκονος), "**a servant**," to describe himself in relation to the gospel.

Colossians 1:23 Of course, if and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument each one of you continues to persevere according to the standards of the Christian faith so that each one of you is established, and thus solid

individuals. In other words, so that each one of you is not moved away from the confident expectation (of blessing) produced by obedience to the gospel which each one of you has obeyed. This gospel was publicly proclaimed throughout all creation which is under the heavens, of which I myself, Paul became a servant. (Author's translation)

Now, as we noted, in Ephesians 3;7, the first prepositional phrase modifies this relative pronoun clause is *kata tēn dōrean tēs charitos tou theou* (κατὰ τὴν δωρεὰν τῆς χάριτος τοῦ θεοῦ), "**according to the gift originating from the one and only God's grace, which was given to me**" (Author's translation). It expresses the idea that Paul becoming a servant of the gospel at the moment of justification was "according to" or "corresponding to" or is "in agreement with" the gift, which originates from God the Father's grace policy towards justified sinners.

The noun *dōrea* (δωρεά), "**gift**" is used of the non-meritorious blessing that Paul received at the moment of justification, namely, the gift of apostleship which was given to Paul at the moment of justification by Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:4-11), who was authorized by the Lord Jesus Christ to do so (Eph. 4:7).

The articular construction of this noun is monadic which indicates that this particular gift is in a class by itself in that it was given exclusively to the apostle Paul and his fellow communicators of the gospel, which would include his fellow apostles, prophets, evangelists and pastors. Therefore, the articular construction of this word indicates that this gift of being a servant of the gospel is unique to those men in the body of Christ who are communicators of the gospel whether they are apostles, prophets, evangelists or pastors.

For the eighth time in this epistle, the apostle Paul employs the noun *charis* (χάρις), "**grace**" (cf. 1:2, 6, 7; 2:5, 7, 8; 3:2). In each instance, the word refers to God the Father's grace policy towards unregenerate sinners who He declares justified through faith in His Son, Jesus Christ, and which grace policy manifests His attribute of love.

The articular construction of this word *charis* (χάρις), "**grace**" is also monadic, which indicates the "uniqueness" of this grace. It emphasizes that this grace is "unique" to God the Father in that it is His policy towards sinners who exercise faith in His Son, Jesus Christ as their Savior.

The articular genitive masculine singular form of the noun *theos* (θεός) refers to the Father which is indicated by the articular construction of the noun, which in the New Testament commonly signifies the Father unless otherwise indicated by the context. Furthermore, in every instance in which the word has appeared in this epistle up to this point in the Ephesian letter, the Father is this word's referent (1:1, 2, 3, 17, 2:4, 8, 10, 16, 19 and 22).

The articular construction of the noun *theos* (θεός) expresses the idea that there were many gods in the world, but the God Jewish and Gentile church age believers

worshipped was the one and only true God in contrast to unregenerate humanity in the first century A.D. which worshipped the pantheon of Graeco-Roman gods.

The noun *charis* (χάρις), "**grace**" functions as a genitive of apposition or epexegetical genitive, which indicates that it identifies this gift, which is identified as being a servant of the gospel, as an unmerited blessing given to Paul, which originates from God the Father.

The noun *theos* (θεός) functions as a genitive of source, which expresses the idea that this grace or unmerited blessing in the form of becoming a servant of the gospel that was bestowed upon Paul at justification "originates from" God the Father.

The verb *didōmi* (δίδωμι) means "to bestow as a gift" since the word pertains in this context to giving someone something which is of great value and as a gift. It speaks of giving someone something as an expression of generosity.

The passive voice of this verb indicates that Paul as the subject received the gift, which originated from the Father's grace policy, which was in the form of being a servant of the gospel, according to the exercise of the Father's omnipotence at the moment of justification.

The aorist tense of this verb *didōmi* (δίδωμι) is a consummative or culminative aorist which emphasizes the cessation of the act of Paul receiving the gift of being a servant of the gospel in accordance with the exertion of the Father's omnipotence at the moment of his justification.

The participle conjugation of this verb is in the genitive case and functions as a genitive of apposition or epexegetical genitive, which indicates that the participle conjugation of this verb *didōmi* (δίδωμι) is identifying or describing the noun *dōrea* (δωρεά), "**the gift**" as being given to Paul at justification.

As we noted the relative pronoun clause is modified by the second prepositional phrase *kata tēn energeian tēs dynameōs autou* (κατὰ τὴν ἐνέργειαν τῆς δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ), "**according to the activity produced by the exercise of His power**" (Author's translation). It expresses the idea that Paul receiving the gift of being a servant of the gospel at the moment of justification was "according to" or "corresponding to" or is "in agreement with" the activity produced by the exercise of the Father's divine omnipotence.

In this second prepositional phrase, the noun *energeia* (ἐνέργεια) refers to the Father's activity on behalf of the apostle Paul the moment He imputed His Son's righteousness to him and declared him justified. Therefore, this word speaks of the "activity" on behalf of Paul at justification, which was produced by the Father's omnipotence. In context, this activity was that of the Father entering Paul into the state of serving the gospel the moment He declared him justified through faith in His Son, Jesus Christ. Simultaneously, the Lord Jesus Christ authorized the Holy Spirit to bestow Paul with the spiritual gift of apostleship, thus giving him the gift of communicating the gospel.

The articular construction of this word is monadic which means that this particular activity of the Father in giving Paul the spiritual gift of apostleship the moment He declared him justified through faith in His Son is "unique" to the Father and in particular His divine omnipotence.

The noun *dunamis* (δύναμις) contains the figure of metonymy which means that the Father's omnipotence is put for the exercise of His omnipotence. Specifically, it refers to the omnipotence of God the Father which He exercised on behalf of the apostle Paul at his justification by giving him the gift of being a servant of the gospel, i.e., the spiritual gift of apostleship.

The noun *dunamis* (δύναμις) functions as a genitive of production, which indicates that the activity which Paul was the beneficiary of at the moment of his justification, which resulted in him receiving the gift of being a servant of the gospel, was "produced by" the exercise of the Father's omnipotence.

Now, Paul's statement here in Ephesians 3:7 is very similar to his assertion in Ephesians 3:2. The difference between the two is that in Ephesians 3:2, he describes his relationship to the gospel as a stewardship whereas in Ephesians 3:7, he describes this relationship as a service. Thus, here in Ephesians 3:7, Paul is restating his special and unique relationship to the gospel. However, in both verses, he asserts that the grace of God is responsible for both his stewardship and his service on behalf of the gospel. This repetition of God's grace serves as an *inclusio* and thus serves to bracket Ephesians 3:2-7. This also serves to emphasize the fact that the content of the mystery that Gentile church age and Jewish church age believers are fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the promise because of their faith in Christ Jesus at justification and union and identification with Him, which Paul received, was based upon God's grace policy. In other words, he didn't earn or deserve this revelation from God.

The apostle Paul as we noted also spoke of the omnipotence of God in Ephesians 3:16 where he shares an intercessory prayer request with the recipients of this epistle, which was on their behalf. He regularly requested of the Father that they would be strengthened by means of the Father's power through the personal interme3diate agency of the Holy Spirit, which would be for the benefit of their new indwelling natures of Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 3:14 For this reason, I make it my habit of bending my knees in the presence of the Father 15 from whom each and every family located in the heavens as well as located upon the earth is designated a name. 16 I make it a habit of occupying myself with praying that according to the wealth produced by His glory He would cause each and every one of you as a corporate unit to be given strength by means of power through the personal intermediate agency of His Spirit for the benefit of your inner being. (Author's translation)

Ephesians 3:16 is composed of the following: (1) direct object clause *hina dō hymin…dynamei krataiōthēnai* (ἵνα δῷ ὑμῖν…δυνάμει κραταιωθῆναι), "**that…He would cause each and every one of you as a corporate unit to be given strength by means of power**." (2) prepositional phrase: *kata to ploutos tēs doxēs autou* (κατὰ τὸ πλοῦτος τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ), "**according to the wealth produced by His glory**." (3) prepositional phrase: *dia tou pneumatos autou* (διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος αὐτοῦ), "**through the personal intermediate agency of His Spirit**." (4) prepositional phrase: *eis ton esō anthrōpon* (εἰς τὸν ἔσω ἄνθρωπον), "**for the benefit of your inner being**."

As we noted in our exegesis of this verse, Paul is using the figuring of ellipsis because he is deliberately omitting the first person singular present middle indicative conjugation of the verb *proseuchomai* (προσεύχομαι), though it is implied from the context. Here the verb refers to the intercessory prayer of the apostle Paul offered up to the Father on behalf of the recipients of the Ephesian epistle but without reference to the fact that it is intercessory. Thus it simply refers to prayer in its general sense or the simple act of making a prayer to the Father without reference to its content. The context indicates it refers to Paul's intercessory prayer on behalf of the recipients of this letter because the contents of Ephesians 3:16-21 make this clear.

The present tense of the verb *proseuchomai* is a customary present used to signal an action that is to regularly occur indicating that Paul "made it his habit of" or "regularly" interceding in prayer to the Father on behalf of the recipients of the Ephesian epistle. The middle voice of the verb is an intensive middle, which would indicate that Paul made it his habit of "occupying himself" with interceding in prayer to the Father on behalf of the recipients of the Ephesian epistle.

Therefore, we can see that the clause *hina* (ἵνα) direct object clause is modified by these three prepositional phrases, which together present the content of Paul's second intercessory in this epistle. They assert that Paul made it his habit of occupying himself with praying to the Father that according to the wealth produced by His glory He would cause each and every one of the recipients of this epistle to be given strength by means of power through the personal intermediate agency of His Spirit for the benefit of their inner being.

The dative second personal plural form of the personal pronoun *su* (σύ), "**each and every one of you as a corporate unit**" not only refers to the recipients of the epistle as a corporate unit but is also used in a distributive sense emphasizing no exceptions expressing Paul's concern for each and every one of them. This word functions as a dative of interest or advantage or benefaction, which indicates that Paul's intercessory prayer to the Father here in Ephesians 3:16-21 is "for the benefit of" of "on behalf of" each and every one of the recipients of the epistle as individuals and as a corporate unit.

We also noted that the verb *didōmi* (δίδωμι) pertains to causing someone to have something in an abstract or physical sense. Here the former is in view since it speaks of the Father causing each and every one of the recipients of the Ephesian epistle to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner being according to the wealth of His glory.

The referent of the first person singular form of this verb is of course the Father. The active voice of this verb is a causative active which would indicate that the Father is not the direct cause of the recipients of the Ephesian epistle being strengthened with power according to the wealth of His glory. Rather, the Holy Spirit is directly involved in this action of strengthening the recipients of this epistle with power as indicated by the prepositional phrase *dia tou pneumatos autou* (διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος αὐτοῦ), "**through the personal intermediate agency of the Spirit**." The latter expresses the fact that the Holy Spirit is the Father's personal intermediate agency who will strengthen the recipients of this epistle with power. Therefore, the causative active voice is expressing the idea of the Father causing each and every one of the recipients of the epistle to be strengthened with power "through the personal intermediate agency of" the Holy Spirit in the inner being according to the wealth of His glory.

We noted that the noun *ploutos* (πλοῦτος), "**wealth**" is used in a figurative sense to refer to a spiritual and material abundance of material and spiritual possessions and spiritual resources possessed by God the Father. In other words, it is used figuratively of the spiritual and material wealth or prosperity of the Father. The articular construction of this word is monadic which expresses the idea that this wealth is unique to the Father's glory.

The noun *doxa* (δόξα) refers to the honor, which is accorded to that which characterizes the Father and the splendor which characterizes Him. It speaks of the fact that the Father is a transcendent being in that He exceeds the limits of human and angelic understanding and experience. Specifically, it is related to the manifestation of the Father's transcendent character and nature, which exceeds the limits of human and angelic understanding and experience. This word is modified by the genitive masculine singular form of the intensive personal pronoun *autos* (αὐτός), "**His**" which refers of course to God the Father. It functions as a genitive of possession indicating that this glory "belongs to" the Father in that it manifests His holy character and nature. We also noted that this noun *doxa* (δόξα) functions as a genitive of production, which expresses the idea that the Father's glory, i.e., the manifestation of His transcendent character and nature, "produces" His wealth, i.e., the abundance of His spiritual and temporal resources.

A comparison of Scripture with Scripture indicates that the Father's transcendent character nature was manifested through the person and work of His Son during His First Advent and through the work of the Holy Spirit on behalf of the recipients of

this letter and all Christians who benefit from the Father's wealth through faith in Jesus Christ and the baptism of the Spirit. The church age believer possesses every spiritual and temporal blessing in the heavens because of their union and identification with Jesus Christ (cf. Eph. 1:3-14).

The Son's perfect life of obedience to the Father's will and His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father manifested the Father's transcendent character and nature and delivered the church age believer from eternal condemnation, condemnation from the Law, enslavement to the sin nature, Satan and his cosmic system, personal sins, spiritual and physical death. At the moment of justification, the Holy Spirit manifested the Father's transcendent character and nature by identifying the church age believer with Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father.

The church age believer's faith, which resulted in the Father declaring them justified, appropriated the omnipotence of God, which delivered the church age believer from eternal condemnation, condemnation from the Law, enslavement to the sin nature, Satan and his cosmic system, personal sins, spiritual and physical death. This union and identification with Jesus Christ results in the Father's spiritual and temporal wealth or prosperity to the flow to the church age believer.

Therefore, the Father's glory "produces" His wealth in the sense that His wealth flows to the church age believer through the person and work of His Son and the person and work of the Holy Spirit whose work manifests the Father's transcendent character and nature. In other words, the work of the Son and the Spirit glorifies the Father because it manifests His transcendent character and nature.

In our exegesis, we noted that the noun *ploutos* (πλοῦτος) is the object of the preposition *kata* (κατά), which is functioning as a marker of correspondence which indicates that the Father's wealth, which is produced by His glory, i.e., the manifestation of His transcendent character and nature through the person and work of both the Son and the Spirit is "in agreement with" the power of the Holy Spirit. Thus, this preposition indicates that the Father's wealth, which is produced by His glory, i.e., the manifestation of His transcendent character and nature as manifested by the work of the Son and the Spirit is "the equivalent of" or "identical to" the Holy Spirit who is able to strengthen the church age believer by means of power in their inner being or new nature.

The reason why the Father's wealth, which is produced by the manifestation of the Father's glory, i.e., the manifestation of His transcendent character and nature corresponds to or is equivalent to the Holy Spirit strengthening the church age believer by means of power for the benefit of the new indwelling Christ nature is that both Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit manifest the Father's transcendent character and nature.

We also noted that the verb *krataioō* (κραταιόω) means "to become strengthened, to become powerful or strong" in a spiritual sense. The noun *dunamis* (δύναμις), "**by means of power**" refers to the exercise of the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit, which is indicated by the *dia tou pneumatos autou* (διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος αὐτοῦ), "**through his Spirit**," **(NET)**, which modifies it. This word functions as a marker of means, which indicates the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit is "the means by which" the recipients of this letter will be strengthened for the benefit of their inner being or new Christ nature according to the wealth produced by the Father's glory, i.e., the manifestation of His transcendent character and nature through both the work of the Son and the Spirit.

Therefore, this expresses the idea that Paul is praying that the recipients of this letter will be strengthened in their inner being or new nature according to the wealth produced by the Father's glory, i.e., the manifestation of His transcendent character and nature which was accomplished through the work of the Son and the Spirit, "by means of" power through the personal intermediate agency of the Holy Spirit.

Now, in Ephesians 3:16, the noun *pneuma* (πνεῦμα), "**Spirit**" refers of course to the Holy Spirit. The articular construction of this word is employed with genitive third person masculine singular form of the intensive personal pronoun *autos* (αὐτός), which refers to the Father, to denote possession. The latter is expressing the relationship between the Father and the Spirit. This construction emphasizes the Spirit is in a relationship with the Father and is also distinguishing the Spirit from the Father. The noun *pneuma* (πνεῦμα), "**Spirit**" is the object of the preposition *dia* (διά), which functions as a marker of personal intermediate agency, which indicates that the Father will strengthen the recipients of this letter with power for the benefit of their new Christ nature "through the personal intermediate agency of the Spirit.

The passive voice of the verb *krataioō* (κραταιόω) indicates that these Gentile church age believers living in the Roman province of Asia would receive the action of being strengthened with power through the personal intermediate agency of the Holy Spirit for the benefit of their new indwelling Christ nature, which is according to the wealth produced by the Father's glory. Therefore, this is another "divine-passive," which Paul employs in the Ephesian epistle.

Now, Paul's intercessory prayer here in Ephesians 3:16 to the Father on behalf of these Gentile church age believers would be accomplished by these Christians responding in faith to the Spirit inspired contents of the Ephesian epistle. This post-justification faith in the contents of this Spirit inspired epistle would result in these Gentile church age believers obeying the various prohibitions and commands and requests, which appear Ephesians chapters 4-6. Therefore, this is why Paul asserts in Ephesians 3:17 that as a result of the Father answering this prayer request, Christ will dwell in the hearts of these Gentile church age believers through their post-justification faith in the Spirit inspired contents of this epistle.

Now, the apostle Paul's doxology in Ephesians 3:20-21 along with the contents of Ephesians 1:3-14 serve as bookends for the first three chapters of this epistle because they both praise the Father.

Ephesians 1:3 The God, namely the Father of the Lord ruling over us, who is Jesus Christ, is worthy of praise. Namely, because He is the one who has blessed each and every one of us by means of each and every kind of Spirit appropriated blessing in the heavenlies in Christ. 4 For He chose each and every one of us for His own purpose because of Him alone before creation in order that each and every one of us would be holy as well as uncensurable in His judgment. 5 He did this by predestinating each and every one of us for the purpose of adoption as sons because of His love through Jesus Christ for Himself according to the pleasure of His will. 6 This was for the purpose of praising His glorious grace, which He freely bestowed on each and every one of us because of the one who is divinely loved. 7 Because of whom, each one of us are experiencing that which is the redemption through His blood, namely the forgiveness of our transgressions according to His infinite grace. 8 This He provided in abundance for the benefit of each and every one of us because of the exercise of a wisdom, which is absolute and divine in nature resulting in the manifestation of an insight, which is absolute and divine in nature. 9 He did this by revealing the mystery of His will for the benefit of each and every one of us according to His pleasure, which He planned beforehand because of our faith in and union and identification with Himself. 10 This was for the dispensation which brings to completion the various periods of history. Namely, to unite for the benefit of Himself each and every animate and inanimate object in the sphere of the sovereign authority of the person of the one and only Christ. Specifically, to unite for the benefit of Himself those things in the heavens as well as those things on the earth in the sphere of the sovereign authority of Himself. 11 Because of whom, each and every one of us has been claimed as a possession because of having been predestinated according to the predetermined plan. Namely, the one who is causing each and every animate and inanimate object to function according to His purpose, that is, His sovereign will 12 in order that each and every one of us would belong to a particular group of people. Namely, those who are certain of possessing a confident expectation of blessing because of their faith in and union and identification with the one and only Christ for the purpose of praising His glory. 13 Correspondingly, because of whom, each and every one of you were sealed by means of the omnipotence of the one and only promised Spirit, who is holy because each and every one of you obeyed the one and only message, which is truth, namely, the proclamation of the one and only gospel, which produced your salvation. Specifically, because each one of you believed in Him. 14 The

Spirit is the down payment of our inheritance until He redeems His possession for the praise of His glory. (Author's translation)

Ephesians 1:3-14 presents three reasons why God is worthy of praise. The first reason is that the Father elected the church age believer in eternity past to be conformed to the image of His Son, Jesus Christ (Eph. 1:3-6). The second reason is that the Son redeemed them at the cross (Eph. 1:7-12). The third reason is that the Holy Spirit sealed them at their justification (Eph. 1:13-14). Therefore, we can see that this preface not only praises the Father for His plan in eternity past to conform the church age believer into the image of His Son but also mentions the work of both the Son and the Spirit, who executed that plan.

In Ephesians 1:3, the adjective *eulogētos* (εὐλογητός), "**worthy of praise**" is making the assertion that the Father is worthy of praise because of having blessed the church age believer in eternity past with each and every kind of Spirit appropriated blessing in the heavenlies and specifically in the person of His one and only Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, who sits at the Father's right hand. The clear implication is that the recipients of the Ephesian epistle, and this is true for of all church age believers, are obligated to worship the Father because of the Spirit appropriated blessings He has imparted to each of them in eternity past when He elected them. These blessings are appropriated by the church age believer's faith in Jesus Christ at the moment of justification. They are also appropriated after justification through faith in the Spirit inspired Scriptures.

As we noted, the second declarative statement in Ephesians 1:3 is epexegetical, which means that it identifies specifically for the reader the reason why the Father is worthy of praise. It asserts that He is the one who has blessed Paul and the recipients of this epistle by means of each and every kind of Spirit appropriated blessing in the heavenlies in Christ. In this second declarative statement, the verb *eulogeō* (εὐλογέω), "**namely, because He is the one who has blessed**" is expressing the idea of imparting to Paul and the recipients of this epistle non-meritorious benefits in Christ in eternity past before the foundation of the world. They are received based upon the merits of the object of their faith, Jesus Christ, as well as based upon the merits of their union and identification with Him. These blessings were received by them through the work of the Holy Spirit at their justification.

Now, the aorist tense of this verb *eulogeō* is a consummative aorist is important theologically because it is emphasizing the cessation of the act of the Father imparting non-meritorious blessings to Paul and each of the recipients of this epistle in eternity past and not at the moment of justification. This is indicated by the contents of Ephesians 1:4, which gives the reason for the two statements in Ephesians 1:3. The former asserts that the Father elected each of them in Christ before the foundation of the world. In other words, the Father blessing them is related to His elected them in eternity past in Christ before the foundation of the world.

However, these blessings were appropriated by them at the moment of their justification when they were declared justified by the Father through faith in His one and only Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

The participial conjugation of the verb *eulogeō* is also important to understand since as we noted in our exegesis, it is functioning as a nominative in simple apposition meaning that the word stands in apposition to the nominative form of the noun *theos*, "God." This indicates that both words have the same referent. Thus, participial conjugation of the verb *eulogeō* is giving a different description of God in relation to Paul and the recipients of this epistle. Namely, He is the one who has blessed each one of them in the sense that He has imparted to each of them non-meritorious benefits at the moment of their justification based upon the merits of the object of their faith, Jesus Christ, as well as based on the merits of their union and identification with Him.

The participle conjugation of this verb *eulogeō* is extremely important to understand since as we noted in our exegesis, it is functioning as a causal participle which means that it indicates the cause or reason or ground of the action of the finite verb. As we noted, the participle conjugation of this verb *eulogeō* is following its controlling verb, which is omitted but implied due to Paul's use of the figure of ellipsis. It is the third person singular present active indicative conjugation of the verb *eimi* (εἰμί) which as we noted means "to possess certain inherent characteristics or attributes, which exist in a particular state." Therefore, this causal participle use of this verb *eulogeō* is expressing the idea that the Father is worthy of praise "because" He has blessed Paul and each one of the recipients of this epistle by means of every kind of Spirit appropriated blessing in the heavenlies in Christ. Here in Ephesians 1:3, the main verb *eimi* we noted is in the present. Therefore, the aorist participle conjugation of the *eulogeō* is antecedent in time. Consequently, this is expressing the idea that the Father is worthy of praise because "before" in eternity past, He blessed each and every church age believer by means of every kind of Spirit appropriated blessing in the heavenlies in Christ.

As we also noted in our exegesis, the referent of the accusative first person plural form of the personal pronoun *ego* (ἐγώ), "**each and every one of us**" in this second declarative statement is Paul and the recipients of this epistle. The latter we noted were not only members of the Christian community in Ephesus but also members of the various Christian communities in the Roman province of Asia. This word not only speaks of Paul and the members of the Christian community as a corporate unit but is also used in a distributive sense emphasizing no exceptions. The latter therefore is expressing the idea that God the Father has blessed "each and every one of" the recipients of this epistle and the apostle Paul "with no exceptions, whatsoever."

In this second declarative statement the dative feminine singular form of the noun *eulogia* (εὐλογία), "**blessing**" pertains to the non-meritorious blessings that the Father imparted to each and every church age believer in eternity past when He elected in Christ before the foundation of the world. These blessings were appropriated by the church age believer the moment the Father declared them justified because of their faith in His one and only Son, Jesus Christ. In other words, it speaks of the non-meritorious benefits that each and every church age believer receives at the moment of their justification. This word describes the immaterial nature of these blessings and supernatural aspect of their reality.

As we also noted in our exegesis, this noun *eulogia* (εὐλογία), "**blessing**" is modified by the dative feminine singular form of the adjective *pas* (πᾶς), "**each and every kind of**" which pertains to the totality of non-meritorious blessings Paul and the recipients of this epistle received from the Father in eternity past in Christ when He elected them in Christ with emphasis upon their individual components

As we also noted, the noun *eulogia* (εὐλογία), "**blessing**" is also modified by the adjective *pneumatikos* (πνευματικός), which means "**Spirit appropriated**" since it pertains to the spiritual nature of the non-meritorious blessings each and every church age believer. Specifically, it describes these blessings as having been appropriated by the Holy Spirit on behalf of the church age believer when the latter was declared justified by the Father through faith in His one and only Son, Jesus Christ. It also describes these blessings as being appropriated by the Holy Spirit on behalf of the church age believer when the latter exercises faith in the Spirit inspired teaching of the apostles, which now appears in the Greek New Testament. This faith produces obedience to the various Spirit inspired requests, prohibitions and commands, which appear in this Spirit inspired teaching. Therefore, this adjective is used by Paul here in Ephesians 1:3 for the Spirit because these blessings are appropriated by the Spirit at the church age believer's justification.

We also noted in our exegesis of Ephesians 1:3 that the noun dative feminine singular form of the noun *eulogia* (εὐλογία), "**blessing**" is the object of the preposition *en* (ἐν), which indicates Paul and each one of the recipients of this epistle have been blessed by God the Father "**by means of**" each and every kind of Spirit appropriated blessing.

So therefore, adjective *pneumatikos* (πνευματικός), "**Spirit appropriated**" is identifying that each and every kind of blessing is the direct result of the work of the Holy Spirit at the moment of the church age believer's justification through faith in the Father's one and only Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. The Father blessed them with every kind of blessing, which are received through the work of the Spirit, which took place the moment the Father declared them justified through faith in His Son, Jesus Christ. They are experienced after their justification when they exercise faith in the Spirit inspired teaching of the apostles, which is now found in the Greek New

Testament. This post-justification faith produces obedience to the various Spirit inspired requests, prohibitions and commands, which are found in this Spirit inspired teaching.

The prepositional phrase *en tois epouraniois* (ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις), "**in the heavenlies**" appears exclusively in the Ephesian epistle and nowhere else in the Greek New Testament (Eph. 1:3, 20, 2:6; 3:10; 6:12). Here in Ephesians 1:3, it marks the first, second and third heavens as the location in which each and every one of the church age believer's Spirit appropriated blessings are residing. In other words, it indicates that each and every kind of Spirit appropriated blessing are "located in" the first, second and third heavens.

The prepositional phrase *en Christō* (ἐν Χριστῷ), "**in Christ**" is epexegetical because it is identifying specifically what is meant by the previous prepositional phrase *en tois epouraniois* (ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις), "**in the heavenlies**," which is ambiguous and begs to be defined. Therefore, the former is identifying for the recipients of this epistle the specific location of each and every one of their Spirit appropriated blessings, which the Father imparted to each one of them in eternity past when He elected them in Christ. Namely, these blessings are located specifically in the person of Jesus Christ who sits in the third heaven at the right hand of the Father. However, the implication is clear that it is "because" of their faith in Jesus Christ and "because" of their union and identification with Christ that they received these blessings from the Father.

In Ephesians 1:3, the prepositional phrase *en Christō* (ἐν Χριστῷ), "**in Christ**" is related to the church age believer's union and identification with Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. This is indicated by the contents of Ephesians 2:6-7, which employ this same prepositional phrase with the addition of *Iesous* (Ἰησοῦς), "**Jesus**" at the end of it. Ephesians 2:6 asserts that the church age believer was raised and seated with Christ Jesus by the Father through the baptism of the Spirit at their justification. Ephesians 2:7 states that the Father did this for the church age believer in order to demonstrate in the coming ages the surpassing wealth of his grace in kindness towards the believer in union with Christ Jesus.

Therefore, a comparison of Ephesians 1:3 with Ephesians 2:6-7 indicates that the Father has blessed each church age believer by means of each and every kind of Spirit appropriated blessing because of their union and identification with Jesus Christ, which is the direct result of their faith in Jesus Christ at their justification. These blessings are non-meritorious because they are blessings are appropriated by the believer as a result of the merits of the object of their faith at justification, Jesus Christ. They are also appropriated by them based upon the merits of their identification with Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. In fact, as we noted Ephesians 2:7 asserts that

this identification was designed to demonstrate the surpassing wealth of the Father's grace in kindness toward the church age believer.