Elpis

A. The noun *elpis* belongs to the following word group:
2. *Elpizo* (ἐλπίζω, verb), “to have confidence in, to trust in, to expect.”
4. *Proelpizo* (προελπίζω, verb), “to have confidence in before the promise or expectation is fulfilled.”

B. Classical
1. The Greeks used *elpis* in a positive and a negative sense.
2. *Elpis* was man’s projection of the future whether for good or evil.
3. To the Greeks the future was uncertain.
4. Therefore, they had a pessimistic attitude toward life.
5. They were subjective about themselves because there future existence was uncertain.
6. To the Greeks, man’s existence was controlled by circumstances he must accept without any certainty that they will turn out in the end for good.
7. In fact, to the Greeks confidence in the future invited disappointment.
8. This use of *elpis* is totally antithetical to the LXX and NT usage of the word.
9. The Roman stoic Senaca defined hope as “an uncertain good.”
10. Paul gives an insight into this mode of thinking when he wrote in Ephesians 2:11-12, “Therefore remember, that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called ‘uncircumcision’ by the so-called ‘circumcision,’ which is performed in the flesh by human hands—remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenant of promise, having no hope (elpis) and without God in the world.”

C. LXX
1. The use of *elpis* in the LXX shaped the NT usage of the word.
2. *Elpis* was used of confidence or trust in the character and nature of God rather than upon self and circumstances and thus was used objectively.
3. Therefore, *elpis* in the LXX always had a positive connotation and denoted confidence in the future rather than the pessimistic attitude toward life which permeated Greek and Stoic thought.
4. Both the noun *elpis* and the verb *elpizo* are used to translate Hebrew words in the OT which denoted confidence and trust.
5. Thus, *elpis* acquired a meaning which was quite different than its classical usage.
6. The object of the individual’s confidence or trust in the Bible was directed toward a God of integrity, character and virtue (Prov. 3:26)
7. This is totally contrary to the Greeks who chose to rely upon men and the gods who could not be trusted with certainty.
8. The God of the Bible was faithful in fulfilling His promises, therefore, when the words *elpis* and *elpizo* are used in the LXX and NT they were used to denote absolute confidence and trust in the Lord.
9. The Greeks had no one that they could absolutely trust with certainty in fulfilling a promise.
10. Both *elpizo* and *elpis* most often function as equivalents for terms which denote faith and trust.
11. *Elpizo* is used to translate the following Hebrew words in the LXX:
   a. *Batach*, “to trust” (2 Kings 18:5; Psa. 4:5; Mic. 7:5).
   b. *Galal*, “to trust” (Psa. 22:8).
   c. *Chasah*, “to trust” (Psa. 16:1 [15:1], 31:1 [30:1], 91:4 [90:4]).
   d. *Chashaq*, “to hide, to take refuge, to love” (Psa. 91:4 [90:14]).
   e. *Yachal*, Piel: “to wait, hope” (Psa. 31:24 [30:24], Hiphil: “to wait, hope” (Psa. 38:15 [37:15]).
   f. *Qawah*, “to wait”; Piel: “to long for, desire” (Jer. 44:14 [51:14]).
12. *Elpis* is used to translate the following Hebrew words in the LXX:
   a. *Batach*, Qal: “to trust” (Isa. 26:3; 47:10); Hiphil: “to hope, trust” (Psa. 22:9 [21:9]).
   b. *Kesel*, “confidence” (Psa. 78:7 [77:7]).
   e. *Sever*, “hope, confident expectation” (Psa. 146:5 [145:5]).
The noun 

1. The noun 

2. It derives its meaning from the LXX usage as we noted above. 

3. The noun and the verb are principally terms which were employed by Paul. 

4. He used the noun 36 times and the verb 19 times. 

5. is only once in the epistle to the Philippians which is here in verse 20. 

6. The word is always used in the NT in regards to a confident, sure expectation of God’s saving actions through the Person and Work of our Lord Jesus Christ and future blessing to those who execute the Protocol Plan of God through the spiritual life that God has provided. 

7. Bultmann commenting on the NT usage of , writes, “With , thus constitutes Christian existence. Hence the prayer of Romans 15:13; hence also the characterizing of Christians as constituting the being of the Christian as Paul describes in 1 Thess. 1:3; or as he characterizes it in 1 Cor. 13:13 in antithesis to a Gnostic formula. In the light of the OT concept of hope it may also be understood why Paul can say that constitutes even though we attain ("to perceive, to see"), for hope is not concerned with the realization of a human dream of the future but with the confidence which, directed away from world to God, waits patiently for God’s gift, and when it is received does not rest in possession but in the assurance that God will maintain what He has given” (Kittel’s Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, volume 2, page 532).
8. Both the verb *elpizo* and the noun *elpis* are used for absolute confidence in the Person and Saving Work of our Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 4:18; 5:2; 8:24-25; 15:12; 1 Cor. 15:19; Col. 1:27; 1 Tim. 1:1; 4:10; Titus 2:13; 1 Pet. 1:21).

9. These 2 words are also used for absolute confidence in the work of God the Father in eternity past (Eph. 1:18; 4:4; 1 Tim. 6:17; Titus 1:2).

10. The noun *elpis* is sometimes used synonymously with *pistis* (Rom. 4:18; 8:24).

11. The verb *elpizo* is sometimes used synonymously with *pisteuo* (Rom. 15:12; Heb. 11:1; 1 Pet. 3:5).

12. It is a word which characterizes the adult spiritual life (Rom. 5:4; 12:12; 2 Cor. 3:12; Gal. 5:5; Phil. 1:20; 1 Thess. 5:8; 1 Tim. 1:1; Heb. 3:6; 6:11, 18; 10:23; 1 John 3:3).

13. *Elpis* is used for the confidence of the spiritually mature believer in receiving the conveyance of their Escrow blessing upon executing the Protocol Plan of God (Col. 1:5).

14. The word is used in relation to the Rapture or the Resurrection of the Church (Titus 2:13).

15. Both *elpizo* and *elpis* are always directed toward either the Person and Work of our Lord Jesus Christ for salvation or God the Father and never toward self (1 Cor. 15:19; 1 Tim. 1:1).

16. The Christian’s confidence in salvation is based upon an historical fact of the crucifixion and resurrection of our Lord (Rom. 15:4).

17. The believer confidence is not self-centered but directed toward God the Father and His logistical grace provisions and the adult spiritual life which He has provided from eternity past (Acts 24:15; 2 Cor. 1:10; 1 Tim. 4:10; 5:5; 6:17; 1 Pet. 1:21; 3:5).

18. In fact, the Scriptures address God as “the God of confidence (*elpis*)” (Rom. 15:13).

19. The adult believer has confidence in the midst of suffering which is for blessing and advancement and promotion in the spiritual life (Rom. 12:12; 1 Thess. 1:3; 4:13, 5:8; Heb. 3:6; 6:11, 18; 10:23).

20. The believer’s confidence is certain because it is based upon the perfect character and integrity of God which is the believer’s point of contact with the Godhead.