

## **EPHESIANS 1:10 THE CENTRAL THEME OF ALL SCRIPTURE GOD'S SUPREME ULTIMATE PLAN**

Verse 10 tells us about the nature of the mystery which God has revealed to us. This is the key to understanding the main purpose of Ephesians. Paul really wants to expound this. This is the central theme of all of scripture. There is nothing greater than this. This is where everything is heading to. This is even greater than verse 7. This is God's ultimate purpose with respect to the world. This is God's grand, final purpose. Our minds cannot think of anything greater. There is terrible turmoil in this country and all over the world, but yet there is no need for us to stumble. Things look bad, but there is something much more important. The ultimate future, we do know about. This will happen no matter what happens in this world in the present. It is absolutely for sure. You can be at peace and calm, despite the perilous times we live in. God's plan is certain, without a doubt. Happiness comes from knowing what is God's plan and making it our plan.

As Best says, 'believers, foreordained and already possessing their deliverance, are now told about the secret of the ultimate destiny of the cosmos (133). The mystery 'which has been disclosed to believers in accordance with God's purpose for history is his summing up of all things in Christ (Lincoln, 32). Th

### **1. DISPENSATION (Oikonomia) House / law**

It can mean the management of a household, management, oversight, Administering anothers property, overseer, stewardship  
It speaks of an administration of God of a certain period of time he manages the affairs of mankind.

A. Meaning— For this verse here it means---Economy, plan, scheme  
It deals with the method by which God administers the particular time referred to in the words "the fullness of times"

Note the word *oikonomia* = (1) the act of administering; or (2) that which is administered, an arrangement or plan; or (2) special duty or assigned task within a household; i.e., a person's stewardship. (1) is probably most accurate. That which is being administered by God is the fullness of the times. God will, in fact, orchestrate and administer the events and direction and course of history to bring about his ultimate purpose. What he wants to happen will happen when it is the right time for it to happen, culminating in the achievement of God's purpose. As F. F. Bruce put it, when the time is ripe for 'the consummation of his purpose, in his providential overruling of the course of the world, that consummation will be realized (262).

B. Related Scriptural Use  
Ephesians 3:9

C. Interpretation  
The mystery that has been revealed is that God has a great scheme, an economy with respect to the world and that He is bringing it into operation.

### **2. FULLNESS OF TIMES (Pleroma)**

A. Meaning—When this great purpose that was in the mind of God from eternity is going to be fulfilled. The time when the succession of ages has come to a close in the plan of God.  
Galatians 4:4, 1 Cor 10:11, Hebrews 1:1-2  
The whole span of time has been divided by the coming of Christ into

the world. The days we are in are the last days. God's great plan began to come into operation at the birth of Christ. His great plan is being worked out now. His plan will continue until Christ comes back.

C. Interpretation

This great plan of God will continue until it is finally completed by Christ's return again to the world.

### **3. IN AND THROUGH THE LORD JESUS**

A. Christ is essential to Christianity

Jesus Christ is the goal of history which finds its resolution in Him.  
The paradise lost in Adam is regained in Christ.

B. Nature---Again

He will gather together again. Not merely to unite, but to reunite.

To sum up again

God redeems men in order that He might gather everything to Himself.

CThe verb translated 'summing up means either 'to renew, arrange under one head, reduce to one sum, or 'to reunify, re-establish harmony where discord and chaos and division once existed (cf. Col. 1:19-20). The idea is that the discordant and disintegrating elements in the creative realm will be renewed and unified under the Lordship of Jesus. Everything will be brought into submission to his will and subservience to his glory. Christ will gather the entire universe into unity Ps 2 Heb 1:8-13

This is the conclusion to the present state of the world. Imagine a vast mathematical mystery, and all the formulae and equations cover huge blackboards, and we are all longing to see what the tantalising end of all this complexity will be. The relief when the final grand law is spelled out. Now multiply by infinity. The main point of the universe is Jesus Christ. We are told that Stephen Hawkins, the most famous mathematical professor at Cambridge, is longing to achieve a single formula that will embrace all of life, the atom and the galaxies, organic and inorganic, the very secret of life. Imagine his announcing one day that it is some equation - like Einstein's in the theory of relativity - and for science to proudly declare that these symbols - chalk on a blackboard, ink on a paper - were the meaning of life! How deadly that would be. What killing times would lie before mankind if those in power believed that the meaning of life was some mathematical or chemical or physical formula. But every Christian knows what is the real formula for the mystery of life. This is so basic that God has not left it as a mystery that only the wise of the world can puzzle out. No. God's will has been made known to us. That formula is a glorious person; God intends to sum up the universe in Jesus Christ. That is what lies before the whole universe which the plan of God is going to achieve.

### **4. ALL THINGS**

The 'all things which require 'summing up in Christ include:

- \* the inanimate creation (Rom. 8:18-23; 2 Pt. 3:13); consider the hostility between the animal world and humanity; also the terrors of natural phenomena such as tornadoes, earthquakes, floods, etc.
- \* the elect (soteriological reconciliation)
- \* the unfallen angelic host (their ministry to us brings them into contact with the sin and evil of this world)

Herman Bavinck:

'Round about us we observe so many facts which seem to be unreasonable, so much undeserved suffering [such as child abuse], so many unaccountable calamities, such an uneven and inexplicable distribution of destiny, and such an enormous contrast between the extremes of joy

and sorrow, that anyone reflecting on these things is forced to choose between viewing this universe as if it were governed by the blind will of an unbenign deity, as is done by pessimism, or, upon the basis of Scripture and by faith, to rest in the absolute and sovereign, yet however incomprehensible wise and holy will of him who will one day cause the full light of heaven to dawn upon these mysteries of life (quoted by Hendriksen, 87).

- A. Does it mean absolutely everything everywhere? Universalism
- B. Does it mean all intelligent beings? Universalism
- C. Does it mean Jews will be in heaven and Gentiles on earth?
- D. Does it mean the redeemed in heaven already and the redeemed who remain?
- E. Does it mean the good angels, created universe, redeemed?
- F. Creation's original condition  
Colossians 1:15-19, 2:10, Romans 8:20
- G. No harmony to others  
2 Pet 2:4 Jude 6 Rev 20:10
- H. Harmony to saved people  
Heb 12:23-24
- I. Harmony to earth  
2 Pet 3:12-14, Rom 8:19-21
- J. Harmony to entire universe  
Psalm 2, Heb 1:8-13

History belongs to God, not to the puny plans of man or Satan. History is written and directed by its creator who will see it through to the fulfillment of His own ultimate purpose, the summing up of all things in Christ.

The universe cursed by sin will be brought back to its pristine state. The saved of the human race will live on the new earth, and the endless eternal ages will begi