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Where the Bible sessions on Ephesians are so far:

Progress Chart for One Commentary on Ephesians

I. Preface and Outline of Exegesis.

II. Integration of Life Introduction.

1. Purpose.
2. Justification.
3. Security,
4. The Christian Vocation.

III. Basics of Life and Ephesians.

1. One.
2. History of a Church.
3. History and History of Ephesus.
5. A Short Commentary of 197 pages.

IV. Ephesians chapter 1: IN CHRIST.

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CHRIST IS OUR PEACE

"For he is our peace..." the book of Ephesians tells us. In the words of the NEV, "For he is himself our peace..." (2:14). Christ Himself is our peace. And under this subject heading, we will briefly review the exegetical contents of the book of Ephesians with sub-headings of: (1) Peace between God and man; (2) Peace between Jew and Gentile; (3) Peace in the individual heart; and (4) Peace on earth.

Five key verses of all of Ephesians are found in 2:14-18:

"For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." (KJV)

1. Peace between God and man. "And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby..." This speaks of the doctrine of reconciliation. How a sinful mankind was reconciled to a holy God thru the price that Christ paid in His death on the cross. It is the heart of the gospel that Paul talks about in I Corinthians 15: "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you...how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures..." (1-3 KJV)

It is similar to justification. It declares the righteousness of God as Paul writes in Romans, "that he (God)
might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." (3:26 KJV) Just and the justifier. The cross of Christ made God just for the sins He had overlooked in the past, the sins He will overlook or forgive in the present and in the future; and the cross of Christ made God the justifier of all that will believe in Christ.

Redemption is also closely related. "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus..." (Rom. 3:24 KJV) God redeems or buys back through the cross the lost humanity that really belongs to Him in the first place. "But God, rich in mercy, for the great love he bore us, brought us to life with Christ even when we were dead in our sins; it is by his grace you are saved." (Eph. 2:4,5 NEV)

All these words try to describe what happened between God and man with Christ's death on the cross. Propitiation is another great doctrinal word about the cross. "Whom God hath set forth (Christ) to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God..." (Rom. 3:25 KJV) Always, it is through what Christ did on the cross and through faith that there is propitiation, redemption, justification, and reconciliation. Praise be to our God for the great work that He wrought in Christ's death on the cross!
2. Peace between Jew and Gentile. This is the ultimate test of the gospel. If it can make peace between the Jew and the Gentile, it can do it all. Or more specifically, if it can make peace between the Jew and the Arab—although while there could be some question as to whether an Arab is a Gentile, he is certainly not a Jew; and with only two categories in the scripture, he must be a Gentile—then the gospel is unlimited in its capability to bring peace on earth.

"For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace..." (Eph. 2:14-15 KJV)

God made Jew and Gentile one; God broke down, through the cross of Christ and faith in Christ, the great wall that stood between Jew and Gentile; God obliterated the enmity—and that within itself is peace—between Jew and Gentile; and God brought the two together in one new humanity. That is peace.

Yet we don't see peace between every Jew and every Gentile. We definitely do not see peace between most Jews and most Arabs. What happened? God made peace between them. The capability is there. The potential exist that did not exist before Christ's death on the cross. Yet it is through faith as well as through the cross. Individual faith. Each
individual Jew and each individual Gentile must personally exercise faith in Christ's blood for the peace to be effective.

What peace that already exists on this earth through faith in Christ, Paul will later urge all Christians to capitalize on. "Spare no effort to make fast with bonds of peace the unity which the Spirit gives." (Eph. 4:3 NEV)

3. Peace in the individual heart. As the individual—any individual believes, the individual heart rests at peace. It is a peace that comes from knowing that all is right between us and our Maker. That the way He has provided for salvation—call it propitiation, justification, redemption, reconciliation, the cross, the blood, or in many other descriptive terminology of the Bible—that way has been accepted by the believing individual.

It is Philippians, not Ephesians, that talks of, "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." (4:7 KJV) But it is Ephesians that speaks of, "And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God." (3:19 KJV) Passing knowledge is passing understanding; keeping the heart and mind is like unto being filled with the fulness of God; and the great prayer of Paul for all Christians in chapter three of Ephesians ends
with a reminder: "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us. Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." (Eph. 3:20,21 KJV)

That brings peace.

It even goes beyond the requests of prayer in Philippians that prefaces the "peace that passeth understanding": "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." (Phil. 4:6 KJV) Our requests which we can think of and ask of God are to be continuously made to God; but the message of Ephesians is that God can do far more than we can even ask or think.

That brings peace. A confidence of the power that works inside us: "For through him (Christ) we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." (Eph. 2:18 KJV)

4. Peace on earth. The angel announced the birth of Christ: "Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:10,11 KJV) A multitude of heavenly host was with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." (2:14)
Did the heavenly host lie when it said "PEACE ON THE EARTH"? You don't see peace on the earth. Could the heavenly host been deceived even as it looked down from the vantage point high above at what was happening in the Roman Empire of 1 A.D.? No, I think not. For peace was on earth, because as of then Christ was on the earth. For, "Christ is himself our peace."

Once on this earth, Christ "came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh." (Eph. 2:17 KJV) Preaching peace, Christ said: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you." (John 14:27 KJV) Preaching peace, Christ said: "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever..." (John 14:16 KJV). Preaching peace, Christ said: "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you." (John 14:18 KJV) Preaching peace, Christ said: "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." (John 14:1-3 KJV)

And lest we as Christians miss all these benefits of peace, Paul reminds us near the conclusion of Ephesians to
be practical about the matter, appropriating for ourselves this inward peace and power by: "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." (6:10,11 KJV)

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