Ephesians 1:4-8

The Berakah details the blessings
1:4

καθὼς ἐξελέξατο ἡμᾶς ἐν αὐτῷ πρὸ καταβολῆς
According he chooses us in him before down-casting (disruption)

κατενώπιον αὐτοῦ ἐν ἀγαπῇ,
down in view (in sight) of him in love

καθὼς ἐξελέξατο ἡμᾶς ἐν αὐτῷ πρὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου εἰναι ἡμᾶς ἁγίους καὶ ἀμώμους κατενώπιον αὐτοῦ ἐν ἀγάπῃ.

“According” kathos – means “just as, because” - the blessings of verse 3 are now detailed and expressed more precisely. They were said to be “in Christ”

“He chose us” exekexato – aorist, indicative, middle of eklego which means to choose out, to select. Linguistic Key says this word form involves three ideas:
  a. the stem of the word indicates “the telling over”
  b. the preposition in compound indicates the rejection of some and acceptance of others
  c. the middle voice indicates the talking to (or, for) himself

Notice the words used to describe God’s purpose:
  1. ἐξελέξατω – “chose” 1:4
  2. προορισμα – “predestined” 1:5
  3. εὐδοκία – “good pleasure” 1:5
  4. θέλημα – “will” 1:5
  5. θέλημα, εὐδοκία, προεθετο – “purposed” 1:9
  6. εκληροθημεν – “appointed” 1:11
  7. προορισθεντες – “predestined” 1:11
  8. προθεσις – plan 1:11
  9. βουλη – “purpose” 1:11

The Old Testament also had the theme of a people chosen by God (Deut 7:6-8; 14:2) to serve God and bless the nations.

ἐν αὐτῷ, or “in him” defines our place of this choosing. In Christ God also has a people who will fulfill the promise and purpose of Abraham. This is seen in Paul’s thoughts in Galatians 3:14-29 – Christ is the “seed” and in this seed we are “all Abraham’s offspring”

“in him” – here it tells us where the choosing was. In verse 3 it told us where the blessings were.

“down-casting” or “throwing-down” or “foundation” from katabolas (kata=down; bolas=throw). This refers to creation. The word “before” or pro that proceeds it has the meaning of “before the foundations”. This term is used to refer to Christ in:
  • John 17:24 – God’s love for Christ
  • 1 Peter 1:20 – God’s purpose for Christ
Notice the use of “beginning” and “before the beginning of time” in:
- 2 Thessalonians 2:13 -
- 2 Timothy 1:9 - “this grace was given us in Christ before the beginning of time.”

“world” or “system” or “order” from kosmou (possessive of kosmos) refers to the world system or the earth.

αγιος και αμομος “holy and blameless” refers not to the future but a people separated for God. Both words have the idea of being separated for the service to God such as in something being sanctified for use in the temple. See Zechariah 14:20

Holy is the positive word. You are holy or set apart for God.
Blameless (flawless) is the negative word. You do not have blemish or fault.

Now begins to describe in greater detail the “spiritual blessing” in the “heavenlies” that are “in Christ”:
1. We are holy agious
2. We are flawless amomous – means “without blame, unblemished; used to refer to the absence of defects in sacrificial animals”

This is all done “in his sight” or “in his view” or “in his opinion”
This is all done “in love” which means for our benefit

Philippians 1:9-10
1 Thessalonians 3:12, 13
Colossians 1:22, 23
1 Peter 15-16 – no other way of living is acceptable for those predestined in Christ

εν αγαπη - “in love” may define the type of holiness and flawlessness. Love is the final product of these characters:
Two qualities that mark the Christian are:
1. separation from the world in order to be set apart for God
2. love for others

Or, “in love” may be attached to the next verse:

1:5
προορίσας ἡμᾶς εἰς νιοθεσιαν διὰ Ιησοῦ Χριστοῦ
Before see us into place of a son through Jesus

χριστου εἰς αὐτον, κατὰ τὴν εὐδοκίαν
Christ into him according to the well-seeming (delight)

του θελήματος αὐτοῦ,
of the will of Him

προορίσας ἡμᾶς εἰς νιοθεσιαν διὰ Ιησοῦ Χριστοῦ εἰς αὐτον κατὰ τὴν εὐδοκίαν τοῦ θελήματος αὐτοῦ.

Some translations of this:
"He destined us in love to be his sons through Jesus Christ” – Revised Standard Version
“He planned . . . that we should be adopted as his own children through Jesus Christ.” – Phillips
“and he destined us . . . to be accepted as his sons.” – New English Bible
“From the first he destined us . . . to be adopted as Sons through Jesus Christ.” – Twentieth Century NT
“Before see” proirisas (pro=before; oria=boundaries) means determine before, ordain, predestinate, to limit in advance, to mark out with a boundary beforehand

“place of a son” or “adopted” huiothesia (huios=son). This word was found in writings around 150-1 BC in documents and inscriptions. It is used to refer to a wealthy man who had no natural children. The wealthy man would adopt an adult male son to be his heir. Many times the son being adopted was a slave.

Used in:
- Romans 8:15
- Romans 8:23
- Romans 9:4 – one of Israel’s privileges was adoption as sons
- Galatians 4:5 – refers to becoming an adult son, adoption

In the OT God adopted Israel and not one of the “great nations” of the world:
- Hosea 11:1

The third description of the spiritual blessings:
3. In the place of an adult son

1:6
εἰς ἐπαίνον δόξης τῆς χαρίτος αὐτοῦ
Into on-praise (laud) of-glory of the grace of him

ης ἐχαρίτωσεν ημᾶς εν τῷ ἡγαπημένῳ,
which he graces us in the One-having-been-loved

εἰς ἐπαίνον δόξης τῆς χαρίτος αὐτοῦ ἢ ἐχαρίτωσεν ἡμᾶς ἐν τῷ ἡγαπημένῳ.

εἰς ἐπαίνον δόξης - “to the praise of his glorious...”
- In verse 12 and 14 a similar phrase is used but here the focus of praise is on God’s grace.
- In 12 and 14 the focus of praise is on God’s glory

1:7
εν ὦ εὖ ἐχομεν την ἀπολυτρώσιν δια
In whom we-are-having the from-loosening (deliverance) through

του αἵματος αὐτοῦ, την ἁφεσίν των
The blood of him the forgiveness of-the

παραπτωματον, κατὰ τὸ πλούτος τῆς
beside-falls (offenses) according-to the riches of the

χαρίτος αὐτοῦ,
grace of him
1:8
Which he-lavishes into us in every wisdom and disposition (prudence)