

The Centerpiece of All Time, Part I

Have you ever wondered why time exists?

God has no need for time; He inhabits eternity.

Isaiah 57:15:

For thus says the One who is high and lifted up,
who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy:

God's personal name and most frequent designation in Scripture is the Hebrew word יהוה *yhwh*, which is usually pronounced "Yahweh". Most often translated "LORD" or "Jehovah" in English versions, the name "Yahweh" (*yhwh*) occurs over 5,000 times in the Old Testament.

A centuries-old tradition in French Bibles translates "Yahweh" as "the Eternal One". An example is found in the first occurrence of the name in

Genesis 2:4 (Segond version, or LSG):

These are the origins of the heavens and the earth, when they were created. When the Eternal God made an earth and heavens,

How intriguing to note that it was the *Eternal* God who made the heavens and the earth, which in contrast to Him are *temporal*, anchored in time.

Genesis 1:14:

And God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night. And let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years,

An environment of days and nights and of seasons and years forms a distinct contrast with the immutable, Eternal One who doesn't change.

Malachi 3:6 (LSG):

For I am the Eternal One, I do not change; ...

Understanding these things leaves us with a question: If the Eternal God inhabits eternity, then *why does man live in a dimension of time?*

The answer lies in God's granting man *free will*.

Because free will allowed the possibility of disobedience, it also allowed the consequences of separation from God — including sin and death — when man chose to disobey.

Since God in His foreknowledge knew that man would disobey, He designed the creation to be time-limited so it could be salvaged after having been damaged by man's rebellion.

Romans 8:20:

For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

Temporal man's salvation would be the key to releasing the temporal creation from its bondage to corruption. But for this to ever occur, God knew in His wisdom that man could not live forever.

Genesis 3:22-24:

Then the LORD [or Eternal] God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil. Now, lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever—"

therefore the LORD [or Eternal] God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken.

He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.

Genesis 3:22 is the first occurrence of the word "forever" in the Bible. God did not want His man to live forever in his fallen state, because that would have consigned him to an eternity without God. Instead, He

chose to limit man to a temporal existence that would allow for God's introduction of His extraordinary plan of redemption.

The second occurrence of the word "forever" in the Bible is in

Genesis 6:3:

Then the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not abide in man forever, for he is flesh: his days shall be 120 years."

Being flesh and blood — with corrupted blood, no less — man would only have a limited period of time to live on earth. As part of the plan of redemption, God informed man that he would not live forever.

God determined that when the fullness of time would come, He would send His Son to redeem man as the Word made flesh.

Galatians 4:4,5:

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law,

to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.

John 1:14:

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

The Son of man was flesh and blood like you and me. He had a beginning as an earthly man — his birth — and he had an ending of that earthbound existence — when he gave up his life on the cross. But this would not be a final end, for three days later he got up from the dead in his resurrected body, never to die again.

Hebrews 2:14,15 (WNT):

Since then the children referred to are all alike sharers in perishable human nature, He Himself also, in the same way, took on Him a share of it [the flesh, but not the blood], in order that

through death He might render powerless him who had authority over death, that is, the Devil,

and might set at liberty all those who through fear of death had been subject to lifelong slavery.

Christ's crucifixion and resurrection broke the death-dealing power of the devil and secured man's redemption for eternity. That work was sealed when Christ ascended to be seated at God's right hand, leaving the reach of this earthly realm.

All of Christ's accomplished works in the plan of redemption — his crucifixion, his resurrection, and his ascension — *were carried out relative to time.*

All of Christ's works in the ages to come — his return for the Church, his administration of justice, his thousand-year reign, his triumph over death and his ushering in of the new heavens and earth — *will also be accomplished relative to time.*

This is why *Christ* fills the gap in the story of redemption, making him *the centerpiece of all time.* God acknowledges this to be true in

Hebrews 1:2 (WNT):

has at the end of these days spoken to us through a Son, who is the pre-destined Lord of the universe, and through whom He made the Ages.

God made the ages through Christ. What an incredible truth to realize! God as the Architect of all things designed the ages; His Son as the Builder is now "building out" the ages, personally deploying each stage.

Hebrews 3:3:

For Jesus has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses—as much more glory as the builder of a house has more honor than the house itself.

The Eternal God has an eternal purpose for the ages, and every bit of it centers around Christ. [Christ](#) continues to actively fulfill his role as [the one through whom God made the ages](#).

Ephesians 3:11 (DBY):

according to [the] purpose of the ages, which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord,

This world will pass, as revealed in

Psalm 102:24-27:

“O my God,” I say, “take me not away in the midst of my days— you whose years endure throughout all generations!”

Of old you laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands.

They will perish, but you will remain; they will all wear out like a garment. You will change them like a robe, and they will pass away,

but you are the same, and your years have no end.

God started this project of redemption, and with Christ He will finish it. That is why Hebrews tells us that this passage is not only talking about the Eternal Lord God, but also about His Son our lord.

Hebrews 1:10-13:

And, “You, Lord, laid the foundation of the earth in the beginning, and the heavens are the work of your hands;

they will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment,

like a robe you will roll them up, like a garment they will be changed. But you are the same, and your years will have no end.”

And to which of the angels has he ever said, “Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet”?

God's purpose of the ages stands unmovable for all time thanks to His partnership with His son in building out the ages to provide for man's redemption and salvation.

How thrilling to know that Jesus Christ will be right there at God's side when it comes time to roll out the third heaven and earth, and like God his years will have no end. As heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, we will get to enjoy that same unending paradise. What a wonderful Father, and what a wonderful Savior!