

## **Point 5. A Personal Sense of Destiny is Related to A Fortiori.**

We begin with a definition: A fortiori is a Latin prepositional phrase (meaning "with stronger reason") used as a system of ancient logic in which a greater is compared with a lesser and by comparison an obvious conclusion is formed.

Most of the time it is used with the phrase polloi mallon translated much more for example, Mat 6:26 **"Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, and {yet} your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they?"**

Mat 6:30 **"But if God so arrays the grass of the field, which is {alive} today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, {will He} not much more {do so for} you, O men of little faith?"**

Mat 7:11 **"If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him!"**

A fortiori was used as a system of debate, which takes an accepted fact as a premise and by comparison produces an inescapable fact. In the ancient world individuals who specialized in arguing and debating drew crowds throughout the streets as they would debate one on one with each other. They would take either side of any argument and try to prove that their side was right. These debaters were men with a very high IQ, They could take either side of an argument and win it. The apostle Paul used this in teaching many passages of the word of God including Rom 5:8 **"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."** Here we have the fact that the humanity of Christ died spiritually as a substitute for us, 1Co 11:24; 2Co 5:21; Gal 3:13. It was His spiritual death on the cross that paid the price for our sins. The substitutionary spiritual death of our Lord Jesus Christ on the cross is described quite

frequently by this Greek prepositional phrase “huper” plus the genitive of advantage from the personal pronoun “ego” which is “hemon” translated "for us".

This may seem too technical but it is a very important part of biblical theology. It is used to express substitution and can be translated in four different ways: instead of, in place of, on behalf of, or as a substitution for. He died spiritually for us and it is spiritual death that is separation from God, something that will never happen to us!

This death referred to His spiritual death on the cross and that is why we die physically but not spiritually. If He died physically instead of us, or in place of us, on behalf of us, or as a substitution for us, then we would not physically.

It is important to bear in mind this prepositional phrase “huper” plus the genitive plural of advantage because it is now going to become a part of an “a fortiori” concerning our personal sense of destiny.

There are many a fortiori passages but the a fortiori of a personal sense of destiny is introduced in Rom 8:31-32 **"Therefore, with reference to these things to what conclusion are we forced? If God is for us, who shall be against us? [the protasis of a first class condition which says in the Greek, He [God the Father] who did not even spare His own Son, but delivered Him over to judgment as a substitute for all of us [huper plus the genitive of advantage of ego] without exception, how shall He not with Him also graciously give to us the all things?"**

In this passage, the greater difficulty is Christ being judged on the Cross for our sins. The accepted fact is that God the Father imputed our sins to Christ on the Cross and judged every one of them.

The inescapable conclusion is that God graciously gives to the believer the all things, which begins at the moment of salvation with forty things, continues at the point of spiritual adulthood with escrow

blessings for time, and concludes at the judgment seat of Christ with escrow blessings for eternity.

prin-If the most difficult was accomplished at the Cross, it follows a fortiori that the least difficult can be accomplished for each Church-age believer regarding his spiritual life and experience.

And this refers to those two power options, those three spiritual skills and the ten problem solving devices with the resultant escrow blessings for time and the eternal state.

This results in an inescapable conclusion--if God accomplished the greater at the Cross, it is obvious that He can accomplish the lesser in divine provision of the most fantastic spiritual life for after our salvation.

God has given us everything that we need and we begin to recognize and really experience these things when we understand our personal sense of destiny.

Now, this same principle is taught in 2Co 12:9.

Paul came up with an a fortiori conclusion in this passage in a little different way.

And this is going to take some time and extreme concentration but when we're finished with the passage, you'll see how electrifying it is.

Actually the corrected translation should say, 2Co 12:7 "And for this reason, that I should not begin to become arrogant because of the extraordinary quality of revelations, I was given a thorn in the flesh, an angel from Satan that he might torment me, that I should not begin to become arrogant.

2Co 12:8 Concerning this I implored the Lord three times that it might leave me.

2CO 12:9 And He had assured me for my benefit, `My grace has been and still is sufficient for you. For My power is made operational in a state of weakness [human incapability to solve the problem; helplessness].` Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, that the power of Christ [the operational spiritual life] may dwell in me.

2CO 12:10 Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.

Now, in verse 9, notice the phrase "Most gladly therefore rather", Heedista oun mallon which is made up of two adverbs, a superlative adverb and a comparative adverb and in between you have the conjunction oun.

What does this mean?

According to A.T. Robertson, this is what is known as an elative superlative.

Let me give you a definition and some illustrations because this definitely has an application to your personal sense of destiny.

Elative is a grammatical term from the fifth century B.C. Athens Greek, which is a combination of a superlative adverb used with a

comparative adverb to indicate superiority through comparing one adverb with the other.

The superlative adverb is the adverb that indicates superiority.

It is the adverb of the highest order in the sentence, surpassing or superior to all others.

It is the extreme degree of comparison of between an adjective or adverb.

We are now noting in the doctrine of a personal sense of destiny, **Point** Actually the corrected translation should say, 2Co 12:7 "And for this reason, that I should not begin to become arrogant because of the extraordinary quality of revelations, I was given a thorn in the flesh, an angel from Satan that he might torment me, that I should not begin to become arrogant.

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He going to teach us that there is something that he discovered to solve his problems with that is ever greater than prayer and he is very happy or "Most gladly" willing to use what he discovered.

Now, with the superlative adverb, we have a comparative adverb.

The comparative adverb is related to the superlative adverb but to a lesser degree.

The comparative adverb in this sentence is *mallon* which is translated rather.

The comparative adverb indicates the choice for what is the superior factor or the absolute factor or the greatest thing in the sentence.

This means that the Attic Greek superlative is used in an absolute sense.

Another relative superlative is found in LUK 12:26 "If then you cannot do even a *very little* [the superlative adjective *elachiston*] thing, why are you anxious about other matters [comparative adjective *loipon*]?"

You see what it's saying with the relative superlative structure.

It is saying you can't even do a very little thing, why are you worrying about other matters that are even greater.

And Paul is going to teach us this same principle in 2Co 12:9.

He is going to say look I am facing insults or slandering (people testing), distresses or pressure (thought testing), persecutions (system testing or injustice), difficulties or troubles (disaster testing), and Most gladly I rejoice because of the power of God.

If you can't do very little in an area, it follows a fortiori you can't do more in that same area.

There's your system of logic.

This is why the relative superlative is related to a fortiori.

Another relative superlative is found in 1CO 4:3 But to me it is a very small [superlative-adjective *elachiston*] thing that I should be examined by you, or by any human [comparative adverb *anthropines*] court; in fact, I do not even examine myself.

You see this is an a fortiori from the opposite direction.

He is saying to me it's a very small matter to be judged by you, when I don't even care about being judged by any human court which is greater than you and has more authority than you.

Look at 1CO 6:2 Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world is judged by you, are you not competent [comparative adjectiveanaxioi] to constitute the smallest [superlative adjective elachiston] law courts?

1CO 6:2 Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world is judged by you, are you not competent [comparative adjectiveanaxioi] to constitute the smallest [superlative adjective elachiston] law courts?

If you're going to judge the world in the future are you not competent to take care of smaller matters?

PHI 4:22 All [the comparative adjectivepantes] the saints greet you, especially [superlative adverb malista] those of Caesar's household. The ones that really wanted to greet them were the ones of Caesar's household.

Another relative superlative can be expressed like GAL 6:10 So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all [the adjective pantas] men, and especially [superlative adverb malista] to those who are of the household of the faith.

We should do our best to operate in divine good especially to those of the household of faith, those doctrinal believers.

Now, back in our passage this superlative adverb is used only here and in verse 15.

2CO 12:15 And I will *most gladly* [superlative] spend and be expended for your souls. If I love you the *more*, [comparative] am I to be loved the less?

Now, what do these two adverbs do?



Well, when you have with them a conjunction like in our main passage 2Co 12:9, the conjunction *oun*, it is saying that one thing is better than another.

He is saying there's something greater than my weakness and problems with the lesser adverb *mallon* translated rather, and that something is found in the greater adverb "Most gladly".

He is saying that the power that God has provided with the two power options and the three spiritual skills and the ten problem solving devices are God's answers to our problems and the absolute and the only solution to our problems.

The comparative adverb, rather, says that the superlative adverb, Most gladly, is absolutely true and therefore eliminates any human viewpoint or power for the solutions to our problems and that we should be glad about it.

In other words, the comparative adverb *mallon* which says "rather" points to the superlative adverb *heedista* which is translated "most gladly."

Here is the superlative and is the comparative, and what do these two adverbs do?

When they have with them the inferential conjunction *oun* translated therefore, then you now compare the absolute from the superlative adverb Most gladly, with the comparative adverb *mallon*, translated rather.

And so the comparative adverb *mallon* translated rather says that there is something even greater to solve my thorn in the flesh problem and I am going to rely on that and be very happy about it, "Most gladly".

He discovered that there was something greater behind his personal sufferings and his problems and that something greater was his

personal sense of destiny and using the two power options and the three spiritual skills and the ten problem solving devices that God had provided for him.

And this is important because in our passage he is saying that there is something greater to solve my problem with my thorn in the flesh including prayer.

What is it Paul?

The two power options, the three spiritual skills, and the ten problem solving devices are greater than yelling "Help O God", in prayer.

Prayer is not a problem solving device.

We do not use prayer to employ God to do what we want done.

Too many believers use prayer to try and get their own way, not God's way.

That's why prayer must be compatible with God's will and God's way, not our will and our way.

Prayer is not designed to get us out of trouble.

And in 2Co 12:7-10, Paul prayed three times that God would remove his thorn in the flesh.

This was a prayer that could not be answered.

The motivation was wrong and the prayer was wrong.

Again the corrected translation should say, 2Co 12:7 "And for this reason, that I should not begin to become arrogant because of the extraordinary quality of revelations, I was given a thorn in the flesh, an angel from Satan that he might torment me, that I should not begin to become arrogant.

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2CO 12:10 Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.

There is a reason for everything that happens to the believer.

Paul was not out of fellowship.

The prayer was not answered to teach Paul the importance of handling suffering for blessing with the two power options and the three spiritual skills and the ten problem solving devices.

It is not wrong to pray for people who are sick.

And it is not wrong for people who are sick to pray for help, but remember that prayer is not a problem-solving device.

Four of the thorns are mentioned in verse 10, slandering (people testing), pressure (thought testing), persecutions (system testing or injustice), troubles (terrible anguish).

Whatever the function of the thorn demon, it brought Paul to a state of preventative suffering.

Being in fellowship, Paul offered a prayer that could not and was not answered.

Prayer was the wrong solution, therefore, it was not answered.

Offering this prayer three times was an abuse of prayer by Paul.

Paul prayed intensely and urgently for this thorn to be removed.

But, Paul applied the wrong solution to the problem.

Paul was wrong to use prayer because this called for the use of the problem solving devices.

If God had answered Paul's prayer, Paul would have missed out on one of the greatest blessings of life.

The Lord did not even answer Paul and then after he had prayed the wrong prayer three times, he remembered and recalled what the Lord had said.

2CO 12:9 And He had assured me for my benefit, `My grace has been and still is sufficient for you. For My power is made operational in a state of weakness [human incapability to solve the problem; helplessness].` Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, that the power of Christ [the operational spiritual life] may dwell in me.

The pain was so intense that Paul skipped his spiritual life and went to prayer.

He put prayer before the spiritual life, instead of the spiritual life before prayer.

Growth is in the spiritual life, not in prayer.

People often want you to pray for them when they are hurting, and it may be God's means of promoting them.

prin-What the Lord does not remove He intends for us to resolve in some other way within the framework of our spiritual life through the function of the ten problem solving devices.

We live in an age of the greatest power that has ever been given to the ordinary believer.

The power at your disposal is phenomenal, but you will never touch it without straightening out your values and functioning on a consistent basis with the spiritual skills.

You do not need a miracle from God; you have far superior power to miracles.

God does not need to perform miracles, when He has given us assets that were pioneered and tested by Christ in the dispensation of the hypostatic union.

You have more power available to you than all of the Old Testament miracles put together.

Paul was asking the Lord to remove the basis for his promotion to spiritual maturity, and God's answer was "No, No, No."

You do not pray about adversity, you use your problem solving devices.

Paul's thorn in the flesh suffering is the divine initiative of grace, designed for the function of grace orientation to pass the final test of Paul's spiritual maturity.

Paul's suffering was designed to be part of the principle of Rom 8:28, "For we know that to those who love God, He causes all things to work together for good, even to those who are called on the basis of a predetermined plan."

Paul's suffering was designed to have grace orientation and personal love for God the Father deployed and functioning on the FLOT line of his soul.

If God answers Paul's prayer and takes away the thorn in the flesh and removes the suffering, it would destroy the only offensive action left to Paul to reach the highest stage of the spiritual life.

The function of the problem solving devices on the FLOT line of the soul take precedence over removal of the suffering and adversity involved.

Suffering is your friend, not your enemy.

Use your problem solving devices.

Certain categories of suffering for blessing are absolutely necessary for spiritual momentum for the execution of the PPOG and for glorifying God.

And when you pass this kind of a test, the elect angels are standing and cheering you.

There is far greater power in the problem solving devices deployed on the FLOT line of the soul against suffering, than the power of suffering to destroy the spiritual skills with the arrogance skills.

Paul is in danger of destroying his spiritual skills by entering into the arrogance skills.

What God does not remove, He intends for us to endure.

Not through the function of prayer, but through the problem solving devices.

The problem solving devices are designed to deal with every category of suffering, converting it into momentum and blessing.

Remove the suffering and you remove the blessing.

Take the suffering out of your life and you destroy the spiritual momentum of your life.

Suffering is often designed by God as a field training exercise, preparing you for every crisis in your life.

The removal of suffering is not a solution.

The solution is in using the problem solving devices.

God intends for us to go through suffering with flying colors.

Believers who pray for miracles never understand the power and grace of God.

Effective prayer is the result of spiritual growth, but never the means of spiritual growth.



Paul's greater effectiveness in prayer came from Paul's understanding and using the problem solving devices.

The effectiveness of prayer demands the function of the spiritual life.

Prayer is the extension of the spiritual life; it is not the means of executing the spiritual life.

You are not spiritual because you prayer; you pray because you are spiritual.

Prayer is not the spiritual life.

Suffering is not your enemy (except when you are under divine discipline).

Suffering is your friend, when God designs it for your blessing.

So verse 9 gives us Paul's elative superlative.

2CO 12:9 And He had assured me for my benefit, `My grace has been and still is sufficient for you.

My grace is sufficient means that Paul discovered that the divine opinion and divine conclusion is the absolute truth and only solution to our problems.

In our dispensation, there is only one solution for any problem in life including the thorn in the flesh problem that caused Paul to turn to a prayer that would never be answered with regard to taking it away.

Instead he found out why he had it.

We may not understand it at the time but the divine solutions are given to eliminate the human solutions to our problems.

Paul had the thorn in the flesh and prayed three times that it be taken away.

But the thorn in the flesh demanded divine solutions not human solutions.

The divine solution is "My grace has been and still is sufficient for you."

You have the two power options and the spiritual skills with the ten problem solving devices and do not need any human solution.

So Paul says "Most gladly therefore I would rather boast about my weakness [why?] that the power of Christ may reside in me."

Paul recognized that a part of a personal sense of destiny is that the divine solutions were the only solutions and human solutions are no solutions to certain problems in life.

God in His grace permits the thorn in the flesh suffering for blessing and provides the divine solution, the grace solution in the problem solving devices.

The relative superlative emphasizes the absolutes of the spiritual life and excludes manmade relative solutions or human viewpoint, human solutions.

Therefore the divine solution is the only solution.

The grace solution glorifies God and therefore the relative superlative perceives the absolutes of the divine solution as the grace solution related to the problem solving devices deployed on the FLOT line of the soul.

Since grace solutions are divine solutions, they exclude human solutions and human viewpoint--such as in this context the misuse of prayer.

But there are other human viewpoint solutions.

Human viewpoint solutions in psychology.

Human viewpoint solutions in philosophy.

The arrogance skills and the defense mechanisms.

Legalism instead of grace.

Ignorance instead of cognition, gimmicks instead of doctrine.

The relative superlative emphasizes the fact that the deployment of problem solving devices on the FLOT line of the soul provide the only accurate application of Bible doctrine to our experience.

This application of Bible doctrine to experience through problem solving devices results in a personal sense of destiny.

A personal sense of destiny as a problem-solving device is founded on the absolutes of metabolized doctrine circulating in the believer's soul.

When the believer begins with God's grace, he ends up with God's power--the two power options.

And so the divine initiative of grace permits the thorn in the flesh suffering for blessing and provides the grace solutions in the two power options and the three spiritual skills with the ten problem solving devices.

And in Paul's case a personal sense of destiny.

In this passage, Paul is emphasizing the absolutes of the spiritual life and excludes manmade relative solutions.

The grace solution glorifies God.

So since grace solutions are divine solutions they exclude human solutions and human viewpoint.

In this context we have a misuse of prayer.

But there are four phrases in 2Co 12:9 to illustrate this principle.

The first part of God's answer, My grace has been and still is sufficient for you.

My grace has been refers to the divine objective of grace from eternity past providing for us our very own portfolio with those invisible assets.

My grace has been and still is sufficient for you.

My grace still is refers to the divine objective of grace in time, which is the utilization of the two power options and the three spiritual skills and the ten problem solving devices.

And this is how an invisible hero is manufactured.

And so the Lord said to Paul in 2CO 12:9 Then He assured me for my benefit, `My grace has been and still is sufficient for you. For My power is perfected in weakness.

The word perfected here is the pres-pass-ind of the verb teleioo (tel-i-o'-o); meaning complete, accomplished, to be made operational.

2CO 12:9 Then He assured me for my benefit, `My grace has been and still is sufficient for you. For My power is made operational in a state of weakness [human incapability to solve the problem; helplessness].

And weakness, astheneia means helplessness, feebleness, powerlessness and incapacity.

No human power is adequate.

And therefore when we finally come to the end of our rope and there is no solution, God says My power is made operational in your status of weakness [human incapability to solve the problem; helplessness].'

And then comes the elative superlative Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, that the power of Christ [the operational spiritual life] may dwell in me.

Why?

Because we recognize that as a part of our personal sense of destiny, that God's solutions are the only solutions to certain problems in life that we face.

And this is the thorn in the flesh problem.

The only solution is the divine solution and this is why we need to recognize our personal sense of destiny and the ten problem solving devices.

2CO 12:9 Then He assured me for my benefit, `My grace has been and still is sufficient for you. For My power is made operational in a state of weakness [human incapability to solve the problem; helplessness].' Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, [why] that the power of Christ [the operational spiritual life] may dwell or reside in me.

Therefore, the elative superlative an attachment and expansion to a fortiori.

And therefore with this rationalization we can conclude that we have the privilege and opportunity to have the greatest meaningful life in the world.