



BIBLICAL HISTORY

Discovering God's Blueprint for Humankind Through Scripture



In the beginning...

God had big plans: The Garden of Eden was to be His temple-garden, His holy dwelling place on earth. This garden would grow and expand until it filled the whole earth. Mankind (Adam and Eve) was in a covenant of creation (a covenant of grace) that required obedience to God. This was one of two covenants that depended on man's obedience, the second being the future Sinai covenant. The covenant of creation required man to be:

- 1) The image of God on Earth. Much as kings placed statues of themselves throughout their territory, so Man was made to be God's image, their presence marking His kingdom on Earth. As they were "fruitful" and multiplied, the whole earth would be filled with God's image (marking the whole earth as God's kingdom).
- 2) Caretakers of His Garden. Man was given authority over all things on earth as God's "viceroys". Man was to care for all natural things, including plants, animals, and the garden (the environment). In turn, God would make earth a habitable environment which would sustain Man.
- 3) God's priests. God walked among the Garden, living in loving fellowship with Adam and Eve as they worshipped and obeyed His will.

...until along came a serpent.



What does it mean to be created in God's image?

- ▶ Living a life of holiness and obedience to God is certainly part of it, but that's not the complete meaning. The God of the Bible is a Holy Trinity, three beings who together form one whole God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. These spiritual beings exist in a harmonious, interdependent relationship. This relationship is one of a constant exchange of life, energy, love, support, submission, and caring for one another. In other words, God is a "triune" being (three in one).
- ▶ Mankind is also a triune being like his creator, formed of a body/flesh, a soul, and a spirit in one.

The Tree of Life

- ▶ Our triune form was intended to be filled by the Holy Spirit with the same love, energy, sustenance, and caring found in the Holy Trinity. In that way, we would experience fellowship with God and reflect His holiness on earth.
- ▶ To that end, within the Garden of Eden was the Tree of Life, the fruit of which was filled with this holy spiritual essence of God. When consumed by God's image—mankind—His spirit would be poured into man, bringing man into this perfect fellowship...*until along came a serpent.*

The Fall of Man

When Satan, in the form of a serpent in the Garden of Eden, appealed to Eve to eat from a different tree, he was appealing to the fleshly and soulish aspects of man's nature. Man's flesh and soul are vulnerable to temptation to pursue personal gratification rather than holy living (what theologians call "*the noetic effect of sin*"). The serpent tempted Eve with promises that the Tree of Knowledge would make man like God, that it would impart Godly power to man, and that it would put man—rather than God—in control. Even today, man's nature strives for individual success, power, fleshly pleasures, and gratification...in other words, soulish temptations.

In consuming the wrong fruit, the triune vessel of man was filled with sin and became Satan's image rather than God's image. This corruption would be inherited by Adam and Eve's off-spring. Worse, as good could not exist within the same vessel as evil, it was no longer possible for man to be filled with God's Spirit or share in fellowship with Him. The earth was now filled with the image of Satan and became a kingdom of sin rather than a kingdom of holiness.

The fall of man does not owe just to eating from the forbidden tree—Adam and Eve had failed in their responsibilities as God's priests, viceroys, and caretakers of His Garden. Their response to the presence of the serpent required them to cast it out of the Garden. Instead, Eve engaged in a conversation with the serpent and allowed it to tempt her into rebelling against God. For his part, Adam witnessed what was happening. He should have cast out the serpent, but he allowed himself to be drawn into rebellion alongside Eve. Because all mankind descends from Adam, we are born into the same corruption of his "original sin". The sin will be removed by the "second Adam"—the Messiah.

The Fall of Man

It was not only man that was corrupted by Adam and Eve's rebellion against God: Nature itself was polluted by the sin. Man would now labor and toil for survival. Women would give birth in pain. Everything in nature would be subject to decay and death.

Adam and Eve were cast from the Garden before they could eat from the Tree of Life. Though this was in part punishment for their rebellion, it is also an act of God's wisdom and mercy. God had established a covenant of creation with mankind as a collective. Obedience to the law would have provided a way to eternal life and fellowship with the Holy Trinity. Instead, humankind now existed in a fallen condition that could only lead them to judgement and death. We were without hope of the fellowship with the Holy Trinity that God originally intended (God's nature is truth, love, righteousness, and justice. He has no fellowship with wickedness). **Had Adam and Eve eaten from the tree, there would be no hope of redemption from our corrupted nature, only an eternity hopelessly mired in the misery of our sinful condition.**

Mankind lives in this corruption to this day, doomed to suffering, death, and eternity apart from God. Man would thus be divided in two warring houses: The children of the Woman (Eve) are those who still seek God's redemption and follow His will and the children of the serpent, who pursue the corrupt, soulish temptations of this fallen world. However, one thing has changed: The promised seed of Eve did indeed come as God promised and crush the head of the serpent, Satan.



God is going to fix it (Redemptive History Begins)

It is not God's will that His created image (man) should be doomed to death and eternity apart from Him. Even as man fell into sin, God set a plan to redeem man from sin back into fellowship with Him and form a new heaven and earth free from sin (a New Creation).

Biblical history is studied by "epochs" (periods of distinctive theological changes—in other words, it is dividing according to God's acts of intervention, redemption, judgment, rescue, and other significant revelations).

Most of these "epochs" are marked by divine covenants between God and Mankind. Such covenants are rooted in God making promises which He will fulfill not because mankind deserves them but out of God's unfailing grace. These covenant promises move biblical history closer to God's final plans for the New Creation (the New Jerusalem).

➤ **THE COVENANTS OF BIBLICAL HISTORY**

➤ 1) Adamic Covenant

➤ 2) Covenant with Noah & Creation

➤ 3) Abrahamic Covenant

➤ 4) Mosaic Covenant

➤ 5) Palestine/Sinai Covenant

➤ 6) Davidic Covenant

➤ 7) New Covenant (Eucharistic)



Eschatology and Redemptive History

Sounds like a mouthful, but it boils down to this: God is the architect of human history. We see that His ultimate purpose is to guide mankind towards redemption. In redeeming us from sin that humanity might finally come into eternal fellowship with God and that He might dwell alongside mankind in a temple that will span the earth. Next time, it will be the temple-city of New Jerusalem rather than the Garden of Eden. Christ will return as King to defeat the enemy and all forces of wickedness on this earth, time as humans understand it will come to an end as eternal life begins, and victorious Christ will restore to God the throne over all creation. This new creation will be unblemished by sin.


“Eschatology” is the study of these final things, particularly the return of Christ. The problem is that theologians can only seem to agree that Christ *will* return, that the dead will be resurrected, and that there will be a final judgement of all mankind. They can only speculate, however, on *how* these events will transpire.

THE ADAMIC COVENANT

The story of the Garden of Eden and the Fall of Man gave us the background for this first biblical covenant.

This covenant also sees the first mention of the Gospel in the Bible. God responds to Adam and Eve's disobedience with the justice that His righteous nature requires, yet at the same time He proclaims the Gospel of a future "seed" who will redeem mankind from the fall.

- ▶ HUMANITY WAS CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE. MAN IS CALLED TO SERVE AS GOD'S ROYAL PRIESTS (VICEROYS) ON THIS EARTH, TO HAVE DOMINION OVER CREATION AND TO FILL THE EARTH WITH GOD'S IMAGE (TO BE FRUITFUL AND MULTIPLY THAT MAN—CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE---WILL FILL THE EARTH)
- ▶ GOD'S ULTIMATE PURPOSE IS THAT THE WHOLE EARTH WILL BE A PLACE WHERE HE CAN DWELL ALONGSIDE HIS PEOPLE. NO OTHER GOD EVER DWELLED AMONG MAN.
- ▶ THE SEED OF THE WOMAN, EVE, WILL BE IN CONFLICT WITH THE SEED OF THE SERPENT (SATAN). ONE DAY, THE WOMAN'S OFF-SPRING WILL CRUSH THE SERPENT. THIS OFF-SPRING WILL BE CHRIST, WHO WILL DESCEND FROM THE LINE OF EVE THROUGH HER SON, SETH.
- ▶ *We will see in the complicated history of Israel that the serpent sets out from this point to thwart God's plans for a promised savior. Satan is surely at the heart of Pharaoh's efforts to destroy the Hebrews by murdering their sons and in King Herod's massacre of the children of Bethlehem. Satan would sow discord in David's line of descendants that threatened to wipe his family (and the promised Messiah) from existence. He would fuel the cries of the crowd to crucify Christ. Through it all, God protects the seed of the woman to preserve the line of the promised Messiah. Ultimately, as God promises now, Satan will be defeated, and Christ will reign forever.*



THE NOAHIC COVENANT (NOAH AND THE GREAT FLOOD – GENESIS 9:8-17)

God's nature includes uncompromising justice and righteousness. It is important to understand this as one examines biblical history.

In the days of Noah, mankind had increased in wicked behavior and rebelliousness against God (for example in the construction of the Tower of Babel). It was not God's desire that His whole creation be wiped from the earth, yet creation was permeated by the infection of sin thanks to the workings of the serpent. Moreover, God had given His word that one day the seed of the woman, Eve, would crush Satan and defeat sin. This could not happen if all the seed of Eve was wiped from the earth in the flood. It would be necessary for a remnant of mankind to be preserved so that God's redemptive plans could continue.

“Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him: “I now establish my covenant with you and with your descendants after you and with every living creature that was with you—the birds, the livestock and all the wild animals, all those that came out of the ark with you—every living creature on earth. I establish my covenant with you: Never again will all life be destroyed by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth.”

And God said, “This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all generations to come: I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth. Whenever I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will remember my covenant between me and you and all living creatures of every kind. Never again will the waters become a flood to destroy all life. Whenever the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and all living creatures of every kind on the earth.”

“So God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant I have established between me and all life on the earth.”

The Noahic Covenant (cont.)

NOAH

Noah was counted as righteous because he *believed* God's Word when the Lord prophesized the Great Flood and because he *obeyed* God's command to build the Ark. Abraham would later also be called righteous for believing God and obeying Him.


This is a lesson in the *covenantal relationship* between God and man:

- 1) God makes a promise, a revelation of some piece of His redemptive blueprint for history
- 2) Man responds with belief and obedience or doubt and rebellion
- 3) God blesses or punishes man based upon man's response.

THE COVENANT

- 1) God promises that the seasons, day, and night will continue for as long as earth endures.
- 2) This means that mankind will have an environment which will sustain him until God's plan is achieved.

Look it up: Noah responds to God's salvation by building altars and worshipping (Genesis 8:20). Noah is acting in man's status as royal priests and viceroys. Moreover, in Genesis 9:1, God repeats His command that man be fruitful and fill the earth.



THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT: THE LESSONS OF SODOM & GOMORRAH (Genesis 19)

We saw previously in the story of the great flood that God's nature cannot tolerate sinfulness.

God's destruction of these cities was in response to a continuous outcry from those who suffered at the hands of the sinful people of Sodom and Gomorrah. God hears the cries of those who suffer. A few centuries later, God would respond again to the outcry of the Hebraic descendants of Abraham during their enslavement in Egypt (Exodus 2:23-24)

The Lord is also merciful and cares for His own. He had promised to spare the city if even ten righteous people could be found among them. He forestalled judgement to give the people time to repent and rescued Lot's family.

- ▶ God will judge those who reject Him. This time in history *will* come as it did for Sodom & Gomorrah. Jesus warns the Day of Judgement will be worse for sinners than what befell Sodom and Gomorrah.
- ▶ Lot had accompanied Abraham when the latter was called by God to go to the land of the Canaanites. Lot believed God, but in remaining in Sodom, he allowed himself to be influenced by the inhabitants of Sodom more than he influenced them. He chose to dwell among the wicked. Sin has that power to entice man, to lead us where we should not go.
- ▶ It is unclear whether Lot ever spoke about God to the sinful people of Sodom and Gomorrah. As Christians, we cannot allow temptations or pressures of sinful culture to give us pause or hesitancy in speaking about Christ. Is it possible more people might have been saved in Sodom had Lot told them of God? We shall never know, but Christians must speak in this world so that others have the chance at salvation and life.
- ▶ In the middle of enacting punishment, God still demonstrated mercy on Lot's family. God's love and grace are as intrinsic as justice and righteousness to His nature.



THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT

- ▶ To make a great nation of Abraham and make his name great so that he will be a blessing.
- ▶ To bless those who bless him and curse those who curse him.
- ▶ That all people of the earth will be blessed through Abraham.
- ▶ To give the Promised Land to his descendants ('the whole land of Canaan').
- ▶ That this would happen through Abraham and Sarah's son, Isaac, not through Abraham's son, Ishmael (born to Hagar).

WHY?

- 1) When God promised Abraham a son, Sarah tried to fulfill God's promise through her own efforts giving Hagar to be the birth mother. A covenant is not fulfilled by man's actions, it is a gift. God alone made it possible for Sarah to bear Isaac.
- 2) God had chosen Abraham to be the conduit of man's redemption, to establish the line from which the Messiah would descend.
- 3) God was creating a chosen people to be the image of His righteous and holy nature among the nations of the earth so others would be drawn to Him to be saved. Israel did nothing to earn this honor (in fact, biblical history shows they were frequently sinful and disobedient towards God). it was a gift of God's grace.

BIBLICAL TEXTS OF THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT (The Covenant of Grace)

“The LORD had said to Abram, “Go from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you. “I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.”

So Abram went, as the LORD had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Harran. He took his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, all the possessions they had accumulated and the people they had acquired in Harran, and they set out for the land of Canaan, and they arrived there.


Abram traveled through the land as far as the site of the great tree of Moreh at Shechem. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. The LORD appeared to Abram and said, “To your offspring I will give this land.” So he built an altar there to the LORD, who had appeared to him. (Genesis 12:1-7)

Did you notice? Like Noah, Abram (Abraham) builds altars and worships in his status as priest and viceroy. Also, like Noah, Abram believes God and obeys God’s commands. The obedience of man to God’s covenantal command frees God to enact His gifts of grace. It is man agreeing to receive God’s gift, not doing something to earn it, for God’s grace is unearned and undeserved.

“The LORD said to Abram after Lot had parted from him, “Look around from where you are, to the north and south, to the east and west. All the land that you see I will give to you and your offspring forever. I will make your offspring like the dust of the earth, so that if anyone could count the dust, then your offspring could be counted. Go, walk through the length and breadth of the land, for I am giving it to you.” So Abram went to live near the great trees of Mamre at Hebron, where he pitched his tents. There he built an altar to the LORD.” (Genesis 13:14-18)

And Abram said, “You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir.” Then the word of the LORD came to him: “This man will not be your heir, but a son who is your own flesh and blood will be your heir.” He took him outside and said, “Look up at the sky and count the stars—if indeed you can count them.” Then he said to him, “So shall your offspring be.” Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness. (Genesis 15:3-6)

Did you notice? This covenant with Abraham is reaffirmed with Isaac and with Isaac’s son, Jacob. God is thereafter sometimes referred to as “the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob” both to distinguish Him from any other gods and as a reminder of His covenant promise to Abraham and its importance in redemptive history.



“When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to him and said, “I am God Almighty; walk before me faithfully and be blameless. Then I will make my covenant between me and you and will greatly increase your numbers.”

Abram fell facedown, and God said to him, “As for me, this is my covenant with you: You will be the father of many nations. No longer will you be called Abram; your name will be Abraham, for I have made you a father of many nations. I will make you very fruitful; I will make nations of you, and kings will come from you. I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you. The whole land of Canaan, where you now reside as a foreigner, I will give as an everlasting possession to you and your descendants after you; and I will be their God.”

Note: God's covenant's follow the “God promise-human response-God blesses or punishes” format. Circumcision does not earn the blessings that God has promised Abraham, it is a response of faith which enables God to fulfill His promise.

Then God said to Abraham, “As for you, you must keep my covenant, you and your descendants after you for the generations to come. This is my covenant with you and your descendants after you, the covenant you are to keep: Every male among you shall be circumcised. You are to undergo circumcision, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and you. For the generations to come every male among you who is eight days old must be circumcised, including those born in your household or bought with money from a foreigner—those who are not your offspring. Whether born in your household or bought with your money, they must be circumcised. My covenant in your flesh is to be an everlasting covenant. Any uncircumcised male, who has not been circumcised in the flesh, will be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant.”

God also said to Abraham, “As for Sarai your wife, you are no longer to call her Sarai; her name will be Sarah. I will bless her and will surely give you a son by her. I will bless her so that she will be the mother of nations; kings of peoples will come from her.” Abraham fell facedown; he laughed and said to himself, “Will a son be born to a man a hundred years old? Will Sarah bear a child at the age of ninety?” And Abraham said to God, “If only Ishmael might live under your blessing!” Then God said, **“Yes, but your wife Sarah will bear you a son, and you will call him Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him.”** (Genesis 17:1-19)



THE MOSAIC COVENANT

(a.k.a. The Law of Moses – Exodus 19-24)

Why would this covenant be conditional when the other covenants were centered on God's grace and decisions? In other words: If man can do nothing to earn salvation, why did God establish the "Law of Moses"?

- 1) To make believers aware of their inability to fulfill all God's standards of holiness so that they recognize their need for Jesus Christ. This was proven true by Israel's historic inability to obey all that the Lord required in biblical times (which was marked by disobedience, sin, and idolatry).
- 2) The Law was to guide Israel as God's special nation of priests in their predetermined role to expand God's kingdom to the ends of the earth. By virtue of the central location of the Promised Land along trade routes, the entire nation would be on display before the world. The Law showed them how to live holy lives that glorified God for all to see. People were meant to see the light of God by the way that Israel lived so they would be drawn to salvation. Conversely, foreigners would also see that He was the God of Justice by the way He punished disobedience in Israel—particularly by their exile to Babylon.
- 3) As part of this, other nations would see what it meant to be in relationship with God, starting with the remarkable fact that God would dwell among His people in the Jerusalem temple. No other God dwelled among man as God did in His tabernacles and temples.
- 4) God anticipated Israel's failure and exile and knew that to completely wipe them from the earth for their disobedience would mean the end of His blueprint for redemptive history. He promised to preserve a remnant of Israel during the exile so that they could be restored to Israel so they would once again prosper and increase in numbers...numbers which would include the future Messiah. He would not allow the Hebraic nation to be completely absorbed and assimilated by the Babylonian culture and religions.



THE PROMISES OF THE MOSAIC COVENANT

- Israel would be God's special possession
- Israel would be a kingdom of God's priests
- Israel would be a holy nation
- God would fight for Israel and overcome all her enemies
- God would treat Israel with mercy and grace and forgive all her sins (as we see with the Babylonian exile, God's forgiveness does NOT preclude promised punishments for disobedience. Though there are consequences for sin, God will never break His promise of salvation of those who are in sincere, faithful relationship with Him and believe in the one He has sent. Blaspheming the Holy Spirit is the only unpardonable sin mentioned in the Bible).



The Palestinian/Sinai Covenant (Deuteronomy 28)

The Palestine/Sinai Covenant builds on the Mosaic covenant, but it is different that the previous covenants that God made with man: It contained nothing that obligated God but rather its commands were to be fulfilled through Israel's obedience. As history demonstrated, Israel failed in obedience to God, falling instead into wickedness, idolatry, and violence that would ultimately lead to its downfall.

Their failure, however, did not override the covenants God had made with Abraham or Moses or the future covenant He would make with King David. God will do what He says He will do.

- ▶ The Mosaic Covenant gave us the Ten Commandments and the Law of Moses. It was a bilateral covenant in which the people were responsible to obey God's law and God was responsible to bless and protect Israel.
- ▶ Made while the Hebrews were waiting to enter the Promised Land, just as God had promised Abraham centuries earlier.
- ▶ God reiterates the Law of Moses and foretells Israel's disobedience and exile to a foreign nation.
- ▶ God promises not only to restore Israel after the exile, but to change their hearts towards God so that they are able to love and obey Him and receive His redemption and salvation.



The Exodus: God as our kinsman-redeemer

The Mosaic Covenant comes about in stages which begin with God rescuing Abraham's descendants from Egypt. He did so to honor His promise to Abraham and to establish the holy nation required for His plans for the redemption of all mankind. God was acting as their kinsman-redeemer (see Leviticus 25:25 and the book of Ruth). Hebraic tradition held that when a man or woman was in debt, slavery, or other oppression, a kinsman could purchase or redeem them to gain their freedom. A redeemer had to be a blood relative, willing and able to pay a kinsman's debt in full.

God's actions in redeeming the Hebrews from Egypt not only establishes that they are His nation, it establishes Abraham's family as God's redeemed family...a family into which Gentiles could one day be adopted (and saved) through the work of Christ the Messiah.

When a man—born Jewish or Gentile—receives Christ as Savior, he is considered as one who was born into Abraham's family and shares in the covenantal promises that God made to Abraham.

When we consider ourselves as enslaved and oppressed by sin, a debt that can only be paid through death, we begin to understand Jesus' role as our kinsman-redeemer.

- 1) A redeemer had to be a kinsman, of like kind. Jesus had to become flesh to be of like kind to those whom He would redeem. Sin had entered the world through one man (Adam); salvation would have to enter the world through another man (Jesus).
- 2) Jesus was willing to redeem mankind. He willingly offered Himself to pay the penalty of death, taking the place of all mankind.
- 3) Jesus was able to redeem mankind. Humanity had placed itself into the oppression and death of sin through disobedience to God. Jesus had lived a life of perfect obedience to God, making Him the only man who could satisfy the requirement as a perfect, blameless, sacrificial lamb.
- 4) This was complete redemption—the whole debt was paid. We are saved from death.



The Exodus and the Future Messiah

The Exodus from Slavery to a Holy Nation

- ▶ Hebrews were spared from the plague of death in Egypt by the blood of the sacrificial Passover Lamb.
- ▶ The Passover Lamb was without blemish. It was held for several days to ensure it was without blemish.
- ▶ The Exodus brought the Hebrews out of slavery and oppression in Egypt.
- ▶ The blood of the Passover lamb had to be applied to the doorpost and its flesh had to be consumed so that the Hebrews would be saved.
- ▶ The Hebrews obeyed these commands and were saved by God's covenant promises.

Exodus from Sin to Salvation

- ▶ Man is spared from death and eternal separation from God by the blood of the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ.
- ▶ Christ was without sin (blemish). He was tempted and tested for several days by the enemy.
- ▶ Christ leads an Exodus out of sin and oppression by the enemy.
- ▶ The blood of Christ must be applied to our hearts through repentance and faith, and we must "consume" Him by internalizing His Word and living as Christ lived in obedience to God.
- ▶ Man believes and receives Jesus' as our Lamb and is saved by God's covenant promises.

The Exodus and the Theocracy of Israel

- ▶ God's election of Israel as His chosen people marked humankind's return to their original purpose in God's plans: Priest-kings designated to extend His kingdom to the ends of the earth. They would establish God's temple-city on earth. Israel became a **theocracy**.
- ▶ Human kingship is often corrupted by the influence of sin (even Kings David and Solomon gave in to temptations). Human kings used power for control, status, and acquisition of wealth.
- ▶ Humans tend to dethrone God. Israel's new status depended on their obedience of God. However, God anticipated their future disobedience and exile and made provisions for it.
- ▶ Every Israelite was to see himself as liberated from the corrupt human kingship of Egypt, moved to God's loving, divine kingship.
- ▶ Giving their allegiance and obedience to God as their divine king gave Israelites a priestly status. Again, God anticipated their rejection of Him as their king and their demands for a human king (with the resulting corruptions that would follow). We know this because God promised Abraham that his descendants would include kings (plural).
- ▶ At times, Israelites strayed into divine worship of false gods, to worshipping God nominally or not at all, to ignoring the warnings God sent through His prophets. Their failures impeded but did not derail God's redemptive plan.
- ▶ The coming of Jesus Christ (the king descendant of Abraham through the line of King David) replaced the theocracy of Israel and inaugurated the permanent Kingdom of God. Every believer today is a resident of that kingdom—and that is right now, in the present---meant to live as

Joseph's Role in Redemptive History

The story of the Exodus is incomplete without mention of the twelve sons of Jacob, for whom the twelve tribes of Israel are named. His sons were: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph, and Benjamin (the latter two being born to Rachel). Among them, Joseph is the only son whose name is missing from the twelve tribes of Israel. After being reunited with Joseph in Egypt, Jacob adopted Joseph's two sons—Ephraim and Manasseh—as his own sons. The two “half” tribes of Israel were named after Joseph's off-spring (which means there were in fact 13 tribes. Seriously. But the Levites did not receive land, they received priestly responsibility for the temple, which provided for their needs. God was their share and portion. Thus, 12 tribes.) Judah, from who Jesus descends, would be regarded as “the tribe of kings”.

Did you know: If you connect the meanings of each son's name, collectively it means: *“Because the LORD (my husband) has looked upon me and seen my affliction. Because the LORD (my husband) has heard me how I feel unloved. Now He will become attached to me. I will praise the LORD. Judge. I have Struggled. He has granted me good fortune. Happy am I. He has given me my reward. He is dwelling with me. He (will add) added unto me another son. A Son of His right hand.”*

W.A. Criswell describes it best: *“When we read of the sufferings of Joseph and of his glorious exaltation, we are reading exactly what happened to our Lord Jesus Christ. When we speak of Joseph, we speak of a blameless life. We speak of his father's love. We speak of one sent for his lost brethren. We speak of one placed in the pit, stripped of his robe, and sold for silver, and delivered to the Gentiles. Then we speak of his life in the dark land of Egypt. Then we speak of his Gentile bride, his elevation to the kingship of the land. And finally, of the revelation of who he is to his brethren who have been saved from death through him.”*

Not only then, is Joseph's story a type foreshadowing Christ, God allowed Joseph to be betrayed and taken to captivity to preserve redemptive history. Otherwise, Jacob and his family (particularly his son Judah) would have perished in the famine, the lineage of the Messiah would have ended.

“Give us a king...”

King Saul – 1 Samuel 8:4-20

⁴ So all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah. ⁵ They said to him, “You are old, and your sons do not follow your ways; **now appoint a king to lead us, such as all the other nations have.**”

⁶ But when they said, “Give us a king to lead us,” this displeased Samuel; so he prayed to the LORD. ⁷ **And the LORD told him: “Listen to all that the people are saying to you; it is not you they have rejected, but they have rejected me as their king.** ⁸ As they have done from the day I brought them up out of Egypt until this day, forsaking me and serving other gods, so they are doing to you. ⁹ Now listen to them; but warn them solemnly and let them know what the king who will reign over them will claim as his rights.”

¹⁰ Samuel told all the words of the LORD to the people who were asking him for a king. ¹¹ He said, “This is what the king who will reign over you will claim as his rights: He will take your sons and make them serve with his chariots and horses, and they will run in front of his chariots. ¹² Some he will assign to be commanders of thousands and commanders of fifties, and others to plow his ground and reap his harvest, and still others to make weapons of war and equipment for his chariots. ¹³ He will take your daughters to be perfumers and cooks and bakers. ¹⁴ He will take the best of your fields and vineyards and olive groves and give them to his attendants. ¹⁵ He will take a tenth of your grain and of your vintage and give it to his officials and attendants. ¹⁶ Your male and female servants and the best of your cattle and donkeys he will take for his own use. ¹⁷ He will take a tenth of your flocks, and you yourselves will become his slaves. ¹⁸ When that day comes, you will cry out for relief from the king you have chosen, but the LORD will not answer you in that day.”

¹⁹ **But the people refused to listen to Samuel. “No!” they said. “We want a king over us.** ²⁰ **Then we will be like all the other nations, with a king to lead us and to go out before us and fight our battles.”**

Where did Israel fail?

- God had established Himself as king over Israel. His people were still influenced by the noetic effect of sin and the ways of the world. They saw other nations with human kings (perhaps they even feared those other nations, lacking trust in God to defend them despite His many victories in the books of Exodus and Joshua). They had been led by judges and priests like Samuel. Alas, Samuel's sons were wicked and did not follow the Lord and the Israelites knew as much. Who would lead them?
- They were also impatient, pushing the Lord to conform to their time schedule in appointing a king rather than waiting on God's plan to come to fruition.
- God had made His people special, from the righteous law that guided their lives right down to the tassels on their clothing which marked them as His people. They were already as viceroys of the Lord, but they still sought a human king to make them like the pagan nations. God had predicted their rejection back in Deuteronomy 17:14-15. They wanted a *human king*, and they received one in Saul
- Prophecy had also told the Israelites that their future king would come from Judah, but King Saul was from the tribe of Benjamin. This should have been an indication that King Saul was not God's intended king.

The Davidic Covenant

⁸ “Now then, tell my servant David, ‘This is what the LORD Almighty says: I took you from the pasture, from tending the flock, and appointed you ruler over my people Israel. ⁹ I have been with you wherever you have gone, and I have cut off all your enemies from before you. Now I will make your name great, like the names of the greatest men on earth. ¹⁰ And I will provide a place for my people Israel and will plant them so that they can have a home of their own and no longer be disturbed. Wicked people will not oppress them anymore, as they did at the beginning ¹¹ and have done ever since the time I appointed leaders over my people Israel. I will also give you rest from all your enemies.

“The LORD declares to you that the LORD himself will establish a house for you: ¹² When your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his kingdom. ¹³ He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. ¹⁴ I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will punish him with a rod wielded by men, with floggings inflicted by human hands. ¹⁵ But my love will never be taken away from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. ¹⁶ Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me^[b]; your throne will be established forever.”

- 2 Samuel 7:8-16

As noted, God's people had turned from His kingship, first by idolatry and then by demanding a human king. David stood apart from his people in that he held firm to the truth that God was the true king of Israel (as we see when he challenges Goliath, a victory he rightly credited to God). God calls David both His servant and a man after His own heart despite David's failures and sins in no doubt because of David's faithfulness to the true King of Israel.



The Davidic Covenant

- ▶ The covenant was the Lord's response when David desired to build God a temple. God instructed Him that David's son, Solomon, would be the one to build the temple instead. The Lord simply stated that David was a man of war whereas Solomon would be a man of peace. For that reason, Solomon would build the temple.
- ▶ The covenant promised that the Lord would bless the kingdom of David's son, Solomon. He promised to be a father to Solomon and to never forsake him.
- ▶ The covenant promised that the Lord would build an everlasting "house" for David: God would establish the "throne" of David forever. It had been prophesized that the Messiah would come from the house of David. Jesus Christ, as a descendant of David, would sit on the throne of David in the New Kingdom for eternity.
- ▶ This was an unconditional covenant—the Lord would do as He promised despite the sins and failures of David, Solomon, and their descendants. David could do nothing to earn the covenant, it was a gift of God's grace. The Lord was still directing biblical history towards its pinnacle in Jesus Christ.
- ▶ Note: *Here again (note the stories of Isaac and Ishmael, Jacob and Esau and Judah and Reuben) we see the blessings of the firstborn falling upon the son who was not firstborn. David's firstborn, Absalom, had briefly stolen the throne only to be eventually killed. David obeyed God's will for Solomon to reign, but David's older son Adonijah crowned himself king during his father's declining years. It is the Lord who determined the line that would lead to the Messiah despite human interference. The Messiah would be the true firstborn Son on the throne of the New Kingdom.*

THE JERUSALEM TEMPLE & GOD'S REDEPTIVE PLAN

When the Ark of the Covenant was brought to the new temple in Jerusalem, King Solomon dedicated the temple with a long prayer to God. You can read the full text of this prayer in **1 Kings 8**.

For our purposes today, we will concentrate on what Solomon's prayer reveals about God's intentions for the Temple of Jerusalem in His plans for redeeming mankind.

Some aspects of the Abrahamic Covenant had been fulfilled at this point in history: Israel was a great nation, richly blessed by God. They dwelled in the Promised Land. Even the Noahic Covenant is on display, for the land supplied their needs while they lived in obedience to their covenantal relationship with God.

- ▶ Solomon asks God to hear and respond to the prayers of the Israelites who come to the temple.
- ▶ Solomon prays for the God-fearing foreigners who pray at the temple that God would respond to them so that they might know His great name and glory.

The Promised Land of Israel was centrally located on a land bridge between Asia and Europe. Travelers would see the temple, the obedient way of life of the Israelites, the temple of Jerusalem, and through all this they would come to hear God's name and learn of His wisdom (particularly His law, which would establish a social system like no other in the world and reveal His justice and righteousness), His blessings, and His power. God's reputation would spread, attracting others to come and believe in Him and be saved. As Christians, part of our mission is to lead lives that attract others to salvation through Christ.

Israel would also serve as an example of God's righteousness and justice when they were disobedient to God. Israel's destruction and exile to Babylon would shock the world, but it would convey with finality that God's righteousness requires punishment for sin. God preserved Israel and restored them from exile so that His covenant to Abraham and His redemptive plans could be fulfilled. However, the exile serves to remind us that God will fulfill His promise to bring final judgement upon the wicked at the end of times. *This missional challenge extends to Christians today: We are to be God's visible image in this world through how we live our lives.*

God's Redemptive Mission and the Exile from Judah into Babylon

- ▶ *"If you are not careful to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that you may fear this glorious and awesome name, the Lord your God, then the Lord will bring on you and your offspring extraordinary afflictions [...] And as the Lord took delight in doing you good and multiplying you, so the Lord will take delight in bringing ruin upon you and destroying you. And you shall be plucked off the land that you are entering to take possession of it. And the Lord will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other"* (Deuteronomy 28:58-64).
- ▶ After Solomon's reign (around 931 B.C.), the kingdom of Israel became divided. The southern kingdom consisted of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin and was known as the land of Judah. The northern kingdom consisted of the remaining ten tribes and was known as Israel.
- ▶ Israel and Judah were beset by sinfulness (most particularly by idolatry) under a succession of wicked kings. Only Judah could boast a few God-fearing kings. In 722 B.C., the city of Samaria in Israel fell to the Assyrians and the ten tribes were scattered among the nations.
- ▶ Judah would be spared for about 150 more years, though sin still abounded. However, they failed to heed the warnings of prophets whom God sent to call them into repentance and obedience. God fulfilled His promised punishment and permitted Jerusalem to fall to the Babylonians.
- ▶ The prophet Ezekiel saw the glory of God depart from Jerusalem before the people went into exile. *God would return to Jerusalem when the exiles returned. He would return again on Palm Sunday riding on a donkey. He WILL return one more time to restore all of creation in the New Kingdom.*

God's Redemptive Mission and the Exile from Judah into Babylon

*"In that day,' declares the LORD Almighty,
'I will break the yoke off their necks
and will tear off their bonds;
no longer will foreigners enslave them.
9 Instead, they will serve the LORD their God
and David their king,
whom I will raise up for them.*

*10 "So do not be afraid, Jacob my servant;
do not be dismayed, Israel,'
declares the LORD.
'I will surely save you out of a distant place,
your descendants from the land of their exile.
Jacob will again have peace and security,
and no one will make him afraid.*

*11 I am with you and will save you,'
declares the LORD." - Isaiah 30: 8-11*

- **God did not forget His covenants with Abraham and David nor His plans for redemptive history. The descendants of Abraham therefore would be preserved among the foreign nations so that some could survive and return to the Promised Land. If the Lord had not done so, redemptive history would have ended with the exile, as would the line of descent that produced Christ the Messiah.**

- The restoration of the captives to the Promised Land from bondage in Babylon was the next Exodus of biblical history. It was God once again acting as Israel's kinsman-redeemer, its ga-al.
- During the captivity, those who remained faithful to God (particularly Daniel, Shadrac, Meshac, and Abednego from the Book of Daniel) were God's light and faithful witnesses, and God again demonstrated His glory, power, righteousness, and justice before King Nebuchadnezzar, humbling the mighty king, who would come to believe and honor God.
- These faithful men illustrate that every believer is called to witness for God in whatever environment He places us. We are to bear witness through our words and our lives that others might be drawn to God and find salvation.
- Their stories also illustrates that God is faithful to fulfill His every promise, be it for blessing or curse, for salvation or for death.



The New Covenant

At the time of Christ's birth, Israel could no longer be called a "theocracy". A series of conquerors had left Israel under Roman occupation, with a pretender to the line of David on the throne (King Herod was Arab and Edomite, not a royal son). The Judaic nation had not heard from God in four hundred years. It was an occupied land awaiting its true and promised King.

This King, the Messiah, the last Adam and the true Israel, and the seed of Abraham through whom all nations would be blessed, would be:

- ▶ God's son by divinity, begotten from the Holy Trinity
- ▶ God's son by adoption because Jesus was born fully human, a son of Adam so that He could fulfil the responsibilities in which Adam failed and earn for mankind the right to eat of the tree of life and come into eternal fellowship with God.
- ▶ A seed of Abraham through Sarah, a descendant of Judah born in Bethlehem, and a descendant of David in order to sit on the royal throne (per the Abrahamic & Davidic covenants)
- ▶ The Lamb of God. As the firstborn of Israel were saved by the blood of the first Passover lamb, so, too will all who believe in Christ be saved by His blood, for His sacrifice on the cross paid the price God requires for sin. Christ's death paid this price for all mankind.



What is the New Covenant?

- 1) God's promise to forgive sin and restore humanity to fellowship with those whose hearts are turned towards Him. We receive a new heart, new spirit, and true holiness.
- 2) Jesus as the mediator between man and God. The covenant was founded on Jesus' death on the cross, which atones for our sins.
- 3) The hearts of God's people would be changed so that they would naturally please God. He would put the Holy Spirit in us so that we naturally obey God, not out of obligation or law but from love and desire to please Him.
- 4) We come into this covenant only by faith in Christ. Through faith we are redeemed. In this redemption, we are adopted into Abraham's family, into God's chosen people. The chosen nation will include people of ALL nations, any who believe in Jesus are adopted. God becomes our kinsman-redeemer. Jesus has purchased us out of bondage and slavery to sin.

"⁶ But in fact the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which he is mediator is superior to the old one, since the new covenant is established on better promises.⁷ For if there had been nothing wrong with that first covenant, no place would have been sought for another. ⁸ But God found fault with the people and said^[b]:

"The days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah. ⁹ It will not be like the covenant I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they did not remain faithful to my covenant, and I turned away from them, declares the Lord.

¹⁰ This is the covenant I will establish with the people of Israel after that time, declares the Lord. I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. ¹¹ No longer will they teach their neighbor, or say to one another, 'Know the Lord,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest. ¹² For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more."^[c]

¹³ By calling this covenant "new," he has made the first one obsolete; and what is obsolete and outdated will soon disappear." – Hebrews 8:6-13

THE CHURCH: FAMILY, DISCIPLES, AND BRIDE OF CHRIST

- ▶ At Pentecost, the Church of Christ was born. The Holy Spirit was poured upon the Apostles, who began the work of spreading the Gospel message to the ends of the earth. Every Christian inherits this mission.
- ▶ Christ redeems us, God makes us holy, and the Spirit sanctifies us to become part of the church body of Christ. We have regained the holy status as God's image and priests that was forsaken by Adam and Eve.
- ▶ We see in the layout of the tabernacles and temple of the Lord that God imparts holiness. The closer something is to God, the more pure and holy. In the Israelites camp, the innermost sanctum of the tabernacle (the Holy of Holies, where God dwelled) was the most sacred and pure place. The further from this place one moved, the less pure and less clean. The tabernacle was holy, the Israelite camp was clean, and anyplace outside the camp was unclean. The priests were holy, the Israelites clean, and the Gentiles unclean.
- ▶ After the sacrificial death of Christ, the Scripture declares that nothing God has made clean (be it people, food, creation) should be considered unclean. God has purified us through Christ's blood, yet believers are still called to strive for holiness of living as people set apart by God. We are to be His image and light, attracting others to God's holiness and the salvation of Christ. We are to share the Gospel message so that others might be saved. We are to reflect our new status as God's adopted family and disciples of Christ in all aspects of our lives (personal, professional, relational, public, and private).
- ▶ As God's New Jerusalem is to be populated by people redeemed from every nation, this MUST influence how we, as Christians, view people foreigners and people of all races, how we see criminals, how we see those still oppressed and enslaved in this fallen world. We already see God's church at work in this as missionaries spread the Gospel, visit jails, minister to those trafficked in human slavery today, and Christians working to translate the Bible into every language of the world.



How God's People Make Him Visible

- ▶ We are called to praise and worship God, who has created and restored us. We are His image
 - ▶ As part of the church, we train, support, and send missionaries to all fields of the world where the Gospel must be planted
 - ▶ As God's people, we live transformed lives, **rooted in God's Word and prayer** (for ourselves, for others, for our leaders, for the church)
 - ▶ We are called to suffer as Christ suffered, for the church will be persecuted in all manner until the enemy is cast out with the return of Christ. Believers must engage in spiritual warfare in a corrupted world. Rejecting suffering is rejecting Christ.
- ▶ We are committed to blessing others. We are to seek the welfare of others, living sacrificially, serving one another.
 - ▶ We walk in the ways of the Lord, including righteousness and justice, resisting the idolatry (in all forms) in this world.
 - ▶ We work for the redemptive blessing of the oppressed
 - ▶ We represent God by living lives of holiness
 - ▶ We proclaim God to others as His witnesses
 - ▶ We attract others to God by our words, deeds, and living redemptively. "Holy" means "set apart for a distinct purpose". It is a gift initiation by God and given through His grace, not a status that we can earn. It means that we are distinctive, transformational, and contrasting the corruption and sin around us. We are salt preserving God's Word in a world of decay and light to those enslaved and oppressed by the darkness of sin.



The Temples of Biblical History

The Garden of Eden

God's "construction site". The garden was intended to fill the earth as a place where God could dwell alongside humankind. God's "blueprint" for history will still end with a "temple" that will fill the earth, a holy place where He can reside alongside man.

The Temple in Jerusalem

Constructed by King Solomon, it would be God's dwelling place among man for 400 years. By extension, Jerusalem was considered God's dwelling place because of the presence of the temple and the Ark of the Covenant. The temple was destroyed by the Babylonians, however God allowed it to be rebuilt when the Israelites were released from Babylon--- which showed His continued commitment to His chosen nation.

The Tabernacle Tent

This tent traveled with the Hebrew nation after God rescued them from Egypt. Significant because God now dwelled with His chosen nation. God's glory filled the tent. His presence was a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. The Ark of the Covenant was also in this tent, said to be the earthly foot stool for God's heavenly throne.

The Church of Christ

Jesus life on earth is said to be a time that He "tabernacled" among mankind (John 1:14). In reality, this marked the transition of God's dwelling place from physical structures like the Jerusalem temple (which would be destroyed once again) to "living temples". In other words, the Christian church became God's new temple. Every believer is a "brick" in this spiritual temple.



I am God's Temple...

➤ THE TABERNACLES & TEMPLES:

- 1) Comprised of three parts: Outer Court, Holy Place, and Holy of Holies.
- 2) The Outer Court was the public place of worship. Everyone can see this part of the temple/tabernacle.
- 3) The Holy Place could only be entered by priests, but it is still separated from God by a thin veil. There is light here. Priests serve and worship God here.
- 4) The Holy of Holies is the innermost area where God dwells. It cannot be reached by human light and invisible to human eyes; no man may enter unless God removes the veil. It is the deep, mysterious habitation of God. It is illuminated only if He wills it.

➤ THE BELIEVER:

- 1) Comprised of three parts: Body, soul, and spirit.
- 2) The Body is the visible aspect of ourselves. Everyone can see our behaviors, hear our words, and know if we act and speak as Christians.
- 3) The Soul comprised man's feelings and will (consciousness); it is the center of activities for the whole person.
- 4) The Spirit is deeper than man's consciousness.



Spirit, Soul, Body...

- ▶ The spirit is the core of a human being, like the innermost sanctum of a temple. This is where the Holy Spirit will reside within the believer. This is where the believer can receive God. It is the location of our conscience, which must connect to God so that we can be filled with God. The spirit empowers our soul for spiritual battle. Paul urges us to become sanctified by God because we are meant to have this fellowship/connection with God and this indwelling of the Holy Spirit. (Proverbs 20:27)
- ▶ “Spirit” and “soul” are NOT synonymous. They are two distinct aspects of the human being. The soul is comprised of our emotions, mind, and will. The soul will either magnify God or fall subject to temptations of the world. (Luke 1:46-47). The soul expresses what dwells with the human spirit, be it good or evil. It is here (in the mind) where Satan will contend with God’s truth, seeking to affect our thoughts and choices.
- ▶ “Body” is mentioned last. The flesh is most vulnerable to temptation and sin. Our bodies are said to be formed from dust of the earth, meaning we are made of the organic material of God’s creation. Though the spirit and soul go on, the body will die, but it will be resurrected and made into a new being at the end of days after Jesus Christ returns.



The Temple Yet to Come: The New Jerusalem

- ▶ Christ's sacrifice not only redeemed mankind, He redeemed the whole of God's creation. As man was cursed by the Fall, so the earth was cursed. As man will be made new in the new kingdom, so will all creation be transformed. It was not God's plan to have predatory animals or famines, floods, and other natural disasters. His Garden was to be one of abundance that would provide for man's every need and glorify God with its magnificence.
- ▶ The New Jerusalem, the new kingdom, will see God dwelling alongside restored humankind in a creation made whole through Christ.
- ▶ The New Jerusalem will be populated from people of all nations and tribes of the earth. This is one reason that God has held back Christ's second coming, for the Bible tells us that the Gospel must be preached to all mankind and all corners of the earth that everyone should have the chance to hear of Christ and be saved. As believers shine God's light, we invite others into citizenship in the New Jerusalem.
- ▶ Most importantly of all, we will have the King that God has promised us: Christ will sit on the royal throne as the righteous king who has defeated Satan and all others who oppose God. He will be at one with God

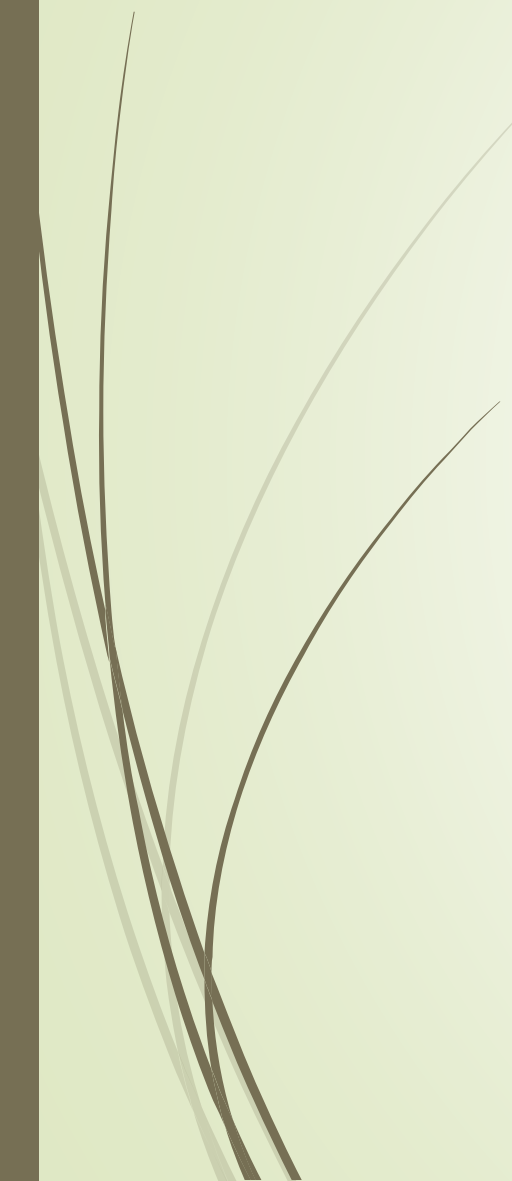


The New Jerusalem in Scripture

- ▶ “And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great, high mountain, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, having the glory of God, its radiance like a most rare jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal. It had a great, high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and on the gates the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel were inscribed.” - Revelation 21:10-12
- ▶ “And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God.” – Revelation 21:3
- ▶ “²In the last days the mountain of the LORD’s temple will be established as the highest of the mountains; it will be exalted above the hills, and all nations will stream to it. ³Many peoples will come and say, “Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the temple of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths.” – Isaiah 2:2-3
- ▶ “See, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind. ¹⁸But be glad and rejoice forever in what I will create, for I will create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy. ¹⁹I will rejoice over Jerusalem and take delight in my people; the sound of weeping and of crying will be heard in it no more.” – Isaiah 65: 17-19
- ▶ “The wolf and the lamb will feed together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox, and dust will be the serpent’s food. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain,” says the LORD.” – Isaiah 65:25
- ▶ “After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands.” – Revelation 7:9



God's Grace: Past, Present, & Future

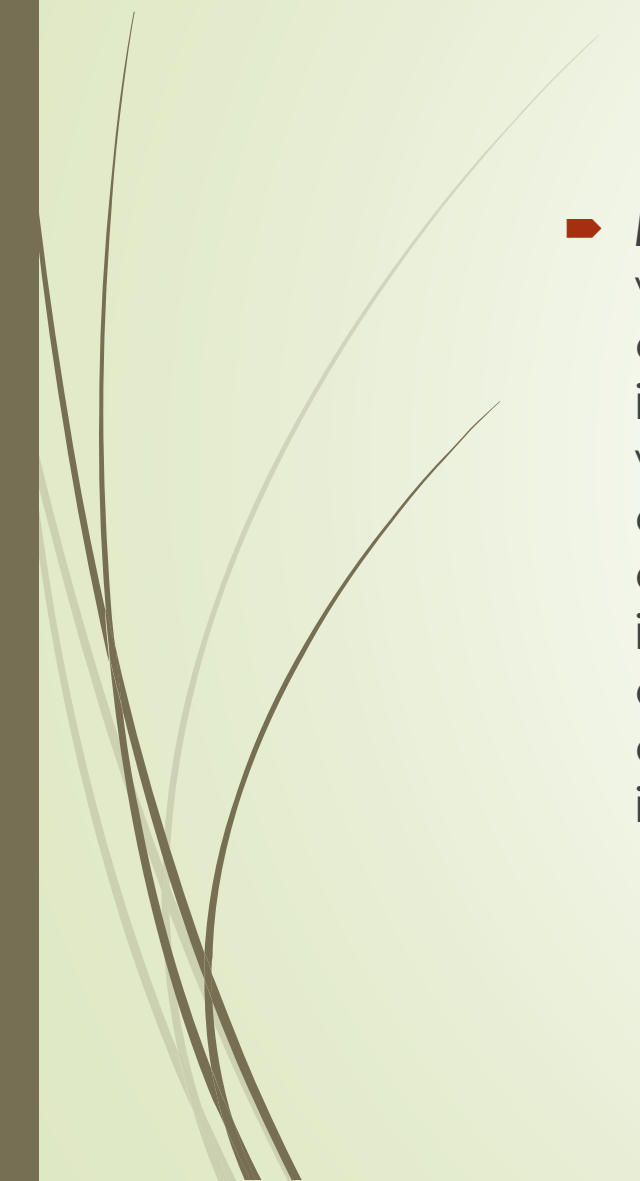


➤ **PAST GRACE:** The biblical narrative, particularly the covenants and many exodus, remind us that God's grace is present throughout biblical history. God is who He says He is; God can (and will) do what He says He will do. God is faithful to keep every promise of blessing as well as righteous and just to deliver the consequences of sin.

➤ **PRESENT GRACE:** By the power and grace of God and the actions and ministry of Christ, believers are redeemed and saved. We live in the inaugurated kingdom of Christ even today. We live as a kingdom of priests and witnesses for Christ, living as holy people set apart for His purposes. We live under the covenant to grow the kingdom and fill the earth with the image of God.



God's Grace: Past, Present, & Future

- **FUTURE GRACE:** The final exodus will be man's exodus from the corrupted kingdom of this world into the New Jerusalem that God will bring. He will restore all of creation—man and nature—out of bondage and oppression to sin into the new kingdom, where once again God will dwell alongside His creation as He intended from the beginning.
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