

Redemptive History

Salvation from Genesis to Revelation

God's Vision

- Genesis 1:27: Who needs to be saved?

Humans.

All of creation will be affected by mankind's salvation.

God's Vision

- He created us with a free will and in His image.
 - What is His image?

It is the ability to experience the same feelings, emotions, and responses as He does. It is essential for us to be able to love Him back. Angels can't. They can speak about Him and sing about Him, where as we can talk to Him and sing intimately to Him.

- Revelation 4:8-11
 - Revelation 5:11 (other references)
 - Revelation 7:11

God's Vision

- God's Big Plan from Gen. to Revelation:

God created us so that we could be His counterpart.

In order to be His counterpart we needed to be created in His image. (A lion cannot be the counterpart with a human because they are not in the same "image". Gen 2:23) So, God created us in His image

Man alone is not the fullness of God's image. It also takes women to complete the fullness of His image. So man and woman together create the fullness of the image of God at creation.

So here we see the foreshadowing of the counterpart imagery found in marriage as referenced in Ephesians 5:22-33, especially verse 32

God's Vision

But even in our perfect state in the garden, in His image, we still were not good enough to be His counterpart because He is the uncreated God and we are the created humans. Some how we needed to reach the “uncreated” class.

This last step happens at the cross when Jesus dies and rises again making us one with Him as we become the body of Christ, thus elevating us to the uncreated class –so to speak- (since Jesus is God and we became one with Him, making us part of God in a supernaturally mysterious way and thus able to be His counterpart).

God's Vision

- All of time is moving towards the great wedding of Jesus and His bride.

God's Vision

- **Genesis** - the birth of His bride
(1:27, 2:23)
- **Everything in Between** - The pursuit of His bride
(Gen 17:7, Ex 6:7, Lev 26:12, Jer 7:23, 30:22, Ezk 37:27)
- **Revelation** — the marriage of His bride
(21:2, 3, 7)

God's Vision

- Genesis 2:17

He creates our “free choice” with the tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil.

There is nothing special about this tree. It is just an object that allows them to choose.

It is like a placebo pill. It has no ability within it self to do anything. It was the actual act of disobedience that opened our eyes to good and evil.

God's Vision

By doing that first “wrong” act we opened the door to evil and thus we now know both what it is to do good (obeying God) and doing evil (disobeying God). By disobeying God we also opened the door to the wages of evil (sin) which is death. Thus the verse says that when you eat of it you will surely die. Once they tasted the act of disobedience they must now pay the price, which is death.

God's Vision

- Genesis 3:15: Proto-evangel: The very first proclamation of the Gospel

Even in the midst of God's discipline for their very first sin-the sin that separates them from Him-He is proclaiming and promising the good news that Jesus will redeem them.

Sin and Solution

- Genesis 4:7

First reference from God as to how sin works and how He wants us to deal with it.

Sin and Solution

- Genesis 6

God spares those who walk with Him from His wrath. He is their salvation.
(He is Noah's salvation).

Sin and Solution

- Genesis 9: 12-17

God's rainbow as a sign of His covenant to man (this is the very first time God makes a covenant [and it is unconditional] with man) not to destroy them with water. The rainbow is so impressive because it is an intentional communication from God to man as a continual reminder that His mercy will not wipe us out as in the flood. A promise of His love.

Sin and Solution

- Genesis 12:2-3

God's first covenant with Abraham (known as Abram) (It is unconditional) to make him a great nation, bless him, make his name great, God will bless those who bless him and curse those who curse him, and in him, all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

- Genesis 12:7

God promises to give Abraham's descendants the land of Canaan.

Sin and Solution

- Genesis 13:14-17

God promises to give Abraham all the land that he sees and promises to make his descendants as numerous as the dust on the ground.

Sin and Solution

- Genesis 15: THE BIG ONE!

This is the covenant that our ENTIRE salvation is based on! The smoking firepot and the blazing torch represented God going through the bloody path made by Abraham.

- The Suzerainty Treaties

This covenant making process was a shadow of a popular treaty performed in those days called a suzerainty treaty. This is where the lesser king would have to walk through the chopped in half bloody animals, toward the greater king, pledging his allegiance and submission and how if he broke this covenant, he would become like the animals-a dead and bloody mess.

Sin and Solution

- Suzerainty Treaty Format
 - Name of the King
 - Historical Prologue
 - Stipulations (Laws)
 - Exclusive loyalty (=love)
 - Specific requirements
 - Sanctions (Blessings and Curses)
 - Administration

Sin and Solution

The big deal about what God did here was that, although HE was the greater “king”, He took the role of the weaker “king” and promised to take on the punishment for when WE broke the covenant.

So every time we sinned or broke the covenant, Judgment was sent down from heaven on that sin, but it never reaches us because of the covenant promise of God to be the one to take the judgment, so it just stores up and stores up until all the judgment of God on sin was poured out on Jesus at the cross, just as He said would happen in the Abrahamic covenant.

Sin and Solution

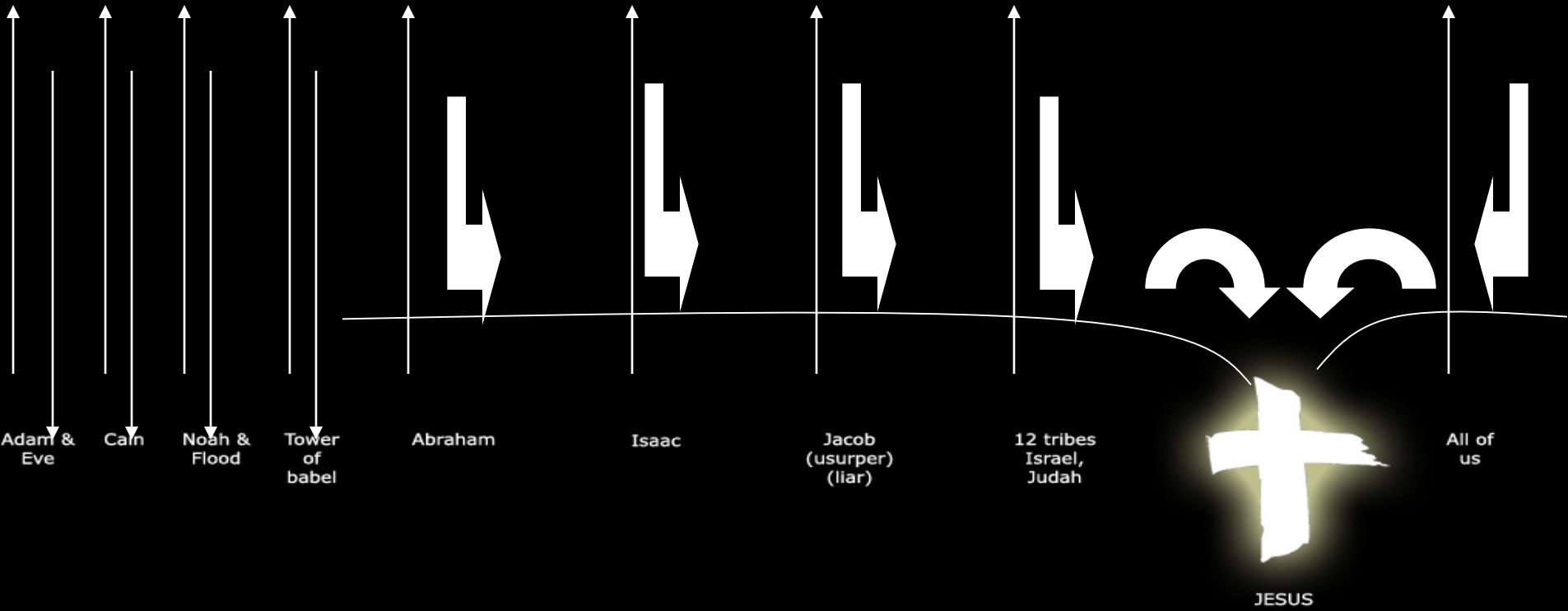
Let's look at how **AMAZING** it is that the New Testament confirms what was happening here.

In **Hebrews 6: 13-19** The author is explaining to the Hebrew church how God had to handle both sides of this covenant (promises) in order to make sure that the covenant remained immutable (permanent), because there was not one greater to do it by.

In **Romans 3:25-26** Paul is showing us how God, in His forbearance (foresight), left the sins previously committed, undealt with for a time, in order to demonstrate His righteousness and Justice in the present time through Jesus!

This stuff is incredible!!!!!!

Sin and Solution



Sin and Solution

- Genesis 17

The final version of the covenant and where God gives them one job to do to uphold the covenant and that is circumcision. This is the most detailed list of the promises that God makes to Abraham. All the families of the earth will be blessed through him. God commands Noah to be fruitful and multiply (his own works) but promises Abraham that HE will make him fruitful and multiply him (God's work – grace).

Sin and Solution

- Genesis 18

God comes down in the form of a man with two angels and talks with Abraham and tells him about His plans to wipe out Sodom and Gomorrah for their wickedness and Abraham begins to bargain with Him. Asking Him if He will show mercy on the cities if there is found 50 righteous, 45 righteous, and so on till he ends at 10. God still says that He will show mercy even if there is 10 righteous.

This is a foreshadowing of How God is willing to show mercy on us as long as someone is willing to stand in the gap for us, as well as how God is willing to save us even if we were the only one.

Preparation of His Dwelling Place

- Exodus 1-20

Burning Bush – God promises to bring salvation to His people who are in slavery and bondage by coming down and intervening on their behalf. This becomes the foreshadow of Jesus Christ coming down and intervening on our behalf, especially when we take the Passover into consideration. He proclaims His name to Moses for the first time “I AM”.

Preparation of His Dwelling Place

- Exodus 12

Passover blood on the door posts. This is where the Angel of Death is coming down to kill all the first born in the land and the only ones who will be saved from this death are those who have covered their door posts with the blood of the sacrificial lamb. All those not covered by the blood will be killed by the Lord's death messenger.

Preparation of His Dwelling Place

The Exodus is the bigger part of the foreshadow of our salvation as the Lord sees His people (his betrothed bride and counterpart) in need of a savior from their bondage and decides to be their savior.

The blood of the sacrificial lamb saves them from God's judgment on the Egyptians and paves the way for their journey to the Promised Land of rest and inheritance.

He leads them on their journey with a pillar of cloud and fire, and He makes a way for them as He splits the red sea, and He provides manna from heaven (the sky) and quail from the desert, and water from the rocks.

Preparation of His Dwelling Place

- Exodus 19

They come to Mt. Sinai and God settles them down for a little while there so that He can give them the opportunity to come to Him and also to give them the 10 commandments – which are the basic guidelines for Godly living to them.

- This is the introduction to the Law and the Mosaic covenant (vs. 3-6) (the rules of God's Courtship)

Rules of God's Courtship

- Exodus 23-34

Here is where the people first withdraw from God (bad move) instead of drawing near to Him (what God wanted them to do - like Moses and Joshua did).

Rules of God's Courtship

When Moses comes down from the mountain and sees them worshipping a false image, he is filled with righteous anger and casts the 10 commandment tablets down and shatters them.

He then draws a line in the ground and tells everyone who is deciding to follow the Lord to cross that line. He then tells everyone who does cross that line to kill everyone who did not cross that line.

“Love the Lord your God above all others”

“He who does not hate his mother, father, brother, sister, for my sake...”

Rules of God's Courtship

- Exodus 32: The Golden Calf.

It is a false image of what they thought God looked like because of their influences from Egyptian culture. They call the golden calf... JEHOVAH!

Rules of God's Courtship

- Exodus 26

The Tabernacle setup. Later becomes the Temple. Both are specific places for God to dwell amongst His people and in the New Testament, WE become the Temple of the Lord, a place specifically set apart as holy (by the blood of Jesus) for Him to dwell in.

Rules of God's Courtship

- Exodus 40

The Lord descends and dwells amongst His people. A habitation.

Rules of God's Courtship

- Leviticus 16

The Day of Atonement. A foreshadow of our Salvation. Aaron had to make atonement for himself first as High Priest (just like Jesus) before he could make atonement for the people (just like Jesus-he had to be sinless in order to save us).

Two-goats, one as a blood offering to God (kadesh), and one as scapegoat (nazir) to take the sins away.



Rules of God's Courtship

- Joshua 2

Rahab believes in God as the one true God and is saved. She becomes a woman in the direct line of Jesus.

This act also signifies how God chooses to use the foolish things to confound the wise and the weak things to overcome the strong. It also shows how God chooses to use anyone because, to Him, we are all weak and sinful. It is only Jesus that He sees as worthy and all those who choose to be known as His.

Rules of God's Courtship

- Ruth: Kinsman Redeemer concept.

Ruth is the great grandmother of King David, from whom Jesus comes. This is also a big deal because Ruth is not a native Jew. She is a Moabite who marries into the Jewish lineage.

Again, this is foreshadowing how God's plan was, is, and always will be for the Gentiles also. Also that God will use the unexpected and weak to accomplish His will, thus bringing maximum glory to Him alone.

Rules of God's Courtship

- Song of Solomon: The Story of Cinderella!

The story of the Great king Solomon (foreshadowing Jesus) who is in love with a lowly, and unattractive (by the world's standards) girl (foreshadowing us) who is also in love with the king. The King initially comes for her and then goes away on a journey, thus leaving the girl to grow in her hunger and desire for Him.

When He comes back He tells her to come away with Him and follow Him. The journey of following Him and seeking for Him is filled with sorrow, suffering, and persecution but in the end they are together and able to proclaim that "Love is as strong as death, and jealousy as unyielding as the grave..." (SOS 8:6)

Rules of God's Courtship

REVERENDFUN.COM COPYRIGHT GCI, INC.



(See Songs 4:1-5)

02-07-2006

SOLOMON'S GIRLFRIEND, AS HE SAW HER

The Prophets part 1

The prophets are messengers sent by God to plead with His people to return to Him after hundreds of years of consistent covenant-breaking betrayal

They are God's "BIG GUNS" - His last effort to warn the people that if they persisted in rejecting Him, they would voluntarily walk into the curses that they had all agreed upon (in the Mosaic covenant [Lev. 26, Deut. 28])

Prophets are God's ambassadors of a good message, of HOPE, along with the warning of judgment that is inevitable for those who reject God

2 Chronicles 24:19 - "Yet He sent prophets to them, to bring them back to the Lord; and they testified against them, but they would not listen"

The Prophets part 1

Although the Israelites deserved the judgment they agreed upon, on the very first day they broke the Mosaic covenant, God showed them incomprehensible mercy for hundreds of years instead, choosing to send messengers of warning, repentance, and hope. These messengers were called prophets.

It was not good enough for these prophets to just speak the messages of God to the people – the messages were far too important – they had to be demonstrated. They had to be embodied by men who were willing to be living demonstrations of God's heart, emotions, and intentions.

The Prophets part 1



KINGS c. 1050-586 BC

SAMUEL

- SAUL
 - Line of Benjamin.
 - Disobeys God.
 - Rejected as king.
- ISH-BOSHETH
- DAVID
 - God's chosen king (line of Judah).
 - Anointed by Samuel in Bethlehem.
 - Jerusalem: holy city and capital.
 - DAVIDIC COVENANT (2 Sam. 7):
 - Everlasting throne
 - Everlasting kingdom
 - "Son of God" relationship
 - Son will build temple
 - Covenant cannot be broken
 - God's GRACE in spite of sin.

UNITED MONARCHY 1050-930 BC

NORTH: ISRAEL
930-722 BC
SOUTH: JUDAH
930-586 BC

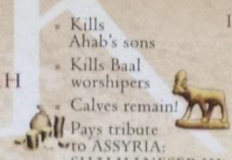
AHIJAH

- Builds altars at Dan and Bethel
- Non-Levites as priests
- Makes two idols: Israel's gods!
- Idols remain next 200 years!

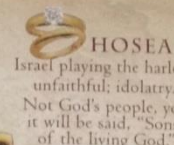


ELIJAH

- Samaria
- Omri dynasty



- Kills Ahab's sons
- Kills Baal worshipers
- Calves remain!
- Pays tribute to ASSYRIA: SHALMANESER III



HOSEA

Israel playing the harlot: unfaithful; idolatry. Not God's people, yet it will be said, "Sons of the living God."

ASSYRIAN EMPIRE 8TH-7TH CENTURIES

- ↑ NAHUM (Southern Prophet) Nineveh will fall! (City falls in 612 BC)
- TIGLATH-PILESER III (745-727) attacks north
- Attacks Ahaz

BABYLONIAN EMPIRE 6TH CENTURY

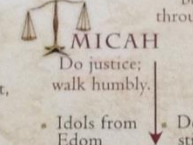
- 605 BC: NEBUCHADNEZZAR defeats Egypt; 1st Deportation; Daniel to Babylon.
- 597 BC: 2nd Deportation; Jehoiachin and Ezekiel to Babylon.
- 586 BC: Final deportation; NEBUCHADNEZZAR destroys Jerusalem.

← NADAB → ELAH → OMRI → AHAZIAH → JEHU → JEHOASH → ZECHARIAH → MENAHEM → PEKAH → JEROBOAM I → BAASHA → ZIMRI → AHAB → JEHORAM → JEHOAHAZ → JEROBOAM II → SHALUM → PEKAHIAH → HOSHEA

DIVISION OF THE KINGDOM 930 BC

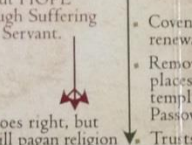
- Pagan religious practices
- Cult prostitutes
- Abominations like nations
- Abolishes cult prostitutes
- Removes idols
- Covenant renewal
- Still pagan religion

- Does evil like Ahab
- Harlotry
- Kills royal family
- Jehoida, the priest, anoints Joash as king.



MICAH

Do justice; walk humbly. Idols from Edom



ISAIAH

Rebellious Israel is blind and deaf. Judgment is coming, but HOPE through Suffering Servant.



JONAH

"Go to Nineveh" God has compassion on the Assyrians.

701 BC SENNACHERIB attacks Jerusalem

FALL OF SAMARIA
722 BC ISRAEL TO ASSYRIA!
SHALMANESER V defeats Samaria
SARGON II Population shifting

JEREMIAH
Israel has disobeyed God's law; Jerusalem will be destroyed, but HOPE after the judgment.

HABAKKUK
Babylon to judge Judah! Righteous: live by Faith.

← REHOBOAM → ASA → JEHORAM → ATHALIAH → AMAZIAH → JOTHAM → HEZEKIAH → AMON → JEHOAHAZ → JEHOIACHIN → AHAZIAH → JOASH → UZZIAH → AHAZ → MANASSEH → JOSIAH → JEHOIAKIM → ZEDEKIAH → AHIJAH → JEHOSHAPHAT → AHAZIAH → JOASH → UZZIAH → AHAZ → MANASSEH → JOSIAH → JEHOIAKIM → ZEDEKIAH → AHIJAH → JEHOSHAPHAT → AHAZIAH → JOASH → UZZIAH → AHAZ → MANASSEH → JOSIAH → JEHOIAKIM → ZEDEKIAH

- Does evil
- Alliance with Ahab
- Religious reforms
- Appoints judges
- Levites: priests
- Trusts God
- Still pagan religion

- Does evil like Ahab
- Initially destroys Baal
- Later, idolatry
- Kills priest
- Murdered

- Builds up kingdom
- Judah's golden age
- Still pagan religion

- Sacrifices to idols, no trust
- Abominations
- Child sacrifice
- Like N. kings
- Asks ASSYRIA for help

- Altars for Baal
- Child sacrifice
- Witchcraft
- Mediums, spiritists
- Idols in temple
- Repentance, but judgment coming against Judah

- Law found
- Covenant renewal
- Removes mediums, witchcraft, spiritists.
- Tears down altars
- Destroys idols
- Celebrates Passover

- Does evil
- Does evil

MONARCHY E ZEDEKIAH IS LAST K

JOEL



FALL OF JERUS
586 BC
JUDAH TO BABYL

Biblical books for this period: 1-2 SAMUEL, 1-2 KINGS, 1-2 CHRONICLES, PSALMS, PROVERBS, ECCLESIASTES (or later), SONG OF SOLOMON, ISAIAH, JEREMIAH, HOSSEA, AMOS, JONAH, MICAH, NAHUM, HABAKKUK, ZEPHANIAH.

The Prophets part 1

- Isaiah

Isaiah is the first of the major prophets of Israel, prophesying primarily to the southern kingdom of Judah just before the destruction of the northern kingdom of Israel (740-680 B.C.). At this time, there was still hope for Judah to repent and avoid the fate that “her older sister” had just suffered at the hands of the Assyrians.

Because of this, the theme of Isaiah is primarily one of Salvation (his very name means Yahweh is salvation)! It is God’s prophetic declaration of a Savior, Immanuel, The Anointed One (in Hebrew translated Messiah, in Greek translated Christo or Christ).

The theme of God’s heart is weaved throughout the entire book and the thread of salvation for all those who choose to obey His commands is seen even in the midst of most of the judgments.

The Prophets part 1

At this point in the Big Picture of Gods redemptive plan for His bride (His counterpart), He is dwelling in the midst of His chosen people (Israel) within the Temple built by Solomon. Sooooo close but yet sooooo far away from what He wants.

God's people have been in gross sin and blatant, willful rebellion to the covenant. Isaiah is sent by God to warn the people of the coming judgment and to reveal to them the state of their relationship with God

He opens up his message in chapter 1 by telling Isaiah "I have raised children and brought them up, but they have rebelled against Me. The ox knows its owner, and the donkey its master's feeding trough, but Israel does not know; My people do not understand." (the whole chapter is a great summary of the whole book)

There is a strong emphasis on Holiness (ch. 6) and the fear of the Lord (33:6) in his prophecies because for God to dwell with them, and for them to live in His presence, they MUST be holy.

The Prophets part 1

In Isaiah's message we begin to see an increased focus on the fulfillment of God's eternal masterpiece – the redemption of ALL people (not just the Jews) and the permanent holiness (kadesh, nazir) of His bride – Jesus!

7:14 “Therefore, the Lord Himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive, have a son, and name him Immanuel” (God with us)!

9:6-7, 11:1-5, 53:4-7 (all of 53 really)

11:10 “On that day the root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples. The [Gentile] nations will seek Him, and His resting place will be glorious”

49:6 “He says, ‘It is not enough for you to be My Servant raising up the tribes of Jacob and restoring the protected ones of Israel. I will also make you a light for the nations, to be My salvation to the ends of the earth’”

42:6

60:3 “Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your radiance”

The Prophets part 1

Gods heart for the nations is being revealed... in the OLD TESTAMENT.

God goes even further and specifies that He will even save Egypt and Assyria, the two most hated nations in Israel! Egypt was their slave master for 400 years and Assyria is the nation that just raped, pillaged, burned, and utterly destroyed the Northern Kingdom of Israel.

“On that day there will be an altar to the Lord in the middle of the land of Egypt, as well as a pillar for the Lord at its border. It will be a sign and witness to the Lord of Hosts in the land of Egypt; so that when they cry out to the Lord for help because of the oppressors, he will send them a savior to defend and rescue them. Adonai will make himself known to Egypt; on that day, the Egyptians will know Adonai. They will worship him with sacrifices and offerings, they will make vows to Adonai and keep them . . . On that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria. Assyria will come to Egypt and Egypt to Assyria, and Egypt will worship with Assyria. On that day Israel will be a third partner with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing here on earth; for the Lord of Hosts has blessed him: blessed be Egypt my people, Assyria the work of my hands and Israel my heritage.” (19:19,21,23-25)

The Prophets part 1

The zeal of the Lord will accomplish this! Even in the midst of His future brides horrific unfaithfulness, God has still not waivered in His pursuit of her and He has not forgotten His promises to Abraham and David.

62:4-5 “It will no longer be said to you, ‘Forsaken,’ nor to your land will it any longer be said, ‘Desolate’; But you will be called, ‘My delight is in her,’ and your land, ‘married’; for the Lord delights in you, and to Him your land will be married. For as a young man marries a virgin, so your sons will marry you; and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so your God will rejoice over you.”

Here is the hope and promise of a faithful husband . . . given in a time when Israel still hadn't returned to him!

The Prophets part 1

Ultimately, Isaiah is a microcosmic picture of God's macrocosmic mission to win back the hearts of a people who have gone astray and broken covenant (the mosaic covenant) thus deserving the death and destruction that they agreed to suffer if they ever did break the covenant.

God, in His everlasting, loving mercy, sends Isaiah with a message of warning and pleading that if they would just turn back to Him now, that He would show mercy and not send the judgment for the broken covenant and they could restore their broken relationship.

He prophesies this fulfillment of both the Abrahamic and Mosaic Covenants towards the end of his message:

“Yet He Himself bore our sicknesses, and He carried our pains; but we in turn regarded Him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted. But He was pierced because of our transgressions, crushed because of our iniquities; punishment for our peace was on Him, and we are healed by His wounds. We all went astray like sheep; we all have turned to our own way; and the Lord has punished Him for the iniquity of us all.” 53:4-6

The Prophets part 2

● Hosea

“I have spoken to the prophets; it was I who gave vision after vision; through the prophets I gave examples to show what it would all be like” (12:10) FAIR WARNING!

God’s pursuit of His bride is intensified as He uses the life of Hosea as a sign to the nation of Israel that they have become a wayward bride to Himself and have prostituted themselves in extreme ways to other nations (lovers).

“Rebuke your mother; rebuke her. For she is not My wife and I am not her husband. Let her remove the promiscuous look from her face and her adultery from between her breasts. Otherwise, I will strip her naked and expose her as she was on the day of her birth. I will make her like a desert and like a parched land, and I will let her die of thirst” (2:2-3) (also vs. 4-13)

The Prophets part 2

“Yet the number of the Israelites will be like the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured or counted. And in the place where they were told: You are not My people, they will be called: Sons of the living God.” (1:10)

God remembers his covenant with Abraham, and even in the midst of the judgment that the people have brought upon themselves by rejecting their covenant with God made at Sinai, God is saying He will still remain faithful to his unconditional promises.

The Prophets part 2

The Man as the Message

God requires Hosea to go and marry a prostitute and to have children with her. Sons he had to name “Jezreel” (to signify bloodshed on Israel) and “Not My People”, and a daughter he had to name “No Compassion” (1:2-6) in order to embody the message of God

His wife leaves him again and returns to prostitution.

In the same way that Hosea’s wife has left him to be a prostitute again, God is declaring that Israel has done the same thing to Him. He is sending Hosea to warn the nation that there is impending Judgment coming because of their sin (breaking of the covenant) but that there is hope.

The Prophets part 2

As a sign to the nation He has Hosea go into the gutters and take his wife out from the holes where she has been prostituting herself and bring her back to his house. There he is to completely forgive her and restore her to her previous status as treasured wife (3:1). This is a sign to the nation that God is going to do the same for those who choose to repent and come back to Him.

“In that day you will call Me, ‘My husband,’ and no longer call Me ‘My Master’... I will take you to be my wife forever... and you will know Yahweh... I will have compassion on ‘No Compassion’; I will say to ‘Not My People; You are My people, and he will say, ‘You are My God.’” (2:16-23)

The Prophets part 2

“When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called My son. The more they called them, the more they departed from Me. They kept sacrificing to the Baals and burning offerings to idols. It was I who taught Ephraim to walk, taking them in My arms, but they never knew that I healed them. I led them with human cords, with ropes of love. To them I was like one who eases the yoke from their jaws; I bent down to give them food” (11:1-4) – God’s heart

“What am I going to do with you, Ephraim? What am I going to do with you, Judah? Your loyalty is like the morning mist and like the early dew that vanishes. This is why I have used the prophets to cut them down; I have killed them with the words of My mouth. My judgment strikes like lightning. For I desire loyalty and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings. (6:4-6)

The Prophets part 2

Here Hosea is showing the deep lament of God's heart toward his people . . . God pining and lamenting what he can possibly do with such a rebellious wife who continues to prostitute herself to other lovers.

He also reveals that he wants to be known! Hosea 4:6 says that the people are perishing for a lack of knowledge and just previously in 4:1 it says that they have no knowledge of God in the land and 5:4 says that they do not know the Lord.

The Prophets part 2

6:1 says that although He is the one to hurt them initially, He will be the one to bring healing and restore them to stronger place of intimate relationship with Him, and that they will strive to KNOW THE LORD!

“Come, let us return to the Lord . For He has torn us, and He will heal us; He has wounded us, and He will bind up our wounds. He will revive us after two days, and on the third day He will raise us up so we can live in His presence. Let us strive to know the Lord” (6:1)

The Prophets part 3

- Ezekiel

A prophet sent from God as a messenger of love to call captive Judah and Israel back to their covenant with God. Israel is already in captivity in Babylon and although Judah is still in their own land, they are under Babylonian rule.

The Prophets part 3

- Ezekiel 6

Severity of the judgment of God:

6:5 And I will lay the corpses of the children of Israel before their idols and I will scatter your bones all around your altars

God's FAITHFULNESS to His covenant:

6:8 Yet I will leave a remnant, so that you may have some who escape the sword among the nations, when you are scattered through the countries.

The Prophets part 3

God's desire is for His people to KNOW THAT HE IS LORD, that is why He is bringing judgment – because judgment produces repentance, a turning of their hearts.

God's heart is heavy because His people took all the beautiful things that He gave them and turned them into abominations (7:20).

The Prophets part 3

- Ezekiel 9

Judgment always begins in the House of God...in other words, WITH US!

9:7 God tells them to defile the temple; in other words He is saying 'there's nothing special about this place anymore, because I'm leaving!'

The Prophets part 3

- Ezekiel 10

While God is leaving the temple He pauses...giving the picture of being totally torn, not wanting to leave but *being forced* to leave due to the wickedness of the people.

Even though God's people are scattered, God can't stand to leave them totally alone and says that He will be a "little sanctuary" for them while they are in other lands. He just can't stay away (Ch. 11)!

The Prophets part 3

“Then I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within them, and take the stony heart out of their flesh, and give them a heart of flesh, that they may walk in My statutes and keep My judgments and do them; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God” (11:19).

This is God's heart! Repeating the Mosaic covenant, that they will be His people and He shall be their God if only they would separate themselves to Himself. But also speaking of the New Covenant, where God will put in them a new spirit...His own!

The Prophets part 3

Ezekiel tells a tragic love story that sums up the whole book...it reflects God's heart-brokenness that one who He loved so deeply and cared for so tenderly would trash all of it for a bunch of foreign guys.

God expresses how much he hates divorce here by saying it 'shed's blood' and that it is the cause for His fury and jealousy (16:38).

But we see that the root of God's judgment is *jealousy* because His bride forgot Him, and He wants her back!

The Prophets part 3

God shows His deep, real feelings about the whole situation of His bride becoming a prostitute to other nations. He uses phrases like '*I beat my fist*' to convey that His heart is shattered within Him and He desperately desires His people back. He is sure to tell them that the reason they are suffering in exile is because of their own sin and choice of death.

“For I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies, says the Lord God, Therefore turn and live!” (18:32)

The Prophets part 3

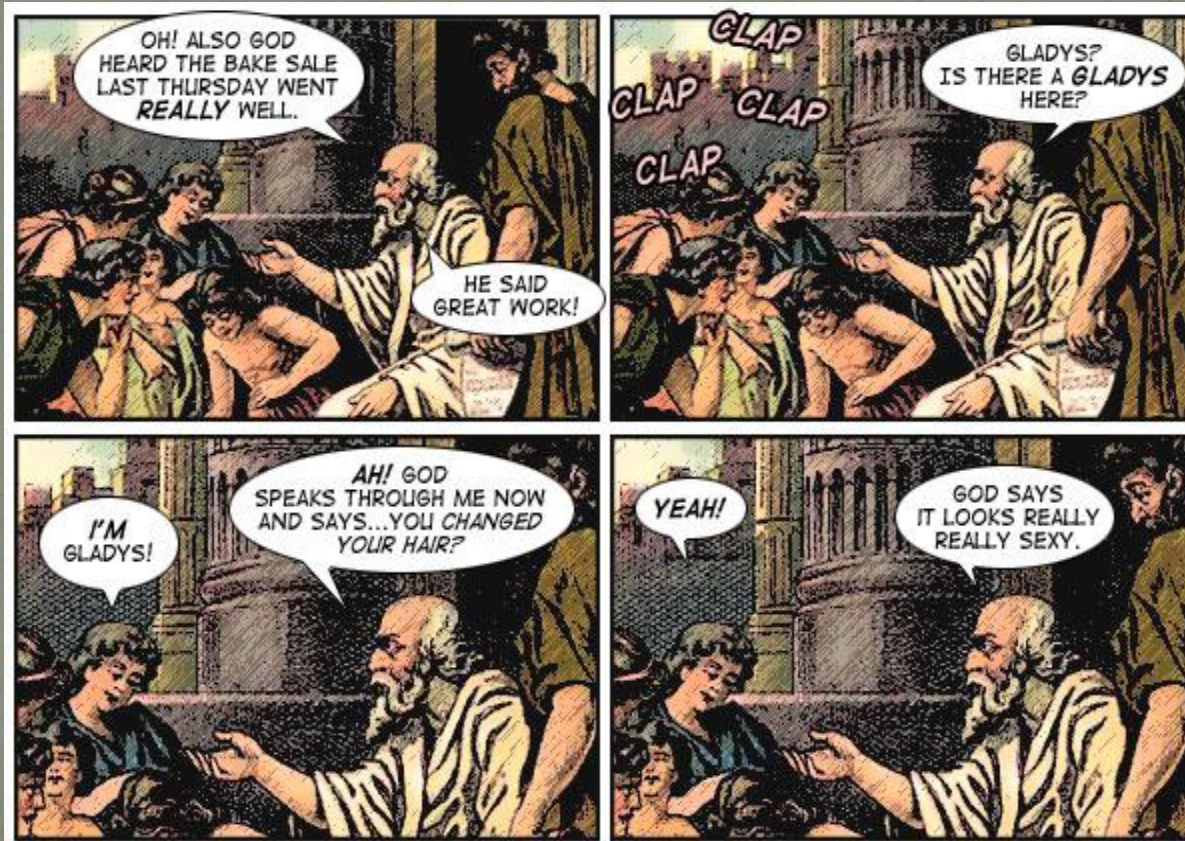
God shows absolutely undeserved mercy even in the sight of such defiance and rejection of His covenant. He does this for His Name's sake...because His heart is to have all people in the whole earth in relationship with Him, therefore He wants His name to be upheld and righteous in the sight of the Gentiles. This gives us a taste of the New Covenant where all men can come to God and receive His salvation.

The Prophets part 3

God is coming back! Once again He will dwell with His people...but this time it will be within us. The dry bones will be restored and full of life and one day there will be a new temple...where God will never again leave His people.

The Prophets part 4

The people desired to hear God speak like this...



The Prophets part 4

- Jeremiah

Jeremiah's ministry was to prepare the people for the coming judgment as a result of their continuous breaking of the covenant with no repentance.

Jeremiah is called as a very young man to speak the Word of God to the people of Judah (southern kingdom) (1:4-8, 10).

They have rejected the previous prophets and their messages and king Manasseh has locked in their judgment (15:1, 4).

The Prophets Part 4

1:13-16 Tells us right off the bat what is about to happen to Judah and WHY: “...for all the evil they did when they ABANDONED ME to worship other gods and their own works”

Chapter 2 starts off with God remembering “the loyalty of your youth, your love as a bride – how you followed Me in the wilderness... Israel was holy to the Lord, the firstfruits of His harvest. All who ate of it found themselves guilty; disaster came on them.” We see bride language, judgment, she is a prostitute, a camel in heat, she loves strangers, claims trees and rocks as her gods and then asks Jehovah to save her when in trouble. He responds by reminding her she would not accept His discipline, my bride has forgotten me! (Read ch. 2)

2:11-13 “Has a nation EVER exchanged its gods? But they were not gods! Yet My people have exchanged their Glory (Jehovah) for useless idols... My people have committed these 2 evils: They have abandoned Me, the fountain of living water, and dug cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that cannot hold water.”

The Prophets Part 4

Chapter 3 is FULL of marriage, divorce, and prostitution language again. God really wants them to understand how He feels and what they've done to Him.

vs. 1 "You have played the prostitute with many partners". vs. 2 "Where have you NOT been immoral? You sat waiting by the highways". vs. 3 "This is why the showers haven't come... You have the brazen look of a prostitute and refuse to be ashamed". (Read ch. 3)

vs. 20 "However, as a woman may betray her lover, so you have betrayed Me"

5:7 "Why should I forgive you?... I satisfied their needs, yet they committed adultery; they gashed themselves at the prostitutes house. They are well-fed, eager stallions, each neighing after someone else's wife"

22:20-22 "... for all your lovers have been crushed... the wind will take away all your shepherds, and your lovers will go into captivity. Then you will be ashamed"

The Prophets Part 4

Because of the nations waywardness and gross, consistent betrayal of God, He is bringing the promised judgment (Deut.28:49-52) on them:

“ I am about to bring a nation from far away against you, house of Israel. This is the Lord’s declaration. It is an established nation, an ancient nation, a nation whose language you do not know and whose speech you do not understand. Their quiver is like an open grave; they are all mighty warriors. They will consume your harvest and your food. They will consume your sons and your daughters. They will consume your flocks and your herds. They will consume your vines and your fig trees. They will destroy with the sword your fortified cities in which you trust. “But even in those days”—this is the Lord ’s declaration—“I will not finish you off. When people ask, ‘For what offense has the Lord our God done all these things to us?’ You will respond to them: Just as you abandoned Me and served foreign gods in your land, so will you serve strangers in a land that is not yours.” (5:15-19)

The Prophets Part 4

The heart of the issue

Broken Covenant: The rejection of their God. The betrayal of His bride, and the staining of His name (17:13)

Jeremiah 11:8 (vs. 4 – big picture) shows how the real problem is that they have broken the covenant and turned from obeying Him.

Ch. 7 (vs. 23 – big picture) refers to the places of worship (Shiloh in the North, Jerusalem in the South) “called by My name” and “where My name dwells” that have been defiled and the judgment that is coming because of this. These places were known to the nations. They represented God to the nations. His name (His reputation) was being stained before the very nations He wanted to see saved through Israel’s example, it’s “light”.

The Prophets Part 4

- **God Longs for Repentance!**

God STILL pleads with them to turn and repent: “Return, Unfaithful Israel... I will not look on you with anger, for I am unfailing in My love. Only repent.” (3:12)

“Return, you faithless children. I will heal your unfaithfulness” (3:22)

“But if you do not listen, I will weep in secret because of your pride; my eyes will weep bitterly, overflowing with tears, because the Lord's flock will be taken captive” (13:17)

“Let my eyes overflow with tears; day and night may they not stop, for the virgin daughter of my people has been destroyed by a great disaster, an extremely severe wound.” (14:17)
also (9:1)

“As surely as the Lord lives, who brought the Israelites up out of the land of the north and out of all the countries where he had banished them.' For I will restore them to the land I gave their forefathers.” (16:15)

“O land, land, land, hear the word of the Lord!” (22:29)

The Prophets part 4

New Testament language:

Jeremiah 4:4 “Circumcise yourselves to the Lord: remove the foreskin of your hearts”

31:31-34 “Look, the days are coming when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. This one will not be like the covenant I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant they broke even though I had married them. Instead, this is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after those days. I will put My teaching within them and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be My people... For I will forgive their wrongdoing and never again remember their sin.” .

The Prophets part 4

In the end Jerusalem is destroyed and the Southern Kingdom of Judah is led into captivity by the Babylonians as promised. Jeremiah continues to prophecy to the people that they need to seek the peace of the city for God has plans to prosper them and give them a future. 29:4-14 (Read it)

31:3-6 “I have loved (ahavah) you with an everlasting love (ahavah); therefore, I have continued to extend faithful love (hesed-“kindness”) to you. Again I will build you so that you will be rebuilt, Virgin Israel. You will take up your tambourines again and go out in joyful dancing. You will plant vineyards again on the mountains of Samaria; the planters will plant and will enjoy the fruit. For there will be a day when watchmen will call out in the hill country of Ephraim, ‘Get up, let’s go up to Zion, to Yahweh our God!’”

The Prophets part 4

The Man as the Message

Jeremiah is restricted from being married and having children. (16:1-4)

Jeremiah melts down under the weight of his calling. (20:7 – to end)

Jeremiah follows up the destruction of Jerusalem and the captivity of Judah by writing the book of Lamentations, which is just Jeremiah lamenting the plight of Judah and Israel, wishing that they would have just repented and obeyed the Lord, but since they didn't, his home is now gone and he must live in a foreign land. In the end, God will bring out a remnant and bring them back to Jerusalem because of the promise of the covenant made to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David.

The Prophets Review

God's Vision: To have a counterpart/bride (Eph. 5:32) that He can dwell with as their God and them as His people (Rev. 21:3)

Their purpose: To call His people to repentance and a restoration of the covenantal relationship with Him (2 Chr. 24:19, Isa. 62:4-5, Hos. 1:10, 2:16-23)

Their message: A warning to a degenerate, unfaithful people that they had broken the covenant by abandoning their God for other lovers and deserve the severe judgment they agreed to..... but if they would repent and return to their Lord, He would forgive even their most wicked sins (national prostitution, child sacrifice, cannibalism, abandoning God, and trusting themselves), and receive them back as His treasured bride (Eze. 6:5, 16:38, Jer 2:11-13, 17-19, 3:12,22, 31:31-34)

The Prophets Review

Further scriptural support for everything you just learned:

References to God being our God, and us being his people. Or to us being chosen as a people for the Lord

OT: Genesis 17:7-8, Exodus 6:7, 19:5-6, 20:2, 29:45-46, Leviticus 26:12, Deuteronomy 4:20, 7:6, 14:4, 23:14, 26:18, 29:13, 2 Sam 7:24, 1 Chronicles 17:22, Psalms 50:7, Isaiah 43:1, 44:2 & 5, 44:21, Jer 30:22, 7:23, 11:4, 32:38, 31:33, 24:7, 31:1, Ezekiel 11:19, 22, 14:11, 34:24, 34:30, 36:37-38, 37:23, 37:27, 36:28, 43:9, Hosea 2:23, Joel 2:27, Zechariah 13:9, 8:8, Malachi 3:16-18

NT: Romans 9:26, 2 Corinthians 6:16-17, Hebrews 8:10, 1 Peter 2:9-10, Revelation 21:3, 21:7

The Prophets Review

Further scriptural support for everything you just learned:

References to God having an exclusive, unique relationship with his people, marriage, or the lack of faithfulness by his people to keep their relationship with the Lord exclusive

OT: Deuteronomy 31:16, Song of Solomon 1:1-8:14 (Shows the unique, exclusive relationship between a man and women that gives us the insight to see what the Groom (Christ) and Bride (Us) should feel for each other in the context of a romantic, marriage relationship), Isaiah 1:21, 54:4-7, 61:10, 62:3-5, Jeremiah 2:2, 3:1-2, 3:6-10, 3:14, 3:20, 31:31-33, 50:1, Ezekiel 16, 23:11, Hosea 1:2, 2:2, 2:7, 2:14-16, 2:19-20, 3:1, 4:10 & 12, 8:1 (exclusive marriage covenant) (Really the ENTIRE book describes this marriage relationship)

NT: Matthew 9:15 (References Christ as the Bridegroom), ch.25 (Parable of the Virgins and the Groom), Mark 2:20, Luke 5:35, John 3:29, 2 Corinthians 11:12, Ephesians 5:31-32, Revelation 19:6-9 (The great marriage finally happens in fullness!)

The Gospels

The “Good News” that God has kept His promises and preserved His covenant!

- Genesis 3:15
- Genesis 22:18
- Galatians 3:3-18
- Isaiah 7:14
- Isaiah 9:2-7
- Isaiah 11:1-5, 10-12
- Isaiah 53
- Isaiah 61

The Gospels

Matthew (The Covenant Gospel)

Matthew's entire theme is that Jesus fulfills the Old Testament prophecies of the Messiah, or Savior, and also the Son of David (relevant because it shows He is a Jew in the line of David, of the tribe of Judah, and thus qualified as the savior) and that the Disciples are now called to live in the new covenant of being saved from the sin that previously separated them from God and kept them from having an intimate relationship the way they can have now- which was the whole reason for salvation in the first place

The Gospels

Luke 1

The birth of John the Baptist is predicted. He will be Elijah – which is prophesied in Malachi 4:5-6. He is also the first man that was *filled* with the Holy Spirit (instead of having the Holy Spirit come *upon* him).

It is a turning point in the story...because the shadow of the OT is about to become a reality!

God remembers the Covenant with Abraham (1:67-79)

The Gospels

God with us!

“And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins. So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: *Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel, which means God with us.*” (Matt 1:21-23)

Matthew is using the words of the prophet Isaiah (7:14) to prove to the Jews that Jesus is the Messiah, the one who will save them from separation from God.

The Gospels

- His Dwelling Place

The Temple shifts from a **place** to a **person**.

Mark 11: Jesus reaffirms the fact that the place where His presence dwells must be pure and holy

Mark 13: He states that He is going to destroy the Temple, but then build it back up in 3 days...indicating that HE is the Temple.

After his death the curtain that separated the outer courts from the Holy of Holies (where His presence actually dwelt) was torn. God was saying, 'Hey! I've made it possible for all peoples to have access to my presence, it now dwells in the man Jesus Christ!...who dwells in US!

The Gospels

God's Heart

“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for you soul. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.” (Matt 11:28-30)

Jesus is offering all nations freedom from the heavy burden of the law, and giving them the opportunity to be in intimate fellowship with Him...just what He's longed for all along.

The Gospels

God's Heart

“Behold! My Servant whom I have chosen, My Beloved in whom My soul is well pleased! I will put My Spirit upon Him, and He will declare justice to the Gentiles. He will not quarrel nor cry out, nor will anyone hear His voice in the streets. A bruised reed He will not break, and smoking flax He will not quench, till He sends forth justice to victory; and in His name Gentiles will trust.” (Matt 12:18-21)

Matthew is again quoting Isaiah (42:1-2) to affirm that Jesus is the One whom God has sent to bridge the gap between people and Himself. He is also making it clear that this Good News (that Jesus came to save us from sin and separation from Him) is for all the nations, Jews and Gentiles alike.

The Gospels

Israel's Rejection and Jesus as the final Prophet

“As He approached and saw the city, He wept over it, saying, “If you knew this day what would bring peace —but now it is hidden from your eyes. For the days will come on you when your enemies will build an embankment against you, surround you, and hem you in on every side. They will crush you and your children within you to the ground, and they will not leave one stone on another in you, because you did not recognize the time of your visitation.” (Luke 19:41-44)

God's emotions and deep love for His people are once again seen here through Jesus who is weeping over His people's rejection of Him, even as He has come Himself in the flesh to save them (instead of sending a prophet), and pronouncing yet another judgment on them, a most severe judgment.

The Gospels

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! You build the tombs of the prophets and decorate the monuments of the righteous, and you say, ‘If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we wouldn’t have taken part with them in shedding the prophets’ blood.’ You, therefore, testify against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers’ sins! “Snakes! Brood of vipers! How can you escape being condemned to hell? This is why I am sending you prophets, sages, and scribes. Some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will flog in your synagogues and hound from town to town. So all the righteous blood shed on the earth will be charged to you, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the sanctuary and the altar. I assure you: All these things will come on this generation! Jesus’ Lamentation over Jerusalem ‘Jerusalem, Jerusalem! She who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her. How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, yet you were not willing! See, your house is left to you desolate. For I tell you, you will never see Me again until you say, “He who comes in the name of the Lord is the blessed One”!’ .” (Matt 23:29-38)

Again, God’s heart and then judgment for their utter rejection of Him but with a promise of redemption!

The Gospels

- Matthew 21:33-46

This parable of the workers in the vineyard is a direct parallel to the entire Old Testament. God, depicted as the landowner sets up a vineyard and leases it out to vinedressers. The landowner continually sent messengers to the workers of the vineyard, but they were not welcomed and instead were stoned, beaten and killed. Finally, the landowner sent his son, saying, "They will respect my son." But instead of respecting the son the workers thought they could gain more by killing him. The landowner then brings judgment on the people and gives the stewardship to others.

This parable is God's summary statement of the history of His chosen people and the sad conclusion to the nation of Israel's role as the name-bearer of God. (1 Peter 2:9-10)

The Gospels

Ecclesia – upon this rock

“who do you say that I am?” Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God!” And Jesus responded, “Simon son of Jonah, you are blessed because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father in heaven. And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church (ecclesia), and the forces of Hades will not overpower it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth is already bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth is already loosed in heaven.” (Matt 16:15-19)

The Gospels

The Vision

“I pray not only for these, but also for those who believe in Me through their message. May they all be one, as You, Father, are in Me and I am in You. May they also be one in Us, so the world may believe You sent Me. I have given them the glory You have given Me. May they be one as We are one. I am in them and You are in Me. May they be made completely one, so the world may know You have sent Me and have loved them as You have loved Me. Father, I desire those You have given Me to be with Me where I am. Then they will see My glory, which You have given Me because You loved Me before the world’s foundation. Righteous Father! The world has not known You. However, I have known You, and these have known that You sent Me. I made Your name known to them and will make it known, so the love You have loved Me with may be in them and I may be in them. .” (John 17:20-26)

The Gospels

In Matthew 27:25 we see a prophetic moment of the “unheard of” mercy of God.

Pilate is saying that He is innocent and the people cry out to “let His blood be on us and our children” with out realizing that the very blood they were referring to was going to be on them, but for salvation instead of for blame! Judas is upset with himself because he betrayed innocent blood, which is just a saying to him, but little did they all know how true the statement was. He truly was the only innocent blood, and thus the only one able to shed His blood to save us.

The Gospels

- The Cross

In the Cross we see everything come together.

We see the fulfillment of the Mosaic Covenant as Jesus takes upon Himself the curses and judgments resulting from the continuously broken covenant

We see the fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant as Jesus becomes sin for us and takes upon Himself the wrath of God towards all sin, past-present-future

We see the fulfillment of the Law and the final atoning sacrifice as Jesus becomes the final spotless lamb, who takes away the sins of the world

The Gospels

- The Veil is Torn!

This may be the most powerful scene in the New Testament (aside from the Resurrection). Jesus gives up His spirit, and at that moment the giant curtain that separated the Holy of Holies (God's dwelling place among His people) from the rest of the temple and the people, was torn in two from top to bottom. This was huge! For any of the priests who were there in the temple, they must have thought they were going to die instantly. God was saying in dramatic fashion "Your sins have been removed! I have made you holy! There is no longer anything separating Me from you! We can dwell together! (Matthew 27: 50-53)

The Gospels

The Resurrection

Jesus does not stay dead, because it was impossible for the grave to hold him. His resurrection was His final act of destroying the enemies of His bride. In this moment, even Death was defeated. The gates of Hades did not prevail, and in the ascension, the God-Man Jesus returns to the father with the promise that He will return and when He does, He will dwell with us as our God, and we will be His people

He commissions us to go and make disciples telling them everything that Jesus had done to make it possible for us to be together (chasing after us soooo intensely, even unto the point of death). These are his last words on earth telling us all to keep our hearts connected with His because He is coming back to get us and be married to us forever!

The New Covenant part 1

The Birth of the Ecclesia

Jesus first reveals the great mystery of Heaven, long hidden through the ages, in Matt 16:16 when He says “upon this Rock I will build my Church” (Ecclesia)

Jesus tells His disciples that it is better for them if He leaves, because then the Holy Spirit will come, and they will be in-filled with power, and be able to do the works of Jesus. He tells them that the Gospel (“repentance for forgiveness of sins”) will be proclaimed in His name, to all the *Nations, starting in Jerusalem* (Luke 24:44-49)

He then says “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come on you, and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” (Acts 1:4-8)

The New Covenant part 1

The Birth of the Ecclesia

Acts 2 is the moment the great mystery of God (His plan to fulfill His Vision!), the Church (Ecclesia), is activated! The Holy Spirit is poured out in power with signs, wonders, and the Gospel message infused with convicting strength.

3,000 people from all over the world repent and are baptized into the family of God (the Ecclesia), radically changing their lives and committing to this new movement, in response to this very strong and direct Gospel message. The first local church is born! (Acts 2:41-47)

The New Covenant part 1

The Expansion of the Ecclesia

What we see in the rest of the book of Acts is God's plan to reach the whole world with the Good News (the Gospel/Kerygma) that a final atoning sacrifice has been made, the veil has been torn as a result, and man can dwell with God and God can dwell with man through the grace of repentance and faith in Christ.

The Ecclesia (the body of Christ on the Earth) is the tool God will use to accomplish this mission (the Great Co-mission) of reaching the "ends of the earth".

The New Covenant part 1

The Expansion of the Ecclesia

Acts was written in 6 sections by Luke, with each section ending with a summary statement by him, and progressively showing the expansion of the Gospel-bearing Church from Jerusalem, to Judea, to Samaria, to the ends of the Earth! Just as Luke had recorded in Luke 24:44-49 and Acts 1:8.

The six summary statements are found in:

Acts 6:7 - Jerusalem

9:31 - Judea, Galilee, Samaria

12:24 - Antioch (Gentiles - Cornelius)

16:4-5 - The surrounding Gentile nations (Iconium, Derby, Lystra, etc)

19:17-20 - The Greek Nations (Corinth, Ephesus, Thessalonica, Athens, etc.)

28:31 - Rome and the “ends of the Earth”

The New Covenant part 1

The Expansion of the Ecclesia

Paul confirms God's mission of expansion multiple times in different places.

Acts 13:46-48 "You've rejected the Gospel. The Gentiles will listen!"

Col 1:6 "This Gospel is bearing fruit and growing all over the world"

Col 1:23 "This Gospel has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven"

Rom 1:8 "News of your faith is being reported in all the world"

Rom 16:19 "The report of your obedience has reached everyone"

Rom 10:18 "Their words have gone out to all the earth... the ends of the world"

The New Covenant part 1

The Establishing of the Ecclesia

God's plan was moving full speed ahead and local churches were being birthed all over the world as the Apostles proclaimed the Good news (Kerygma) that Jesus was the Messiah and had reconciled man back to God.

These local churches were mostly gentile churches with little to no background in Judaism, Jehovah, or Jesus, who responded in faith to the Gospel message and received God's saving grace. In God's master plan, what they needed now was to be "established" and "strengthened" in their new found Faith. They needed to be taught the fullness of the "Kerygma" (the proclamation/Gospel) and the "Didache" (the Teaching/Lifestyle of how the Church is to be, or better yet – who the Church is to become).

The New Covenant part 1

The Establishing of the Ecclesia

Paul has been commissioned by God in Ephesians 3:8-9 to preach the Gospel to the gentiles and to reveal the administration of the Church to the Church. In other words, Paul is called to be the master builder of the Church global and lay the foundational teachings by which the Church global will live and be defined.

This is a hugely important part of God's plan because in order for the Vision to come to pass, the world must see God accurately, which means the Church (as the body of Christ on the earth) must be an accurate representation of Him. In order for that to happen, the Church must be taught accurately about the Person and Work of Christ (Kerygma) and how He lived/lives, His nature, character, ways, and truth (Didache). This was a big part of the Gospel message – to correct the golden calf-like misrepresentation of God, by Israel and it's leaders (the Pharisees) to themselves and to the nations.

The New Covenant part 1

The Establishing of the Ecclesia

We see Paul expressing his desire to establish a young gentile church in Rome in the Kerygma and Didache. In Romans 1 Paul praises the church for their genuine faith and tells them he longs to come to see them to impart to them spiritual gifts and to establish them in the Gospel (Kerygma) and the ways of Christ (Didache).

The next 11 chapters is a lengthy explanation of the Gospel (Kerygma), what it is and isn't, how it works, how we are to respond, it's beauty, Faith, the Spirit, works, etc.

In 3:25-26 we see Paul explaining the relevance of the Abrahamic covenant, and continuing into ch. 4 showing how God's mystery was in motion through the covenants to Abraham, Isaac, David, etc.

The New Covenant part 1

The Establishing of the Ecclesia

From chapter 12-16 we see Paul switch to a focus on the Didache with ch. 12:9 starting a long series of instructions on how we ought to be as representatives of Christ, starting it off with his two most important points by saying we must love without hypocrisy and we must have strong family-level affectionate love for each other as members of God's household.

Again, this Didache, used to reveal the administration of God's household (how God wants us to be, look, act), is of uttermost importance to the Gospel because it is what adorns it (Titus 2:10), makes it look attractive to the watching world. It's why St. Francis of Assisi's words have resonated so well for so long "Preach the Gospel at all times. If necessary, use words". The Didache is the living out of the Gospel message as a community, family, household, and also as individuals.

The New Covenant part 1

The Establishing of the Ecclesia

Paul is seen establishing the Church in Ephesus in a much deeper way than the Roman church, and this is because the Ephesian church was further along in their growth than the Roman church at the time of their epistles being written.

We see him reminding them of their great salvation (kerygma) and praying for greater revelation in their hearts and minds of God's love at the beginning of his epistle, and then reminding them how to live (some didache). Then in chapter 3 we see a MAJOR revelation from Paul to the Church: The Mystery revealed! (read it)

Finally in chapter 5 we come FULL circle back to God's heart Vision when Paul says this at the end of a strong didache section of instructions to the family units: "the two will become one flesh. This mystery is profound, but I am talking about Christ and the church"!!! It's all about HIS BRIDE!!!

The New Covenant part 2

The Reproduction of the Ecclesia

Paul had a 4 part strategy for seeing God's Vision come to pass through the Ecclesia: Preach the Gospel (kerygma), Establish/Strengthen Churches (kerygma/didache), Reproduce Churches (Family/Sonship).

In 1 Timothy 2:7 we see Paul reminding Timothy that Paul was appointed as a herald, apostle, and teacher of the Gentiles in Faith and Truth, confirming again the mystery of God hidden through the ages: Jesus as the Messiah of both Jews and Gentiles, combined on Earth as His body, the Ecclesia

God reveals the Ecclesia to Paul as a family, as the household of God (Tim 3:15) and throughout his entire first letter to Timothy, continues to remind him of this truth. Families naturally reproduce themselves, and the family of God is no different. Paul does not only preach this truth, he lives it also, reproducing many sons in his life who were to carry on the work of reproducing Ecclesia's.

The New Covenant part 2

The Reproduction of the Ecclesia

“You, therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, commit to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.” (Tim 2:2)

In this verse we see Paul referring to Timothy as his son (he is not Timothy’s father in any natural sense) and commissioning him to reproduce in others what he (Paul) had reproduced in him (Timothy).

Paul actually opens up his letter to Timothy by calling him “my TRUE son in the faith (1:2) and just 16 verses later intentionally refers to him as his son saying “Timothy, my son, I am giving you this instruction...” (1:18), and a third time in the 2nd chapter saying “...therefore, my son, be strong...” (2:2). Paul is intentionally driving home a point and affirming Timothy in his identity as a son. Paul wanted this Gospel to be reproduced from the perspective of true family, knowing this is how God saw it and wanted it done.

The New Covenant part 2

The Reproduction of the Ecclesia

Lastly this is confirmed again in chapter 5:1-19 where Paul reminds Timothy to interact with those in the Church as family members. Older men as fathers, younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, younger women as sisters – with all propriety, taking care of the widows as family members, honoring the elders as fathers, etc.

From this identity of family, with God as Father, the Church is to move with confidence, as the body of Jesus, to reach the lost with the Gospel in a way that invites them back in to the family of God they were always intended to be a part of.

The New Covenant part 2

Hebrews – The Greater Covenant

The epistle to the Hebrews was a letter written to a second generation Jewish Christian Church, most likely in Israel, who was struggling with their faith in the saving work of Jesus due to intense and consistent persecution and hardship, which caused discouragement and mistakes. Because they were a church of Jewish believers, they were very familiar with the law, the sacrificial system of atonement, and especially the annual Day of Atonement where all their sins would be wiped away by the sacrifices made by the High Priest on behalf of the nation, and they would feel clean before God again.

Due to the consistent and intense persecution and hardships, these disciples of Jesus found themselves falling into various sins of the heart and the flesh and were looking for a way to make themselves feel clean before God again. They were struggling with the transition from yearly sacrifices to putting their faith in a once and for all sacrifice. The epistle to the Hebrews was an encouragement to this church to hold fast to the Faith and persevere.

The New Covenant part 2

Hebrews – The Greater Covenant

Right off the bat the author of Hebrews (most likely Apollos, possibly Paul) opens up with this statement, affirming the new day they were in:

“Long ago God spoke to the fathers by the prophets at different times and in different ways. In these last days, He has spoken to us by His Son. God has appointed Him heir of all things and made the universe through Him. The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact expression of His nature, sustaining all things by His powerful word. After making purification for sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high” (1:1-3)

He exact expression of His nature made purification for sins!

The New Covenant part 2

Hebrews – The Greater Covenant

Throughout the whole book the author is systematically showing the church how Jesus and the new covenant He has inaugurated is superior to everything they've held as holy, sacred, and important.

He introduces the dynamic of the Trinity in chapter 2:8-12 when He describes God as the Father (Head of the house and family of God) and Jesus as the son and first of many brothers (son, groom) who is here to save His bride, the Church. All of Hebrews is built around the Trinitarian idea of God as the Father and Jesus as the son, with both referenced as the groom!

In Chapter 2 we see the author showing how Jesus is superior to the Angels
In Chapter 3 we see how Jesus is superior to Moses and the Law (Mosaic Covenant), as He is our Apostle and High Priest

The New Covenant part 2

Hebrews – The Greater Covenant

In Chapter 4 we see how through Jesus we can now enter into the promised rest of God that the Promised Land was a shadow of, and that the Israelites were not able to fully enter under the Law (Mosaic Covenant) but instead wandered in the wilderness for 40 years until the entire generation died off.

In Chapters 4-8 we see how Jesus is superior to the priesthood and their Levitical High Priest, instead becoming a superior High priest in a different order and by appointment instead of generational inheritance

In Chapter 7 Jesus is shown to be superior to Abraham and in Chapters 8 and 9 we see Jesus again superior to the entire Law

The New Covenant part 2

Hebrews – The Greater Covenant

Hebrews ties in the big picture of God's vision and mission from the beginning in ways that no other NT book does.

“After He was perfected, He became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey Him, and He was declared by God a high priest in the order of Melchizedek.” (5:9)

6:13-20 confirms God's intentions with the Abrahamic covenant

Chapter 7 shines a brilliant light on the Abrahamic covenant and Jesus (read it)

The New Covenant part 2

Hebrews – The Greater Covenant

The VISION! It's getting Close!

“But finding fault with His people, He says: Look, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah - not like the covenant that I made with their ancestors on the day I took them by their hands to lead them out of the land of Egypt. I disregarded them, says the Lord, because they did not continue in My covenant. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws into their minds and write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be My people. And each person will not teach his fellow citizen, and each his brother, saying, “Know the Lord,” because they will all know Me, from the least to the greatest of them. For I will be merciful to their wrongdoing, and I will never again remember their sins. By saying, a new covenant, He has declared that the first is old. And what is old and aging is about to disappear.” (8:8-13)

The New Covenant part 2

The Return of Jesus

In God's redemptive plan to save His bride from herself and her enemies, there will be a moment where all questions are answered as to who has won and who the bride belongs to. In a climactic victorious scene Jesus Himself is going to descend from Heaven with a SHOUT, with the voice of an Archangel, and the trumpet of God! The dead in Christ will rise first, then we who are still alive will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet Jesus in the air and be with Him forever from that point forward. (1 Thes 4:15-17).

In 5:9-10 this point is again told to us by Paul when he says "For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep, we will live together with Him."

In both passages God's heart and vision are captured as he affirms "we will live together with Him". We will dwell together. The tabernacle of God will be with men!

The Revelation of Jesus Christ and His Bride

- Revelation

This book is titled very specifically as the Revelation of Jesus Christ. It is not a book intended to be about strange future events, but rather about the Incredible return of a Holy & Just God... Heaven bent on claiming His bride once and for all. It is a revelation of the fierceness of His love for us as He reveals the unimaginable greatness of who He is and the utter destruction of all of the enemies of God and His bride. It is the Revelation of who Jesus Christ really is, in all His attributes, characteristics, and nature. He is the Groom, He is the Lord of all Lords, the King of all Kings, the Bright and Shining One... He is God!

The Revelation of Jesus Christ and His Bride

- Revelation

Revelation is what we call Apocalyptic literature. This has often been understood as the end of all things, destruction, doom, violence, etc. But the word apocalypse literally means “uncovering” or “disclosure” or “unveiling”. It’s about things being exposed and revealed for what they really are. Evil is being exposed and finally and completely destroyed while Jesus is being revealed in the fullness of His glory, majesty, and power!

The Revelation of Jesus Christ and His Bride

- Revelation

Chapters 17-22 are the Grand Finale chapters! They are the happy ending to the story, just like all great stories! The King returns in fury against His arch enemies and defeats them while rescuing His love and living happily ever after in paradise.

In 21:3 We see the climactic statement of the Scriptures

In 21:10 We see the redemption of Israel symbolized, and in verses 22-23 we see the Sanctuary (Tabernacle/Temple) is absent because God is the eternally rebuilt/resurrected Temple.

Let's read this stunning conclusion to the greatest story ever told!...

The Credits

- Redemptive History

Written by Steve Arsenault 2004, revised 2014

Significant contributions by Rebekah Schmitz

- Holman Christian Standard Bible

- New King James Version

All verses are taken from the HCSB or NKJV of the Bible