

# God's Plan for the Ages

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## *An Outline for the Timeline/Chart*

### **GENESIS**

1:1 – God made 2 places: Heaven & Earth

- Over 80% of our Bible talks about God's plan for the EARTH.
- We learn very early on what God wanted man to do: multiply & have dominion over the EARTH (1:28, 9:1, see also Psa 115:16)

11:1, 4-8 – When man tried to get to Heaven, God reminded them that He didn't want them in Heaven, but "upon the face of all the EARTH."

12:1-3 – God separated Abraham from all the people in order to make a great nation through which God would deal with the world.

- God promised Abraham some things: one of the most important of which is LAND (see 12:7, 13:14-15, 15:18, 17:5-8)
- These promises would be passed down to Abraham's descendants, but not ALL descendants would receive them – only part (see 15:18, 16:15, 17:19-21). This theme continues (see 26:1-5, 25:24-28, 28:13-16).

32:28 – God renames Abraham's grandson, Jacob, to ISRAEL.

46:2-3 – God sends Jacob and his 12 sons to Egypt to become a GREAT NATION.

### **EXODUS - DEUTERONOMY**

Exo 1:1-7 – What began as a large family of 70, God made a GREAT NATION in Egypt, but they had become slaves. When they cried to God, He remembered what He had promised (see also Exo 2:23-25)

Exo 6:2-8 – God calls Moses to be the leader and administrator of God's plans and instructions for the nation of Israel (see also Exo 3:10-15).

Exo 13:17-18 – Moses leads Israel from Egypt and across the Red Sea (Exo 14:21-22, 29-31).

Exo 19:3, 5-6 – God offers Israel a deal: the First Covenant (or Old Testament – see Heb 8:13 & 9:15).

- This is an IF/THEN covenant (see Exo 19:5) also known as the Mosaic Law or the Commandments and is found in the books of Exodus through Deuteronomy.
- Israel AGREED to the deal (Exo 19:8) and were promised to become a HOLY Nation and a Kingdom of PRIESTS (Exo 19:6).
- Israel could be found right (righteous) in God's eyes by doing these commandments (see Deut 6:25)

### **JOSHUA – ESTHER**

- These books are a chronological history of the nation of Israel from the death of Moses until the births of Jesus Christ and John the Baptist.
- During this time God only deals with mankind through Israel focusing on Israel becoming a mighty nation ruling the world from their promised LAND.
- God communicated to the nation of Israel during this time primarily through the PROPHETS.

## JOB

The book of Job is thought to be one of the earliest in the Bible, chronologically. Most place Job after the flood (see Job 22:15-17) but before Moses since there is no indication that Job was an Israelite or under the Mosaic Law. So he would have lived sometime between Genesis 10 and Exodus 1.

## PSALMS – MALACHI

- These books are the writings of the leaders and prophets of Israel during the same time period as the books of Joshua through Esther, above.
- In these books are the things God spoke to Israel at that time through the prophets.
- During this time, God made many promises to Israel called PROPHECIES.
- We will discuss 5 major prophecies that should help us more clearly understand God's plan laid out in the Bible:

### FIVE PROMISES GOD MAKES TO ISRAEL

1. **A KING** – Israel is promised a King that will reign forever and shall be God's Son (2 Sam 7:12-14,16)

*The sign to be shown is told in Isa 7:14*

2. **A KINGDOM** – Israel is promised an ever-lasting Kingdom (Psa 145:13)

*The sign to be shown is told in Isa 35:4-6*

3. **A NEW COVENANT** – Israel was promised a NEW deal with God to replace the old one from Exo 19. In this New Covenant with Israel, God's laws will be written in their hearts, and He will put His spirit in them to CAUSE them to keep His commandments (Jer 31:31-33, Eze 36:26-28)

*The sign to be shown is told in Joel 2:28*

4. **GOD'S WRATH** – God will pour out His anger and punish unbelieving Israel and the heathen (non-Israel) (see Isa 13:11&13 and Isa 66:15)

*The sign to be shown is told in Psa 7:6*

5. **A REMNANT** – The believing part of Israel will be saved from God's wrath in order to survive into the Kingdom (Isa 11:11-12 and Isa 37:32)

*The sign to be shown is told in Jer 9:13-16*

## MATTHEW – JOHN

- These books are a continuation of Israel's history where the History books (Joshua-Esther) and the Prophecy books (Psalms-Malachi) left off.
- Each book contains the life of Jesus Christ from a different perspective.
- Nothing new begins with these books:
  - God is still dealing with mankind only through Israel (Mat 10:5-6, John 4:22)

- Israel is still expecting God to fulfill the promises He previously made them, and indeed those promises began to be fulfilled during these books (see below).
- God had not changed His deal, the Old Covenant, with Israel, and it is plain to see that Jesus' teachings were consistent with that Old Testament/Mosaic Law (Mat 5:17-18 & Mat 23:2-3).
- Even when Jesus began to teach that He would die then rise again, His own disciples had no idea what He was talking about (see Mat 17:23, Mark 9:9-10 & 31-32, Luke 18:34, John 9:20).
- The prophecies and promises made to Israel began to come to pass:
  - 1. **A KING** – Mat 1:18-23 (Remember the sign? Isa 35:4-6)
  - 2. **A KINGDOM** – Mat 4:23-24 (Remember the sign? Isa 35:4-6)
- Jesus was crucified, but this is not taught as good news. After His resurrection, Jesus then commands the disciples to **continue the program they had already started** (Mat 28:20). After all, there were still several promises yet to be fulfilled.

## ACTS

- The book of Acts is still a continuation of Israel's history picking up where the previous four books left off.
- More prophecies and promises to Israel continue to come to pass:
  - 3. **A NEW COVENANT** – Acts 2:4, 14-21 (Remember the sign? Joel 2:28)
  - 4. **GOD'S WRATH** – Acts 7:51-57 (Remember the sign? Psa 7:6 – see also Mark 16:19)
  - 5. **A REMEMNAT** – Acts 8:1-4 (Remember the sign? Jer 9:13-16)
- By chapter 8 of the book of Acts, the nation Israel had rejected God the Father through His Prophets, God the Son through Jesus Christ, and God the Spirit through Peter, the Disciples, and their fellow believers.
- The next thing to happen according to Israel's prophetic timeline would be for God to punish the world and unbelieving Israel for their complete rejection of God, then He would set up Israel's promised Kingdom in the promised LAND for Jesus, the King, to rule the EARTH with Israel serving as His priests to the rest of the world. BUT IT NEVER HAPPENED! WHY? When every other promise God had made had come to pass, why wasn't the rest of Israel's program fulfilled? Since Adam's fall from the Garden of Eden, everything God said would happen has happened, but for the last 2000 years, it seems to most that God has become much harder to figure out. WHY?
- BECAUSE: In Acts chapter 9, God interrupted His prophesied plan with Israel and saved Saul (Acts 9:3-9) in order to start a different program. Saul, later named Paul, is the man through whom God would administer His plans and instructions for the Body of Christ. (Read Paul's own account of his conversion in Acts 26:12-18).
- Though we read much about Paul in the remainder of the book of Acts, the theme of the book is still about ISRAEL. Chapters 9-28, consequently, are about Israel's fall and the putting on hold of their Kingdom Dispensation from the Jewish perspective (see Acts 22:17-18 & 28:28).

- By the end of Acts, God’s plan for Israel had been temporarily set aside in order for God to institute His plan for the Body of Christ through the Apostle Paul.

## ROMANS – PHILEMON

- These 13 books are all of Paul’s letters.
- Paul was given a message distinct from any other plan God has instituted with mankind. He calls that program the “Dispensation of Grace” (Eph 3:2) and the “Mystery” (Eph 3:3).
- For the first time we learn of God’s plan for HEAVEN through Paul’s letters. Remember, God created 2 places: Heaven & Earth. The entire Bible, until Paul, has described God’s plan for the EARTH, BUT NOW God reveals His plan for HEAVEN. Israel’s promised domain is the promised Kingdom on EARTH, whereas the Body of Christ will occupy HEAVEN (1 Thes 4:17, Phi 3:20, 1 Cor 15:51-52, Col 3:1-4, Eph 1:3 & 2:6, Col 1:5).
- Paul was given instructions straight from God to be the pattern for all believers in the Body of Christ (1 Tim 1:16).
- The information Paul received from Christ for the church today is different from information given to Israel. Peter says the information given to Israel has been KNOWN since the world began (Acts 3:19-21), but Paul says the information given to the Body of Christ through him had been kept SECRET since the world began (Rom 16:25).
- Instructions for the church today, then, are found in Paul’s letters, and God expects us to heed them (1 Cor 11:1 & 4:16, Phi 3:17 & 4:9, 2 Thes 2:15).
- There are many aspects of the Mystery program as given to Paul, but the most prominent is that anyone can be saved by the blood of Christ apart from earning it or proving it with their works, but solely by the belief that Jesus paid the full price for their sins (Eph 2:8-9, Rom 4:5, Titus 3:5-7, Eph 1:7 & 13, Rom 3:24-25, 1 Cor 15:1-4).
- The end of the Dispensation of Grace is marked by the receiving of the Body of Christ into Heaven (1 Thes 4:13-18). Then God will resume His promised earthly program with Israel (Rom 11:11, 15, & 25-27).

## HEBREWS – JUDE

- These books are referred to as the Hebrew epistles written by believing Jews during the Acts period. The following verses help us to understand that these were written, not to the Body of Christ, but to believing Israel:
  - HEBREWS – If the title of the book isn’t enough, see Heb 2:3-4.
  - JAMES – See Jam 1:1 (cross reference with Acts 8:4 & 11:19)
  - 1 PETER – See 1 Pet 1:1 (cross reference Acts 8:1)
  - 2 PETER – See 2 Pet 3:1 (cross reference 1 Pet 1:1)
  - 1 JOHN – See 1 JN 2:3-7
  - 2 JOHN – See verse 6
  - 3 JOHN – See verse 7
  - JUDE – See verses 1 & 5

- Let us not forget that Peter, James, and John were ministers of the circumcision, otherwise known as Israel (Gal 2:7-9)
- These books are properly placed AFTER Paul's letters because the teachings in them will be applicable and necessary to the REMENANT OF ISRAEL that will be in place when God resumes His plan with Israel AFTER the Dispensation of Grace has ended (Rom 11:2, 5, 25-27).

## REVELATION

- Written by John (a Jew), is a foretelling (prophecy) of the portion of Israel's program yet to come after the Dispensation of Grace.
- Revelation 1:5-6 further indicate that this is a book themed on the completion and fulfillment of God's plan for Israel on the EARTH (see also Rev 1:9).
- Of the 5 promises we looked at earlier, we see their complete fulfillment in Revelation still yet to come:
  - 5. **A REMEMNANT**: Rev 7:1-4, 5-8, 13-15 (cross reference Mat 24:31 & Isa 1:12)
  - 4. **GOD'S WRATH**: Revelation chapters 6, 8, & 13
  - 3. **A NEW COVENANT**: Rev 22:14
  - 2. **A KINGDOM**: Rev 21:2-3
  - 1. **A KING**: Rev 19:11-16
- Information for the Body of Christ is not found in Revelation as it is written regarding God's future plans for the EARTH. Besides, Paul was God's administrator and dispenser of the previously hidden mystery information for the church today, they Body of Christ (Acts 26:16-17, 1 Cor 9:17, Eph 3:2, 1 Tim 1:16).

## CONCLUSION

- In conclusion, while ALL scripture is truth and for our benefit (2 Tim 3:16), we must properly understand God's plans for both the HEAVEN *and* EARTH. He has two different plans for two different places. Learning how to rightly-divide the Word of God helps us to better understand God's plan for us in Heavenly places (2 Tim 2:15, Eph 2:6).
- Earlier it was mentioned that over 80% of our Bible talks about God's plan for the EARTH. Hopefully, this study has shown that Genesis through Acts and Hebrews through Revelation contain vital information for God's plan for the EARTH, while the books of Romans through Philemon contain the once hidden mystery about God's plans for His HEAVENLY people—the members of the Body of Christ—now revealed.