

# GOD'S COVENANT PROMISES

The Beginnings

Dr. Dan Starcevic

**Still  
Here!**

## OUR PLAN

- Goals and Introduction
- Promise/Noah/Nation
- Abrahamic Covenant
- Land Covenant
- Davidic Covenant
- New Covenant
- Between the Testaments
- Gospels and Acts
- The Epistles
- Revelation

WHAT WE LEARNED  
LAST TIME

*repetitio est mater  
studiorum*

*Repetition is the  
Mother of Learning*

- **Covenants** Are Fundamental to Understanding God's Word
- **Covenants** Are Promises But not Every Promise is a Covenant
- **Covenants** Are Formal Promise In Which God Binds His Action With an Oath
- **Covenants** Show God Means What He Says

## THE BEGINNINGS

- Starts in Eternity Past
- Single Goal
- Solid Foundation
- Seeing From God's Perspective

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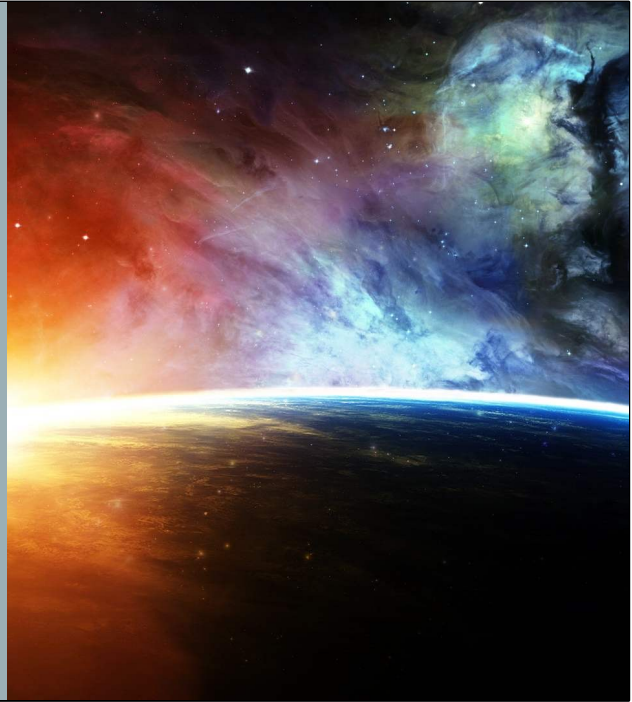


WHERE DO WE START?

In Eternity Past

God's Plan For The World Was in  
Place Before He Created  
Anything

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## GOD'S PLANS WERE MADE IN ETERNITY PAST

- The Work and Ministry of Jesus Were Determined (Micah 5:2)
- The Kingdom of God was Prepared (Mt. 25:34)
- The Fire of Hell Was Prepared for the Devil (Mt. 25:41)
- Jesus was Loved by the Father (Jn. 17:24)
- God Chose Who Would Believe (Eph 1:4)
- Granted Grace to Those Who Have been Called and Saved (2 Tim. 1:9)
- The Sacrificial Death of Jesus Was Known (1 Pet. 1:20)
- The Names of the Saved Were Written (Rev. 13:8, 17:8)

**God's Plans Were Made Before Creation**

GOD'S PLANS WE MADE IN ETERNITY  
PAST

“But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Too little to be among the clans of Judah, From you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, From the days of eternity.” (Mic 5:2)

THE WORK AND MINISTRY OF JESUS WERE DETERMINED

GOD'S PLANS WE MADE IN ETERNITY  
PAST

Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. (Mt 25:34)

THE KINGDOM OF GOD WAS PREPARED (MT. 25:34)



GOD'S PLANS WE MADE IN ETERNITY  
PAST

Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels; Mt 25:41

THE FIRE OF HELL WAS PREPARED FOR THE DEVIL (MT.  
25:41)

GOD'S PLANS WE MADE IN ETERNITY  
PAST

Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, so that they may see My glory which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world. Jn 17:24

JESUS WAS LOVED BY THE FATHER (JN. 17:24)

GOD'S PLANS WE MADE IN ETERNITY  
PAST

just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him.  
Eph 1:4

GOD CHOSE WHO WOULD BELIEVE (EPH 1:4)

GOD'S PLANS WE MADE IN ETERNITY  
PAST

who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity, 2 Ti 1:9

GRANTED GRACE TO THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN CALLED  
AND SAVED (2 TIM. 1:9)

GOD'S PLANS WE MADE IN ETERNITY  
PAST

For He [Christ] was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you I Pe 1:20

THE SACRIFICIAL DEATH OF JESUS WAS KNOWN (I PET.  
1:20)

GOD'S PLANS WE MADE IN ETERNITY  
PAST

All who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written **from the foundation of the world** in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain.  
Re 13:8

“The beast that you saw was, and is not, and is about to come up out of the abyss and go to destruction. And those who dwell on the earth, whose name has not been written in the book of life **from the foundation of the world**, will wonder when they see the beast, that he was and is not and will come. Re 17:8

THE NAMES OF THE SAVED WERE WRITTEN (REV. 13:8, 17:8)

## GOD'S PLANS WE MADE IN ETERNITY PAST

The **divine decrees are the eternal plans** God has made for his creation that are now being worked out in the lives of his creatures.

Gerald Bray, "The Divine Decrees," in *Lexham Survey of Theology*, ed. Mark Ward et al. (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2018).

ANOTHER WORD FOR GOD'S PLANS ARE HIS DECREES

## PLANS AND COVENANTS

- Plans Express God's Intent For the Future
- God Plans were Made Before Creation
- Plans Are Revealed Through the Bible Progressively, Over Time
- In Unconditional Covenants God Commits Himself To Do Certain Parts of the Plan No Matter What
- God Graciously Reveals What He Will Do To Make His Plan Happen
- Since We Know His Plan And Covenants, We Can Know and Play Our Part

God's Decrees Are Being Worked Out Through His Covenants



## INTRODUCTION

- Starts in Eternity Past
- Single Goal
- Solid Foundation
- Seeing From God's Perspective

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## GOD'S INTENT IS TO REVEAL HIS GLORY

- **Creation**, Ps. 19; Is. 40; Rev. 4:8-11.
- **God's Predestining and Calling Works**, Eph. 1:5-12; 2 Pet. 1:3;
- **Ministry of Christ** (including His resurrection), Jn. 13:31-32; 17:1-5; 21:19; 2 Cor. 1:20; Heb. 13:21;
- **Keeping of His word**, Rom. 3:1-7;
- **Salvation**, Ps. 79:9; Rom. 15:7; 16:25-27; Eph. 1:14; 1 Tim. 1:15-17; 2 Tim. 4:18; Jude 24-25;

The Goal of Everything God Does is His Glory

## GOD'S INTENT IS TO REVEAL HIS GLORY

- **The Church**, 1 Cor. 10:31; 2 Cor. 4:15; Eph. 1:12; Php. 1:11; 2 Thes. 1:11–12; 1 Pet. 4:11, 16;
- **Fruitfulness of Believers**, Jn. 15:8; 1 Cor. 10:31;
- **The Kingdom**, Php. 2:11; 1 Thes. 2:12; Rev. 1:6;
- **Sickness, Death, and Resurrection**, 1 Sam. 6:5; Lk. 17:11–18; Jn. 9:1–3; 11:4;
- **Judgment**, Rom. 3:7; Rev. 14:7;
- **Deliverance of Israel**, Is. 60:21; 61:3;
- **Fulfilling of covenants and summing up of all things**, Is. 25:1–3; 43:20; Lk.

The Goal of Everything God Does is His Glory

GOD'S INTENT IN CREATION IS TO  
REVEAL HIS GLORY

The heavens are telling of the **glory of God**; And their  
expanse is declaring the work of His hands. (Ps 19:1)

The Goal of Everything God Does is His Glory

GOD'S INTENT IN JESUS' MINISTRY IS TO  
REVEAL HIS GLORY

For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, **His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen**, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. (Ro 1:20)

The Goal of Everything God Does is His Glory

GOD'S INTENT IN JESUS' MINISTRY IS TO  
REVEAL HIS GLORY

Therefore when he had gone out, Jesus said, “Now is the Son of Man glorified, and **God is glorified** in Him; if **God is glorified** in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself, and will glorify Him immediately. (Jn 13:31–32)

The Goal of Everything God Does is His Glory

GOD'S INTENT IN SALVATION IS TO  
REVEAL HIS GLORY

Help us, O God of our salvation, **for the glory of Your name**; And deliver us and forgive our sins for Your name's sake. (Ps 79:9)

The Goal of Everything God Does is His Glory

GOD'S INTENT IN KEEPING HIS  
COVENANTS IS TO REVEAL HIS GLORY

Then all your people will be righteous; They will possess  
the land forever, The branch of My planting, The work  
of My hands, **That I may be glorified.** (Is 60:21)

The Goal of Everything God Does is His Glory



**GOD'S INTENT IN KEEPING HIS  
COVENANTS IS TO REVEAL HIS GLORY**

For I say that Christ has become a servant to the circumcision on behalf of the truth of God to confirm the promises given to the fathers, and for the Gentiles **to glorify God** for His mercy; as it is written, "THEREFORE I WILL **GIVE PRAISE TO YOU** AMONG THE GENTILES, AND I WILL **SING TO YOUR NAME.**" (Ro 15:8–9)

The Goal of Everything God Does is His Glory

**GOD'S INTENT IS TO REVEAL HIS GLORY**

Chapter 1, Section 5 of the Westminster Confession of Faith Affirms that the Scope of All Scripture is “to Give all Glory to God”

**The Goal of Everything in the Bible is to Give God His Glory**

## INTRODUCTION

- Starts in Eternity Past
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## The Old Testament 76% of Bible

Law 17 Books	Wisdom 5 Books	Prophets 17 Books
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 5 Books of Moses</li><li>• 12 Books of History</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Job: How to Suffer</li><li>• Psalms: How to Worship</li><li>• Proverbs: How to Live</li><li>• Ecclesiastes: How to Enjoy</li><li>• Song of Solomon: How to Love</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 5 Major Prophets</li><li>• 12 Minor Prophets</li></ul>

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- Genesis is Part of the 5 Books of Moses

- Written By Moses

- (Ex. 17:14; Num. 33:2; Josh. 8:31; 1 Kin. 2:3; 2 Kin. 14:6; Ezra 6:18; Neh. 13:1; Dan. 9:11, 13; Mal. 4:4) (Matt. 8:4; Mark 12:26; Luke 16:29; 24:27, 44; John 5:46; 7:22; Acts 15:1; Rom. 10:19; 1 Cor. 9:9; 2 Cor. 3:15)

- Written Between 1447 (Exodus) and 1407 (Enter the Promised Land)

IN THE BEGINNING  
GOD CREATED THE  
HEAVENS AND THE  
EARTH. (GE 1:1)

- The Immediate Recipients Were the Second Generation of Israelites Who Were About to Enter the Land Promised to the Patriarchs
- The Pentateuch Is Directed to Every Subsequent Generation of Israelites
  - Establish Their Understanding of The Sovereignty of God
  - Clarify Their Role as God's Mediator on Earth
  - Set The Expectation For Their Role
  - Provide a Foundation For Their Right to Seize and Settle in the Land

## The Commencement

### IN THE BEGINNING

GOD CREATED THE  
HEAVENS AND THE  
EARTH. (GE 1:1)

- בְּרֵאשִׁית (bereshith)
  - Of Time Itself
  - Immediately Distinguishes the Account From Ancient Near Eastern Myths or Greek Philosophy Which Simply Assumes An Ancient Earth
  - Establishes Time Itself As Part of the Divine Creation Within Which All Things Exist

Three things to note: The Commencement, The Creator, The Creation

**IN THE BEGINNING**

GOD CREATED THE  
HEAVENS AND THE  
EARTH. (GE 1:1)

The Commencement

- בְּרֵאשִׁית (bereshith)
- Designates the Start of a Period of Time (Dt. 11:12, Isa. 46:10)
- Implies an End as Well as Beginning
- Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, 'My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure'; (Is 46:10)



**IN THE BEGINNING**

GOD CREATED THE  
HEAVENS AND THE  
EARTH. (GE 1:1)

The Commencement

- But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up. (2 Pe 3:10)
- Time and History Are “Bookended” By the Creation
- Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea. (Re 21:1)

God Has Established a Time With a  
Beginning and End

**IN THE BEGINNING**

GOD CREATED THE  
HEAVENS AND THE  
EARTH. (GE 1:1)

The Commencement

- בְּרֵאשִׁית (bereshith)
- Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, 'My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure'; (Is 46:10)
  - Not Only a Beginning and an End But Also A Divine Purpose
  - God Has Specific Things He Wants to Accomplish
- In His Covenants God Binds Himself to do Certain Things To Accomplish His Purpose

God Has a Purpose He is Going to Accomplish

IN THE BEGINNING  
**GOD CREATED** THE  
HEAVENS AND THE  
EARTH. (GE 1:1)

#### The Creator

- בָּרָא (bara)
  - Used 48x in the Bible
  - God is Always the One Creating
  - Always Used Regarding What Was Created, not The Material Used
  - It is an Activity Unique to God
- Reveals His Glory (Ps. 19), and Irresistible Power and Divinity (Rom. 1:20)

IN THE BEGINNING  
**GOD CREATED** THE  
HEAVENS AND THE  
EARTH. (GE 1:1)

### The Creator

- **בָּרָא** (bara)
  - His Creative Activity Provides Him With the Intrinsic Right and Power to Do What He Will With Creation
  - He Determines Its Purpose
  - He Determines How it Will Be Used
  - He Determines How Best to Bring Glory to Himself

God Has the Authority and Power to Accomplish All His Purposes

IN THE BEGINNING  
GOD CREATED THE  
HEAVENS AND THE  
EARTH. (GE 1:1)

### The Creation

- The Heavens and the Earth
  - God Provides For Himself a Time and Place Within Which His Purposes Will Be Accomplished and Glory Displayed
  - Earth Centric
    - In 31v. The Earth, Land, or Ground Mentioned 23x
    - Culminates With an Earth Teeming With Life

God Has Established Time and Space Within Which His Purposes are Accomplished and Glory Revealed

God Has Established a Time With a  
Beginning and End

God Has a Purpose He is Going to  
Accomplish

God Has Established Time and Space  
Within Which His Purposes are  
Accomplished and Glory Revealed

God is Sovereign, Omnipotent,  
Omnibenevolent

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## SOVEREIGN OVER HISTORY

God blessed them; and God said to them, “**Be fruitful** and multiply, and **fill** the earth, and **subdue** it; and **rule** over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” (Ge 1:28)

The Sovereignty of God Over History Echoes Through the Whole Bible



**150 Years  
Before He  
Became  
Ruler of  
Persia!**

## SOVEREIGN OVER HISTORY

Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, and the one who formed you from the womb, "I, the LORD, am the **maker of all things**, Stretching out the heavens by Myself And spreading out the earth all alone, Causing the omens of **boasters** to fail, Making fools out of **diviners**, Causing **wise men** to draw back And turning their knowledge into foolishness, Confirming the word of **His servant** And performing the purpose of **His messengers**. It is I who says of Jerusalem, 'She shall be inhabited!' And of the cities of Judah, 'They shall be built.' And I will raise up her ruins again. "It is I who says to the depth of the sea, 'Be dried up!' And I will make your rivers dry. "**It is I who says of Cyrus, 'He is My shepherd!** And he will perform all My desire.' And he declares of Jerusalem, 'She will be built,' And of the temple, 'Your foundation will be laid.' " (Is 44:24–28)

The Sovereignty of God Over History Echoes Through the Whole Bible

## SOVEREIGN OVER HISTORY

and **He made from one man every nation of mankind** to live on all the face of the earth, having **determined their appointed times** and the **boundaries of their habitation, that they would seek God**, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; (Ac 17:26–27)

The Sovereignty of God Over History Echoes Through the Whole Bible

## GOD'S INTENT IN KEEPING HIS COVENANTS IS TO REVEAL HIS GLORY

R. Joshua of Sikhnin in the name of R. Levi

G. "He told them about the beginning: 'In the beginning God created ...' (Gen. 1:1)."

What does the creation story tell us? It answers Israel's question: What right have we to the land? The answer is that God made the world, and told humanity about creation so as to **establish God's right to give the world to whom God willed**. And that small pocket of earth God gave to Israel, **God had the right to give**—for God made it all. The purpose of the passage is to demonstrate Israel's right to the land.

Jacob Neusner, *Confronting Creation: How Judaism Reads Genesis: An Anthology of Genesis Rabbah* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2004), 31.

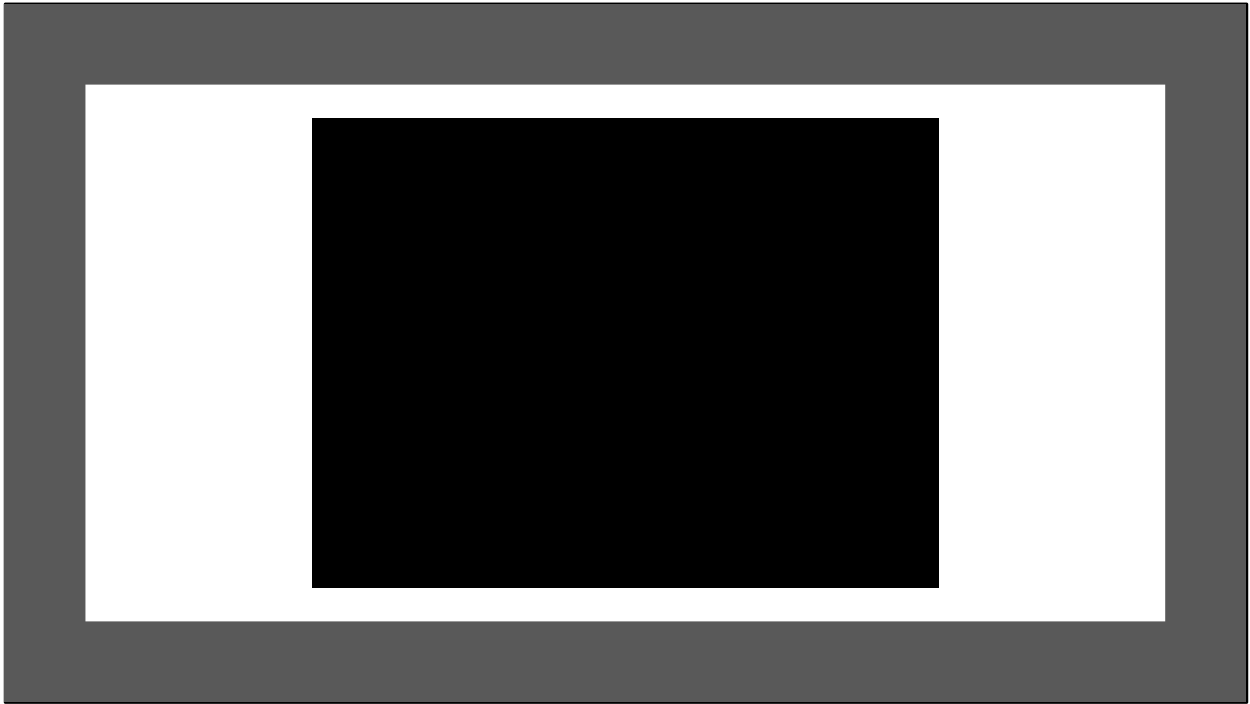
**Rabbi's Understood the Purpose of God in Creation Was to Make a Place For Israel**

## A GOD-CENTRIC VIEW OF HISTORY

- Establish Their Understanding of The Sovereignty of God
- Clarify Their Role as God's Mediator on Earth
- Set The Expectation For Their Role
- Provide a Foundation For Their Right to Seize and Settle in the Land

Now for what reason did He commence with “In the beginning?”... For if the nations of the world should say to Israel, “You are robbers, for you conquered by force the lands of the seven nations [of Canaan],” they will reply. **“The entire earth belongs to the Holy One, blessed be He; He created it ... and gave it to whomever He deemed proper.”**

—Shlomo Yitzchaki, aka Rashi 11<sup>th</sup> Century Rabbi





## THE NATIONS

- Now the sons of Noah who came out of the ark were **Shem** and **Ham** and **Japheth**; and Ham was the father of Canaan. These three were the sons of Noah, and **from these the whole earth was populated.** (Ge 9:18–19)
- Gn. 10—The Table of Nations
  - The sons of **Japheth** (Gn. 10:1)...From these the coastlands of the nations were separated into their lands, every one according to his language, according to their families, into their nations. (Ge 10:5)
  - These are the sons of **Ham**, according to their families, according to their languages, by their lands, by their nations. (Ge 10:20)
  - These are the sons of **Shem**, according to their families, according to their languages, by their lands, according to their nations. (Ge 10:31)

From the Seed of Noah's Wife Nations Were Formed

## WHAT DEFINES A NATION?

- Population—A People Sharing Common Social, Cultural, Linguistic Traditions
- Government—Responsible to Organize, Create and Enforce Laws, Defense
- Independence—Recognized as a Sovereign, Self-Governing Entity
- Territory—A Land

Nations are Geo-Political Entities on the Earth



## GOD'S RULE OVER THE NATIONS

- For the kingdom is the LORD'S  
And He rules over the nations.  
(Ps 22:28)
- He rules by His might forever;  
His eyes keep watch on the  
nations; Let not the rebellious  
exalt themselves. Selah. (Ps  
66:7)
- and He made from one man  
every nation of mankind to live  
on all the face of the earth,  
having determined their  
appointed times and the  
boundaries of their habitation,  
that they would seek God, if  
perhaps they might grope for

Because He is Creator, God Has the Intrinsic Right to Rule Over  
Nations With the Goal of Bringing Glory to Himself  
(AC 17:26-27)

WHAT HAVE WE  
LEARNED?

- Creation Is a Unique Activity Of God
- God's Creative Work Was Centered in the Earth
- As Creator God is Intrinsically Sovereign Over Everything, Particularly the Earth
- God Unconditionally Promised a Savior (Gn. 3:15), Then Preserved the Seed of the Woman (Gn. 6:8—9)
- God's First Reported Act of Grace Was To Preserve a Godly Remnant
- The Godly Remnant Was Dispersed into Nations

## NEXT TIME

- God Creates a Unique Nation, Particularly His Own
- God Makes Sovereign, Unilateral, Unconditional, and Eternal Promises to His Nation
- It is Through His Nation That He will Bring the Savior Promised in Gn. 3:15

WHAT SHOULD WE  
DO?

Give Him Glory