



EXODUS & CONQUEST **(Exodus-1 Samuel 8)**

Let's move down to the Exodus and the Conquest. The Exodus and the Conquest encapsulates the Exodus all the way to the monarchy. This is Exodus through the Judges and part of 1 Samuel. That is the point in history we will be discussing as we continue to build on the foundation and purpose of this study.

We will continue to see God's blessing and judgment through Moses, Joshua, Judges, and Samuel. The place becomes a reality instead of it just being a promise of the Patriarchs. We will see God with His people as symbolized with the tabernacle. God is with His people in the tabernacle. The purpose is that God's glory is made known to all peoples through His deliverance. That is what the book of Exodus is about and what the word means, "deliverance."

Moving forward we will see God's blessing and judgment through Moses, Joshua, Judges, and Samuel, God with His people in the tabernacle, and God's glory made known to all peoples through His deliverance. Let's see the people: Moses, Joshua, Judges, and Samuel.

People—God's Blessing and Judgment through Moses, Joshua, Judges, Samuel

God's blessing: How are we seeing the theme of—God blessing and remembering His people—unfold? Turn to Exodus. We are going to look at a few verses. Look at Exodus 2:23-24, and see how God remembers His people. They have been promised all these blessings, but now they are slaves in Egypt. Where is the blessing of God in that? In Exodus 2:23-24 it says, *"During that long period, the king of Egypt died. The Israelites groaned in their slavery and cried out, and their cry for help because of their slavery went up to God. God heard their groaning and he remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac and with Jacob. So God looked on the Israelites and was concerned about them."* He remembered His covenant. God does not forget His people. He is blessing them by remembering them.

Also, He reveals Himself to His people (Ex. 6:1-12). When you get to Exodus 6, you see a major change in God's revelation of His character to His people. Look at Exodus 6:2-4. This is God speaking to Moses as he is preparing to go to Pharaoh. See here what God says to Moses. He says, *"I am the Lord. I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob as God Almighty, but by my name the Lord I did not make myself known to them. I also established my covenant with them to give them the land of Canaan..."*

See what He just said—"I made myself known to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as God Almighty. That is my name—El Shaddai. I didn't make myself known to them as Yahweh, the Lord." This is the name of God throughout the rest of the Old Testament, and it is going to represent His love, His grace, and His covenant with His people. That is going to be the covenant name. "When I go before Pharaoh, who will I tell them sent me? Tell them I AM

sent you." That is the name God reveals himself as to His people. He reveals himself in a new and fresh way and it is His blessing on His people.

Third, He delivers His people (Ex. 7-18). Exodus 7 all the way to Exodus 18 is the actual story of God delivering His people. There are several verses listed in the study guide, but there are other references: 2 Samuel 7:23; 1 Chronicles 17:21; Isaiah 63:12-14; Jeremiah 32:20-21; Daniel 9:15; Nehemiah 9:10. I want to give you a picture of the importance of the Exodus in the entire story line. From now on the story line is going to point back to this event. For example—when you get to the farthest point, Nehemiah 9:10, the historical conclusion of the Old Testament, you see them looking back and renewing the covenant.

Several chapters talk about how God brought His people out of Egypt over the Red Sea and how He delivered them out. They constantly went back to it over and over again. We serve a God that brought us out of Egypt. We serve a God that split the sea in half and sent us through. We serve that God. He delivers His people.

The Exodus event is a pivotal and incomparable theological truth from which Israel establishes its entire theological belief system. It is huge.

Fourth, He renews His covenant with His people at Mount Sinai (Ex. 19). He started it with Abraham and He renews it in Exodus 19. They come together at Mount Sinai to renew the covenant.

Fifth, He gives His people the Law. From Exodus 20 all the way through Deuteronomy God gives His people the Law. We also see the rehearsal of the Law, the second one, in Deuteronomy. We see again a picture of His blessing in Joshua where He gives His people the land. God is blessing His people. He gives them the Law and the land. Then in Judges He gives His people leadership. He is their King in the theocracy, but He raises up judges to lead them. God gives His people the Law, land and leadership. God's blessing unfolds throughout the Exodus and the Conquest.

God's judgment—On the other hand we see God's judgment on two main areas. First, we see it on Pharaoh and the people of Egypt. God was showing a line of judgment in all the plagues that He sent.

Then, we see God's judgment on pagan lands. As Israel came into the Promised Land, they were told to destroy everything that was against God. All of the idols, everything that was set up against His name and glory. Destroy it all. The entire picture of the Conquest shows God's judgment on the sin of the nations as He sends His people into the Promised Land. He is ridding the nation of all areas of paganism—God's blessing and God's judgment.

The Riddle of the Old Testament is in Exodus 34:6-7. It says, *"The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished."*

How do you put those two together? He is compassionate, gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love, and does not leave the guilty unpunished. God's blessing and judgment are side-by-side and inseparable. This is a huge riddle because man has sinned and he stands under judgment. So you have these two lines—blessing and judgment—that are the rule of the Old Testament.

Place—God with His people: Tabernacle

The presence of God—First, God was with His people in the tabernacle. You see His presence in different ways throughout the Exodus and the Conquest. He was also with His people in pillars of cloud and fire. When God led His people out of Egypt, He led them with fire by night, with a cloud by day. He led them in that way. He brings them out and they come to Mount Sinai where He establishes His covenant. His presence was also in the tabernacle. Turn to Exodus 25. Look at what God tells them in Exodus 25:8-9, "*Then have them make a sanctuary for me, and I will dwell among them. Make this tabernacle and all its furnishings exactly like the pattern I will show you.*" And that is what He does. He gives them the instructions for the tabernacle. I am going to dwell with you. This is not just promised fellowship. God's presence is going to be with them symbolized in the tabernacle with the Ark of the Covenant at the center of it.

So the presence of God is seen in pillars of fire and in the tabernacle, and finally in the Promised Land. They are finally going in. After they get through Deuteronomy and Joshua, they come to the land that had been promised. The entire land that had been promised to Abraham, they are now taking it. They are receiving what had been promised to them.

Ultimately, the tabernacle becomes the focal point of God's dwelling with His people. Turn to 2 Samuel 7:6-7. 2 Samuel is obviously after the Exodus and the Conquest, but I want you to see how the tabernacle is described in 2 Samuel. God said,

"I have not dwelt in a house from the day I brought the Israelites up out of Egypt to this day. I have been moving from place to place with a tent as my dwelling. Wherever I have moved with all the Israelites, did I ever say to any of their rulers whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, 'Why have you not built me a house of cedar?'"

This is how God showed His presence with His people as He moved with them from place to place.

God dwelled among His people, but could only be approached through a mediator who offered an acceptable sacrifice for sin. The presence of God is in the tabernacle, but you don't just walk in the tabernacles. You don't go out for a walk and just happen to peek in. This is the place where the presence of God dwells among His people, and you need a mediator to come between Him and you or else you come under His judgment. You need a mediator and that is where the priests appear.

All of Leviticus is given to the priests for their instructions for handling worship and approaching the tabernacle, for their going in as a representative on the Day of Atonement, and other times. God dwelled among His people but there still was a mediator between the two. Keep that in the back of your mind.

Purpose—God's Glory Made Known to All Peoples Through His Deliverance

God's zealous actions derived from His desire that all individuals, groups, and nations "might know that I am the Lord" and acknowledge and trust in His glory.

Let's go on a quick tour. I want to give you a few verses to underline. We are looking for a phrase that is mentioned a few times. Exodus 6:7, "*I will take you as my own people, and I will be your God. Then you will know that I am the Lord your God, who brought you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians.*" Exodus 7:4-5, He said, "*... I will lay my hand on Egypt and with mighty acts of judgment I will bring out my divisions, my people the Israelites. And the Egyptians will know that I am the Lord when I stretch out my hand*

against Egypt and bring the Israelites out of it." Exodus 7:17, "This is what the Lord says: By this you will know that I am the Lord: With the staff that is in my hand I will strike the water of the Nile..." You are going to know that I am the Lord. Exodus 8:22, "But on that day I will deal differently with the land of Goshen, where my people live; no swarms of flies will be there, so that you will know that I, the Lord, am in this land." In Exodus 10:2 He says, "...You may tell your children and grandchildren how I dealt harshly with the Egyptians and how I performed my signs among them, and that you may know that I am the Lord."

Are you seeing this phrase repeated over and over again? In Exodus 14:4, God brings His people to the Red Sea and the Egyptians are about to overtake them. Exodus 14:4 says, *"I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and he will pursue them. But I will gain glory for myself through Pharaoh and all His army, and the Egyptians will know that I am the Lord."* So the Israelites did this. Exodus 14:18, *"The Egyptians will know that I am the Lord when I gain glory through Pharaoh, his chariots and his horsemen."* During their journey, God provided manna for His people to eat in the desert. Exodus 16:12 says, *"I have heard the grumbling of the Israelites. Tell them, 'at twilight you will eat meat, and in the morning you will be filled with bread. Then you will know that I am the Lord your God.'"*

The phrase, "You (or they) will know that I am the Lord" is mentioned almost 50 times from Genesis to Numbers alone.

Do you see the motive of God? "I am going to do great and mighty things. I am going to pour out judgment and blessing. And I am going to do it so you will know, so that all nations will know, that I am the Lord." God's glory will be made known to all peoples through His deliverance. That was the very purpose of the Exodus. Why did God lead them to the middle of the Red Sea? It was not so they could have a cool trip and see the sea on each side or say, "Look at how great we are?" Absolutely not. He led them through so that the Egyptians would look and see what happened and say, "God is great! The God of the Israelites is worthy to be praised." He delivered His people and He said, "You (or they) will know that I am the Lord," over and over again throughout the rest of the Old Testament.

Now look at Exodus 19. Remember when we read in Genesis 49, "Through you, kings will come from you"? Remember the promise of the Patriarchs, the promise to Jacob in Genesis 35? Look at Exodus 19:5-6, *"Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites."*

He says in Exodus 19:6 I am going to make you a kingdom of priests. Now think about it. What did a priest do? A priest stood in the middle, between man and God to allow man to come to God. And He says—don't miss this—to the Israelites, you are going to be a kingdom of priests. You are going to stand between the nations, and me, and you are going to bring the nations to me. Just as the priests stand and make the way for people to come to me, you are going to make a way for the nations to come to me. You are going to be a kingdom of priests. This is not a select people, one king here or one king there. It is going to be an entire kingdom, and all of you are going to be doing this. All of you are priests that are going to bring people to me.

This means that they are to be intercessors between a holy God and the peoples of the earth. Israel was joining an eternal God and His eternal desire to provide and proclaim the glory and greatness of His own name. They were going to be an intercessor between all the nations and God. They are a kingdom of priests. Don't miss it.

Israel was delivered to rid the land of foreign gods and to reflect the glory of His name to the nations. That is why God delivered them. That is why the Exodus happened. God's people are coming to His place for His purpose. You see the kingdom and the story line unfolding. It is progressing. Let's go to the next era.

MONARCHY **(1 Samuel 9 - 1 Kings 11; 1 Chronicles - 2 Chronicles 9)**

People—God's Blessing and Judgment through Saul, David, & Solomon

Saul, David, and Solomon make up the monarchy, and what we see is God's blessing and judgment being administered through those three. Through His kings we see blessing and judgment.

God mediates His covenant through the kings. That is the role of the kings and the reason why covenant loyalty was so big, and why covenant disloyalty came under such judgment. You see both lines—blessing and judgment. If the king is loyal to the covenant, he experiences blessing. If the king is disloyal, he experiences judgment. So there is blessing in covenant loyalty, and judgment in covenant disloyalty. We see that in all three of these kings. We see it in the life of Saul. At some points we see him under the blessing of God, and at other points, we see him under the judgment of God. We see both blessing and judgment with David. You see both blessing and judgment with Solomon, based on covenant loyalty and disloyalty.

But then at the heart of David's reign, God renews His covenant with His people through David. Now I want you to look at 2 Samuel 7. This is God renewing His covenant. We saw how the covenant began with Abraham. Then it came to Moses. Now we are going to see it with David. We are going to look at 2 Samuel 7 and notice the comparison to Genesis 12. What you see is exactly the same promised blessing God made to Abraham, now promised to David. Look at 2 Samuel 7:5-16,

Go and tell my servant David, "This is what the Lord says: Are you the one to build me a house to dwell in? I have not dwelt in a house from the day I brought the Israelites up out of Egypt to this day. I have been moving from place to place with a tent as my dwelling. Wherever I have moved with all the Israelites, did I ever say to any of their rulers whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, 'Why have you not built me a house of cedar?'"

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

"The Lord declares to you that the Lord himself will establish a house for you: When your days are over and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up your

offspring to succeed you, who will come from your own body, and I will establish his kingdom. He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will punish him with the rod of men, with floggings inflicted by men. But my love will never be taken away from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever."

We see here that God promises to bless His name (2 Sam. 7:9; Gen. 12:2). Do you see the entire kingdom—people, place and purpose—unfold throughout these verses? Just as we saw it with Abraham, the promise is to bless His name, He said, "I am going to make your name great, Abraham." He also comes to David says, "I am going to make your name great like the names of the greatest men of the earth."

Second, He promises victory over their enemies. The same promise that he had given to Abraham after he was willing to sacrifice Isaac in Genesis 22:17, He gave to David in 2 Samuel 7:11—the promise of lands and victory over his enemies.

Third, He promises a unique relationship with His people. We see this in 2 Samuel 7:14. We see that there is something special here, namely, the blessing of God upon them. It is the same thing that he promised to Abraham in Genesis 17:7-8.

Fourth, He promises future seed. The same thing that He promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, He now promises to David—the future seed. So God renews His covenant with His servant David as the King of His people. God's blessing is on His people through David.

God's blessing among His people is at its height under David and Solomon. Under David you have got this picture of prosperity and stabilizing. The enemies are driven out, and 1 Kings 4:25 talks about the prosperity and peace that was under Solomon. You see the strength there in God's blessing.

Place—God with His people: Temple

Think about place. Up to this point, God was with His people in the tabernacle. Now it changes and we have God with His people not in the tabernacle but in the temple. The tabernacle was there through David's reign. God had said, "I am not going to build this and you are not going to do this." He says, "It is going to be for your son Solomon to do." So now God dwells with His people not just in the tabernacle that had been brought to Jerusalem, but now through the temple.

God's people are now established in God's land. They are in the Promised Land and experiencing prosperity. Think about how this affects the way you view David and Goliath. You don't just see a story about how we beat giants in our lives. Let's take it to a higher level. The Philistines threatened to take the land back from Israel, and God raises up an anointed leader who will lead them to victory over the Philistines. He continues His promise to them. And then at a much higher level, God renews His covenant through the leader who would conquer them. David is very unique in that story.

Also, we see God's presence established in God's city. The temple was promised to David in Jerusalem, but the temple was prepared by Solomon. God had revealed the same to Solomon, as seen in 1 Kings 5:3-5,

"You know that because of the wars waged against my father David from all sides, he could not build a temple for the name of the Lord his God until the Lord put his enemies under his feet. But now the Lord my God has given me rest on every side, and there is no adversary or disaster. I intend, therefore, to build a temple for the Name of the Lord my God, as the Lord told my father David..."

Solomon takes that and he builds the temple. God's dwelling is established with God's people through the temple in two ways. First, the people encounter God's glory at the temple. And second, the temple is a place not only where they encounter God's glory, but also where they express their worship.

I want you to see this in 1 Kings 9. After the temple was built, this is where they encounter His glory and express their worship. Look at 1 Kings 9:3-9. The Lord comes to Solomon upon the completion of the temple. Look at what happens after Solomon has finished it. God says,

I have heard the prayer and plea you have made before me; I have consecrated this temple, which you have built, by putting my name there forever. My eyes and my heart will always be there. As for you, if you walk before me in integrity of heart and uprightness, as David your father did, and do all I command and observe my decrees and laws, I will establish your royal throne over Israel forever, as I promised David your father when I said, "You shall never fail to have a man on the throne of Israel."

But if you or your sons turn away from me and do not observe the commands and decrees I have given you and go off to serve other gods and worship them, then I will cut off Israel from the land I have given them and will reject this temple I have consecrated for my name. Israel will then become a byword and an object of ridicule among all peoples. And though this temple is now imposing, all who pass by will be appalled and will scoff and say, "Why has the Lord done such a thing to this land and to this temple?" People will answer, "Because they have forsaken the Lord their God, who brought their fathers out of Egypt, and have embraced other gods, worshiping and serving them—that is why the Lord brought all this disaster on them."

Does that sound familiar? Like something that we are going to see in a few chapters? This is the temple, the place where you encounter the glory of God and express worship of God. If you miss out and disobey me, people are going to walk by this temple and they are going to say, "God has shown His judgment to His people." The temple fell in 586 B.C.

Purpose—God's Glory Made Known to All Peoples Through His Anointing

God's glory made known to all peoples. His glory is made known through His faithfulness, His deliverance, and through the monarchy by His anointing of these kings.

The first way that we see this is happens when God renews the covenant to David for His renown in all nations. In 2 Samuel 7:22-24,

"How great you are, O Sovereign Lord! There is no one like you, and there is no God but you, as we have heard with our own ears. And who is like your people Israel—the one nation on earth that God went out to redeem as a people for himself, and to make a name for himself, and to perform great and

awesome wonders by driving out nations and their gods from before your people, whom you redeemed from Egypt?"

Did you catch that? "God you have worked among us to make a name for yourself." God's purpose in anointing these kings is to make a name for Himself. His renown is going to be made known. That was in David's life, and the same thing continued to happen.

Second, God establishes the temple to express His glory to people from all nations. In 1 Kings 8:41-43, it says that people from other nations are going to come to this place and they are going to encounter the glory of God and they are going to express the worship of God. Jerusalem is where the nations are going to come and they are coming to the temple.

Third, God gives favor to Solomon to increase His fame in all nations. This is not Solomon's fame, but God's fame in all nations. In 1 Kings 10:6-9, God blesses Solomon with great wisdom. The Queen of Sheba comes to observe His wisdom and concludes, "Your God is worthy of praise." He has increased His fame through blessing Solomon. Do you see what He is doing? He anointed David. He is anointing Solomon to make a name for Himself, to increase His renown, and to increase His glory. By anointing them, all nations are going to know who He is.

We are coming to the conclusion of the Old Testament and the last historical period. Let's see where it leaves us.

ANARCHY **(1 Kings 12 - 2 Kings; 2 Chronicles 10 - Esther)**

People—God's Blessing and Judgment through Major Prophets & Minor Prophets

They were the agents of His blessing. God's blessing and judgment was administered through these guys to the people.

We just talked about God mediating His covenant through the kings, as well as God sending blessing in covenant loyalty, judgment in covenant disloyalty. The problem began when the kingdom divided, anarchy erupted and all these different kings disobeyed the Lord. The kings were not mediating the covenant, so God guards His covenant through the prophets. He mediates His covenant through the kings, and He guards His covenant through the prophets. We see this throughout. You even see it in the relationship Samuel has to Saul, between Samuel and David, and between Nathan and David. The prophets helped guard the covenant.

When anarchy breaks out, the prophets foretell both blessing and judgment. The prophets foretell what is coming, both blessing and judgment, in three different facets.

First, the prophets foretell a new captivity for God's people. Israel and Judah are going to be destroyed, and the people are going to be taken into exile. That is the message of the prophets— judgment because of covenant disloyalty. The Minor Prophets unfold what we have already seen in the Major Prophets. They are constantly saying, "Captivity is coming. God's judgment is coming."

They also foretell a new exodus for God's people. The prophets foretell blessing and judgment. They foretell judgment but also blessing. Present judgment and future hope. Does that sound familiar? The first 39 chapters in the book of Isaiah are mainly filled with judgment. The last 29 chapters are mainly filled with hope. Thus the second facet is that the prophets foretell a new exodus for God's people. The deliverance from exile follows the pattern of deliverance from Egypt (Jer. 16:14-15, 23:7-8; Is. 43:15-21). God's work in the Exodus provides God's comfort for the people in exile (Is. 40:3-4; 41:17-20; 42:7; 43:1-2, 16-20; 48:20-21; 49:24-26; 51:9-11; 52:3-4, 11-12).

Let me show you an illustration of this in Isaiah 43. What we have is a picture that is progressing. This is not something new, but is building on what has come. When the prophets are saying, "you are going to be in captivity, but God is going to deliver you out," what would be the best picture they could give so the people would know what was going to happen? Remember the Exodus? Remember how God delivered His people? Isaiah 43:15-21 says,

"I am the Lord, your Holy One, Israel's Creator, your King." This is what the Lord says—he who made a way through the sea, a path through the mighty waters, who drew out the chariots and horses, the army and reinforcements together, and they lay there, never to rise again, extinguished, snuffed out like a wick: "Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland. The wild animals honor me, the jackals and the owls, because I provide water in the desert and streams in the wasteland, to give drink to my people, my chosen, the people I formed for myself that they may proclaim my praise."

You saw an exodus from Egypt, and now you will see an exodus from captivity. The prophets say, "He did it in the past and He is going to do it again." It is a new exodus for God's people.

Third, there is a new covenant for God's people. Jeremiah 31:31-34 gives what is known in the Old Testament as the "new covenant." Jeremiah foretold this new covenant. Basically there are two facets: God's law on His people's hearts (Jer. 31:31-33), and God's forgiveness in His people's lives (Jer. 31:34).

Everything is going to change. It is not going to be Law written on tablets of stone, as with Abraham, Moses and David. It is going to be Law written on their hearts. Look at Jeremiah 31:31-34,

"The time is coming," declares the Lord, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them," declares the Lord. "This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time," declares the Lord. "I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord. "For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more."

"There is a new covenant coming," the prophet says. "It is not going to be written down on tablets of stone. It is going to be written on your hearts and you are going to have forgiveness in your life because you can't measure up to the Law." That is what he is talking about: a new covenant for God's people. This is God's blessing.

Place—God with His people: Exile

The temple is gone, but God is with His people in the exile. The people of Israel have been taken from Jerusalem and the temple has been destroyed. They wondered, "Is God still with us?" The temple was the symbol of God's presence, but look at this: God remembers His people by strengthening His people through exile, and sustaining His people through a remnant. The people of Israel will not die off in exile and never to be heard from again. God is faithful. He is going to bring them back, He is going to sustain them, and they will return to His land. That is what the prophets are saying. You are coming back to the place. God is going to bring His people back to His place. This means the restoration of Zion. Now, Zion is Jerusalem. The restoration of Zion will be like the restoration of Eden (Is. 51:3; Ezek. 36-35). Look at Isaiah 51:3, and see how these things progress. Eden had perfect fellowship. Now, the people have been taken apart completely; they don't even have the temple anymore. Is God still with His people? Isaiah 51:3, *"The Lord will surely comfort Zion and will look with compassion on all her ruins; he will make her deserts like Eden, her wastelands like the garden of the Lord. Joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and the sound of singing."* Ezekiel says the same thing. Later on in Ezekiel 36:35, he compares it to Eden, saying, *"They will say, 'This land that was laid waste has become like the garden of Eden; the cities that were lying in ruins, desolate and destroyed, are now fortified and inhabited.'"*

The prophets are foretelling a time when the land is going to be restored. God is going to bring His people back and is one day going to be like Eden—perfect fellowship.

God remembers His people. They will return to His land and they will rebuild, and they will rebuild His temple. The temple will display the greatness of God's glory. That is where Ezekiel 40-47 paints a picture in the Old Testament that is really cool. You have a picture of the new temple and the glory of God filling the temple, and it will demonstrate the work of God's Spirit.

The temple is going to be rebuilt. Zechariah, one of the Minor Prophets, comes on the scene here and he says, *"'Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,' says the Lord Almighty"* (Zech. 4:6-9). "I am going to rebuild the temple and the Spirit is going to be demonstrated in the way this temple is restored."

So the prophets are promising that those in exile are going back to the land and God is going to be with them. They are going to restore the temple. You get to purpose and that is exactly what happens. Remember the history in Ezra and Nehemiah. They come back, and they rebuild and restore the temple. What the prophets said was true. God brings them back to His place. God delivers them back to Jerusalem and to the temple.

Purpose—God's Glory Made Known to All Peoples Through His Discipline

God's glory will be realized in all nations. This is heavy in the prophets. God is saying, "I am going to make my glory known not just through my blessing on you, but through my judgment on you. I will make my glory known." I will make it known through their exile. Habakkuk is in the middle of seeing God using pagan nations to discipline His people and Habakkuk says, "Why? How long Oh Lord is this going to last?" Habakkuk 1:5 God says, *"Look at the nations and watch—and be utterly amazed. For I am going to do something in your days that you would not believe, even if you were told."* It sounds like a great verse,

and it sounds exciting. But no, God is going to raise up the nations to bring His judgment on them. Habakkuk asks, "How long, Lord, are you going to do this?" And God said, "I am going to make my glory known, my holiness known through their exile" (Hab. 1:5-2:20).

Second, God will make His glory known through their survival. Take a look at Isaiah 48:9-11. Think about the motive of God, the purpose of God, and the purpose of the king. Why is He going to bring them through this and not have them experience the full extent of His judgment? He says in Isaiah 48:9-11, "*For my own name's sake I delay my wrath; for the sake of my praise I hold it back from you, so as not to cut you off. See, I have refined you, though not as silver; I have tested you in the furnace of affliction. For my own sake, for my own sake, I do this. How can I let myself be defamed? I will not yield my glory to another.*"

God is serious about making His glory known among all the nations through bringing His people back.

Third, God will make His glory known through their return. Ezekiel 36:22-23 says, "*It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am going to do these things, but for the sake of my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you have gone. I will show the holiness of my great name...*" to all these nations in the way that I pour out my Grace on you. God is going to bring the people in exile back for His name.

Fourth, God will make His glory known through their Salvation. Don't miss this. Look at what He says to them in Isaiah 46:13. This is a great verse. He says, "*I am bringing my righteousness near, it is not far away; and my salvation will not be delayed. I will grant salvation to Zion, my splendor to Israel.*" Through His discipline and bringing them back through their salvation, God said, "I am going to bring my glory to Israel." So Israel, the people of God, are in the process of being restored to fulfill His purpose by being the glory of God. That is what the prophets are foretelling. The people of God will be His glory. I am going to give my glory to Israel. My glory will be upon them.

Next, we see that God's glory will be shared in all nations. He is going to share His glory with His servant and with His son. That is His purpose. Isaiah 42:1, "*Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him and he will bring justice to the nations.*" Who is this verse talking about? Let's continue to read verses 6-8:

"I, the Lord, have called you in righteousness; I will take hold of your hand. I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people and a light for the Gentiles, to open eyes that are blind, to free captives from prison and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness. 'I am the Lord; that is my name!'"

So there you see His servant, now look at His Son. Isaiah 9:6-7 says,

"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this."

Now you have the complete picture of the Old Testament. It is God. He is blessing. He is bringing His people through His blessing and judgment to His place for His purpose. That is the entire story, the kingdom of God in the Old Testament.

JESUS (Matthew - John)

Jesus Christ comes on the scene, and the first thing he says is "the time has come; the kingdom is near." And we begin to see how the entire picture is headed toward him. I want you to see this.

People—God's Blessing and Judgment through Christ

Jesus inaugurates His ministry and says, "The time has come. The kingdom of God is near." Don't miss it. The entire gospel is introduced as the "coming near" of the kingdom. The kingdom of God is coming near.

Jesus solves the riddle of the Old Testament. How can a God of—compassion, grace, love and mercy, abounding in love—not leave the guilty unpunished? He can't. How can a God of love punish the guilty and it come together? Turn to Romans 3:25-26. Paul says,

"God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished— he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus."

By pouring out His judgment on His son, he is able to show His grace, His love and His mercy to His people. Christ solves the riddle of the Old Testament. This is the same riddle that faces every single person. How can anyone ever come before a Holy God? We can never be His people in His kingdom, never apart from the one who took His judgment. The two lines, blessing and judgment, continue. We are destined for judgment. Jesus is destined for our blessing, 2 Corinthians 5:21, "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."

Remember the family line beginning in Genesis that we talked about in reference to this theme of blessing and judgment? Christ is the Son from Adam's lineage. He is the Son. Romans 5 teaches us that death came through Adam and life came through Christ. Just as the trespass was carried over to all men through one man so also the gift of God is carried over to all men through one man. He is the "second" Adam. Through one man, Adam, disobedience and many were made sinners. Now through the obedience of one man, Jesus, the many will be made righteous. He is the Son from Adam's lineage.

Second, He is the seed of Abraham's lineage. He is the blessed seed that was promised. In Romans 4, Paul says that we all have an inheritance because of faith in Christ as was promised to Abraham. Because we believe in him, it is credited to us as righteousness. He is the seed of Abraham's lineage.

Third, He is the King from David's lineage. Remember Genesis 49:9? He is the Lion of the tribe of Judah, and "... the obedience of the nations is His."

Get the full picture here. First, He is our prophet. Deuteronomy 18:15 says, "*The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own brothers. You must listen to him.*" You get to Acts 3:22 and Peter is preaching, "*For Moses said, 'The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you must listen to everything he tells you.'*" That is what Peter is saying when it comes to salvation in Acts 4:12, "*...Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.*"

It is all leading to Christ. He is our prophet. Remember what the prophet does—reveals the Word. Christ is the Word. Turn to Hebrews 1. Don't you love Hebrews? Do you want to know Hebrews? Then you have to know the Old Testament. Hebrews 1:1-2 say, "*In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe.*"

He is our Prophet who reveals the Word.

Second, He is our Priest. How do you experience the blessing of God? You have to have a mediator, right? Hebrews 4:14-16,

"Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need."

Jesus is our Priest. He is our High Priest (Heb. 5:10), and that means He removes our guilt. He is our Prophet, and He is our Priest who He removes our guilt.

Third, He is our King. He is our King and He reigns as Lord (Jer. 23:5-6). The only way we can come to the blessing of God is through the person of Christ.

Place—God among His people: Incarnation

God is blessing His people and bringing His people to His place. What have we seen about the place? We have seen the Promised Land; God with His people at the tabernacle; God with His people in the temple; and God with His people in exile. Now we see God among His people in the incarnation. John 1:14 says, "*The Word became flesh and made his dwelling (tabernacled) among us.*" This verse uses the Old Testament word "tabernacle," the dwelling of God. John 1:14 tells us that Christ's dwelling is now among His people. He became like us. God lives among His people!

Now look at the claims of Jesus. First, he says, "I am the Tabernacle," in John 1:1-14. And then, not just "I am the tabernacle," but also Jesus says, "I am the temple." Remember when this happened in John 2:13-22? He is cleansing the temple and they are looking at Him as if to say, "What are you doing? Who do you think you are?" Jesus steps up in John 2:19 and says, "*Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days.*" What does that mean? Destroy this temple and raise it again in three days? You can't build this whole facility again in three days. "You are exactly right because I am the Temple. I am the way for you to approach the presence of God and I will be destroyed and three days later I will be restored." He is the temple.

Purpose— God's glory made known to all peoples through His salvation

This is through Christ, and the salvation he brings. He is the Lamb of God's provision for the world. Behold the Lamb who takes away the sins of every single person who places their faith in Him (John 1:29). He takes away the sins of the world. He is the Lamb of God, the provision for the world.

He is the accomplishment of God's glory in the world. See what Proverbs 30:4 is asking, *"Who has gone up to heaven and come down? Who has gathered up the wind in the hollow of his hands? Who has wrapped up the waters in his cloak? Who has established all the ends of the earth? What is his name, and the name of his son? Tell me if you know!"*

Or Daniel 7:13-14,

"In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed."

Jesus is the radiant center of God's plan to make His glory known in the world. Remember how God had said "I am going to put my Glory on my people?" That is what the prophet said in Isaiah 36:14. I am going to put my glory on my people. See His beauty. He is the anticipated glory of God. He is going to give His glory to His people. And they find out what they have been anticipating is actually the eternal God of glory himself, God in the flesh. The anticipated glory of God is the eternal God of the world. Jesus is the pinnacle of this whole picture.

PRESENT

People—God's Blessing and Judgment through His Church

With Christ as our Prophet, we now speak for him. Acts 1:8 says, *"You will be my witnesses..."* You will be my prophets, and you will be my witnesses. We are now His spokesmen.

Christ is our Priest. We are now His kingdom of priests (1 Pet. 2:5-9; Rom. 15:14-16). You are a royal priesthood, able to come into contact with the God of the universe through His Son Jesus Christ. Experience His blessing first hand, up close and personal. It is for anyone who trusts in him.

Third, we are now His heirs. Christ is our King and we are His heirs. Galatians 3:26-4:7 reads,

You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. What I am saying is that as long as the heir is a child, he is no different from a slave, although he owns the whole estate. He is subject to

guardians and trustees until the time set by his father. So also, when we were children, we were in slavery under the basic principles of the world. But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons. Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father." So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir.

Christ is our Judge. We are now under His judgment, and apart from faith in him, we experience the judgment of God (John 5:21-27).

Place—God in His people: Body

God is bringing His people to His place. Today it is God in His people, not God among His people. That, which was the tabernacle and the temple, now in Christ, becomes us—our bodies. The prophets foretold the rebuilding of God's temple. It is going to display the greatness of God's glory that we saw in Ezekiel 40-47, and it is going to demonstrate the work of God's Spirit as we saw in Zechariah 4:6-9. Do you remember seeing that in Ezekiel and Zachariah? God's glory is in the new temple and God's Spirit is in the new temple. Now our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit. Do you realize the connection here between the temple of God and our body?

We now display the greatness of God's glory (1 Cor. 3:16-17; 2 Cor. 6:16). Your body is the temple of God declaring His glory, and we now demonstrate the work of God's Spirit. 1 Corinthians 6:18-20 reads, *"Your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit...therefore honor God with your body."* Students, men and women, be pure, Be Holy, because the Spirit of the glory of God dwells in your body. Don't compromise in a world where everything goes to corruption and against God. You are the temple of the Holy Spirit. The glory of God does not dwell in a tabernacle or a temple but inside of you. It radically changes the way we live when we understand that picture in the Old Testament.

Second, the temple of God and our mission—I told you 1 Kings 8:41-43 communicates that, "The nations would come to the temple." If they want to encounter the glory of God, all the nations come to the temple in the Old Testament. Now, in the New Testament, the temple is our body. The temple now goes to the nations (Acts 1:8). We are going to take the glory and the Spirit of God, and we are going to bring the worship of God to the nations so that, in us, they will encounter His glory and express His worship.

Purpose—God's Glory Multiplied To All Peoples

God's glory multiplied to all peoples. Jesus' purpose is to establish the kingdom. Our purpose is to multiply the kingdom. Don't miss it. It all started in Genesis 1 and 2. God's image will be multiplied throughout the earth. He has restored us; he has made us holy through the blood of His Son, and now we are multiplying to all people. The need to be about making disciples of all nations is not made up. It is what we are supposed to be about. The Old Testament teaches us to be about multiplying the glory of Christ to all nations.

Jesus' purpose is to establish the kingdom. Our purpose is to multiply the kingdom. Our purpose is to multiply the kingdom in Sudan, in Birmingham and everywhere in between. John 20:21 says, "As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you." Make disciples of all nations! Go and announce the kingdom to all peoples. Announce His blessing and His judgment. Announce the fact that he, Christ, is the center of it all. Announce His kingdom. We are to be baptizing and embodying the kingdom before all peoples. Don't miss it. The

Church is a kingdom preview to the world. We are like the movie trailer. Do you want to see the kingdom of God? Then teach. Teach—spread the kingdom to all peoples.

God, help us to learn from Israel and the Old Testament and to connect God's blessing with God's purpose. Did you see how over and over again in the Old Testament they disconnected His blessing from His purpose? When they didn't fulfill His purpose, they experienced His judgment. God help us to connect His blessing with His purpose. Please help us to multiply the kingdom to all nations.

All of this leads to the future—God's people, God's place, and God's purpose.

FUTURE

People—God's Final Blessing and Judgment

This is the consummation of the kingdom. Revelation 20:11-21:8 give us a picture of the new heaven and the new earth, where the old order of things has passed away. Heaven exemplifies the King's eternal blessing, and hell exemplifies the King's eternal judgment.

The call of the kingdom—Matthew 4:17 tells us, "*Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.*" Romans 10:9 is the confession of the kingdom, "*That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.*"

If you have not trusted in Christ, then I urge you to "confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead and you will be saved." That is where the entire kingdom is headed: His final blessing and judgment. At that point in the future, all of us will either eternally come under the blessing of God or eternally come under the judgment of God.

Place—God with, among, and in His People: Redeemed Body

Is this God with His people, in His people, or among His people? It is all of them. You will not just have a body, you will have a redeemed body if you are a citizen in this kingdom. This is good news. It is good news that a redeemed body awaits us in the kingdom of God. Listen to this: we are co-residents in His kingdom (Rev. 22:1-5). Genesis 3:24 told us about the Tree of Life, of which we were banished from. Revelation 22 says we come back to the Tree of Life, and it brings healing to all of our lives, and on that day the glory of Eden is restored. Not only that, but the glory of Zion is finally realized. What Hebrews 12 says is true. Hebrews 12:22-24 says, "*But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect, to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.*"

We are co-residents. The glory of Eden is restored to perfect fellowship with our redeemed bodies.

Second, we are co-recipients of His kingdom (Rom. 8:17). We know that if we shared in His sufferings, we will also share in His glory. That is good news for everyone. Everyone who shares in His sufferings will share in His glory.

Zechariah 13:9 prophesied of a time when God will be with His people and He will be their God and they will belong to Him and He will belong to us. We belong to Him, and He belongs to us. The King of the universe belongs to you. This is a good place that we are going to.

Finally, we are co-rulers in His kingdom. We are not just co-residents or co-recipients but we are co-rulers. Did you know that 2 Timothy 2:11-12 says, "*If we died with him, we will also live with him; if we endure, we will also reign with him.*" Isn't that the picture of Genesis? "You will rule and you will reign with me."

The reign of Christ belongs to us as well. Not that we are like Christ in our authority, because Christ is God, but He is sharing His reign and His kingdom for all eternity with you and with me. And everything changes (Rev. 5:10). Our relationship with God is completely restored. Remember the effects of sin—guilt, shame, and fear? We go from total guilt to total innocence. There is a place where there will be no more sin ever. We also go from lowest shame to highest honor. Ephesians 2 says, "We will be seated with Him in the heavens." And again, we go from everlasting fear to everlasting peace, so we will have no reason to fear because there is nothing but peace. Romans 8:38-39 communicates that, neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, that can ever, ever, ever ... separate you from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Nothing can separate us from this place. God is with, among and in His people. Our relationship with man is completely renewed, and our relationship with our environment is completely redeemed.

Purpose—God's Glory Enjoyed By All Nations

That is the completion of the picture. It is the completion of God's kingdom. It all started in Genesis 1, and now we have come full circle through the Old Testament to today, and it has shown us God's people, in God's place, fulfilling God's purpose.

Revelation 7:9-12,

After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb." All the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures. They fell down on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying: "Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and honor and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen!"

God's people! God's place! God's purpose!

Permissions: You are permitted and encouraged to reproduce and distribute this material provided that you do not alter it in any way, use the material in its entirety, and do not charge a fee beyond the cost of reproduction. For web posting, a link to the media on our website is preferred. Any exceptions to the above must be approved by Radical.

Please include the following statement on any distributed copy: By David Platt. © David Platt & Radical.
Website: Radical.net