

**NAVIGATING  
THE  
DIVINE**

*Thematic Overview of the Bible*

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Rex & Lois Burgher

# Navigating The Divine

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1st Edition

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Our Father's Heartbeat

Journey to our Kingdom Destiny

When The Fire Falls

# DEDICATED TO:

Jonah

Simeon

Ezra

Selah

Malakai

Anastasia

You are more than a blessing to us—you are a reminder of God’s faithfulness through the generations. This book is a gift to you, born from our deepest desire that you would know the One who loves you more than words can express.

There are many in the generational line before you (too many to list here.) that faithfully served the Most High, building a foundation of love and devotion to God. We pray their legacy will inspire you to seek Him with all your heart and discover the abundant life He has planned for you.

Never forget His promises are as true today as they were for Abraham and all who walked in faith before you. He has called you by name, and His plans for your future are full of hope, joy, and purpose. May you walk boldly in His love and light, trusting Him to guide your steps with all our love and prayers.

Grandpa and Grandma

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# FOREWORD

by Dr. Randy Clark

Understanding the Bible for a new believer can be challenging, even for many who have been saved many years. Obtaining an understanding of the Bible and how it all fits together is challenging. I want to recommend an easy read, a short book that provides such an understanding of a thematic overview of the Bible. Rex Burgher traveled with me all over the world for several years. He brings years of experience as an elder in local churches. He is a student of the Bible and committed to helping believers grow in their knowledge of the Bible. Rex became an itinerate minister of Global Awakening for several years prior to launching his own itinerate ministry. He and his wife, Lois, have also been facilitators in the *Christian Healing Certification Program since it began in* (2012).

*Navigating the Divine: Thematic Overview of the Bible* will give you a unitive understanding of the whole Bible. You will see how, from Genesis to Revelation, there is an important theme that brings unity to the diversity of the sixty-six books of the Bible. I read the book in one setting. I believe Rex has provided an essential guide that will help you gain an understanding of the Father's heart to have a family who loves

Him and worships Him.

Jesus focused on such unity between the Father and the Son in John 14-17. In His upper-room discourse, He lets us know that we are invited into the love between the Father and the Son. Believers are invited into the deepest level of fellowship with the Father and the Son through the Spirit.

Suppose you are looking for a short, easy-to-comprehend overview of the Bible with a thematic unity. In that case, you will want to read Rex & Lois Burgher's *Navigating the Divine: Thematic Overview of the Bible*.

# Endorsements

*Navigating The Divine* is a true gem. Rex and Lois Burgher have captured the thread of our Father's saving love from Genesis 1 to Revelation 22, showing the continuity of God's amazing grace through all 66 books of the Bible. It's easy to read, flows beautifully, and stays on track—making it one of the best Bible overviews we've seen. Whether you're a new believer or a seasoned saint, this book will help you connect the dots and see the central message of Scripture come alive. They write with an authentic voice, making complex truths simple and accessible.

Having known them for over 30 years, we can say they are carriers of God's tangible love, people of prayer, and kind-hearted friends. *Navigating The Divine* will bless countless believers, just as it has blessed their own grandchildren—its first test audience. Thank you for this gift to the Body of Christ!”

— Charles & Anne Stock, Senior Pastors, Life Center Ministries,  
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

# Endorsements

The Bible is the most amazing, divinely inspired book ever written, and *Navigating The Divine* captures its heart with a clear and powerful overview. My long-time friends and respected church leaders, Rex and Lois Burgher, have created a guide that reveals the central theme of Scripture—God’s faithful love and His promises fulfilled—tying together the Old and New Testaments as one continuous story. This book is simple yet profound, offering readers a deeper understanding of God’s Word and a more personal connection with its Author. Whether for personal growth or discipleship, *Navigating The Divine* is a valuable resource that will bless and equip believers at every stage of their journey. Rex and Lois’s passion for the Word of God and its message shines through every page. Thank you, Rex and Lois, for sharing this gift with the Body of Christ.

— Dr. Mike & Dr. Deena Van’t Hul

# Introduction

Deep within man's heart is the desire to love and be loved. That love was birthed at the beginning of time by a Father who desired to have a family to share His love and life. Throughout the Bible, the heart of the Father is revealed through His commitment and love for His children. Within the Father is a love so powerful that each beat of His heart is a beacon drawing us homeward.

Our Father never intended for us to become separated from Him. What happened within the Garden cut to His heart; from that moment onward, He intended to have His children back home with Him forever. The Bible is the story of that journey home, from its heart-wrenching beginning to its epic conclusion. No Hollywood film could ever touch this kind of intrigue, romance, deception, and plot twists, along with its heroes, heroines, and notorious villains.

Many of us have never realized how much our Father in Heaven loves us, nor do we know how much He longs for us to be home with Him again. Within a few months of accepting Jesus as my Savior, I had read the Bible from beginning to end. I have to admit that the Bible was difficult for me to understand at times, mostly because I was trying to read it as one would read a novel. I was unaware that the books

in the Bible were not placed in chronological order; in other words, they didn't necessarily follow the order in which the historical events occurred.

It was confusing to re-read events mentioned in earlier parts of the Bible. I did not understand that these were separate books, not separate chapters, often written hundreds of years apart. Also, the complex storyline within the Bible was hard to follow and identify with. There were times after reading about the flood that I wished God would wipe out all of humanity and start over again. I was beginning to feel God's frustration over humanity's continual disobedience.

I discovered that many in the Body of Christ experienced the same problem with the Bible and faced similar challenges in trying to understand what we were supposed to be doing now that we are saved. It was hard for me to understand just what we were being saved from—was it from ourselves, a mad God, or an even angrier devil?

I began to realize that many churches do not have a coherent doctrinal position on what we are supposed to do after accepting Jesus as our Lord and Savior. Without a cohesive position, living the Christian life can be confusing and will leave many to wander through life, trying to make sense of their faith. We need a better roadmap to help us in our journey through life. I knew the Bible was that roadmap, but no one ever sat down with me and explained how it all fit together.

Understanding the Bible is essential, but it is a poor guide unless we know how to connect all the dots. Doctrine helps us keep our bearings for the journey, but it doesn't always give us the answers we so desperately need to deal with the twists and turns of daily living.

Christianity is not a philosophy but a relationship between a loving Father and His children. It is not so much a set of creeds, doctrines, or theological precepts but a story of a family that had been separated and their journey back home. We all need to understand where we are on this journey, for we all play an essential role in this epic adventure. The Bible is the story of a Father's love for His children, how they were separated from Him, and His journey to bring them home.

Over the years, I discovered a theme that ran throughout the Bible. I wasn't looking for anything groundbreaking—just a straightforward approach to understanding God's Word. Rather than getting mired in an exhaustive study, this approach kept me focused on the main points found throughout the Scripture. It ultimately helped me see the bigger picture without getting lost in the details.

In my conversations with Christians, I found many who had memorized large portions of Scripture but struggled with even the most basic concepts of their faith. I realized many Christians failed to understand why the books of the Bible were not placed in their chronological order. This led many to read the Bible from start to finish

like a novel, which can be confusing.

The Bible is far more than a history book. It's a love letter, timeless and universal as the Lord Himself, and it gives us a deeper understanding of the nature of God. We aren't meant to read it "in order," as God's order is far more extensive than we can comprehend. Instead, we are meant to understand the entire canon as working together to help us grasp God's beautiful, perfect, loving nature – a nature that transcends time. I believe the best place to start is "In the Beginning." So, let's begin there

# CHAPTER 1

## Promises, Covenants & Walking Between The Pieces

**T**he first five books can raise numerous questions, which might feel overwhelming when trying to understand the events they describe. Instead of providing detailed answers, they offer a broad overview of what has occurred, avoiding an overload of intricate details. They don't delve into questions surrounding the development of civilizations, the fate of dinosaurs, the age of the Earth, the war with Satan and his minions, or other scientific inquiries. Instead, they focus on foundational narratives, relationships, and covenants between God and humanity. Emphasizing these key themes provides insight into the spiritual journey rather than answering every question about the physical world. Let's explore how the Bible outlines the beginnings.

Out of nothing (*ex nihilo*), God spoke the universe into existence and declared it good. In this perfect, sinless world, He placed Adam and Eve, the first man and woman, in the pristine beauty of the Garden of Eden. The Garden was a place of harmony, free from sin, death, and distrust. But this perfection was shattered when Adam and

Eve, tempted by the serpent, chose to disobey God. With their sin, brokenness entered creation, and everything was thrown off balance. What was once whole and good became fractured. All creation, once vibrant and in perfect harmony, now groans under the weight of sin, longing to be restored to its original state. As Adam and Eve gave in to their sinful nature, the consequences rippled outward, darkening the world and distancing humanity from its Creator.

In time, Adam and Eve were expelled from the Garden of Eden, separated from the perfect fellowship with God they had once known. As they began to populate the Earth, their descendants—sons, daughters, and generations to follow—gradually drifted further from God’s heart. Humanity turned away from its Creator, and the world descended into chaos. Sin multiplied, and violence filled the Earth, corrupting all that God had declared good. The depth of humanity’s rebellion grieved God deeply, and He purposed in His heart to cleanse the Earth of its wickedness through a great flood, a deluge that would wipe away all life on the Earth.

Yet even amid widespread corruption, one man stood apart—Noah. Noah found favor in God’s sight because he lived in obedience and faithfulness to Him. In His mercy, God chose to spare Noah and his family. He gave Noah detailed instructions on building an ark, a vessel large enough to preserve his household and a remnant of every animal. As God had commanded, Noah obeyed, gathering the animals

in pairs and groups of sevens. When the floodwaters came, Noah, his family, and the animals entered the Ark and were saved. The flood destroyed all life outside the Ark, but within it, God preserved the seeds of a new beginning.

After a prescribed interval, the Ark landed on Mt. Ararat, and God opened the door, and Noah, his family, and the animals returned to the Earth. They offered a sacrifice there, and God placed a rainbow in the sky as a covenant that He would never again destroy the world with a flood. The world then began to be repopulated by Noah and his family. After some time—a length we do not know, but a period marked by great civilization-building (which can be read about in the book of Genesis).

God spoke to a man named Abraham and made three significant promises to him:

1. I will make you into a great nation.
2. I will give you the land you are walking on.
3. I will bless the world through your seed or offspring.

We don't know why God made these three promises to Abraham. However, we are told that Abraham heard the promises, and because he believed them, God credited them to him as righteousness. This underscores a profound truth: God values belief as the foundation of a relationship with Him. It is through faith, not actions or achievements,

that we are made right with God. Abraham's belief set the standard for all who would follow, showing that righteousness is not earned but given to those who trust in God's word and His promises. To fully understand the importance of those three promises, we must understand the three covenants used in the ancient world. A covenant is another name for a deal or a contract. What we call a contract today was a covenant in the olden times.

Here are three types of covenants used throughout the Bible.

1. **Suzerainty Covenant:** A more powerful party (the suzerain) imposes terms on a lesser party (the vassal). This reflects the relationship between God and His chosen people, where God sets the terms for obedience and blessing. In this covenant, the more powerful person tells the less powerful person what to do (or else). The (or else) usually meant being killed or a form of torture.
2. **Parity Covenant:** is an agreement between equals where both parties have mutual obligations. An example can be seen in the agreements made among tribes or nations.
3. **Patron Covenant:** Here, a powerful benefactor (the patron) provides protection and benefits in exchange for loyalty and service from the lesser party. This can also be called the *Covenant of the Gift* or the *Covenant of Grace*.

Covenants illustrate God’s ongoing commitment to humanity and His desire for a relationship built on trust and faithfulness while showcasing His redemptive plan throughout history. Understanding these agreements helps the readers understand God’s promises and their significance in the Biblical narrative. In Genesis 15, an odd passage of Scripture occurred after God made those three promises to Abraham. It is called *THE PASSING BETWEEN THE PIECES*. You may remember reading about them. Still, you probably wondered what it was all about. I discovered it wasn’t as isolated of an occurrence as one might think. If you open your Bible to Jeremiah 34:1-20, you will see that this practice was far more common than first realized. It starts with God having Abraham take some animals, cut them in half, and position them in such a way as to create a pathway between the pieces. In other words, where their backbone used to be, a path extended between the cut halves of the animals. We were told that Abraham stayed there all day, shooing the vultures away from the animals lying in the sun.

“Jeremiah explains that it was a common practice in covenant-making—whether between a king and his subjects, two equal parties, or a patron and their beneficiary—to cut animals in half and meet in the middle of the pieces as a solemn act symbolizing their commitment, with the understanding that breaking the covenant would result in severe consequences, even death.” Then, they would say the following to one another. *“If I don’t keep this covenant, may I become like these cut-up animals?”* As you can see, making such a statement could have

dire consequences. For God to come alone and not meet Abraham in the middle describes the type of covenant used. It meant that God alone was responsible for fulfilling all the covenant requirements. What kind of covenant would that be? Is it a suzerainty—of course not, for God required nothing of Abraham? – Is it a Parity? No! Because Abraham was not God’s equal. No, this is the Patron Covenant, the Covenant of the Gift, or the Covenant of Grace. Because God came to the middle by himself and made those promises to Abraham, nothing Abraham could do would stop those promises from happening.

Finally, God showed up in the (*THEOPHANY*), or what appeared to be a smudge pot, or a smoking pot and torch, and passed between the pieces saying, “*Abraham, I swear that I will keep these three promises to you. I will make you a great nation, give you the land you are walking on, and bless the world through your children or offspring.*” As you can see, God did not meet Abraham in the middle of the pieces but came alone. At the heart of the Bible are the three promises God made to Abraham. These promises form the foundation of Scripture, shaping the story of Abraham’s family and God’s faithfulness to fulfill His covenant. From Genesis 12 onward, every book of the Bible connects in some way to the unfolding of these promises—promises that hold the key to understanding where you are in the narrative of Scripture. ***The Bible is, at its core, the story of the family of Abraham and how God kept His promises to that one man.***

It's essential to recognize that the Bible is not a comprehensive account of the world, nor does it claim to be. It does not provide detailed explanations about God's origin, the Nephilim's fate, or their connections to the mythical gods of Greek mythology. Nor does it venture into the depths of Jesus' journey into the pit, a subject of rich theological debate. Instead, the Bible focuses on how God kept those three promises to Abraham. The final Promise to bless the world was realized through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. You will notice that great care was taken to record the genealogy of Jesus Christ in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. This was done to demonstrate that Jesus was a pure descendant of the family lineage of Abraham.

Furthermore, anyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved. Looking ahead, we will see the establishment of a new Heaven and Earth, a return to the purity and wholeness that characterized creation in the beginning, free from sin. You will witness the family's journey from when the promises were given until each one was fulfilled.



## **For Personal & Group Study**

*Use the questions below to deepen your understanding and spark meaningful discussions.*

1. Name God's three promises to Abraham and explain their significance.
2. What were the three main types of covenants used in ancient times, and what was their purpose?
3. In 'Passing Between The Pieces', describe how a covenant was established and each party's responsibilities in honoring it.'
4. What type of covenant did God make with Abraham, and why must we know the difference?
5. Explain how the rest of the Bible is the story of one man's family and how God kept his promises to that man.

# CHAPTER 2

## Fulfilling The First Promise: A Family Becomes A Nation

**T**o understand the family better, we need to start by following the family lineage, specifically by looking at the three Patriarchs mentioned in the Old Testament. The first was Abraham, the second was Isaac, and the third was Jacob. But first, let me explain what it means to “begat” someone. Begat refers to reproducing or having a child or offspring. So, when we say Abraham begat Isaac, it means Abraham had a son named Isaac. Now, what is the most significant word in the Bible? Some might say Jesus, and indeed, the name of Jesus is essential. However, we cannot overlook the word “begat.” Why? Because the Bible is the story of a family making, the word “begat” is essential when understanding the family.

You know those lists of begat you often skip over in the Bible? The next time you encounter them, take a moment to read them carefully. When you do remember that each name represents two complete generations—two generations that God watched over to ensure He

could keep His promises to Abraham. Abraham begat Isaac, Isaac begat Jacob, and Jacob had an extensive family as he had two wives, two concubines, and twelve sons. When each Son married and had children, they formed what was referred to as a tribe. Later, we learn that Jacob had a wrestling match with God and was renamed Israel. So, when you read about the twelve tribes of Israel, you are reading about Jacob, his sons, and their families.

As Abraham's family grew, a severe famine struck the land, threatening their survival. Amid this crisis, Joseph, one of Jacob's twelve sons, began to have prophetic dreams that foretold his rise to a position of prominence. However, these dreams, which seemed to elevate Joseph above his brothers, stirred jealousy and resentment among them. Joseph was his Father's favorite, and the coat of many colors he was given only deepened the division. The tension within the family reached its breaking point when Joseph shared his dreams of ruling over his brothers, dreams that they perceived as arrogance.

One day, their jealousy boiled over. When the opportunity arose, they conspired against him. Initially plotting to kill him, they relented and instead sold him into slavery to a passing caravan, eager to silence both Joseph and the discomfort his dreams caused them. Stripped of his family and his freedom, Joseph was taken to Egypt, where he would face challenges that seemed far removed from the lofty future his dreams had foretold. Yet, even amid betrayal and suffering, God's hand

was upon Joseph, weaving a plan far greater than anyone in his family could have imagined.

When Joseph was in Egypt, God elevated him to a significant position. He became the right-hand man to Pharaoh, so much so that Pharaoh placed his ring on Joseph's finger. As the famine worsened, Pharaoh instructed Joseph to bring his family to Egypt, promising them prime land where they could be safe from starvation. Joseph happily complied. Thus, Joseph's family, around seventy at the time, moved to Goshen, where they lived and raised their families. Before long, Abraham's family grew very numerous.

Consider this, if the family faced the threat of starvation, would God allow them to perish? Most would instinctively say, of course not. But the reason behind this assurance is crucial. You see, God had made promises to Abraham, and if the family were to die, those promises would be at risk. Therefore, God would not allow harm to come to them. In His divine wisdom, God took Joseph's betrayal and his descent into slavery in Egypt, transforming what seemed like a tragic turn of events into a pivotal moment of salvation for the entire family. Through Joseph's journey, God orchestrated a greater plan, ensuring His promises would endure, and His people would find refuge and sustenance in their time of need.

I ask you: Did God rescue His people from Egypt because they

worked hard in the hot sun? Or because they were enslaved and oppressed under the harsh rule of Pharaoh? No! When did God move on behalf of His people? God came to their aid when Pharaoh devised a plan to permanently address the growing Israelite population. Pharaoh concocted a scheme allowing him to kill two birds with one stone. He could eliminate the population explosion while simultaneously appeasing the Nile goddess by drowning all the Hebrew boys in the river as an offering. Although this may have seemed like a perfect solution to Pharaoh, it was unacceptable to God. If all the boys drowned in the Nile, what would happen to the family? The family would cease to exist, which could not happen because God still had promises to fulfill with Abraham.

Because of the ingenuity of a mother—Moses’ mother—God turned a dire situation into a victory for the family of Abraham. Moses’ mother knew she would have to throw him into the Nile, and she did. She did so by constructing a basket that could easily float. That way, she could tell those in charge that she had done what she was supposed to do. Still, she knew, and God knew, that he was in a basket. The basket floated right past Pharaoh’s house just as Pharaoh’s daughter went outside to bathe. She happened to notice the basket, and her heart was struck by the baby inside. She named him Moses, meaning “to draw out,” because she had drawn him out of the water. God orchestrated events so that Moses was raised in an Egyptian household. He received the best education and learned about the ways and customs of the

Egyptian people. As a result, he understood their culture and practices better than any of the Hebrew people before him. God used the sin of Pharaoh to raise a deliverer within his own household, and Moses was that deliverer.

Finally, when God's timing was right, Moses began to ask Pharaoh to let the people go. Pharaoh, however, had become very accustomed to the enslaved people, knowing his empire wouldn't survive without the family of Abraham, so he was reluctant to let them go. Even so, God was determined to keep His promises to Abraham. And by the way, how many of those promises had already been kept? One Promise had already been fulfilled—they had become a great nation, which is why Pharaoh feared them. Now, under Moses' leadership, they were journeying toward the land God had promised to Abraham. This second Promise, often referred to as the "promised land," was central to their hope and identity. God faithfully led them out of Egypt toward this land, using ten mighty plagues to secure their freedom.

Most of us have read about and learned about these plagues in Sunday School and beyond, but I would like to explain something about them: there is real meaning behind them. Each of the ten plagues God sent upon Egypt addressed a specific aspect of Egyptian life linked to their gods, effectively mocking or challenging their power. Moses approached Pharaoh and declared, "The God of the Israelite people demands that you let His people go." He asserted, "I am more powerful

than you are, Pharaoh; I am more powerful than the gods you worship; let my people go so they can come into the desert and worship Me.” Naturally, Pharaoh resisted this demand.

God chose ten plagues to confront and ultimately topple the gods the Egyptians revered. For example, the Egyptians worshipped Heket, the frog goddess, so God filled the land with frogs, proclaiming His power over their deity. They revered Hapi, the goddess of the Nile, believing that sacrifices to her would ensure prosperity. In response, God turned the Nile into blood, tainting their vital water source and symbolizing death and impurity. Similarly, they worshipped Ra, the sun god, yet God shrouded Egypt in darkness, allowing light to shine on the Hebrews. The final and most devastating plague came when God struck down the firstborn in every Egyptian household. However, the Hebrew people were spared through the blood of a spotless lamb, painted on their doorposts as a sign of protection. This act preserved their lives and foreshadowed the ultimate sacrifice of Jesus, the Lamb of God. Overwhelmed by these plagues, Pharaoh finally granted the Hebrews’ petition to leave, freeing them to begin their journey toward the promised land.

The Egyptians revered Pharaoh above all other deities, worshiping him as a god. God instituted the Passover among the Hebrew people in the final and most devastating plague. As the Angel of Death swept through Egypt, every firstborn Son was struck down, including Pharaoh’s own

child. This judgment exposed Pharaoh's utter powerlessness before the God of the Hebrews and shattered the Egyptians' faith in their leader's divinity. Stricken with grief and fear, the Egyptians not only permitted the Israelites to leave but also gave them gifts of gold and silver, urging them to depart quickly. Led by Moses, the Israelites crossed the Red Sea, leaving Egypt behind and stepping into the next chapter of God's plan for their deliverance.



## **For Personal & Group Study**

*Use the questions below to deepen your understanding and spark meaningful discussions.*

1. What does 'begat' mean, and why is it essential in understanding the events in the Bible?
2. How did God use Joseph's betrayal and time in Egypt to fulfill His first promise to Abraham?
3. Why did God send ten plagues to Egypt, and what message did each plague communicate?
4. Who are the three Patriarchs?

# CHAPTER 3

## Fulfilling The Second Promise: The Journey Towards The Promised Land

**S**o far, we have covered the Books of Genesis and Exodus. In Leviticus, we find rules about what the Israelites could and could not eat. By this time, they had already received the first Promise and had become a great nation, numbering in the millions. However, God still needed to give them the land and bless the world through their descendants. This required that God keep the family line pure and undefiled, free from sexual impurity, healthy, happy, and worshipping Him. That is the essence of the covenant containing the Ten Commandments.

God implemented this significant covenant with His children to prepare them for their journey. He essentially stated, *Keep this law, or else I will destroy you or put you outside the camp or family.* What kind of covenant was this? Was it a patron covenant, where God gives something for free, expecting nothing in return? No, because He

expected obedience. Was it a parity covenant, where two equals come together to strike a deal? No, of course not, as man can never be equal to God. This is a suzerainty covenant, where the more powerful, God, makes demands on the less powerful, the people of Israel. Demands that they keep His law or face destruction or exclusion from the chosen people.

After accepting this law, the Israelites headed for the promised land, the land promised to Abraham. However, they repeatedly failed to uphold the law throughout their journey, even breaking it before Moses returned from the mountain with the commandments. At the foot of the mountain, they engaged in sexual sin, demonstrating their blatant disregard for the covenant that required them to remain faithful to God's commands.

Despite their repeated unfaithfulness, this suzerainty covenant could never nullify God's Promise to Abraham. Nothing could prevent that covenant from being fulfilled. Although the people continually broke the law, God remained faithful; He never broke His Promise to Abraham and ensured the survival of His people throughout history. The Book of Numbers recounts the Israelites' wandering in the wilderness, illustrating their constant disobedience, even extending to Moses' failure to follow God's instructions.

It took a while, but Moses and the Hebrews finally arrived at Mount

Nebo, which overlooks the promised land across the Jordan River. Although Moses could not enter the promised land because of his disobedience at Meribah, where he struck the rock instead of speaking to it as God commanded (Numbers 20:12), he climbed Mount Nebo to view it from a distance. After his death, he was carried over and buried in the land. Following Moses, his successor, Joshua, took command. Under Joshua's leadership, the Israelites launched military campaigns in Canaan's central, northern, and southern regions. The story of these campaigns and the conquest of the land is recorded in the Book of Joshua.

The Book of Joshua describes how the 12 tribes conquered Canaan and removed its inhabitants, primarily the Canaanites. After their victory, they divided the land among the tribes, each receiving a portion. The tribes chose to remain loosely connected without a central government, a period known as the time of the Judges. The cycle of the Book of Judges unfolds like this: first, the people would begin to worship other gods. God would then allow another nation to defeat them in battle. When that happened, the people would cry out to God. God would hear their pleas and send a Judge (which means)—a military deliverer—to free them. As long as that Judge lived, the people would obey God and feel safe. However, once that Judge died, they quickly returned to their old ways. The Book of Judges repeatedly chronicles this cycle of disobedience, judgment, and deliverance. For a glimpse into the cultural context of this period, you might also consider reading

the Book of Ruth.

Eventually, an enemy emerged on the shores of the promised land that the Israelites could not dispel: the Philistines. Despite their efforts, the twelve tribes were unable to eliminate this threat. In response, they gathered together and approached their last Judge, Samuel, asking for a king. They pleaded, *Samuel, please give us a king. Our lack of a centralized government hinders us; we cannot defeat the Philistines without a king. If we were like the nations around us and had a king who had an army, we would be able to defeat our enemies.*



## For Personal & Group Study

*Use the questions below to deepen your understanding and spark meaningful discussions.*

1. What was the purpose of the suzerainty covenant given to the Israelites, and how did it differ from other covenants like patron and parity covenants?
2. How did the Israelites' repeated failure to keep God's law demonstrate the tension between God's faithfulness to Abraham's covenant and their own unfaithfulness?

# CHAPTER 4

## A Divided Legacy And A Promise Unfulfilled

**S**amuel did not want to give the people a king. He warned them, saying, “You do not want a king; the king will impose taxes, take your boys to serve in the military, and have you build temples and palaces.” Despite his warnings, the people persisted in their demand for a king. Thus began the period when they were united. They united long enough to have three kings: Saul, David, and Solomon. However, deep-seated tribal divisions and competing loyalties among the twelve tribes of Israel made unity difficult. These tensions, rooted in their history and differing priorities, led to frequent disagreements and struggles for power. As a result, they did not get along very well in the past, and unity remained fragile even during this time. During their unity, Assyria to the north had become relatively powerless due to its wars with Egypt in the South. Consequently, Israel emerged as the pre-eminent nation in that region, experiencing prosperity and unmatched success. It was during this time that many significant works of literature were written. For a detailed account of this period, you can read the books of 1 and 2 Samuel, which chronicle the events when they were

unified under one King. After Solomon's death, the people grew weary of the federal government's overreach. They gathered in Jerusalem and confronted Solomon's Son, who was set to be the next King, stating, "If you are going to be like your Father, we do not want you as King. When they inquired whether he would be like his Father, he replied, "No, my father whipped you with whips, but I shall whip you with scorpions." A response that did not sit well with the people, leading ten of the twelve tribes to reject his rule and secede from the union. This resulted in a bloody civil war, splitting the crown into two parts: Israel to the North and Judah to the South. Israel was formed when ten tribes broke away from the union, while Judah consisted of the two tribes that remained loyal to Solomon. You can read the books of 1 and 2 Kings and 1 and 2 Chronicles to learn about these two kingdoms and the events that transpired during that period.

At this point, the family was divided into two kingdoms, Israel and Judah. During this time, God began sending prophets to both regions. These prophets were tasked with delivering messages from God, urging the people to live according to His laws or face destruction. Both kingdoms had started to worship other gods and disobeyed the commandments God had given to ensure their well-being. Thus, God sent His messengers, warning the divided nation to *straighten up; I have a promise to keep. I still have one more Promise to fulfill to your Father Abraham: I will bless the world through your seed, but you must turn from your sins.* He sent prophets to the Kingdom of Israel in the North and

Judah in the South, urging them to repent and turn from their sins. The prophets repeatedly called Israel to “straighten up” and to Judah to turn back to God. Unfortunately, the people refused to listen to these warnings.

Sin is always followed by *judgment*, and *repentance* is the path to *restoration*. The Northern Kingdom of Israel did not repent, leading to dire consequences. In 722 B.C., the Kingdom of Assyria invaded and destroyed the Kingdom of Israel. This invasion shattered the Ten Tribes, and they were never heard from again. God allowed Assyria to obliterate them once and for all. The Assyrians had a distinct strategy for conquering nations: they relocated the Israelite men to Assyria and brought Assyrian men into Israel. This tactic aimed to promote intermarriage between the two groups, fostering a sense of family ties that would discourage conflict. As a result of these unions, children were born who were of mixed heritage—part Israelite, part Assyrian. These mixed descendants became known as Samaritans, named after Samaria, the capital of the Northern Kingdom of Israel. Thus, the Samaritans were viewed as half-breeds, representing a blend of the two cultures, and they played a unique role in the history of the region moving forward.

Ten of the tribes were lost. Have you heard of the Ten lost tribes of Israel? Lost through intermarriage. Did Judah learn from Israel’s fall? NO! Now, out of the whole family of Abraham, there are only two tribes

left. Two tribes! The Bible calls it a remnant, a little piece that was left. But did they repent? No. And it wasn't long until Babylon took over Assyria in 586 B.C. Babylon looked at Judah under King Nebuchadnezzar and decided to seize Judah, so Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem and took over the Kingdom of Judah. Now, Nebuchadnezzar didn't believe in the idea of intermarriage. He thought it would be better to kill off all the uneducated people and take all the educated individuals back to his country, namely Babylon. He planned to put them in a ghetto; that way, if he needed a doctor, he could go to the ghetto and get one, and if he needed a lawyer, he could go down to the ghetto and find one. In this way, he could make use of the people he conquered. So we read that Nebuchadnezzar took the educated people from Jerusalem after he had destroyed it and brought them off to a ghetto in Babylon. If you want to learn more, read the Book of Daniel. Daniel was one of those who was removed and taken off into the ghetto of Babylon.

Now, Jeremiah, the prophet of the Kingdom of Judah, walked through the streets of Jerusalem after Nebuchadnezzar had destroyed it and was grieved in his heart. He wrote a sad poem called Lamentations. While in Babylon, they looked at each other and realized *they had better obey the Law of God*. So finally, the family of Abraham, this tiny remnant of the great family of Abraham, turned to God and said...*We want to obey your laws fully and finally*. Since the temple was destroyed and they had no place to worship, they began to meet in home groups known as gatherings or synagogues. Each synagogue had to have a holy

one, a minister, or a **hasan**. These individuals eventually evolved into the Pharisees in the New Testament. Additionally, each home cell had to possess a copy of the scriptures, which led to the training of their children to write or become scribes. In the dismal ghetto of Babylon, we see the beginnings of the synagogue, the Pharisees, and the scribes—those who fervently followed God, eager to adhere to the law.

No wonder the Pharisees and the scribes were reluctant to accept or follow Jesus. They feared he was against the law—the very law they had clung to since their days in the Babylonian ghetto. It wasn't long until the Persians took over the Babylonians. If you want to read about the Persian period, please look at the Book of Esther.

Once the Persians assumed control, Cyrus, the King of Persia, looked into the ghetto and asked why they kept these people there? He decided to send them home. The Jewish people repented and found favor with God, and Cyrus issued a decree stating all Jews in the ghetto were free to return to their homes and rebuild Jerusalem.

So, the people left Babylon and returned to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple. Look to the Books of Nehemiah and Ezra to read about that journey. Upon their arrival in Jerusalem, their cousins, the Samaritans, offered to help them rebuild the temple. However, the returning Jews refused their assistance, viewing the Samaritans as a threat to their identity. To them, the Samaritans were considered half-breeds, unclean,

and unworthy.

“In response to being rejected by the Jews, the Samaritans built their own temple on Mount Gerizim, while the Jews constructed theirs on Mount Zion. The proximity of the two mountains, both visible from one another, symbolized the deep division between these groups. This tension is evident in the New Testament when Jesus spoke to the Samaritan woman. She referenced the divide, saying, ‘Our fathers worshiped on this mountain,’ pointing to Mount Gerizim, ‘but you say the place where we must worship is on that mountain,’ referring to Mount Zion.

As the Jewish people worked to rebuild Jerusalem, their initial enthusiasm for God gradually faded. They grew weary from their labor and became complacent, shifting their focus to rebuilding their personal lives. This complacency led them to neglect their covenant obligations, including the tithe, which was essential for supporting the temple and its priests. Their neglect revealed a declining trust in God’s provision and a failure to honor Him with their resources.

In response to their growing apathy, God sent the prophet Malachi with a final message of correction and warning, calling them back to faithfulness. After Malachi’s message, God remained silent for 400 years.”

“During this time, the Greeks conquered the Persians, and eventually, the Romans took control of the Greek territories. The Roman Empire did not fully become imperial until after the death of Julius Caesar, but once it did, it appointed its first emperor, Octavian, also known as Caesar Augustus. It was during the reign of Caesar Augustus that Jesus entered the world, marking the beginning of a new chapter in the divine narrative.

During the Roman Empire, God fulfilled His third Promise to bless the world through the children of Abraham. This Promise was fulfilled in Jesus Christ, the child of Abraham and the Son of God, who came to bless the world by dying as the Lamb of God. Jesus’ life and ministry are recorded in the Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—which provide four unique perspectives on His teachings, actions, and mission. Though not arranged chronologically, these accounts collectively reveal how Jesus taught, revealed God to us, showed us how to live, and ultimately died on the cross for our sins. He was buried in a tomb, rose again on the third day, and ascended to the right hand of God the Father Almighty, from where He will one day return to judge both the living and the dead.

Matthew and Luke begin their Gospels with genealogies to establish that Jesus was a legitimate descendant of Abraham and the rightful Messiah who promised to bless the world. After His ascension, Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to empower His disciples—those who learned from

His teachings and sought to imitate His character and mission. Being a disciple was more than gaining intellectual knowledge; entering a transformative relationship with Jesus shaped every part of their lives. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, these disciples were tasked with proclaiming the Euangelion—the Gospel, or Good News—that Jesus had died so that all might be saved. The Book of Acts records how the apostles preached this message, established churches, and taught people how to live under the New Covenant, where salvation and new life are found in Christ.



## **For Personal & Group Study**

*Use the questions below to deepen your understanding and spark meaningful discussions.*

1. Why did Samuel warn the Israelites against choosing a king, and how did his warning come true during their united monarchy?
2. How did God use the prophets to address the sins of Israel and Judah, and what was their central message?
3. What were the consequences of Israel's refusal to repent?

# CHAPTER 5

## Lessons In Navigating The Divine: A Review

**L**et's do a short review. God created the heavens and the Earth, and everything was good. However, through Adam and Eve's disobedience, sin entered the world and spread throughout creation. In response to humanity's increasing wickedness, God brought judgment through the flood, destroying everyone except Noah and his family. Afterward, God spoke to Abraham and made three promises:

1. I will make you a great nation.
2. I will give you the land upon which you are walking.
3. I will bless the world through your seed or offspring.

God the Father made three promises to Abraham and passed through the pieces of the cut-up animals independently, requiring nothing from Abraham. This is called a Patron Covenant. The main narrative throughout the Bible, culminating in the New Testament Gospels, is the story of one man's family and how God kept His promises to that man. Ultimately, we know that God kept those promises fully and finally through Jesus our Lord, who is the one who came—a child

of Abraham who died as the Lamb of God, blessing the world. While it is easy to see how God fulfilled the first two promises, the question remains: how was the third Promise fulfilled?

The third Promise was realized when Jesus blessed the world by establishing a new covenant. During the Last Supper with His disciples, He held up the communion wafer and the wine, saying, “This is my body, broken for you; this is the blood of the new covenant. Drink from it, all of you, for this is my blood, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.” When Jesus died, the old covenant with Abraham was fulfilled, and a new covenant began. Few, if any, of His disciples understood what Jesus proclaimed when He held up the bread and wine as His body and blood. Jesus effectively said He was a new covenant’s sacrificial/cut-up animal.

When Jesus was on the cross, with His arms spread wide and gasping for His last breath, He suddenly cried out, “Tetelestai,” which is Greek for “It is finished.” Some have supposed that He meant His life was over, but that interpretation lacks depth, as that should have been clear to everyone around Him. The word *tetelestai* holds multiple meanings. Each year, on the Day of Atonement, the temple priest would make a unique sacrifice on behalf of the people, slaying a lamb to pay for their sins. Once the animal was sacrificed, the priest would go before the crowd and declare in Hebrew, “*It is finished,*” this served as a temporary atonement. For the Jews who rejected Jesus

as their Messiah, animal sacrifices were done in obedience to the Old Testament covenant and were stopped in A.D. 70 at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple by the armies of Rome. Jesus warned of this in the Gospels. For Christians, animal sacrifices stopped with the death and resurrection of Christ.

The third Promise, to bless the world, was symbolically represented when the sins of the Israelite people were placed on a sacrificial animal. When Jesus died on the cross, He became the complete and perfect sacrifice for all sin. Some have suggested that Jesus's declaration of *tetelestai* referred to the Greek meaning of "the debt has been paid," signifying that the debt owed to Abraham was satisfied. This understanding aligns with the truth that the Israelites no longer needed to sacrifice their purest animals, as Jesus was the pure, spotless Lamb and the ultimate sacrifice for our sins. Furthermore, we should consider the implications of Jesus's proclamation that the debt for the world's sins had been paid. All of God's promises had been kept. The Israelites had become a great nation, accepted the land God had given them, and God had blessed the world through His offspring. Thus, when Jesus hung on the cross and cried out, "It is finished," the debt was paid for Abraham and all who would believe in God's promises through faith. He proclaimed that He had fulfilled Abraham's promises and initiated a new covenant. The old covenant was made with Abraham; the new covenant is made with us; it is the Gospel.

Traditionally, the New Testament was penned by the apostles of

Jesus Christ, except for two non-apostles, Mark, who wrote the Gospel of Mark, and Luke, who wrote both the Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts. Jesus clearly stated He would not leave us orphaned; *I will come to you*. Paul declared, *“I am not ashamed of the Gospel, for it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes, first for the Jews, then for the Gentiles.”* In the Gospel, righteousness from God is revealed, achieved by faith from first to last, as it is written, *“The righteous will live by faith.”* The Gospel proclaims, *“Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved.”*

What kind of covenant is that? God made a promise that you will be saved. Do you believe it, yes or no? Is that a suzerainty covenant, where something is required of you? Of course not! For salvation, as Ephesians tells us, *“You are saved by grace through faith,”* and this does not come from yourselves. It is not the result of works so that no one may boast. The Gospel is not a suzerainty covenant. Is it a parity covenant? Of course not, for we were sinners and could not save ourselves. The Gospel is a Patron Covenant. God offers the gift of eternal life, free for the taking if we believe as Abraham did. When we believe, it is credited to us as righteousness. If God went through all the trouble to keep His Promise to Abraham, how much more would He do to keep His promises to the many?

Millions have put their faith in our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, and we will not be disappointed. The central theme to remember in the

Bible is simply this: God keeps His promises. One day, there will be a new Heaven and Earth, and the Earth will enter eternity in a renewed state, as it was meant to be from the beginning. It is essential to realize that the covenant Jesus established on the cross was a Patron Covenant; we cannot earn it or deserve it any more than Abraham could deserve his. The covenant we have experienced in the Gospel is one in which God promises: if we believe, repent of our sins, and receive Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, it is credited to us as righteousness.

One last thought: At the Last Supper, Jesus took the bread, broke it, and handed one piece down one side of the table and the other down the opposite side. As Jesus broke the loaf and stretched out His arms, He said, “This is my body, broken for you.” It was a profound symbol of what would occur on the cross. When Jesus died, His body was broken, and His blood was poured out to establish the new covenant.

When Jesus died, he could have easily lost a quarter to a third of his body’s total blood supply. Though his body was severely wounded and bruised, none of his bones were broken. In a sense, Jesus passed through the pieces of His own broken body, just as God had passed through the pieces of the animals in His covenant with Abraham. With His death, Jesus—fully God and fully man—became the sacrifice that fulfilled the promises made to Abraham. His blood became the blood of the new covenant, ensuring that God’s Promise to bless the nations, create a great family, and provide a homeland was kept. By passing

through the pieces, Jesus declared, “He that comes unto me, I will in no circumstance cast out,” inviting all who believe to enter this covenant of grace.

The Gospel is free. The good news is that your sins have been fully and unequivocally paid for. God orchestrated a way back into His very presence when the veil was torn through the death and resurrection of the pure offspring of Abraham as He became the spotless Lamb of God, culminating in the third Promise made to Abraham given to all humanity who receive Him. If God had gone to such lengths to fulfill His promises to Abraham throughout history, He would spend eternity keeping His promises to us. When the veil was torn in the temple from top to bottom, it provided a way back into the presence of God. Through Jesus’s death and resurrection, As the pure offspring of Abraham, the spotless Lamb of God was given to all who receive Him. God’s promises to Abraham aren’t just ancient declarations but keys to unlocking *our identity, purpose, and future*. These promises reverberate across time, calling us into something far beyond what we can see or imagine. The more we study these promises, the more we will see them not as a distant memory but as the foundation for everything God does and will do in our lives and the world.

# CHAPTER 6

## The Ultimate Fulfillment Found In The Book of Revelation

### A Great Multitude

**G**od's Promise to Abraham, "I will make you into a great nation," envisioned a people set apart for Him. Under the new covenant, this Promise is no longer limited to a physical nation but is fulfilled in a spiritual family of believers from every tribe, tongue, and nation. Revelation 7:9-10 gives us a glimpse of this fulfillment: *"After this, I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, 'Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!'"*

This is not a far-off dream but the living reality of God's Promises. We are part of this great multitude—a supernatural nation united not by heritage but by the blood of Jesus. We are clothed in His righteousness, crowned with His love, and entrusted with His mission. As members of this nation, we are not just participants but ambassadors of the King,

carrying His authority and the message of His salvation to a world desperate for hope. In this new nation, every believer wears the robes of righteousness and the ring of the King's authority (Isaiah 61:10, Luke 15:22). We are called to shine as lights in the darkness, reflecting the glory of the God who has brought us together. This is a kingdom unlike any other—eternal, unshakable, and radiant with the love and power of God.

To be part of this nation is to embrace a calling greater than ourselves, to step into the eternal story of redemption and restoration. It is an invitation to belong to something far more extensive, a family that spans the globe and eternity. This is the fulfillment of God's Promise to Abraham. This Promise extends to all who believe, welcoming them into the great nation that will one day stand before the throne, united in worship, proclaiming with one voice, *“Salvation belongs to our God and the Lamb!”*

Let this vision ignite excitement in your heart—this is your inheritance, your family, and your destiny. You are part of a nation chosen by God to reflect His glory and to declare His greatness forever. What a privilege to stand among the redeemed, clothed in His love, and commissioned to bring the message of His salvation to the world!

## The New Heaven and the New Earth

As God revealed Abraham's Promise of a great nation and spoke of a homeland where this family would dwell. *"I will give you the land you are walking on."* At first, this Promise seemed tangible and immediate. Abraham's descendants would inherit the land of Canaan, a land flowing with abundance, where they could live under God's laws and worship Him freely. But as with the Promise of descendants, the gift of land carried a deeper meaning that pointed far beyond the borders of Canaan.

The land of Canaan was a sign of God's faithfulness, a physical reminder that He provides for His people. Under Joshua's leadership, the Israelites took possession of this land, which became their home—a place of rest, security, and identity. Yet even as Abraham stood in that land, he was looking beyond it. Hebrews tells us that he longed for a "better country"—a heavenly one (Hebrews 11:16). Abraham's steps on Canaan's soil were steps toward a promise far more significant than he could have imagined: an eternal homeland with God.

*"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first Earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, 'Look! God's dwelling place is now*

*among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.” Rev. 21:1-3.*

This Promise wasn't merely about geography; it was about relationships. It pointed to the ultimate reality of living in God's presence, free from the pain and separation that mark our lives now. The land symbolized rest, but its ultimate fulfillment would be found in the eternal rest of God's Kingdom. Though rich and abundant, the earthly Canaan was just a shadow of the unimaginable inheritance prepared for those who love Him—a new heaven and Earth where God will dwell with His people forever.

Imagine the richness of Canaan, a land so abundant that its grapes required two men to carry a single cluster. It was described as flowing with milk and honey, a land of unparalleled provision. Yet, this was only a glimpse of what God has in store for us. Jesus spoke of preparing a place for His people in His Father's house, a home designed by the Creator, free from decay, sorrow, and suffering (John 14:2, Revelation 21:1-4). If the physical land of Canaan was extraordinary, how much greater would the eternal home be, where God Himself would wipe every tear from our eyes?

At its heart, the Promise of Land was a promise of belonging—a declaration that God's people are not wanderers but heirs to His eternal Kingdom. It reminds us that we are not destined to remain in a broken,

fleeting world but are called to a future filled with God’s presence, love, and peace. Abraham’s inheritance is our inheritance, too: a home where we will no longer long for rest because we will finally be with the One who is our rest.

As we reflect on this Promise, we see God’s heart revealed again: He is a Father longing to bring His children home. The land is more than a gift; it symbolizes His faithfulness and reflects His desire to be with us forever. Just as Abraham was called to trust in a promise more remarkable than he could see, we, too, are invited to walk in faith, knowing that God is preparing a place for us—our eternal home, where we will dwell with Him in perfect joy.

## **The Blessing Of Family**

*“The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. Scripture does not say ‘and to seeds,’ meaning many people, but ‘and to your seed,’ meaning one person, who is Christ. [...] So in Christ Jesus, you are all children of God through faith, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and 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.”*

This third Promise is the most expansive and, ultimately, the most transformative. God told Abraham that through his offspring, all the nations of the Earth would be blessed (Genesis 22:18). This wasn’t just

about Israel—it was always about the world. Israel was meant to bless the nations, showing what living under God’s rule would be like. But, as history unfolded, Israel failed to live up to this calling fully. This is where Jesus fulfills the Promise. He is Abraham’s true “Seed” (Galatians 3:16), through whom the blessing of salvation is now offered to all nations. Jesus came to bring *reconciliation*, to restore *what was lost*, and to give *life*—and this life is now available to anyone who believes, regardless of their background, culture, or past mistakes. This blessing is not just for Israel; it’s for *you*. Through Christ, you have been grafted into this Promise. You are blessed with eternal life and the ability to become a vessel of blessing to others. Just as Israel was meant to be a light to the nations, you, as part of God’s family, are now called to live as that light—demonstrating what it looks like to live under God’s rule and sharing His blessing with the world.

When God promised to bless all nations through Abraham’s offspring, He revealed His plan to restore everything broken by sin. This blessing wasn’t just material prosperity but the ultimate gift of salvation through Jesus Christ. This Promise invites us to see God’s heart for all humanity—not just a chosen few. Through Jesus, God is reconciling people to Himself and redeeming all creation. What would it be like for the whole world to be a reflection of His glory as it had been in those early days within the Garden? “To be made in God’s image is a profound statement about who we are. It means we were created to reflect His character, glory, and love. When God promised

Abraham, ‘Through your offspring, all nations on earth will be blessed’ (Genesis 22:18), He wasn’t just speaking about physical descendants but a family that would bear His image and carry His blessing to the world. This Promise is fulfilled through Jesus, the perfect reflection of the Father.

There is no more incredible blessing that the world could receive than to encounter the image of God through His people. Scripture calls us to this transformation: *“And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.”* (2 Corinthians 3:18). This transformation is not just about reflecting His glory but about becoming like Him in holiness, love, and truth.

Could it be that the ultimate blessing is not simply in what we receive but in who we become? Scripture shows us that God’s purpose has always been to conform us to His image and to be people who reflect His character and glory to the world. In Christ, we are being made new—living testimonies of the God who created us, redeemed us, and is making all things new.

God’s covenant with Abraham is the foundation for all His promises. When God alone passed between the pieces of the sacrificed animals in Genesis 15, He declared that He would bear the full responsibility of the covenant. Jesus also fulfilled this when He took our sins upon Himself,

making the covenant unbreakable and eternal. Could this covenant be the key to understanding our salvation and God's unwavering commitment to restore His creation? The promises to Abraham are far louder and more significant than they appear at first glance. They're not just about individual blessings—they tell the story of God's eternal plan to reconcile heaven and Earth, to unite His family under one King, and to dwell with His people forever. When we grasp the scope of these promises, we're drawn into awe and anticipation of what God has yet to reveal. Could these ancient promises be an invitation to step into God's eternal story?

This is the story of a Father who never stopped pursuing His children, of a family once torn apart but now brought home. Through Abraham's seed, Jesus, we are restored to bear God's image in all its fullness, to live as He intended, and to walk in the blessing of His eternal presence. The world has been waiting for this moment, and not in the new creation; it is here. Every longing is fulfilled, every Promise kept, and the children of God live forever in the radiant joy of their throne says, 'Behold, I am making everything new!'



## For Personal & Group Study

*Use the questions below to deepen your understanding and spark meaningful discussions.*

1. According to the passage, how has God's Promise to Abraham about creating a great nation been fulfilled in a spiritual family rather than a physical one?
2. How does Revelation 7:9-10 describe the people who are part of God's family, and what does this tell us about the diversity and unity of believers?
3. What do the rivers of the Water of Life and the Tree of Life in Rev. 22 represent, and how do they show the restoration of God's plan for humanity?
4. Why is Jesus central to fulfilling God's promises to Abraham, and how does He make it possible for us to be part of this new nation?
5. How does the vision of a new heaven and new earth in Rev. 21-22, inspire hope and encourage believers to trust God's promises.
6. How did the Babylonian exile influence the development of synagogues, Pharisees, and scribes within the Jewish community?

# CHAPTER 7

## Sixty–Six Books of the Bible: The Old and the New

The Bible is a collection of writings from over two dozen authors spanning thousands of years. Of the 66 books found within its pages, the Bible is divided into two parts: the Old Testament, which comprises 39 books, and the New Testament, which contains 27 books. The Old Testament starts in order, at least for the first five books, but then it veers off and fails to follow the historical timeline. Instead of being organized chronologically, it was organized by literary genre. In other words, it was grouped as follows: Law, History, Poetry, Major Prophets, and Minor Prophets.

### 39 BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

**5 Books of Law:** Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. *(In these foundational books, we witness a Father who, from the beginning, lovingly establishes the world and makes a covenant to draw His children close. Despite humanity’s fall, He reveals a plan for redemption, committed to bringing His family back to His heart.)*

**12 Books of History:** Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, 1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther. *(This section chronicles Israel's journey through faithfulness and rebellion, revealing a Father's persistence as He guides, forgives, and pursues His children. Through every trial, His love and longing for their return are evident, highlighting His desire to see them restored.)*

**5 Books of Poetry:** Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon. *(The Books of Poetry give voice to the human heart in its joys, struggles, anger with God, and deepest desires for God. They capture the soul's cries for help, gratitude, and the Father's longing to be close to His children, affirming His desire for a deep, intimate relationship.)*

**5 Books of Major Prophets:** Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel. *(Through the Major Prophets, God's heart is laid bare as He calls His people back to Him. Even in His warnings, there is a relentless pursuit of His children, foretelling the Promise of restoration and His ultimate hope to reunite them with Him.)*

**12 Books of Minor Prophets:** Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nathum, Habakkk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi. *(In these concise but powerful books, God's love is evident in His call for repentance and justice. They emphasize His enduring patience and deep desire to see His children return, underscoring a Father's open arms waiting to welcome His family home.)*

## 27 BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

Although the New Testament does not strictly follow a timeline, it does follow a purposeful sequence. The first five books—Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and Acts—cover the historical events of Jesus’ life and the early Church. After these, the remaining books are organized by their literary purpose, much like the Old Testament. The letters of Paul and other apostles serve as instruction and encouragement for the Church, akin to the wisdom and prophetic writings of the Old Testament. Finally, the New Testament closes with Revelation, a prophetic book that mirrors the Old Testament’s focus on prophecy and future hope

**4 Books of the Gospels:** Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John (*The Gospels or ‘The Good News’ present the culmination of God’s plan through Jesus Christ. They depict the ultimate act of love and sacrifice—Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection—as the means to reconcile humanity to the Father.*)

**1 - Acts of the Apostles:** (*Acts chronicles the early Church’s growth, showcasing the fulfillment of Jesus’ commission to spread the good news of reconciliation and love, demonstrating God’s desire for all to come home.*)

**5 letters, Paul's Early Letters:** Galatians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Corinthians and Romans. *(These letters address the challenges of early believers, emphasizing God's ongoing guidance and the transformative power of His love in the life of His children.)*

**4 Prison Letters from Paul:** Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon. *(Written during Paul's time in prison, these letters reflect his deep understanding of God's love and the hope of restoration, encouraging believers to remain steadfast in their faith).*

**3 Pastoral Letters:** 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus. *(These letters guide church leaders, emphasizing sound doctrine and moral integrity, crucial for healthy church life and governance.)*

**8 General Letters:** 1 & 2 Peter, 1 & 2 & 3 John, Hebrews, Jude, & James *(These writings offer encouragement and warnings, illustrating the communal aspect of God's love and the call for believers to support one another in their journey home).*

**1 Revelation:** *This letter is difficult for most to follow. It reminded me of Abraham's attempt to explain God as He walked through the pieces of the cut-up animal. His finite mind could only describe what he saw as a smudge pot or a smoking pot and torch. How difficult it is to explain the unexplainable.*

