

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

JROC – Thinking Through the Bible...to Revelation
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We all know that the plot of the entire Bible is summarized in 4 words:

CREATION FALL REDEMPTION RESTORATION

The key to God's plan is in Genesis. We see the creation of the heavens and the earth, the fall of mankind, redemption of man and the world, and restoration – in the book of Genesis. I'm suggesting that we see all four (creation, fall, redemption, & restoration) in the first three chapters of Genesis:

Creation – Gen. 1 & 2 – God created the heavens and the earth out of nothing. God gave man dominion over the earth – to tend and nurture and keep the earth. And, man enjoyed fellowship with God

Fall – Gen. 3 – rebellion against God; believing Satan and not God (Satan: "if you eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil – you won't die." God had said – "You shall surely die!") AND, in the fall the earth was cursed.

Redemption – Gen. 3:21 (skins of animals); Gen. 3:15 – first Messianic prophecy – *And I will put enmity between you (Satan) and the woman, (the virgin) and between your seed (non-believers, followers of Satan) and her Seed (the Messiah – Gal. 3:16); He (the Messiah) shall bruise your head (Heb. 2:14), and you shall bruise His heel (at His crucifixion).*

From Gen. 3:15 God's plan of redemption unfolds through to Revelation!

What about RESTORATION? Because the underlying principle of the Bible is God's character...what do we know about God already in the beginning of Genesis? Through creation we see that God is sovereign – the almighty ruler of the universe. God created for relationship – eternally. That was God's plan! After the fall, man was separated from God and the earth was cursed. Is God's plan now Plan B? Does God come up with something different? NO!!! God's plan will NEVER be thwarted. For God's plan to be implemented...for man to have dominion and live in a perfect world...there needs to be RESTORATION! For the sake of God's credibility there MUST be RESTORATION! From reading Genesis 1 through 3 and knowing Who God is, we KNOW after the fall that God will REDEEM and RESTORE!

RESTORATION is God's perfect will which will NEVER be thwarted! God's plan for man and for the world is restoration

And so from Gen. 3:15 through to Revelation we see the unfolding of God's plan of redemption – to redeem and to restore! The Millennial Kingdom will be a RESTORED earth! AND, the world will be RE-CREATED.

Rev. 21:1 - Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea.

Rev. 21:3-4 - Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their

God. ⁴And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.

Therefore, since we read of the entire plot of the Bible in the beginning of Scripture, great doctrinal truths are developed in the OT. It is the OT that gives us our basic understanding of God's majesty, His power, His holiness and sovereignty, His justice and mercy. It is the OT that tells us of God's plan to give man dominion (to nurture, keep, and serve the earth) (Gen. 1:26-28). And, it is the OT that promises His Kingdom on earth. What does that Kingdom look like?

There is the UNIVERSAL KINGDOM of God – God as sovereign ruler of the universe. There is the SPIRITUAL KINGDOM of God – when one is born again by the Spirit of God (Rev. 13:8; Gen. 3:21). The Spiritual Kingdom is ALWAYS based on Jesus shed blood!

What about the Kingdom in Revelation? Remember Revelation refers to approx. 550 accounts from the OT.

It is the OT that tells us of God's desire to dwell with His people. We read this in Ex. 25:8 – and in this context He was speaking to Israel – Ex. 25:2, 8 - Speak to the children of Israel, that they bring Me an offering. ⁸*And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them.* God is speaking of the sanctuary in the wilderness – the tabernacle – which then would take shape/transition to the Temple in Jerusalem. In this passage in Exodus 25, God speaks of the ark of the covenant in the tabernacle. The ark represented God's presence. In I Sam. 4:4 we read that God dwelled above the mercy seat on the ark of the covenant between the cherubim.

We also know that the Temple in Jerusalem wasn't only for Israel! Isa. 56:7 states that the Temple was to be known as "...a house of prayer for all nations." God's desire was to dwell with man. Would that plan be thwarted or nixed? NO!

Wasn't Jesus' first coming a fulfillment of Ex. 25:8 re: God's desire to dwell with His people? What did John write about Jesus at His first coming?

John 1:1 - In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 1:14 – And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Consider: when Jesus came at His first coming, He offered Himself as the Messiah to Israel – He offered them the Kingdom of God!

Matt. 3:1-2 - In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, ²*and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!"* What does that mean? The kingdom of heaven is at hand because the King is here! Jesus is Messiah the King – AND Jesus is also Messiah the Suffering Servant.

Matt. 4:23 - And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people. Jesus was preaching in their synagogues!? Who were the ones expecting the Kingdom of God?

And, of course Jesus was preaching in their synagogues. There were no churches as yet.

Matt. 15:24 – Jesus told them that He had come for the lost sheep of the house of Israel! MULL over that. BUT – always know that SALVATION was always provided for and offered to “all the families of the earth” (Gen. 12:3/Abrahamic Covenant) which included both Jews and Gentiles!

WHY did Jesus preach the “gospel of the kingdom” and WHY hasn’t it yet come as yet? What do we read in the OT of the Kingdom of God?

Daniel 2 – Gentile kingdoms: Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, antichrist’s kingdom...and then the stone

Daniel 2:34, 35b – *a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain (a kingdom) and filled the whole earth.*

Daniel 2:44 - *the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.*

In Revelation 12:15 – the heavens are rejoicing because the kingdom of this world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ. It hasn’t as yet happened – but it will!

In Isa. 2:2-4 - *Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the LORD’s house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow to it.* ³ Many people shall come and say, ‘Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths.’ ⁴ For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. ⁴ He shall judge between the nations, and rebuke many people; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore. This will be in the Kingdom of God!

Isaiah told the Jews this 700-800 years before Jesus’ incarnation – to his being born in the flesh – Immanuel – God with us! AND, Isaiah told the Jews that when the Messiah comes, He will perform miracles Isa. 35:5-6 - *Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.* ⁶ *Then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the dumb sing.* When Jesus performed these miracles at His first coming, what was He doing? He was proclaiming, “Here I am – your Messiah!”

Matt. 10:5-8 - *These twelve Jesus sent out and commanded them, saying: “Do not go into the way of the Gentiles (!!!??!!), and do not enter a city of the Samaritans.* ⁶ *But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.* ⁷ *And as you go, preach, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’* ⁸ *Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead (not in original manuscript), cast out demons.* The disciples were to proclaim the Kingdom of God and perform miracles that would authenticate that the King was near.

WHY? Why were the disciples to go only to the house of Israel?