

I WILL BE WHOM I WILL BE

The plan and purpose of God was revealed in many ways. We are told: "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." (Hebrews 1:1 NIV)

The Burning Bush

One of the most unusual ways in which God presented His plan to the prophets was when He appeared unto Moses, through His angel, at Mount Sinai in a burning bush.

We are told about this incident in Exodus 3. This special event revealed significant features about God's plan and purpose for this earth.

The Bush did not burn up!

The reason that Moses was attracted to this bush was that he noticed it kept burning but that it was never consumed by the fire.

When Moses approached the bush he was commanded to take off his shoes for this was Holy ground. God asked him to

return to Egypt and bring His people Israel out of bondage, to worship God here at Mount Sinai.

Moses was a meek man, and reluctant to be a leader of the people. He asked God for His name as an identification to the Israelites. He was told:

"I AM THAT I AM: (or I will be whom I will be) and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The LORD God of your



fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: **this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations.**" (Exodus 3: 14-15)

I WILL BE MANIFESTED

What did this all mean? God wanted Israel to bear His name and to be His special people. If Israel was obedient they would have the opportunity to live forever. God would dwell in them through His Spirit, and they would never be consumed.

Visual Aid

The burning bush was a very dramatic visual aid to teach Moses about God's purpose:

BUSH - A family tree representing the people of God through all generations (see John 15: 1-8)

FIRE -Represents God, who is called a "consuming fire" (Hebrews 12:29)

NOT CONSUMED - God's purpose is to be manifested in His people. He will dwell with them on the earth and they will be His people. (see Rev 21: 3-4) If we wish to be a part of this hope, we must learn now to glorify God and to manifest Him in the earth.

Things Concerning

The Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ

GOD'S PLAN AND PURPOSE

The Bible is not just a book of stories. It is more than a history of God's people Israel. It reveals things that have greater significance than a series of commandments for us to follow.

The Word of God outlines a plan. Not just any plan, but a plan designed and revealed by the Creator of heaven and earth. The Bible teaches us about God's wonderful plan and purpose for this earth and for the human beings that populate it.

Created to be Inhabited

The earth was created to be filled with people. We read about this from Isaiah 45:18

"For thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, **he formed it to be inhabited:** I am the LORD; and there is none else."

This was one of God's purposes for the earth, and it was for this reason that He created man and woman, and commanded them to be fruitful and multiply in the earth. It was God's desire that man would remain obedient and that he would live and worship in respect for His ways, praising Him in the earth.

God will be Glorified

The purpose for man on the earth is further explained with another verse, this one taken from the Book of Numbers, Chapter 14, verse 21.

" But as truly as I live, **all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD.**"

Inhabited and Filled with Glory

When we combine the teachings found in the two verses that we have considered, there is an obvious conclusion: If the earth is to be inhabited with people, and filled with God's glory, then the inhabitants must learn to glorify God.

This is our mission. This is the reason that we have been given a temporary life on this earth.

God has blessed us with so many things. All things come from His hand. It is our reasonable service to dedicate our lives to Him, and to glorify His name in the earth. In response to the Master's request we must be converted and become as little children.

The potential rewards are great. We have been given an opportunity to have eternal life. To live forever in His Kingdom which will soon fill this earth with Glory to God in the Highest and on earth, peace and good will among men.



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Hope and Comfort from the Scriptures

“Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.” (Romans 15:4)

The Golden Thread

Some say that the Bible contains a golden thread, and that this thread weaves its way throughout the pages of scripture, from Genesis to Revelation, revealing a consistent message from God concerning His intentions for this earth.

The golden thread idea is only a humble attempt to describe the truth of God’s revealed plan for the salvation of man.

We find that we can start at the very beginning, and identify certain promises that God has made to the “fathers”. These promises gradually add detail to the process of atonement.

The Promises of God

It is through these promises of God that have been revealed in the Holy Scriptures, that we are able to find the comfort to endure this present evil world, and hope for a better future, when God’s Kingdom will fill this earth with peace and righteousness.

Sure Promises

God’s promises are sure. They are as good as gold. We are told by the prophet Isaiah: “For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.” (Isa 55:10-11)



THE PROMISES

The Promises of God for a plan of redemption begin with the words included in the sentence on the serpent, who was told: “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.” (Gen 3:15 NIV)

This was a long range promise that was fulfilled 4000 years later. Through his sacrifice, Jesus (the offspring of the woman) destroyed in himself (the offspring of the serpent), sin and death.

“Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death” (Hebrews 2:14 NIV)

More Promises

Many promises were added as time progressed. Some of the significant promises were:

- To Abraham** Gen 12:1-3, Gen 13:14-15, Gen 22:17-18
- To Isaac** Gen 26:3-4
- To Jacob** Gen 28:13-14
- To David** 2 Sam 7: 12-16

These promises involved future territory, a throne and blessings for all nations of the earth.

Promises to Us

Our comfort and hope is found in the fact that provision has been made in God’s plan for us to be included as heirs to these promises through belief and baptism into Christ. (See Galatians 3:27-29)

The scriptures have been written for our learning so that we might have hope. Read these precious words of hope for yourself.

“IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD”

There is no better way to describe the fact that God has a plan and a purpose for this earth than to consider the following words from the Gospel of John:

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. And the Word was made 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.” (John 1:1-2, 14)

The Word

“WORD” in the verses above is from the Greek “LOGOS” which means “motive” or “reason”. God had a motive (plan) with reason (or purpose) from the beginning of the creation.

This plan was so much a part of His being that “the Word was God” This may seem a difficult thing to understand. A consideration of the discourse on WISDOM presented in the 8th chapter of Proverbs may help. (Note: Wisdom comes from a Hebrew word meaning “good sense or logical” It is closely related to the Greek “logos” which is translated “word”).

“I wisdom, dwell together with prudence; I possess knowledge and discretion.The LORD brought me forth as the first of his works, before his deeds of old; I was appointed from eternity, from the beginning, before the world began. When there were no oceans, I was given birth, when there were no springs abounding with water;when he gave the sea its boundary so the waters would not overstep his command, and when he marked out the foundations of the earth. Then I was the craftsman at his side. I was filled with delight day after day, rejoicing always in his presence”

(From Prov. 8: 12, 22-24, 29-30 NIV)

God’s Plan from the Beginning

These poetic expressions of the Wisdom of the Creator help us to understand that there was an intelligent plan from the beginning. Every thing that was created was with purpose.

First came the thought, and then the word, for God commanded the angels and they carried out His plan.

Much of the plan was only the spoken word for a time. God spoke unto holy men of old, (through His spirit) and they recorded his promises as the written word (The Bible).

Word Made Flesh

When these promises came to pass they were the word made flesh The life and sacrifice of Jesus is the classic example. In the above quotations, John referred to Jesus when he said: “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.”

Plan of Redemption

After Adam and Eve had sinned and brought condemnation into the world, God in His wisdom conceived and instituted a plan of restoration so that man could be reconciled to the Creator.

This plan included the promise of a future descendant of Eve, who would crush the head of the serpent, destroying sin and death. (see Gen 3:15)

The Old Testament scriptures are filled with “the word”, including prophetic details of this plan of redemption that would be fulfilled by the coming “Messiah” or Christ.

Peter tells how the plan was presented: “Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. “