



SECOND CORINTHIANS

The Comfort of God FOR and THROUGH His People



Part I2— Excursus B: “A Synthetic Overview of the Bible (I of 2)” — 14 January 2023

Introduction: The Promises of God

2 Cor. 1:20-22—²⁰For all the promises of God find their Yes in him. That is why it is through him that we utter our Amen to God for his glory. ²¹And it is God who establishes us with you in Christ, and has anointed us, ²²and who has also put his seal on us and GIVEN US HIS SPIRIT IN OUR HEARTS as a guarantee.

⇒ Paul uses the term “promise” in Eph. 2:12a in reference to the unconditional covenants of God. Paul’s allusion to/partial quotation of Ezek. 36:26-27 in these verses demonstrates he sees a particular aspect of an OT covenant of promise (the giving of the Spirit) as being experienced by believers in the present.

What are the covenant promises of God and what is our relationship to them?

Main Point: The covenants that God has made with man form a _____ for how He is accomplishing His will for the world and it is through _____ that these promises have been or will be fulfilled.

The Tapestry of the Biblical Storyline

“[The Bible] is not just a single narrative, like a river with only one channel. It is rather a complex mixture of all kinds of smaller narratives, many of them rather self-contained, with all kinds of other material embedded within them—more like a great delta. But there is clearly a direction, a flow that can be described...”

—Christopher J.H. Wright, *The Mission of God*

The Prologue: Creation, Fall, & the Promises of God

- The creation account demonstrates that the world has an _____.
Gen. 1:1—¹In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.
- The creation account demonstrates that God created with a _____ in mind and that the creation of _____ is central to accomplishing that goal.
Gen. 1:26—²⁶Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”
Man was made to _____ and to _____ God in the world that He had made as they _____ together.
- The account of the fall demonstrates that man chose _____ from rather than _____ to God.
Gen. 3:6b-7—she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. ⁷Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.
- The account of the fall demonstrates God’s intention to _____ mankind from their enemies (*Satan, Sin, Death*).
Gen. 3:15—I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.”

God purposed to save mankind through the _____ of a particular man.

“...God is telling the Tempter that the means by which he sought to destroy God’s plan would be the means by which he, the serpent, would come to grief. The instrument of Satan’s defeat would be human!”—Paul Henebury *The Words of the Covenant Vol. I*

Key Point: From this point forward in the unfolding of the biblical storyline, the success of God’s creation project necessitates the _____ of His image-bearers and the _____ of His creation.

The Covenants of Scripture: God’s Promises Formalized

What is a covenant? “A covenant is a bond in blood sovereignly administered.” —O. Palmer Robertson

“Covenants are formal partnership agreements with chosen and specified partners.” —Elliot Johnson

“A biblical covenant between God and man is a solemnly sealed and explicit declaration of intent and obligation, about a matter of great importance. It binds one or both parties to fulfill the words of the covenant oath. The parties of the covenant cannot be changed out. *The function of a covenant is to amplify or reinforce the plain terms of the oath between the parties in order to clarify their relationship and clear away ambiguity or misinterpretation*, thereby insuring a unified understanding of the terms.” —Paul Henebury

The Noahic Covenant

Background: As humanity multiplied on the earth after being expelled from the garden and began to cover the earth, they became more and more wicked. Their knowledge of good and evil did not restrain their evil and rebellion but accentuated it.

Gen. 6:5—The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention...of his heart was only evil continually.

⇒ God purposed to bring judgment on all of the creatures of the earth (Gen. 6:7) but also to work deliverance both for and through Noah and to make a covenant with him (Gen. 6:11-18).

The Parties of the Covenant: _____ *and* _____ *of the earth.*

Gen. 9:8-10—⁸ Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, ⁹ “Behold, I establish my covenant with you and your offspring after you, ¹⁰ and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the livestock, and every beast of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark; it is for every beast of the earth.

The Covenant Oath

Gen. 9:11—I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.”

The Sign of the Covenant: *The* _____

Gen. 9:12-13—¹² And God said, “This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: ¹³ I have set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth.

Key Point: The Noahic Covenant is a unilateral and unconditional covenant that is the _____ of God’s covenant program because it assures the conditions on earth that will allow for His plans and purposes to be accomplished.

The Abrahamic Covenant

Background: Following mankind’s failure to disperse after multiplying on the earth after the flood, God brought judgment upon them and scattered them. As they formed nations across the earth, the Lord purposed to form for Himself one particular nation through whom He would bring His salvation to all others.

Gen. 12:1-3—¹ Now the Lord said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. ² And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

The General Promises of God to Abram:

I. A Great _____ 2. A Great _____ 3. All Nations _____

⇒ Abraham left his homeland and forfeited his inheritance from his family in order to obey the Word of the Lord. In the years that followed, he faced famine (Gen. 12:10) and armed conflict (Gen. 14:13-16) as he waited for almost 10 years for the Lord to keep His promise to him regarding an heir.

The Parties of the Covenant & the Covenant Oath: _____ *and* _____ *along with all of his* _____

Gen. 15:18a—¹⁸ On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, “To your offspring I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates, ¹⁹ the land of the Kenites, the Kenizzites, the Kadmonites, ²⁰ the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, ²¹ the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites and the Jebusites.”

Necessities for a Great Nation: I. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

The Sign of the Covenant: _____

Gen. 17:10—This is my covenant, which you shall keep, between me and you and your offspring after you: Every male among you shall be circumcised.

The Covenant & the Promised Savior

Gen. 22:17-18a—¹⁷ I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, ¹⁸ and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed...

Key Point: The Abrahamic Covenant is a unilateral and unconditional covenant by which God promised to establish the nation through whom He would _____ Himself to all nations and accomplish _____ for them.

Concluding Thoughts

- As we begin to understand the promises of God in Scripture, we should see that human history has a _____.
- As we begin to understand that God binds Himself to His people by His promises, we are reminded of the importance of responding to Him in simple _____.



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⇒ Paul uses the term “promise” in Eph. 2:12a in reference to the unconditional covenants of God. Paul’s allusion to/partial quotation of Ezek. 36:26-27 in these verses demonstrates he sees a particular aspect of an OT covenant of promise (the giving of the Spirit) as being experienced by believers in the present.

What are the covenant promises of God and what is our relationship to them?

Main Point: The covenants that God has made with man form a framework for how He is accomplishing His will for the world and it is through Messiah that these promises have been or will be fulfilled.

The Tapestry of the Biblical Storyline

“[The Bible] is not just a single narrative, like a river with only one channel. It is rather a complex mixture of all kinds of smaller narratives, many of them rather self-contained, with all kinds of other material embedded within them—more like a great delta. But there is clearly a direction, a flow that can be described...”

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The Prologue: *Creation, Fall, & the Promises of God*

- The creation account demonstrates that the world has an owner.
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Man was made to know and to worship God in the world that He had made as they dwelt together.

- The account of the fall demonstrates that man chose autonomy from rather than obedience to God.
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- The account of the fall demonstrates God’s intention to deliver mankind from their enemies (*Satan, Sin, Death*).
Gen. 3:15—I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.”

God purposed to save mankind through the birth of a particular man.

“...God is telling the Tempter that the means by which he sought to destroy God’s plan would be the means by which he, the serpent, would come to grief. The instrument of Satan’s defeat would be human!” —Paul Henebury *The Words of the Covenant Vol. I*

Key Point: From this point forward in the unfolding of the biblical storyline, the success of God’s creation project necessitates the redemption of His image-bearers and the restoration of His creation.

The Covenants of Scripture: *God’s Promises Formalized*

What is a covenant? “A covenant is a bond in blood sovereignly administered.” —O. Palmer Robertson

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⇒ God purposed to bring judgment on all of the creatures of the earth (Gen. 6:7) but also to work deliverance both for and through Noah and to make a covenant with him (Gen. 6:11-18).

The Parties of the Covenant: *God and All Creatures of the earth.*

Gen. 9:8-10—⁸ Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, ⁹ “Behold, I establish my covenant with you and your offspring after you, ¹⁰ and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the livestock, and every beast of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark; it is for every beast of the earth.

The Covenant Oath

Gen. 9:11—I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.”

The Sign of the Covenant: *The Rainbow*

Gen. 9:12-13—¹² And God said, “This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: ¹³ I have set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth.

Key Point: The Noahic Covenant is a unilateral and unconditional covenant that is the foundation of God’s covenant program because it assures the conditions on earth that will allow for His plans and purposes to be accomplished.

The Abrahamic Covenant

Background: Following mankind’s failure to disperse after multiplying on the earth after the flood, God brought judgment upon them and scattered them. As they formed nations across the earth, the Lord purposed to form for Himself one particular nation through whom He would bring His salvation to all others.

Gen. 12:1-3—¹ Now the Lord said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. ² And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

The General Promises of God to Abram:

- I. A Great Name 2. A Great Nation 3. All Nations Blessed

⇒ Abraham left his homeland and forfeited his inheritance from his family in order to obey the Word of the Lord. In the years that followed, he faced famine (Gen. 12:10) and armed conflict (Gen. 14:13-16) as he waited for almost 10 years for the Lord to keep His promise to him regarding an heir.

The Parties of the Covenant & the Covenant Oath: *God and Abraham along with all of his Offspring*

Gen. 15:18a—¹⁸ On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, “To your offspring I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates, ¹⁹ the land of the Kenites, the Kenizzites, the Kadmonites, ²⁰ the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, ²¹ the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites and the Jebusites.”

Necessities for a Great Nation: 1. People 2. Land 3. King

The Sign of the Covenant: Circumcision

Gen. 17:10—This is my covenant, which you shall keep, between me and you and your offspring after you: Every male among you shall be circumcised.

The Covenant & the Promised Savior

Gen. 22:17-18a—¹⁷ I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, ¹⁸ and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed...

Key Point: The Abrahamic Covenant is a unilateral and unconditional covenant by which God promised to establish the nation through whom He would reveal Himself to all nations and accomplish salvation for them.

Concluding Thoughts

- As we begin to understand the promises of God in Scripture, we should see that human history has a trajectory.

- As we begin to understand that God binds Himself to His people by His promises, we are reminded of the importance of responding to Him in simple faith.