



GOD IS IN THE DETAILS
CREATION REVELATION

THY WORD IS TRUE FROM THE BEGINNING; AND EVERY ONE OF THY RIGHTEOUS
JUDGMENTS ENDURETH FOR EVER. - PSALM 119:160

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Opening Prayer



Understanding Prophecy
Lesson 03-01
God's Master Plan –
Purpose and
Dispensations
Part 1 [118]



God's Purpose



God's Purpose

Carl Sagan has said in his *Cosmos* television special:

“The Cosmos is all there is.”

The impression given in this statement is that there is **no purpose to life** – we are simply **a cosmic accident** – therefore, **there is no God.**



God's Purpose

In our understanding of prophecy, it is important that we have an understanding of **God's plan for His creation.**

God had a purpose in creating the world, the universe, and everything in it.

God created man for **His Glory**.

Man and the rest of God's creation can **glorify God and bring Him Joy.** [45]

It is therefore **man's purpose in life to glorify God, to take delight in God, and worship Him.** [45]



God's Purpose

As man moves through life, all other selfish purposes of man are nothing compared to the implications of **his relationship to God**.

Whatever choices man makes must be made with the understanding of **man's ultimate purpose of glorifying God**.

ISA 43:7 **Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him.**

God's Purpose

It is significant that **Jesus summed up His life** with these words:

JOH 17:4 I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.

Jesus continues with a description of **how He glorified God** that should serve as **a model for our life purpose**:

JOH 17:6 I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. **(Continued)**

God's Purpose

7 Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee.

8 For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.

9 I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.

From this we can glean that **our entire purpose** in life is to **glorify God by keeping His Word, telling others about Him, and praying for them.**



**We Are
Significant To
God**

We Are Significant To God

We are meaningful to God and He rejoices over us. [45]

Isaiah and Zephaniah speaks of this:

ISA 62:3 Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.

4 Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzibah [delight], and thy land Beulah [married]: for the LORD delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married.

(Continued)

We Are Significant To God

5 For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee: and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.

ZEP 3:17 The LORD thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing.

We Are Significant To God

In Genesis chapter 1, God created man **in His image**.

This means that man was created to be **like God** and to **represent God**.

Man would be **like God**, but **not identical**.

The idea was that man would simply be **like God** and would **represent Him**.

The implication is that in this likeness man had **“intellectual ability, moral purity, spiritual nature, dominion over the earth, creativity, ability to make ethical choices, and immortality.”** [45]

We Are Significant To God [45]

Therefore, In Genesis chapter 2, God gave man **a choice** to exercise his **free will** to **choose obedience to God.**

In Genesis chapter 3, **man chose to disobey God** and therefore **the image of God, although not lost, became distorted.**

It is within God's plan to restore the distorted image.

We Are Significant To God [45]

Our redemption in Christ is “a progressive recovering of more of God’s image.”

It is only at **Christ’s return** where the Bible speaks of the “**complete restoration of God’s image.**”

1 CO 15:49 And as we have borne the image of the [One] made of dust, we shall bear also the image of the heavenly [One]. *Darby Bible*

(See also Romans 8:29)

We Are Significant To God

1JO 3:2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

Because we are **significant** in God's eyes
He made a plan to rescue us.



God's Objectives

God's Objectives

God has certain **objectives** in His plan for the world and mankind.

The **major objectives** of God's plan involve redemption of fallen man through the sacrifice of Christ. [133]

Bible prophecy is closely related to God's plan for Man's salvation.

It is through various dispensations, covenants, and prophecies that God slowly reveals His plan to mankind. [133]

God's Objectives

“Predestination” refers to God's purpose in providing us grace and redemption.

God does not exist in a time dimension.

He exists **outside of time**.

Because of this **He knows the end from the beginning**.

He knows who will be saved and who will not.

[133]

God knew that man would fall, and He had a plan for man's salvation **before the creation of the world**.

But sadly, He also knew that many, of their own free will, will reject God's salvation.

God's Objectives

Paul speaks of God's **foreknowledge (omniscience)** in Romans 8:

ROM 8:29 For whom he did **foreknow**, he also did **predestinate** to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

30 Moreover whom he did **predestinate**, them he also **called**: and whom he called, them he also **justified**: and whom he justified, them he also **glorified**.

God's Objectives

Predestination does not mean that God determined in advance who would be saved and who wouldn't, but it simply means that He knows in advance who would accept His grace and receive His free gift of salvation.

Even though God predestined man for salvation, many will not heed His call.

He simply gave mankind the ability to make choices. [133]

God's Objectives

God knew that man would fall, and that He provided beforehand for man's redemption:

1 PE 1:19 ...with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

20 Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world....

God's Objectives

In 2 Timothy 1:9, Paul tells Timothy that God

“...has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began,” 2 TI 1:9

God's Objectives

In **creation** God revealed His **omnipotence, omniscience, and sovereignty.**

But only in **redemption** could God reveal His **love,** His **righteousness,** and His **grace.**

It is because of this that the story of human history is of **God revealing who He is.** [133]

God's Objectives

God's purpose is to **save mankind**, but He will not force us.

When the **angels** sinned and fell, God immediately displayed His righteousness by **judging them** and kicking them out of heaven.

But **man is different**.

God provides a way for the salvation of man by God, Himself, taking on human flesh, and **providing the required sacrifice for redemption**.

In that, God demonstrates not only His righteousness, but also **His love**. [133, 66 >Eph²⁵3:2]



Dispensations

Dispensations

There are seven dispensations in God's dealing with man.

Dispensations are administrations within a period of time representing the **different ways God governed** in the lives of men.

These dispensations were **periods of testing**.

God had certain **expectations** – **when man failed** those expectations (man's responsibility), **the dispensation ended**. [7; 105;

Dispensations

According to Lewis Sperry Chafer:

“Dispensationalism is derived from normal, or literal interpretation of the Bible. It is impossible to interpret the Bible in its normal, literal sense without realizing that there are different ages and different dispensations.” [21]

All of the dispensations represent **covenants** between God and man.

These dispensations represent **God’s progressive revelation of His divine purpose of salvation to mankind.** [133]

Dispensations

The **primary covenants** for God's purpose of saving mankind are the covenant of **grace** and the covenant of **redemption**.

These two covenants are the **same act**, so are represented as the **dispensation of grace**.

All the other dispensations represent a **gradual unfolding of God's plan** leading to the New Testament (new covenant of grace) and beyond.

Most of the dispensations deal with **God's moral and ethical requirements** of mankind.

Dispensations

In the Old Testament, God gave the Mosaic Law to direct the lives of Israel.

In doing so he used the Old Covenant represented by the Old Testament to introduce the New Covenant represented by the New Testament.

He introduced this New Covenant by prophecy in the Old Testament. [133]

Dispensations

Covenants are **eternal agreements** made by God with humanity, revealing **what God will do** for people individually or collectively.

God made covenants with mankind at different times in history that specifically relate to **what He would do and expect** in a particular **dispensation**.

Man has **free will** in rejecting or accepting the covenant, but **violation** of the covenant will result in a **judgment** that brings the **dispensation to an end**. [66 >Eph 3:2]

Dispensations [7; 105]

The seven dispensations are:

1. Innocence (The Edenic Covenant) – from Adam to the Fall (man communicated directly with God);
2. Conscience, or self-determination (The Adamic Covenant) – from the Fall to the Flood (God ruled through man's conscience);
3. Civil [Human] government (The Noahic Covenant) – from the Flood to the Tower (God gave man authority over the lives of men);
4. Promise (Patriarchal rule) – from the Tower to Egyptian captivity;

Dispensations [7; 105]

5. Mosaic Law (Rule by Old Testament Law) – from the Egyptian captivity to Jesus Christ;
6. Grace (Salvation for all based on Christ's works) – from Jesus to the Second Coming;
7. Millennium (Direct rule by Jesus Christ) – Second Coming to end of the Millennium.

Through these various dispensations, God would slowly **reveal Himself**, prove the **need of salvation** through the **continual failures** of man, and lead mankind toward their **salvation** by **redemption** through the Savior Jesus Christ.



Innocence (The Edenic Covenant)

Innocence (The Edenic Covenant)

Innocence, the first dispensation, was governed by the Edenic Covenant: (Gen 1:28-29; Gen 2:15-17) [66

>Gen 1:28]

GEN 1:28 And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

29 And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat.

Innocence (The Edenic Covenant)

GEN 2:15 And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.

16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:

17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

Innocence (The Edenic Covenant)

Man was expected to honor **six obligations**. [66
>Gen 1:28]

1. To replenish the earth with children (Gen 1:28).
2. Use nature for physical needs – food and shelter (Gen 1:28).
3. Have dominion over animal life (Gen 1:28).
4. Eat fruit and vegetables (Gen 1:29).
5. Labor for sustenance (Gen 2:15).
6. Obey God – abstain from forbidden fruit (Gen 2:16, 17).

Innocence (The Edenic Covenant)

The only requirement that had **moral significance** was the requirement **not to eat** of the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

This requirement represented **a choice** – to obey or not to obey. [133]

Adam's **failure**, as seen in Genesis chapter 3, “resulted in his **expulsion** from the garden and in the **fall of the human race** from a state of innocence into a **condition characterized by sin.**” [66 >Gen 1:28]



Conscience (The Adamic Covenant)

Conscience (The Adamic Covenant)

Conscience, or self-determination, the **second dispensation**, was governed by the Adamic Covenant (Gen 3:14-19). [66 >Gen 3:15]

This covenant was based on Adam's firsthand knowledge of the benefits of good and consequences of evil. [66 >Gen 3:15]

GEN 3:14 And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life:

(Continued)

Conscience (The Adamic Covenant)

15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

16 Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.

(Continued)

Conscience (The Adamic Covenant)

17 And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: **cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life;**

18 **Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;**

19 **In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.**

Conscience (The Adamic Covenant)

Man was now able, through conscience and experience to distinguish good and evil.

Man was required to live by his conscience, avoiding evil. [66 >Gen 3:15]

Conscience (The Adamic Covenant)

Under this covenant: [66 >Gen 3:15]

1. The serpent was cursed (Gen 3:14).
2. God promised redemption through the seed of the woman (Gen 3:15).
3. The woman experienced multiplied sorrow and pain in childbearing (Gen 3:16).
4. The earth was cursed (Gen 3:17, 18).
5. Sorrow, pain, burdensome labor, and physical death became part of life experience (Gen 3:19).

Conscience (The Adamic Covenant)

The conscience cannot produce moral perfection over a sinful nature.

Only through Christ can man have victory over sin. [133]

John chapter 8 provides insight into the working of man's conscience when Jesus confronted Jews ready to stone a woman for adultery:

JOH 8:7 ...[Jesus] said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. (Continued)

Conscience (The Adamic Covenant)

8 And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground.

9 And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last....

Next, Paul speaks of men's conscience in the end-times when he describes men:

1 TI 4:2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;

Conscience (The Adamic Covenant)

Paul also describes the struggle of man's conscience:

ROM 7:21 I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.

22 For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:

23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

(Continued)

Conscience (The Adamic Covenant)

24 O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

(See also: Romans 8:1-3)

Conscience (The Adamic Covenant)

Even though man had the ability to distinguish good and evil, this covenant shows that **man will not necessarily choose good over evil.** [133]

Man failed under this covenant where **evil prevailed continually.**

GEN 6:5 And **GOD** saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

Because of this, **God sent the Flood** to destroy the earth. [66 >Gen 3:15]

Only righteous Noah and his family were saved (Gen 6:8, 9; 7:1, 7).



Human Government (The Noahic Covenant)

Human Government (The Noahic Covenant)

Human Government, the third dispensation, involved the Noahic Covenant, where man was responsible to govern the world for God (Gen 9:1-17): [66 >Gen 9:12]

GEN 9:1 And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.

(Continued)

Human Government (The Noahic Covenant)

2 And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; **into your hand are they delivered.**

3 Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb **have I given you all things.**

4 But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat.

(Continued)

Human Government (The Noahic Covenant)

5 And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man.

6 Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man.

7 And you, be ye fruitful, and multiply; bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein.

(Continued)

Human Government (The Noahic Covenant)

8 And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying,

9 And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you;

10 And with every living creature that is with you....

11 And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth....

(Continued)

Human Government (The Noahic Covenant)

13 I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth....

16 And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth.

17 And God said unto Noah, This is the token of the covenant, which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth.



Human Government (The Noahic Covenant)

Under this covenant: [66 >Gen 9:12]

1. Man was to be fruitful and multiply and replenish (lit. “fill”) the earth (Gen 9:1).
2. Man’s relationship to the earth and the order of nature was confirmed (Gen 9:2-11).
3. Human government was established (Gen 9:6).
4. God promised to never again destroy the world by a universal flood (Gen 9:11-17).



Human Government (The Noahic Covenant) [133]

- Man was to scatter and populate the earth.
Instead they chose to stay near Babel.
- God now allowed meat as food, but the blood was not to be consumed.
- Government was established whereby capital punishment for murder was ordered.
- Never again would God destroy the earth by a universal flood.
- Noah failed almost immediately with his drunkenness.

Additionally, Ham ridiculed his father, Noah.



Human Government (The Noahic Covenant) [133]

GEN 9:20 And Noah began to be an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard:

21 And he drank of the wine, and was drunken; and he was uncovered within his tent.

22 And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren without....

24 And Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done unto him.

- After that, **man failed** in meeting the obligations of this covenant by congregating near Babel and failing to scatter and fill the earth.

Human Government (The Noahic Covenant)

The **failure** of man under this covenant of conscience **resulted in the Tower of Babel and the confusion of tongues (Gen 11:1-9)**. [66 >Gen 9:12]

GEN 11:1 And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech....

4 And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth....

6 And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do.

(Continued)

Human Government (The Noahic Covenant)

7 Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech.

8 So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city.

9 Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the LORD did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the LORD scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.

General wickedness prevailed again in the hearts of men.



5 Minute Break