

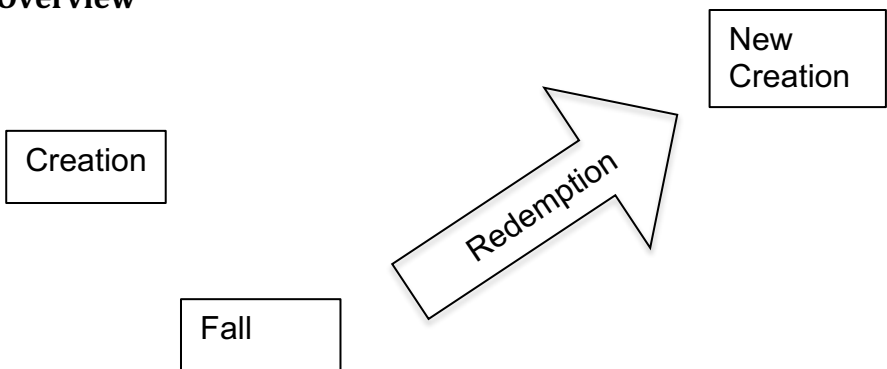
Grateful for God's Word - Bible Overview Session 1

Introduction

The Bible Story



Overview



Creation (Gen 1-2)

Ch 1 The 'big picture' account of creation

Skim Gen 1:1-2:3 and answer the following questions:

- How does God make the world and all that's in it?
- What verdict does God give on all that he has made?
- What do we learn about God's relationship with humanity?

→ Discuss: What is there to be grateful for in this passage?

Bonus: read Col 1:15-17.

What does this add to the picture painted in Gen 1?

(note: the word 'firstborn' here in Colossians has the significance of 'owner' or 'inheritor')

Humanity

- Humanity 'in the image of God'
- 'Male and female he created them'
- 'Fill the earth and subdue it'

A royal task and privilege

- Just one command?
- A perfect world?

“The world that God handed over to Adam and Eve was not a dusty museum that needed to be preserved exactly as it was for millennia to come. No, it was an art gallery full of beautiful white canvases waiting to be made even more beautiful by hundreds of mini-artists created in the Great Artist’s image.”¹

Eden and the world

- Eden as a ‘temple’
- Expanding the boundaries of Eden?

“In Genesis 1-2, Eden is the dwelling place of God, and God commissions Adam and Eve to expand the boundaries of that dwelling place to fill the earth (Gen 1:28).”²

¹ Jonty Rhodes, *Raiding the Lost Ark: Recovering the Gospel of the Covenant King*.

² G. K. Beale and Mitchell Kim, *God Dwells Among Us: Expanding Eden to the Ends of the Earth*, 16

The Fall (Gen 3)

Gen 3:1-6 The causes of sin

What God actually said	How Satan contradicts or misrepresents God	What do you think is the effect of this distortion?
(2:16)	"Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?" (3:1)	
(2:17)	"You will not certainly die," (3:2-3)	
(2:17)	"For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." (3:4-5)	

→Can you retell this story in terms of *gratitude*?

The effects of sin v8-13

- how they feel about themselves
- their relationship with God

God's judgment on sin v14-24

Broken (but not obliterated) relationships between them and

- one another (16)
- the world (esp. 17-19)
- God (21-24)

The 'first gospel' in the Bible (2:14-15)

Looking ahead to Jesus...

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Gospel Promise to Abraham – Gen 12:1-5

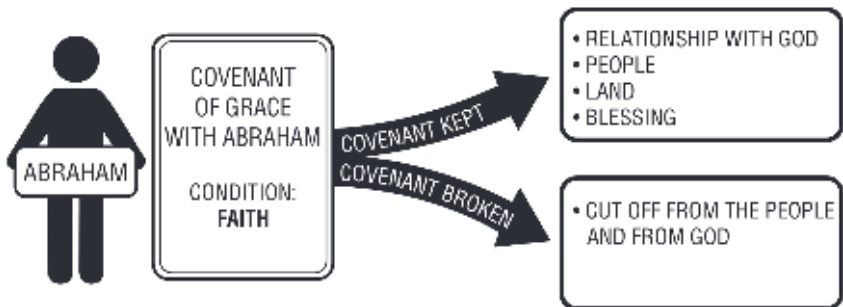
Fill in the table below to see how the promise made to Abram corresponds to (remedies) the results of sin seen in Gen 3.

Relationship with	Results of sin	Promise to Abram
land	Cast out of Eden Thorns and thistles	
people	Adam and Eve's relationship broken People scattered	
God	No longer have access to God Under God's curse	

→ What are the similarities between this promise, and God's original creation plan in Genesis 1-2?

Bonus: what does Gal 3:7-9 add to this picture?

Covenant (Gen 15, 17)



*This and all subsequent covenant diagrams taken from Matt Searles, *God's Story*, adapted from Jonty Rhodes, *Raiding the Lost Ark*. All other diagrams taken from *God's Story*.

The Exodus

- The Israelites were fruitful and multiplied greatly (Exodus 1:7)

Pharaoh / Satan and God contrasted

Pharaoh / Satan	God
Desires to restrict: “the Israelites have become much too numerous for us” (Exodus 1:9).	
Oppressive and abusive. uses the Israelites for his own ends. constantly demands more. (Exodus 1:11-14; 5:6-18)	
God of death: gives a command that all the Hebrew boys must be killed (Exodus 1:16).	
Ultimately powerless. He fails to prevent the Israelites from becoming “even more numerous”.	

For reflection: What will our Christian lives look like if our view of God is more like Pharaoh than the God of the Bible?

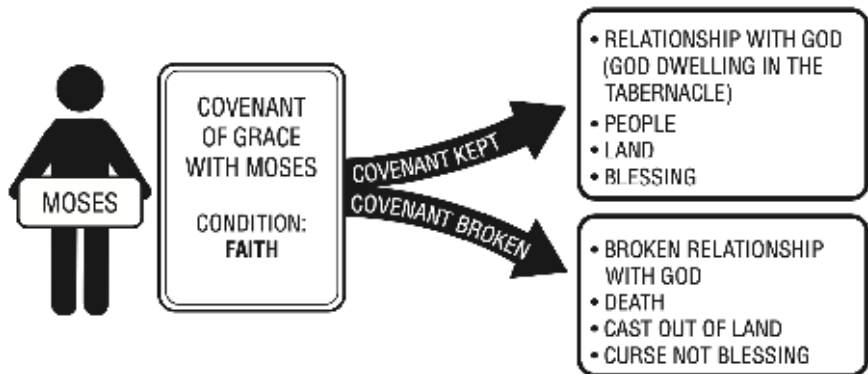
Redemption

- from slavery
- for worship (3:7-10, 4:22-23)
- by sacrifice (12:1-13)

Read Colossians 1:13-14. How is our experience as Christians described in similar terms to that in Exodus?

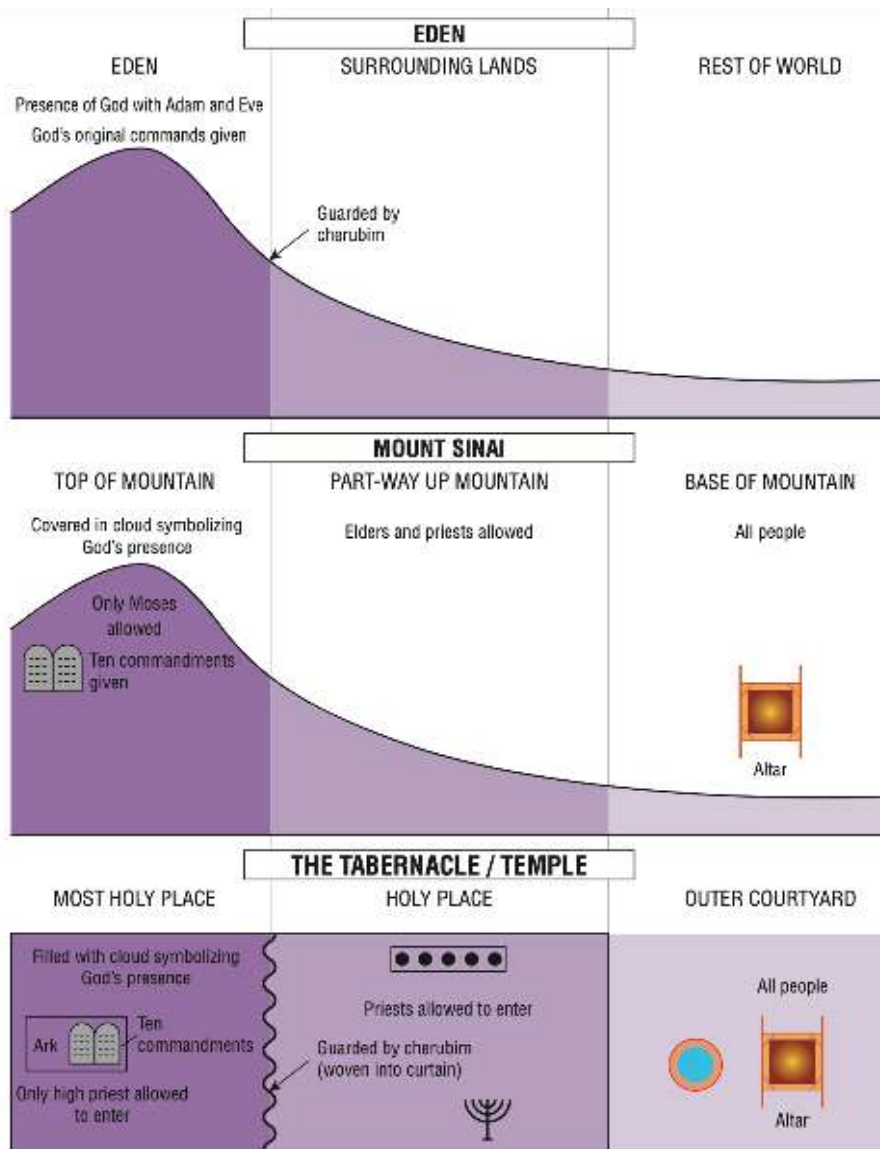
Imagine you were talking to an 'oldest son' of the Israelites who was worried about the coming judgment that night – his spiritual failures meant he thought God might treat him like an Egyptian and punish him. What would you say?

The Covenant with Moses



- The Ten Commandments
- Faith and obedience

The Tabernacle



The correspondences between Eden, Sinai and the tabernacle/Temple

→ Looking ahead to Jesus...

Grateful for God's Word - Bible Overview Session 3

Coming to Dwell with God

Numbers – wilderness wanderings



- Manna in the desert
- Grumbling
- Distrust and disobedience

What do you think it would have been like to receive manna from heaven for 40 years? What do you think this would have taught you about God?

Read Hebrews 3:12-19. What lessons does the writer draw from this wilderness generation?

How does gratitude feature in all this?

Deuteronomy – ‘choose life’

Joshua – entering the land (a new Eden)

- A land of abundance - ‘milk and honey’
- Entered from the East past a guardian angel
- Crossing the Jordan to get there
- ‘rest’

The King of God’s Kingdom

Note the word Messiah (Hebrew) and Christ (Greek) both mean ‘anointed one’ and usually refer to the king.

The need for a king

“In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as they saw fit.” (Judges 21:25)

David

- God looks at the heart (1 Sam 16:7)
- A humble and suffering king
- Saves his people (1 Sam 17)
- Promised a ‘son’ who will reign forever (2 Sam 7)

Solomon – the prince of peace

Read 2 Chronicles 9:1-27

Either: (a) Note down what you would have experienced through your five senses had you been there:



or (b) note down what we learn of Solomon's reign under the following headings

- riches / exotic finery and splendour
- wisdom
- Solomon's power / rule

We know that Solomon (at his best) is a pattern for Jesus, the greater king to come.

- What do we learn of Jesus' kingship? Is this how we normally think?
- How is this passage supposed to make us feel?

Kingdom split and exile

Northern Kingdom (Israel) – 10 tribes

- All evil kings.
- Went into exile to Assyria in 722 BC (1 Kings 17:6) Never returned

Southern Kingdom (Judah) – 2 tribes (Judah and Benjamin)

- 12 bad kings, 8 faithful ones
- Went into exile to Babylon in 597, 586BC
- Return from exile under Ezra Nehemiah

The Prophets - Judgment and hope

For reflection: what are the major 'problems' we have seen in the Bible story so far that God's people face?

Judgment

- exile
- separation from God and all his goodness
- darkness
- punishment
- death

Hope

- New and greater _____ (Is 43:1-7)
- New and greater _____ (Ezekiel 40-48)
- New and greater _____ (Jer 31-33)
- New and greater _____ (Isaiah 65:17-25)

And a servant who will suffer for the sins of his people (Isaiah 53)

→ What have we seen to lead us to gratitude to God?

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Jesus Christ – the fulfilment of all God's promises

"For no matter how many promises God has made, they are 'Yes' in Christ" (2 Cor 1:20)

Look over the following verses and see how Jesus fulfils the Old Testament. If you can, summarise the teaching of the verse with a phrase 'Jesus is the true and greater _____'

"Just as through the disobedience of one man [Adam] the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man [Christ] the many will be made righteous." (Romans 5:19)

"Since the children have flesh and blood, he [Christ] too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death – that is, the devil – ¹⁵and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death." (Heb 2:14-15)

"The word [ie Jesus] became flesh and made his dwelling amongst us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:14)

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,"¹⁴ meaning one person, who is Christ. (Gal 3:16 cf Gen 12:1-3)

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! (John 1:29)

“Christ died for sins, once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God.” (1 Peter 3:18)

Jesus and his disciples went on to the villages around Caesarea Philippi. On the way he asked them, “Who do people say I am?” They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets.” “But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?” Peter answered, “You are the Messiah.” (Mark 8:27-29)

No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in the closest relationship with the Father, has made him known. (John 1:18)

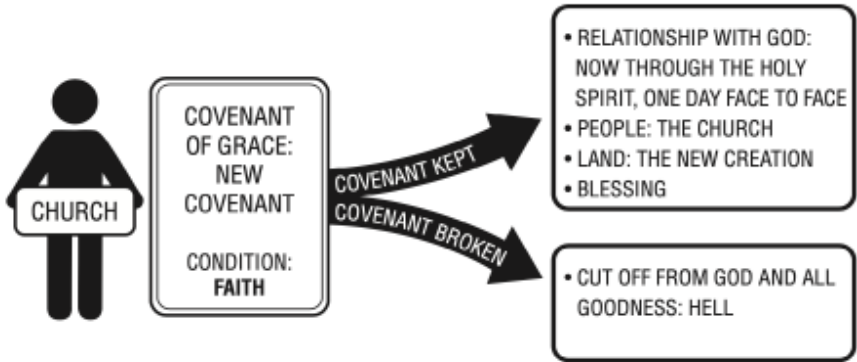
→ which of these references is newest to you?

→ what here can lead you to give thanks to God?

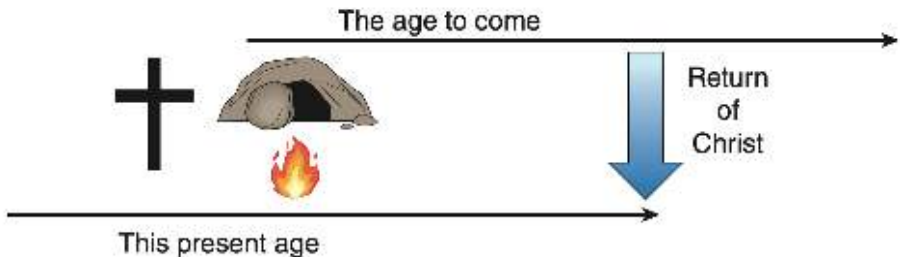
→ Bonus: can you think of other ways Jesus fulfils the Old Testament?

- His birth
- His teaching
- His miracles – signs of a world re-made
- His death
- His resurrection

The Church



- The Spirit poured out
- United to Christ – his story is our story
- Jesus’ Mission continuing
- Now and not yet – living as exiles and strangers



The new creation

Read Revelation 21:1-5 and 21:22-22:5

How is this future the culmination of all the promises (and answer to all the problems) we have seen so far?

How does this make you feel?

For reflection: Try to write down one thing that has enlarged your view of

- Jesus
- The Scriptures
- What we can be thankful to God for

Is there anything you want to do in response to all you have seen in the Scriptures this week? Take a moment to capture that here, and pray about it.