

A Summary God's Great Plan

In recent blogs, we have reviewed some of the events and reasoning within God's Great Plan. Robert Milligan titled his book "The Scheme of Redemption" and views everything in the Old Testament as looking forward to Christ and His sacrifice for sin. There is a continuation of the plan in the New Testament to establish the church that Christ promised (Matthew 16:18). The unfolding of the gospel of Christ describes the full results of that plan as applied to faithful people, making them God's children and citizens of The Eternal Kingdom. All the types and shadows lead us to understand the magnificence displayed in the church and the glories awaiting in heaven.

Paul provides a summary of God's work through Immanuel and the apostles He sent throughout the world. Paul said 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 granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity, but now has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel"* (2 Timothy 1:9-10). This is evidence that even before creation, God had a purpose. God purposed to provide a Kingdom filled with loving, obedient servants. To do that, He first created a universe. Within the universe, God made a system of planets surrounding a star. On one of those planets, He created a perfect environment for the people He shaped from the dust of the planet called Earth. And within each person, God placed a spirit that could exist for the remaining eternity. He then provided us an instruction manual called The Bible.

God's plan left nothing out. He challenged the wise, the seers, the idols with a test of their knowledge and abilities. *"Present your case,' the LORD says. 'Bring forward your strong arguments,' The King of Jacob says. 'Let them bring forth and declare to us what is going to take place; As for the former events, declare what they were, That we may consider them and know their outcome. Or announce to us what is coming; Declare the things that are going to come afterward, That we may know that you are gods; Indeed, do good or evil, that we may anxiously look about us and fear together'"* (Isaiah 41:21-23). The challenge extends to those today who are wise in their own knowledge and philosophies but ignore the one wise and powerful God of Heaven.

Often, we are like early astronomers who thought the Earth was the center of creation and everything revolved around us. Our minds try to tell us what is real based on the information gathered by our senses, even when we believe there must be places and things beyond our ability to see, hear, touch, and smell. We see and hear evidence of far-off cities and acknowledge they exist. We look at the planets and understand that the Earth is round like they are. We look at a spiral galaxy and picture our Milkyway Galaxy to be the same. People tend to reject the idea of a loving spirit being who made them in His image, created a pleasant environment for them, and provided a plan so that they could be with Him forever. The physical mind has difficulty believing in a spirit within each person, placed there by an all-powerful spirit being. God said that the evidence is available.

Concerning evidence, Paul wrote, *"For ever since the world was created, people have seen the Earth and sky. Through everything God made, they can clearly see his invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse for not knowing God"* (Romans 1:20). David sang to Israel, *"The heavens proclaim the glory of God. The skies display his craftsmanship. Day after day they continue to*

They speak; night after night they make him known. They speak without a sound or word; their voice is never heard. Yet their message has gone throughout the Earth, and their words to all the world" (Psalm 19:1-4 NLT). As we examine the world around us, there is ample evidence of the existence and capabilities of a thoughtful and capable planner and designer. We see that a designer carefully assessed the needs of each creature and provided for it. We learn that a retirement plan that far exceeds our imagination awaits the faithful. Jeremiah told Israel, as they were going into Babylonian captivity, "' For I know the plans that I have for you,' declares the LORD, 'plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope'" (Jeremiah 29:11)

All that God did, from forming all matter in the universe (Genesis 1:1-2) to receiving His Son on His throne, prepare for the day Jesus promised His apostles. *"In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way where I am going" (John 14:2-4).* Are you prepared to go with Jesus to the home prepared for the faithful?