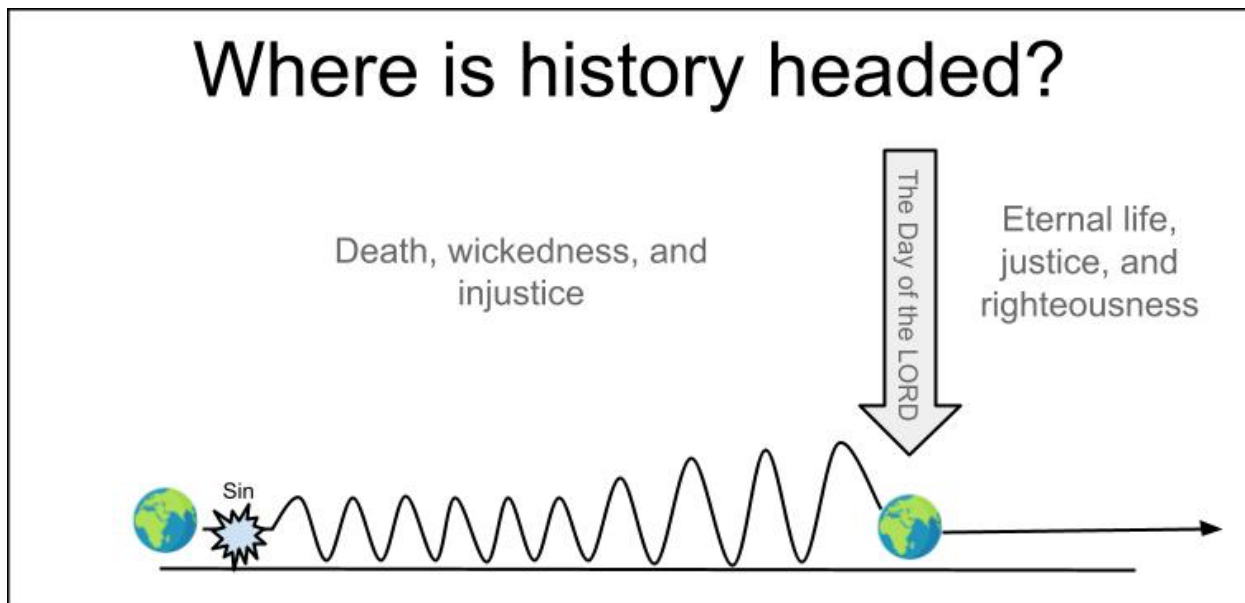


The God of Israel

And the Families of the Earth

I. Reminder: The message of the Bible

- A. The Bible's message (including the cross, and the resurrection of Jesus) takes place over this basic view of history. History is headed somewhere.



- B. The Bible's vision of the future is both very earthly and geographically specific

² *In the last days the mountain of the LORD's temple will be established as the highest of the mountains; it will be exalted above the hills, and all nations will stream to it.* ³ *Many peoples will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the temple of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths." The law will go out from Zion, the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.* ⁴ *He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore.* (Is 2:2–4 NIV)

II. The Tower of Babel: Setting the stage for God's plan to restore all of the families of the earth

A. The Great Rebellion

¹ *Now the whole world had one language and a common speech.* ² *As people moved eastward, they found a plain in Shinar and settled there.* ³ *They said to each other, "Come, let's make bricks and bake them thoroughly." They used brick instead of stone, and tar for mortar.* ⁴ *Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves; otherwise we will be scattered over the*

face of the whole earth.”⁵ *But the LORD came down to see the city and the tower the people were building.*⁶ *The LORD said, “If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them.*⁷ *Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other.”*⁸ *So the LORD scattered them from there over all the earth, and they stopped building the city.*⁹ *That is why it was called Babel—because there the LORD confused the language of the whole world. From there the LORD scattered them over the face of the whole earth. (Ge 11:1–9 NIV)*

²⁸ *God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it...(Ge 1:28 NIV)*

¹ *Then God blessed Noah and his sons, saying to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the earth. (Ge 9:1 NIV)*

B. This rebellion followed two earlier rebellious acts by the families of the earth against God

¹⁷ *To Adam he said, “Because you listened to your wife and ate fruit from the tree about which I commanded you, ‘You must not eat from it,’ “Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat food from it all the days of your life.”¹⁸ *It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. (Ge 3:17–18 NIV)**

¹ *When human beings began to increase in number on the earth and daughters were born to them,*² *the sons of God saw that the daughters of humans were beautiful, and they married any of them they chose...*⁵ *The LORD saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time.*⁶ *The LORD regretted that he had made human beings on the earth, and his heart was deeply troubled. (Ge 6:1–6 NIV)*

C. The families of the earth were scattered, and YHWH’s direct involvement with their families ended.

⁸ *When the Most High apportioned the nations, when he divided humankind, he fixed the boundaries of the peoples according to the number of the gods;*⁹ *the LORD’s own portion was his people, Jacob his allotted share.* (Dt 32:8–9 NRSV)

III. God chose one family to lead the others back to Him

¹ *The LORD had said to Abram, “Go from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you.”² *“I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing.*³ *I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.” (Ge 12:1–3 NIV)**

⁵ *Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine,⁶ you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites.” (Ex 19:5–6 NIV)*

¹ Listen to me, you islands; hear this, you distant nations: Before I was born the LORD called me; from my mother's womb he has spoken my name. ² He made my mouth like a sharpened sword, in the shadow of his hand he hid me; he made me into a polished arrow and concealed me in his quiver. ³ He said to me, "You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will display my splendor...I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth." (Is 49:1–6 NIV)

IV. The Redemption has a zip code

²¹ *In that day the LORD will punish the powers in the heavens above and the kings on the earth below.* ²² *They will be herded together like prisoners bound in a dungeon; they will be shut up in prison and be punished after many days.* ²³ *The moon will be dismayed, the sun ashamed; for the LORD Almighty will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and before its elders—with great glory...* ^{25:6} *On this mountain the LORD Almighty will prepare a feast of rich food for all peoples, a banquet of aged wine—the best of meats and the finest of wines.* ⁷ *On this mountain he will destroy the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations; he will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign LORD will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove his people's disgrace from all the earth. The LORD has spoken.* ⁹ *In that day they will say, "Surely this is our God; we trusted in him, and he saved us. This is the LORD, we trusted in him; let us rejoice and be glad in his salvation."* (Is 24:21-25:9 NIV)

⁵ *But you are to seek the place the LORD your God will choose from among all your tribes to put his Name there for his dwelling. To that place you must go; (Dt 12:5 NIV)*

²⁰ *This is what the LORD Almighty says: "Many peoples and the inhabitants of many cities will yet come, ²¹ and the inhabitants of one city will go to another and say, 'Let us go at once to entreat the LORD and seek the LORD Almighty. I myself am going.'²² And many peoples and powerful nations will come to Jerusalem to seek the LORD Almighty and to entreat him."²³ *This is what the LORD Almighty says: "In those days ten people from all languages and nations will take firm hold of one Jew by the hem of his robe and say, 'Let us go with you, because we have heard that God is with you.'" (Zec 8:20–23 NIV)**

V. The Irrevocable Calling of Israel

²⁵ *I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers and sisters, so that you may not be conceited: Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in, ²⁶ and in this way all Israel will be saved. As it is written: "The deliverer will come from Zion; he will turn godlessness away from Jacob."²⁷ And this is my covenant with them when I take away their sins."²⁸ As far as the gospel is concerned, they are enemies for your sake; but as far as election is concerned, they are loved on account of the patriarchs, ²⁹ for God's gifts and his call are irrevocable. (Ro 11:25–29 NIV)*

²⁴ God heard their groaning and he remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac and with Jacob. ²⁵ So God looked on the Israelites and was concerned about them. (Ex 2:24–25 NIV)