

From Beginning to Forever

A STUDY OF THE GRAND
NARRATIVE OF SCRIPTURE

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In *From Beginning to Forever*, Elizabeth Woodson guides you through the story of the Bible, showing how all 66 books combine to form one unified narrative. Weaving together the rich theological truths found in Genesis through Revelation, this 8-session study shows the eternal significance of what God is doing in the world and how He invites us to be a part of it.

THE CREATION & CORRUPTION OF THE KINGDOM



1

In the very first sentence in Genesis, we are told that God created the world and established His kingdom. Out of overflow of His love, God created humanity in His image. As image bearers, we were designed to be His representatives, reflecting His glory to the world as we ruled and reigned over His creation.

Everything was perfect, but then something changed.

After being tempted by Satan, Adam and Eve rejected God's rule over them and decided to live as their own god. With this one decision, they unleashed sin into the world and suddenly, what was perfect was now broken. But in His grace, God promised to restore the kingdom, fixing all that sin destroyed.

1

A PROMISE TO RESTORE THE KINGDOM



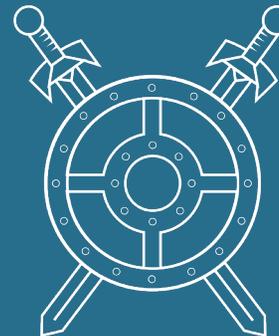
2

God's restoration plan is accomplished through a series of promises called covenants. God started with a man named Abraham, making a covenant with him to bless his family and use his family to bless the world.

After hundreds of years, Abraham's descendants, the nation of Israel, became enslaved. Remembering His covenant, God used a man named Moses to set them free. But He also made another covenant with Israel. Through Moses, God and Israel agreed to be committed to one another. God would be their King, and they would be His people. God gave them a set of guidelines, called the law, showing Israel how to live in His kingdom—loving Him and loving others.

2

A DIVIDED KINGDOM



3

After Israel entered the promised land, they began a cycle of covenant unfaithfulness. As judgment for their disobedience, God would allow foreign nations to attack them. The people would cry out for mercy and God would graciously raise up a judge to help save them. Yet, every time the judge left the scene, the cycle would start over again.

Eventually, Israel asked to be ruled by a human king like the nations around them. God granted their request. He then made another covenant with Israel through their second king, David. God promised to raise up a King that would rule forever, perfectly leading Israel to love God and love others.

After the leadership of David and his son Solomon, internal conflict caused the kingdom to divide. However, the kings of Israel and Judah proved to be a collective failure, leading the people to persist in a sinful lifestyle characterized by injustice, idolatry, and greed.

3

LIFE IN THE KINGDOM



4

For hundreds of years, God was patient with Israel and Judah and sent prophets to remind them to be faithful to the covenant. But they didn't listen. So, in love, God punished them by sending them into exile.

Yet, while in exile, the prophets also gave the people hope. They told Israel about one last covenant God was making with them. God promised to provide a permanent solution to their sin through a future King who would redeem all humanity, leading them to live in the way of God—loving God and loving people.

God eventually released Israel from exile, but they continued to struggle with sin. Israel needed God's promised Savior, and for hundreds of years, they waited for Him.

4

THE ARRIVAL OF THE KING



5

After 400 years of silence, a virgin girl named Mary gave birth to a child who was the promised Messianic King. By the power of the Holy Spirit, God the Father sent His Son Jesus into the world to save it.

Jesus began His ministry by announcing the kingdom of God. He told Israel that to live in the kingdom is to reject living for self and to embrace God's authority while pursuing the flourishing of all humanity.

Along the way, Jesus invited a few disciples to follow Him. With them by His side, Jesus told Israel that He is God, and that salvation from sin and entrance into the kingdom comes through Him alone. Some believed Him. Most didn't and they ended up killing Him because of it. But, three days after Jesus's death, He was resurrected from the grave. He conquered sin and death and restored the kingdom of God for Israel and the entire world!

5

THE KINGDOM COMMUNITY



6

Before ascending into Heaven, Jesus gave His disciples one last mission: tell the world the good news that the promised King has come, and eternal life in the kingdom of God is available to all through submission to the King.

Empowered by the Holy Spirit, the disciples set out on this mission, and it is one we continue today. As followers of Jesus, our ultimate allegiance is to the kingdom of God. We make disciples, sharing the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ. We submit to the way of the kingdom of God, living like Jesus. We work to build a world where all humanity thrives and God is glorified while standing against the enemies of the kingdom—sin, evil, and Satan.

6

THE KINGDOM IS RESTORED



7

In the final pages of the story, we are told that one day our Savior and King, Jesus Christ, will return to fully restore the kingdom of God. Placing all of creation under His rule, sin, evil, death, and the schemes of Satan will be no more! Jesus will finish the work of salvation He began on the cross.

In the end, believers will not escape to a far-off world; we will stay here. Heaven and earth will be brought back together, and all of creation will be perfectly restored. In a world with no sin, believers will perfectly love God and love others. We will live out our divine design as image bearers, reflecting the glory of God and working to build a world where all creation thrives. We will live in the kingdom of God, under the rule of our triune God, and will love and worship Him forever.

7