

UNIT 1 PART 1



BF232 OUR FUTURE HOPE

Welcome to our study of

OUR FUTURE HOPE.

This class looks at God's plans and promises. As we introduce this course, I'm sure that most of you are thinking that we will study Daniel and Revelation. Those are the books that we usually think about because they deal with the end times. They deal with future hope.

We also think about 1 and 2 Thessalonians, because those books look at our future hope. Well, we will get to those books later, but what we're going to do in this course is start in the beginning because we see God's plan and God's promises from the beginning. God's plan is what determines the future and our future hope. And so, the future hope that we have as believers is connected to the story of Scripture and that story starts in the beginning. And so, in this course, we will look at what the Bible says about future events. The events that God will bring about in the future are based on his plans and his promises that we have seen in the past. So, I'm going to start in Genesis and we're going to look at God's plan that we first see in Creation. The only way we can truly understand what God says about the future is to know what God has said in the past. So, again,

OUR FUTURE HOPE IS BASED ON GOD'S PLAN AND PROMISES.

God revealed his plan in the book of Genesis. We see God's plan for his Creation in Genesis 1 and 2.

Maybe you've built something before and before you built it, you think about what you wanted it to be. The thing that you want it to be is going to impact the way you make it. You have a plan in mind in the way you create something. You wanted to accomplish what you're making it to do.

GOD HAD A PLAN AT CREATION.

In Genesis 1 God said,

Genesis 1:26-28 Then God said, "Let us make human beings in our image, to be like us. They will reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the livestock, all the wild animals on the earth, and the small animals that scurry along the ground."

*So God created human beings in his own image.
In the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them.*

Then God blessed them and said, "Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern it. Reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the animals that scurry along the ground."

Genesis 1:31 And God looked over all he had made and it was very good.

You probably remember the full Creation account. Every day, day one through day six, God said, "Let there be", and it was. And God said it was good. On the different days, God made the light and he made the waters gather together. God made the plants. God made the animals; he made the sun and the moon and the stars. And each day whenever God created something, God said it was good.

But on the 6th day when God made man, he said it was very good. And this means that God reached the end of what he wanted to create, the goal of God's Creation. The place where he wanted it to go was to have mankind as his image-bearer. God made us special. God made us with the ability to know God and to have fellowship with God, to live in a relationship with him. God is a personal God and God also wanted mankind to reign over the earth. God wanted them to govern the earth. God wanted human beings to be like a king to rule on the earth for him. But God is the Great King, and he rules over all things. That was God's plan in Genesis 1 and 2.

So, the Lord God created the heavens and the earth and everything in them. He wanted mankind to rule over his Creation from the paradise of God, from this beautiful garden of Eden, this special place where God communed or had fellowship with mankind. Mankind was to live in perfect fellowship with God and man was under the blessing of God.

Genesis 1 says, "God blessed them". God was blessing his Creation. It had God's favor. It was exactly what God wanted it to be. There was no death, no fear and no pain. And the tree of life was present and the river went out from this special place, and it carried the richness of that garden wherever it went.

Now I want to use an illustration of a garden, because I think planting a garden helps us understand what God did at Creation. God's plan was to have this perfect place and mankind was to multiply and to fill the earth. There was no sin in the world. And so God's plan is that this would grow and expand and cover the earth.

God's plan is that mankind would live in fellowship with him and they would have children that also knew the Lord. And those children would have children that knew the Lord. And over time the earth would be filled with people who worship God and do God's will and they would rule the earth for God. So God wanted a kingdom filled with worshippers that spread over the entire earth.

I planted a garden recently at our house; my wife and I planted the garden together. And when we planted the garden, we put seed potatoes in the ground, we planted onions in the ground, the little bulbs that grow into the full onion. We planted beans in the ground and different vegetables. The day that we finished planting everything, we put a fence

around the garden to protect it from being damaged by wild animals. We looked at our garden and we were very pleased. It was like we said, "It is very good", and the work was finished. But the garden wasn't finished yet, it had to grow, to develop into what we wanted it to be.

God's planet, Creation, God had everything finished, but it wasn't finished in the sense that it completed everything God wanted. God started it by making mankind in his image, but they were supposed to fill the earth. And so God's plan was beginning. God's plan was in motion, but it had not been fulfilled yet.

GOD'S PLAN IN GENESIS 1 AND 2 SHOWS US IT WAS GOD'S DESIRE TO BE WORSHIPPED AND TO BE KNOWN THROUGHOUT THE EARTH.

IT ALSO SHOWS US THAT GOD HAS A CLAIM ON THE EARTH.

God made the earth; he has authority over the earth, and God can determine what he wants to do with the world and mankind that he created.

BUT GOD'S PLAN IN GENESIS 1 AND 2 ALSO SHOWS US THE DIRECTION THAT THE BIBLICAL STORY MUST GO.

If God is God, and we know that he is, then God's plan will be fulfilled. God will have a world filled with people who worship him, live in fellowship with him, and rule on God's behalf. And so, our future hope, where God is going to move history to; that future hope is based on God's plan in Genesis 1 and 2.

And just to convince you of this, if you read Revelation, 21 and 22, mankind is back in the paradise of God. The tree of life is present. There is no death, no suffering, no sadness. Mankind is living under the blessing of God. There's no curse and mankind can see the face of God, in perfect fellowship with him. That is very good. So God will move history to that place.

Our future hope is based on God's plan and promises, but we know that God's plan was challenged in Genesis 3.

Genesis 3:1 The serpent was the shrewdest of all the wild animals the Lord God had made. One day he asked the woman, "Did God really say you must not eat the fruit from any of the trees in the garden?"

I want you to notice what the serpent is doing. The serpent is challenging the Word of God. God is the Lord. He has authority over his Creation. His Word has authority and when God gave his Word, he is the Great King. When the serpent challenges the Word of God, he is fighting against God's plan.

Genesis 3:2-3 "Of course we may eat fruit from the trees in the garden," the woman replied. "It's only the fruit from the tree in the middle of the garden that we are not allowed to eat. God said, 'You must not eat it or even touch it; if you do, you will die.'"

Now notice the first time the serpent questioned the Word of God, "Did God really say?" But this time, he directly rebels against God's Word. The serpent said, "You won't die". God said they would die. The serpent said they won't die, he goes on to say,

Genesis 3:5-6 "God knows that your eyes will be opened as soon as you eat it, and you will be like God, knowing both good and evil."

The woman was convinced. She saw that the tree was beautiful and its fruit looked delicious, and she wanted the wisdom it would give her. So she took some of the fruit and ate it. Then she gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it, too.

And so what we find in Genesis 3 is God's plan being challenged. The serpent questioned God's authority, which means he questioned God's right to rule. Does God have the right to rule over his Creation? We know that he does. God is the Lord of all things. Man was supposed to rule over God's Creation under God's authority.

Let's use an illustration. Let's say that a friend is going on a trip and they ask you to watch their house for them. They tell you, "I'm going to be gone for a few weeks. I want you to stay at my house, protect my house, feed my animals and watch my garden while I'm gone". If you are watching somebody's house for them, then you are responsible to take good care of it. God put Adam as the caretaker over his Creation. But Adam and Eve chose to obey the enemy instead of obeying God.

And so the woman was supposed to submit to her husband's authority. There was an authority structure. God was the Great King. Adam was supposed to rule God's Creation. The woman was supposed to submit to her husband and the creatures were under the authority of Adam and Eve. And so what happens? Adam and Eve had authority over the beasts, but they rebelled against God's order of authority. The woman submitted to the serpent. The man submitted to the woman and everyone rebelled against God.

They did not honor the authority of God and it brought judgment upon them. The fall of mankind reversed God's plan. Man was created to represent God's rule, but he rebelled against God's rule. Man was created to live in fellowship with God. But now sin separated him from God. Man was supposed to live under the authority of God's Word, but he chose to believe the words of the serpent.

God's kingdom was challenged because the serpent established an enemy kingdom that opposes the rule of God. Even though it was an animal, Satan was working through the serpent, Satan became the god of this world. And all people who do not believe in the Lord, Jesus Christ, they are part of Satan's kingdom.

And so, this fall of mankind reversed God's plan. It leaves us with some questions; whose kingdom will win? Will God's kingdom fill the earth or will Satan's kingdom fill the earth? Will God have a world filled with people who worship him? Will mankind live in the presence of God? Will mankind rule on God's behalf? Will mankind live under God's blessing?

Well, our future hope is based on God's plan and his promises. We saw God's plan in Genesis 1 and 2. After God's kingdom was challenged, God gave a promise that he would set the direction for future hope. Our hope is that God will restore things the way they were in Genesis 1 and 2. God's Promise first comes in Genesis 3.

*Genesis 3:14 Then the Lord God said to the serpent,
“Because you have done this, you are cursed*

And then God says,

*Genesis 3:15 And I will cause hostility between you and the woman,
and between your offspring and her offspring.*

This means there would be hostility between those who are in the kingdom of Satan and those who believe God's Word about the coming seed of the woman.

*Genesis 3:15 He will strike your head,
and you will strike his heel.”*

**THE SEED OF THE WOMAN WOULD BE ATTACKED BY SATAN BUT THE SEED OF THE WOMAN
WOULD DEFEAT SATAN.**

That is the first promise in Scripture that talks about God's plan to restore his blessing to mankind on the earth. God promised he would bring judgment on the serpent and those who follow the serpent. God promised that this salvation would come through the seed of the woman. Because this promise is made in connection to the fall of mankind, God is showing us that the seed of the woman would be the one to fix the things that were messed up with the fall of mankind. In Genesis 3, he doesn't give us the details of how this will work, but he puts our hope focused on the seed of the woman. The seed of the woman was the future hope of mankind because he would defeat the serpent and he would restore God's blessing.

***AND SO GOD'S PLAN IS FIRST FOUND IN GENESIS 1 AND 2. IT WAS MESSED UP
WITH THE SIN OF MANKIND. BUT GOD GAVE FUTURE HOPE AND THAT HOPE IS
FOUND IN THE COMING SEED OF THE WOMAN.***