

The Story That Began in Genesis Is Not Over—And Why We Are Called To Be Part of It

For many Christians, there is a disconnect between the Bible and today. In fact, for some, there is a disconnect between the Old and New Testaments.

However, the story that began in Genesis is still going on today, and we are called to be part of it.

Story of the Bible

The Bible tells the story of God's love for the world, His plan to redeem that world, and the battle against God's plan of redemption. Central to this plan is the calling and role of the Jewish people.

God's choice of the Jewish people is not because He loves them more than another. God did not line up all the people groups on earth and choose one over the other. Rather, because of His great love for *all* mankind, He *created* a people through whom He would carry out His redemptive plan.

In fact, the story in Genesis actually began far earlier – in eternity. Ephesians 1:4–5 says that before the creation of the world, we were predestined to be adopted as sons through Christ Jesus. Revelation 13:8 confirms this eternal existence of God's plan when referring to the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (NKJV). This means that Jesus' substitutionary death on the cross was always God's plan.

The New Testament

Too often, Christians believe God's work with the Jews ended

in the Old Testament, and the New Testament launched a new plan with new people: the church. However, in Romans 11, when speaking of the Jewish people, the apostle Paul said that the gifts and calling of God are irrevocable (v. 29). There is not a separate Old Testament plan and New Testament plan. Jesus' ministry, death and future return are all part of Plan A found in the Old Testament covenants and prophecies.

God was not surprised by Israel's rejection of Jesus – He used their rejection to carry out His plan. The apostle Paul said this rejection allowed the gospel to go to the Gentiles. For this reason, he admonished Christians to approach the Jewish people in humility and give them honor, even if they were enemies to the gospel (Rom. 11:28). God is greater than human weaknesses and failures. His promises are true, He knows the end from the beginning, and He will fulfill His will.

Since the New Testament

When the last New Testament book was written and the canon of the Bible was closed, the Jewish people and the newfound Christian church were scattered throughout the Roman Empire. Over the next 1,800 years the two faiths developed in very different directions, and the church became severed from its Jewish roots, going so far as to teach contempt for the Jewish people. It is an agonizing history of exile and persecution that culminated in the tragedy of the Holocaust.

But God – the sovereign Creator of the universe – has miraculously brought the Jewish people back to their homeland. He is fulfilling everything He promised Abraham, Moses and King David, just as the Hebrew prophets predicted. The story is not over, and what began in eternity long before Genesis was written will not end until eternity comes.

What a privilege it is to be in *this* generation. God is bringing His people back to the land and setting the stage for His final act in this redemptive story.

The day you get this in your gut is the day the Bible becomes the most exciting book on the planet. It is also the day you will want to become part of the story! {eoa}

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