

Discover the Story of Your Biblical Heritage



Laying the Foundation
Covenant Heritage Series – Book One

LAWRENCE BLANCHARD

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A word to KJV folk: We are aware that there are many who believe that the *King James Version* (KJV) of the Bible should be the only version that is used. We respect that belief and conviction. However, we hope that because we have chosen to use the *New American Standard Bible* (NASB) in this book series, that that will not dissuade you to partake in reading it. We encourage you to check out every Bible reference with the KJV to see if there are any substantial discrepancies.

All bold notations are the author's except where it is in an original quoted text from another source and will be indicated by "Emphasis in the original."

Cover background painting: by Frans II Franken, "King Solomon meets the Queen of Sheba," painted in between the years 1606 and 1617.

Maps and artwork: Johannes Verhoeff

For more information on the *Covenant Heritage Series*, please logon to:
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Introduction

About the *Covenant Heritage Series*

The *Covenant Heritage Series* is comprised of seven books that will help you build knowledge, understanding and relevance regarding the heritage of the covenant people of God. As you will see, this heritage has been lost or hidden from the modern day teaching of the Bible and the pages of history. However, this series boldly and joyfully reveals and proclaims this God-ordained heritage to the people to whom it belongs.

Why is heritage important? Is **your** heritage important to you? We tend to live in the moment with little, if any, regard for our past heritage. But whether we know it or not, whether we try to ignore it or not, we are the products of our history in and through our ancestors. Knowledge of our heritage reveals who we are and who we're supposed to be. It reveals what we've been given as an inheritance. And, by implication, it reveals our present and future purpose in life.

Most of us have been taught that our heritage is not important to living in the present. But the truth is, living in the present is relatively meaningless without the knowledge and understanding of your purpose that has its roots in your heritage – your family history. And life is void of meaning in the present unless from that heritage you realize your destiny.

To live with ultimate meaning and purpose, to know without a doubt who you are and what you were created for comes together in your past heritage, your present life and your future destiny. Where do you begin to find your biblical heritage?

Where Do We Start?

We begin with a basic question: What does the Bible say and what does it mean by what it says? That's what Book One, *Discover the Story of Your Biblical Heritage*, and the subsequent books in the *Covenant Heritage Series* attempt to answer.

Would you be willing to take a **fresh look** at the Old and New Covenant Scriptures to discover for yourself what the word of God actually says and consider what it means by what it says?

There is not a more significant question that must be satisfactorily answered for every person – Christian or not. Of course, if you already are unmistakably confident that you have grasped for yourself the unity and consistency of what the whole Bible says and means from beginning to end, then you will have no need for reading this book. Or, perhaps you are satisfied with what you have been told to believe by recognized hierarchies in the “church” and by trusted “scholars” who have, more or less, come to a consensus of opinion about what they **think** the Bible says and means. If so, you will have no reason to read this book.

Who Is this Book For?

If, on the other hand, you do have questions and some doubt in your mind as to what the Bible says and what it means by what it says, and if you feel you have not been satisfied enough to confidently understand it for yourself, **then this book is for you**. Perhaps you have thought or felt that the Bible doesn't fully add up or make complete sense. **Then this book is for you**.

Beyond that, this book is for those who really want to find out for themselves what the message and meaning of the Scripture is. If you seek hard after the truth and hold on to the truth based on the evidence discovered for yourself, even if it means rethinking what you previously believed or had been told the Bible said and meant, **then this book is for you**.

It's for those who are courageous enough to think and believe differently from the present day "orthodox"¹ systems and traditions even if it means the ridicule and rejection of family and friends.

Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

– Matthew 5:11-12

Though personal conviction of truth is often costly, Jesus Christ did say we would be "blessed" and to "rejoice."

It will be a test of character and personal integrity to hold to a view contrary to the majority if you find the evidence to warrant a change of thinking. But as someone once said, "The truth is the truth even if no one believes it, and a lie is a lie even if everyone believes it."

The Old and New

Please rest assured that this book and the books in this series do not abandon **historical and biblically evidenced** doctrines of Christianity. Indeed, these books hold firmly to the Bible as God-breathed and other core teachings such as the sacrificial blood atonement of Christ Jesus and justification by grace through faith alone.

On the other hand, these books do challenge the liberal and present day "conservative" opinions of our time that render a radically different picture about what the Bible says and what it means by what it says, as you will see. It will challenge the "orthodox" consensus opinion that has become an **assumed**² set of biblical "facts."

¹ Orthodox: of, pertaining to, or conforming to the approved form of any doctrine, philosophy, ideology, etc. ... conforming to beliefs attitudes or modes of conduct that are generally approved. – Dictionary.com (online). Orthodoxy is simply the consensus opinion of recognized authorities and experts of the day. That opinion may be true, correct and certain, or it may not be.

² Assume: 1. to take for granted or without proof. – Dictionary.com (online)

Of course, these are vehemently guarded as sacred. But still, the issue is, does the consensus opinion agree with what the Bible actually says or not? Is it verified by the evidence of Scripture with the fewest contradictions?

How to Read and Study this Book

If you want to get the most out this book, here are some helpful suggestions:

- Start at the beginning and read it through page by page.
- Set aside sufficient time to read and study one chapter at a time with a Bible in hand.
- Though you can go through this book on your own, you might benefit from partnering up with your spouse, friend or even a small study group. But be sure they have the same open mind and are committed to considering the facts objectively. Get that commitment to do so first.
- Make sure you do not go beyond a word you do not understand. This book was carefully written to highlight the definitions of certain words so you can better understand the meaning of words and their application.
- Make sure you go back to a previous section or chapter if necessary and reread it until you feel you have a firm grasp of what is written before you proceed to the next.
- Take time to ponder and answer the questions at the end of each chapter. They are designed to help you review what you have read and studied, and confirm your own conclusions.

In other words, don't rush through this book. It's foundational to understanding what the Bible says and sets the groundwork for the rest of the books in this series. Take the time to absorb it, think about it, and test it.

Unique Approach to the Bible

The Bible is a true story. It's not just a collection of interesting stories, events and people. It's essentially the story of one man's family traced

and recorded down through the ages. It's a history that reveals God's unfolding plan and purpose for this family, which in turn develops a clearer and larger picture of God's will and grand design for the sake of His own Name and Glory.

This book, therefore, proposes to answer the question, "What does the Bible say and what does it mean by what it says?" by following this unfolding story and piecing together the key characters and elements of that story to present a picture of the whole purpose of God. "The sum of Your word is truth ..." (Psalm 119:160).

Unlike typical approaches, often called "systematic theology," that take small sections gathered from the biblical text to arrive at isolated conclusions of doctrine (such as the doctrine of salvation called Soteriology or the doctrine of Jesus Christ called Christology), this approach captures the broader, sequential³ context of the continuing unfolding storyline that is the progressive revelation of God throughout time.

Another unique distinction of this book is that it presents this biblical story as a unified whole with an unforced consistency of the people and covenants continually advancing God's unchanging purpose by God's sovereign hand of grace. This is in contrast to relatively modern, but popular, versions of a theological framework that divide the plan of God through the ages into theoretical "dispensations" and imagined "gaps." This is also in contrast to the teaching that biblical interpretation is based on each individual's personal conclusions or opinions (II Peter 1:20-21).

This book (and the following series of books) does, however, stay within the bounds of the well-accepted principles of interpretation of the Bible. The two fundamental ones are: 1) that the Bible is more accurately and safely understood in its own context and, 2) when the

³ Sequential [from sequence]: the following of one thing after another in chronological, causal, or logical order. – Victoria Newfeldt, Ed.in Chief, *Webster's New World Dictionary*, Third College Edition, New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, Inc., 1988.

Bible is allowed to interpret itself. These two basic principles underlie the guiding process that will be critical to answering the question about what the Bible actually says.

A Personal Message

Even though modern Bible teaching and preaching is primarily focused on personal application, and pastors and teachers strive to make it personally relevant to others, true individual significance is lost without understanding the full context of the word of God. The Bible was not written primarily to individuals although it does have individual, personal application (“How do I live my life now?”). But, what the Bible says and what it means has a much larger context. It is a **national message** of which an individual is a part of the whole.

Within that national message lies the greater personal message of true and lasting relevance. That a man or woman finds himself or herself as a vital part of a greater unfolding purpose of the Kingdom of God is the high road of finding personal significance and eternal purpose, which cannot be equaled.

Jesus commanded us to “**seek first His kingdom** and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you” (Matthew 6:33). But how can we seek His Kingdom if we don’t know and understand what it is and our place in it? This book introduces the national context of the Kingdom of God consistently through the biblical covenants assigned throughout the story of one man’s family.

Significance for Our Time

This book will lay the foundation for a biblical perspective of the consequences of a rapidly deteriorating moral, economic and political system not just in America, but in the rest of the “civilized world.” In order to understand why we are going through increasingly severe difficulties, we must understand biblical history and how it relates to us. Through evidence-based conclusions of fact in this book, and the

ones that follow, you may begin to catch a glimpse of why we have “gone off the rails,” so to speak, and what must be done to repent and return to do the will of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

These conclusions are not difficult to understand, but may be the ultimate challenge to accept. If, however, you discover they are true, correct and certain, there is no other choice but to accept them unless, of course, you find the personal cost too great. If you want results and want to be a part of a real change of direction that seeks first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, consider carefully what this book and the books that follow present.

This book, and the rest of the books in this series, will not interest those who have concluded that nothing can be done to remedy our deteriorating conditions because, after all, “we are in the end times” and everything is going to get worse anyway. If that is true, why do anything at all beyond the survival of yourself and family and maybe get motivated to get as many “saved” as possible?

If you also believe that things will turn around only if God directly intervenes by a massive global display of His presence and power “when Jesus comes back,” and that we are powerless to do anything apart from this direct action of God, then this book will not interest you.

If, on the other hand, you believe that the true local church is the dwelling place of God by His Spirit and the church is His “body” to fulfill His “eternal purpose...so that the manifold wisdom of God might **now** be made known **through the church** to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places” (Ephesians 3:10-11), then read on. If you believe that God the Father in Christ Jesus is “far above all rule and authority and power and dominion and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come, and He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things **to the church, which is His body**, the fullness of Him who fills all in all” (Ephesians 1:21-23) and that Jesus promised “I will build My church; and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it” (Matthew 16:18), then read on.

If you do not yet realize, at least in some small degree, that the problems and issues of our time have consequences with critical outcomes, then there may be little reason to read this book. However, if you are aware enough to know that:

- murder, rape and drugs are continuing to increase,
- prisons are overflowing,
- sexual perversion is rampant,
- politicians and judges are largely compromised and many are corrupt,
- the economic debt is unmanageable and unsolvable in the present system (that is, there is “no mathematical solution” or “market solution” to pay it off),
- we are daily poisoned by “dead” food laced with chemicals, preservatives, pesticides and herbicides, not to mention environmental pollution introducing more chemicals and heavy metal poisoning,

then you may want to consider this book seriously as a study of what the Bible says and what it means by what it says.

What Is this Book About?

This is a foundational study that tells the true story about one man and his physical offspring. It’s the story about how God revealed Himself and specially chose Abraham and his descendants through Isaac and Jacob to establish His Kingdom on earth. It’s the story of God’s faithful covenant relationship with this chosen covenant family. It connects all the significant points of history and covenants from Abraham to Jesus Christ, helping you make sense about what the Bible says. And it shows why the vast majority of the churches today have misunderstood God’s purpose and plan to establish His Kingdom in righteousness and justice. When you complete this book, you may never read or study the Bible in the same way again.

Okay, here you go. Are you ready to start discovering what the Bible says and what it means by what it says? Be like a Berean⁴ and examine everything that is written here very carefully.

And one more piece of counsel, to get the most out of this book and the remainder of the books in this series as they interact with God's word: **Read the Bible as if you were reading it for the very first time.** To do that, you may need to temporarily set aside what you have come to believe the Bible says and what it means by what it says and consciously put your beliefs on the shelf. Examine the Scriptures afresh. You may just discover new truths that you have never seen before.

... and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free. – John 8:32

In the quest for truth, may the Spirit of truth make His revelation and wisdom known to you.

Lawrence Blanchard
December 2012

⁴ In Acts 17:10-12, the Apostle Paul preached “the word” to some of the people in Berea and the text says of them: “Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so.”

Summary of the *Covenant Heritage Series*

The *Covenant Heritage Series* is a set of seven books that will help you understand what the Bible says and what it means to you in regard to your heritage. The series examines the current critical issues of our time in light of what the Bible says. Finally, it offers biblical answers for transforming this world system back to God's original plan and purpose.

You will be challenged to re-examine what the majority consensus believes about the teaching of Scripture and the politically correct and religiously acceptable life perspectives and practices. The *Covenant Heritage Series* will provoke you to think! In the end, you will be able to decide for yourself what your ultimate purpose is and your consequential duties and obligations before the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

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