God is on a Mission

redeemer was His only Son Jesus Christ who came to earth 2000 years ago **(JC1).** His substitute death on the cross was sufficient to pay the penalty of sin that His people owe to God. By rising from death and returning to God in heaven, Jesus demonstrated that He truly was God's promised redeemer. As a result, anyone who hears God's Gospel Good News about Jesus and responds in repentance and faith, admitting their sin, seeking reconciliation with God, and believing Jesus is God's only solution to their sin problem can regain the true life that was lost in the *Fall*. Jesus now reigns from heaven at God's right hand, from where He is gathering a new spiritually awakened humanity in a collaboration of His Holy Spirit, His word (the Bible) and His people - the true Church of Jesus Christ: comprising believers who daily seek to trust and obey their King, no longer living for just "self" but for God, their Lord!

***Paradise Restored*:** God is on a mission! The Bible outlines this unfolding story. God continues to fulfil His promise to bring "blessing to the nations" as He gathers spiritually restored people into His eternal kingdom. When the last of God's people have been gathered in, Jesus Christ will return to earth a second time **(JC2)** to wind up human history as we know it. At that time of *Consummation*, the Bible reveals that the currently intangible, invisible, spiritual Kingdom of God will be transformed into a tangible and visible reality i.e. the physical and spiritual realms will be combined into one glorious eternal kingdom. At that time God will judge every person: those who responded positively to His redeemer, Jesus Christ, will live with God in *Paradise Restored* where they will experience "eternal life" forever in the new "Eden" - the new heavens and earth. Those who responded negatively, choosing not to accept God's solution for their sin problem, will be condemned to a place of torment the Bible labels "hell." There they will "live" separated forever from God - the source of true life and goodness - and from His redeemed new humanity, in a place of "eternal death." In the opening chapters of the Book of Ephesians, the apostle Paul marvels at the redemption that God, the Father, is accomplishing in and through His Son, Jesus Christ, as the third person of the Triune Godhead, the Holy Spirit, draws the people God in amazing grace and mercy, has graciously chosen to redeem.

Jesus Christ: the hinge and hope of history

Though these people were spiritually "*dead in your transgressions and sins*" and following the "*ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air*" and "*deserving of* (God's) *wrath*"… "*because of His great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive in Christ*" to fulfil His calling on their lives that they might be "*holy and blameless in His sight.*"



The era in which we now live, the epoch between the 1st and 2nd comings of Jesus Christ, is the time in which redemption has "already" been accomplished, but which is "not yet" come to it's ultimate fulfilment and realisation. But the crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and ascension of Jesus back to His Father in glory, effectively guarantees that God's redemptive triumph will be completed.

Till that final day, the mission of the true Church of Jesus Christ on earth is to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ, for the gospel message is the means by which God, by His Spirit, gathers His new spiritually renewed humanity into His eternal kingdom.

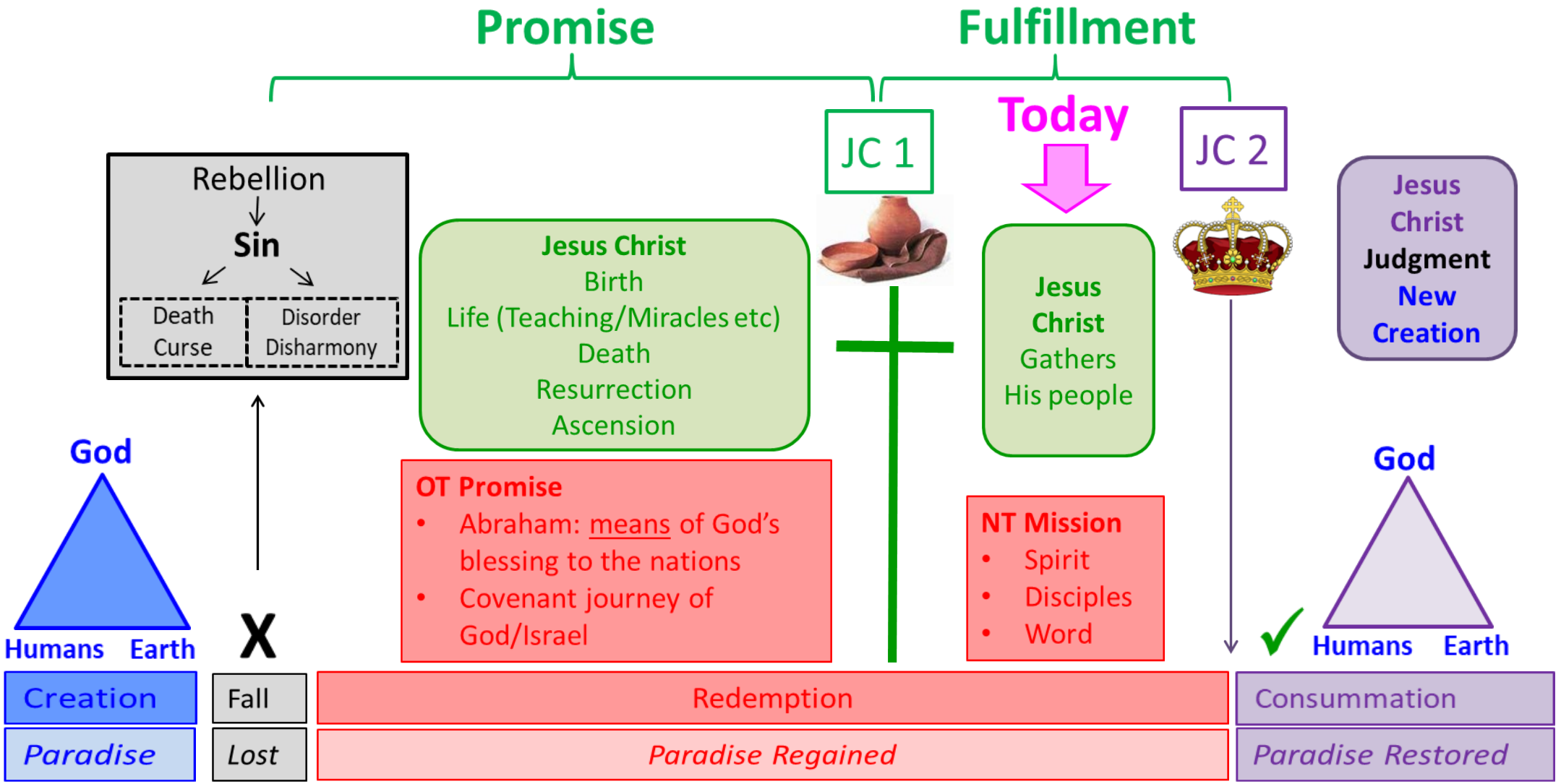
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The Story



God's Redemptive Triumph

"For God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life"
(John 3:16 NLT).



Paradise: The Bible story begins at *Creation* as God carefully crafts a well-ordered, "very good" universe; all out of nothing - by His powerful word. God put the first people (Adam and Eve) in a very special and unique paradise - Eden. There they experienced the true life God planned in a close, personal, harmonious relationship with God; with each other; and with their surroundings.

Paradise Lost: *Paradise* was lost when the man and his wife rebelled against God, when God's enemy (Satan) successfully tempted the representatives of the human race to disobey God. In this *Fall* of mankind everything changed in an instant, as humans began to experience the penalty God had threatened - death - together with a devastating, debilitating spiritual condition the Bible terms "sin." Though created as God's image-bearers to live in the presence of God; in dependence on God, experiencing His blessing and peace, they were now separated from God - the source of true life - by their sin. God expelled them from His holy presence out into the wilderness of the world, where mankind still "lives" today in an existence that is only a hollow "shell" of the true life Adam and Eve had previously enjoyed in God's garden paradise. Disobedience to God brought disaster to mankind and to the rest of God's glorious creation.

Paradise Regained: In amazing love, grace and mercy, God immediately initiated a plan of *Redemption* to rescue His now spiritually alienated ("dead") human rebels. God's solution for the human sin problem enables individuals to be restored back into a right relationship with God and to recover true life once again. God promised a man called Abraham that one of his offspring would one day come and fix the problem of sin, death and alienation from God, and overcome their devastating affects - a broken world; suffering and pain; and the futility and frustration of "life" lived without a spiritual connection to God etc. God's promised