



that He did not look
like a man,
and His form did not resemble
a human being —
¹⁵ so He will sprinkle^{A,B}
many nations.^{C,a}

^a52:15 Nm
19:18-21; Ezk
36:25
^bRm 15:21;
Eph 3:5

Kings will shut their mouths
because of Him,
For they will see
what had not been told them,
and they will understand
what they had not heard.^b



The Promises of God in the Mission of God

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While God, being eternal and the fountainhead of all life, was never sent by anyone, His mission, in pursuit of His divine purposes, reaches back all the way to creation. God made Adam and Eve in His image and placed them on this earth so they might accomplish His mandate to multiply and fill the earth. Through their obedience to God's command, and through their offspring, His vice-regents on this earth would take God's presence to the ends of the earth, expanding the scope of His reign and extending His rule (Gn 1:26–31).

When the first man and woman transgressed the boundaries set by their Creator and fell into sin, God's mission took on a new element. No longer did humans enjoy direct communion with God. They now required redemption from sin and reconciliation with their Creator. God's story of salvation is the account of His quest to reclaim a people for Himself who will take His presence to the ends of the earth once again. The Creator immediately instilled hope when He promised that Eve's offspring would overcome the curse (Gn 3:15). The prospect of restoring creation rested on God's faithfulness to His promise.

Yet, again, God's mission was potentially thwarted almost immediately. In keeping with the creation mandate, humanity began to multiply and to fill the earth. But rather than take God's presence to the ends of the earth, humans plunged into evil, sin, and destruction (Gn 6:1–4). God judged their rebellion through a universal flood, but He renewed His promise of a new creation to Noah and His family (Gn 6–9). At the Tower of Babylon, God dispersed humanity in judgment (Gn 11), but then called Abraham in order to bless all the peoples of the earth through him and his descendants (Gn 12, 15, 17, 22).

Faithful to His promise, God made the children of Abraham into a great nation and delivered them from bondage in Egypt through the exodus. As a nation formed by God, Israel would display God's character to all nations, summoning them to participate in the renewal of all things by worshiping Him alone (Ex 19:5–6). In this way, God would bless all nations through Israel, Abraham's offspring. Once Israel was in the land, God further focused the promise of an offspring on a son of King David, declaring that his descendant would establish an eternal kingdom (2Sm 7:14).

Yet Israel disobeyed, and God scattered her across the nations. The exile posed the greatest threat to the promise and mission of God, and the Old Testament ends with the promises of God in doubt yet with the hope of divine restoration still intact. How will God remain faithful to His promises and complete His mission if the people whom He has chosen—the recipients of His promises—are disobedient and in ruins? It is in the offspring of Adam, Abraham, and David, the suffering Servant (Is 52:13–53:12), the true Israel, that God will fulfill His promises and His mission.

^A52:15 Or *stirle* ^B52:15 As the blood of a sacrifice is sprinkled on the altar on behalf of the people ^C52:15 LXX reads *so many nations will marvel at Him*