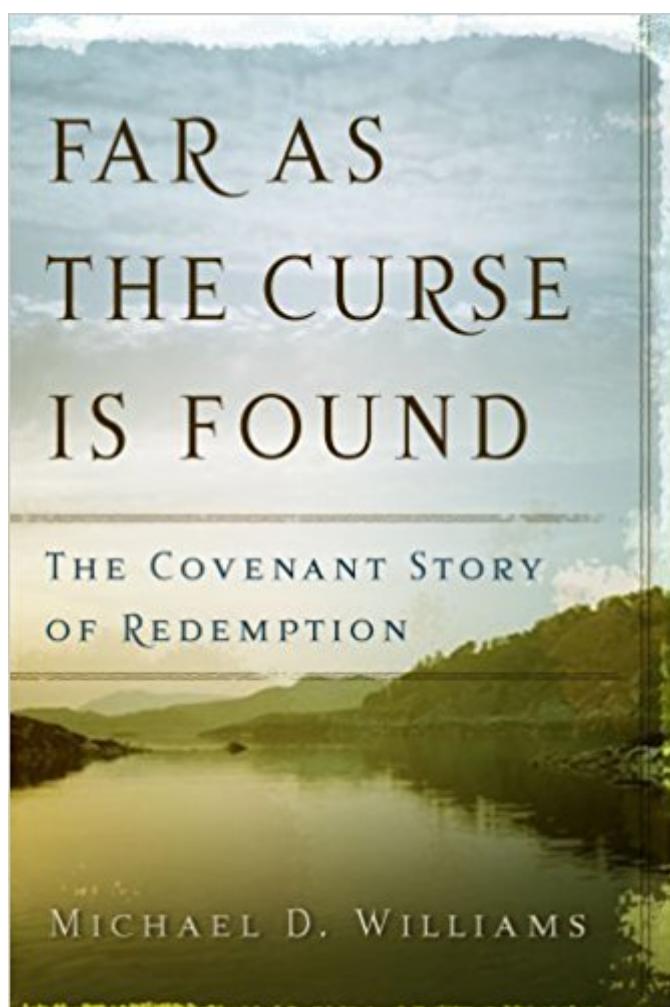


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# Far As The Curse Is Found: The Covenant Story Of Redemption



## Synopsis

God's covenant with his people is an unfolding historical drama with personal and earthly dimensions that are often overlooked. In this study of the meaning and scope of the covenant, Michael D. Williams highlights the goodness of the physical realm and God's redemptive intentions for his creation.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Will help readers understand the Bible's covenantal structure and character, glory in God's covenant faithfulness, and see in Jesus the fullness of God's covenant now and forever. Drawing from a wide range of Reformed and evangelical scholarship, and rooted firmly in the Scriptures, Williams's account is unique in its approach, thorough in its development, compelling in its argument, and timely in its arrival." --T. M. Moore

"Combines four emphases in a remarkably fresh way: exegetical faithfulness, biblical-theological wisdom, awareness of contributions already made, and evangelistic and pastoral fire. I am not aware of anything quite like it. What a wonderful book!"

--William Edgar

"When I used a prepublication copy to teach seminary students, they found the book to be reader-friendly and the story of the intimate connection between creation and redemption easy to follow. They were deeply moved by the power of the Bible's own covenant narrative. Some were surprised to be opened to new ways of looking at God, his world, salvation, and themselves. The book is clear, thoughtful, and faithful to Scripture." --Robert A. Peterson

Michael D. Williams (MTS, Harvard Divinity School; MDiv, Grand Rapids Baptist Seminary; PhD,

University of Toronto) is professor of systematic theology at Covenant Theological Seminary. He was professor of theology at Dordt College for six years before joining the Covenant faculty. Dr. Williams is author of *This World Is Not My Home* and coauthor, with Robert A. Peterson, of *Why I Am Not an Arminian*. He is also highly regarded for his insightful articles on the nature of theology, theological method, history, and homosexuality.

Fantastic look at how the Scriptures, from Genesis to Revelation, fit together. I'm a pastor who also teaches future pastors in seminary, part-time, and who loves Biblical accuracy. I'm also a huge advocate of God's people understanding the Bible better. This book gets a thumb up on both of those counts—Biblical accuracy and knowing the Bible (and thus God and His salvation) better.

This is a phenomenal book. Williams traces the biblical story through a redemptive-historical lens that brings out the richness of God's narrative from Genesis to Revelation. It is an easy, insightful and penetrating read that presents the Bible's story according to its covenantal and cohesive structure with Christ at the center. It is an excellent primer to understanding Covenant Theology. I would highly recommend that every Christian read this book. It is a shame that I didn't read something like this in my earlier Christian years instead of the mess pot of material that dished up disjointed Bible verses in a pragmatically oriented fashion. We must understand the Bible as a whole story and Williams excels in telling it.

I knew I was going to love this book from the moment I perused the authors cited in the footnotes: John Murray, Christopher Wright, Anthony Hoekema, Geerhardus Vos, Abraham Kuyper, and S. G. DeGraaf, the author of the beloved *Promise and Deliverance* (which gets two citations in the main text of the book). It was love at first sight, and Michael Williams' *Far as the Curse is Found: The Covenant Story of Redemption* did not disappoint. This book is one of the best contemporary introductions to biblical theology, the covenant of grace, and the Christ-centered unity of Scripture that is available today (together with Goheen and Bartholomew's *The Drama of Scripture: Finding Our Place in the Biblical Story*). Williams traces the story of redemption using the themes of covenant and kingdom, weaving together a compelling overview of the Bible from creation to consummation, emphasizing the continuity between the Old and New Testaments. He ably challenges the seasoned biblical theologian on specific points while making the Bible's story of redemption clear and accessible for someone new to covenant theology. Most importantly, the

authors cited in the footnotes proved to be an accurate indicator of the approach that Williams takes in his overview of the story of the Bible. Williams makes consistent and thematic use of some of the most beloved riches of the Continental Reformed tradition, including the Heidelberg Catechism's articulation of a positive view of the law, and Abraham Kuyper's vision for the cosmic scope of redemption. Williams is wonderfully clear, for example, in his robust defense of the continuity of the Mosaic covenant within the one covenant of grace. "Far from setting aside the promise of grace, the law was given to those who had been saved by grace in order to show them how to live in that grace. Thus Sinai does not bring fresh bondage but rather proof that the old bondage had been broken. In fact, we can speak of the law as a further act of grace, a gift to God's people that serves his covenantal and gracious purposes. Thus the call of the law is to translate God's grace into action" (151). Moreover, Williams presents - in a winsome and compelling way - the cosmic and corporate scope of redemption in Christ. While he uses the covenant as his primary motif to tell the story of redemption, he acknowledges that the kingdom of God also serves as a unifying theme from Genesis to Revelation. "The kingdom is nothing less than the rule of God. The church is the people of God called to live out and proclaim the kingdom. A proper understanding of the church places it within the context of the kingdom because God's reign extends over more than simply the church. The kingdom of God has the whole creation in view and ultimately will lay claim to all things" (265). This book is highly recommended as an accessible introduction to covenant theology, one that is rooted deeply in the distinctives of the Continental Reformed tradition. Enjoy!

Excellent book for Seminary Biblical Theology students. Williams gives a good introduction to understanding the historical-redemptive history of the Old Testament and its progressive to the New Testament. Excellent for beginning Seminary students. Gives a comprehensive understanding of the drama of redemption from OT to NT.

Currently reading this book. It's a struggle to get through, but I'm pushing through. I find the material dry at times. Definitely not a book to just "skim" through.

great

I just finished reading this book and must say that I am quite pleased with it. Michael Williams has done an admirable job of making a Biblical Theological model of understanding the Scriptures (i.e. redemptive-historical, in the line of Geerhardus Vos) accessible to a broad audience. I read a lot of

this genre of literature, and most of it is fairly technical (i.e. a knowledge of Greek and/or Hebrew a must); however, Williams' book manages to retain both readability and an appropriate scholarly depth. The average reader will be able to pick it up without any problems. Regarding the contents of the book: I was happy to see that Williams structures his book around the story of redemption. He draws the reader nicely through creation, fall, redemption, and consummation. In doing so he explores the richness of the Biblical narrative. Overall, this is a fine introduction to the Covenant Story of Redemption. I think that it would make an excellent text book for a college Theology class. Note: this book is not intended as an exhaustive scholarly treatise. So for those of you who have read a good deal of Dutch Neo-Calvinists or followers/sympathizers of Reformational thinking, you may find it to be repeating many things that you've heard before.

There is no doubt that Michael D. Williams (Prof of Systematic Theology at Covenant Theological Seminary) is a gifted writer and teacher. But even gifted writers and teachers at times face the serious challenge of making complex theological expositions both accessible to laymen and challenging for scholars. This book is as close to achieving those goals as any I've read. Thoroughly historical-redemptive and Christocentric in its mission, it is a masterfully written journey from the first biblical covenant, through the renewal covenants, and onward to the cross. It never for a moment loses its readability. I especially enjoyed Williams' interpretation of the differences between the biblical covenant and lesser covenants. Recommended reading.

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