

# All Part of His Plan

by [Colin Punt](#) (March 2026)



Savaoph, God the Father (Viktor Vasnetsov, 1885-96)

**God had recently had several** very uncomfortable run-ins with people and creatures that espoused interesting and somewhat disturbing misinterpretations of his so-called plan. After a school bus driver had a seizure and six children died in the ensuing violent and fiery crash, the minister at the funeral attempted to comfort the confused, sad, and angry mourners by saying that while we may not understand, all things happen according to God's divine plan. And when a multi-national energy company clear-cut 200 acres of old growth pine in northern Wisconsin for a frac sand mine, the endangered Yellow Throated Warblers sang to one another as they fled their homes, "This is all just part of His plan."

Why, God thought with consternation, would they say such things? How do the deaths of schoolchildren and the

destruction of vulnerable habitats contribute to the implementation of my plan? There were other similarly aggravating instances—a twelve-year-old girl being forced to carry her rapist's child to term, a four-year old run down in his own street by the driver of a full-size pickup who could not even see the child (a smiling and loving spark of joy to all who knew him) due to the size of his own massive compensatory vehicle, and a loving and beloved young wife and mother struck down slowly and painfully by breast cancer. Every time it was "God works in mysterious ways" or "It's all part of his plan." Eventually enough was enough and God decided to revisit his plan himself. It had been years since he had actually read it—by this time things had been on autopilot for a while—and he had some trouble finding it at all. Eventually, though, after cleaning out a good portion of his basement, he located it in his filing cabinet right between the owners' manual for his oven and the folder with the paperwork for his Roth IRA, which he relabeled "IRA, Roth" and moved behind the hot water heater manual. The plan was printed in quarto and library bound with blue cloth covers. Taking it upstairs and sitting at the kitchen table with a cup of coffee, he spent most of the next three days reading through the whole thing—almost 1500 onionskin pages of divine plan, outlining in general the intended constitution and direction of the whole planet, humankind, and all of God's creation. While there were moments of whimsy and not a few instances of real creative genius, God was shocked and embarrassed by some of the questionable inclusions and glaring omissions. He remembered devising this plan and all the effort that went into it—almost a whole week of work—but as he read the plan, it was as if it was written by someone completely different. God could not fathom crafting a plan like this one at the present time, with all he had seen and experienced, all he knew. It seemed so juvenile, and certainly not a work he would take pride in were he to write it today. He actually felt an uncomfortable embarrassment as he sat at the kitchen table flipping slowly through the massive ancient tome. When

he finally finished, he saw it was nearly eleven p.m., so he got up to brush his teeth and go to bed. Lying there late into the night, unable to sleep and mind running over and over through the plan, God decided he needed a new plan. God resolved to start tomorrow. He felt better after making this decision and soon fell into a deep and restful sleep.

God woke early the next morning and set right to work after he made some coffee and a breakfast sandwich. Unfortunately, it had been some six millennia since he had written his last plan, and he could not recall how exactly he put it together. He returned to the basement filing cabinet, but there were no drafts, no notes, just the final product. He sat back down at the kitchen table to think. Should he start with an outline? Or should he begin by marking up the previous plan with needed revisions in red pen? No, the new plan needed a whole new structure, but what that structure was, he didn't know. After throwing out half of a legal pad of false starts, God decided he needed help—professional help. He had dumped the phone book in the recycling bin as soon as it had been unceremoniously thrown on his doorstep some months ago, so he drove to his local library in his vintage Volkswagen Beetle (really, the only luxury he kept for himself) to consult the yellow pages. God flipped to the pages with “PL” headings and was immediately confronted with the choice between “Planners, Party” and “Planners, Urban.” His project seemed a bit more complex than a party and cities were kind of like little worlds unto themselves, so God went with the urban planners. There were, to his surprise, five consultancy firms listed under “Planners, Urban.” God wrote the firm names and phone numbers down in his notebook and drove home. With his copy of the I Ching open on the kitchen table next to the notebook and two coins, God cast lots for each firm until he was left with Maynard and Associates. Not once doubting the wisdom of the choice, God immediately called the number in his notebook to hire them for the opportunity of a lifetime. Only after his call went straight to voicemail did he realize it was already

after five on a Friday and he would have to wait until next week to talk with them.

At precisely nine o'clock on Monday morning God walked through the glass office doors on the second floor of a nondescript office building in a nondescript office park. A petite and heavily made-up redhead at the reception desk asked if he had an appointment.

"Well, no," said God. "I was hoping to hire the firm for a very important and expansive planning project."

"Have you spoken with anyone about it yet?"

"Not yet."

"Okay, well let me see who is available," said the receptionist. She spent a few minutes tapping away at her computer and making two short calls. Eventually, a short, balding, middle-aged man came in and introduced himself as Kevin. He ushered God into a small conference room where God explained his need. Kevin exuded a nervous energy and decided that if God was serious he should call in a principal. After a full morning of meetings, God was sent home with a handshake agreement and the promise of a full scope of work and contract ready for him by Thursday.

Before lunch on Thursday, God had reviewed the scope of work and signed the contract. It was more than he wanted to spend—much more, in fact—but this wasn't something to cheap out on. It was important. God sat at his kitchen table looking at the Gantt chart Kevin had given him. It was impressive: there were nearly fifty lines for different activities. The planning team was pulling together some initial materials and had scheduled a four-hour visioning session with God for Monday morning. Thereafter, they had scheduled weekly check-ins, with a forty-week total timeline for the entire project.

On Monday morning, God met with the planning team. Rob, the

principal, popped in briefly for appearance's sake, but Kevin was the project lead. Two junior planners, Ben and Suzy, filled out the rest of the team. Kevin turned down the lights as Ben and Suzy walked God through a 50-slide presentation detailing every step of the planning process. God's eyes had glazed over by the end, but they seemed to know what they were doing, so he went along with their plan for the plan.

"The first public meeting is in three weeks," explained Kevin. "Ben will be sending out postcards and pushing the news out on social media. Once we finalize the meeting materials, we'll run it by you prior to the meeting."

God agreed to the recommended course of action and two weeks later he received a link to a slideshow and a number of posters. There was a dizzying array of background information, flow charts, maps, charts, graphs, surveys, and other feedback opportunities, but frankly, God was not sure about the point of the feedback opportunities—neither what the questions were actually asking and what possible use the answers could be.

On the evening of the meeting, God sat in the front row of chairs set up in the biggest meeting room at the public library. Posters mounted on foam-core boards sat on easels lining the side and rear walls of the room. Ben fiddled with a laptop and projector system while Kevin and Suzy slowly circulated throughout the room, greeting attendees and answering questions. There were nearly a hundred attendees. God had expected more religious leaders, and perhaps a head of state or two, but the crowd was mostly middle class, white, and older. Other than a handful of crunchy-looking twenty-somethings probably out to save the world, almost the entire crowd was over fifty, and God guessed the average age of all attendees to be 70. This was the typically demographic for meetings like this, Ben told God. They would be reaching younger demographic cohorts through social media, and had a Spanish-language ad ready to run on two radio stations.

At the appointed time, Kevin called everyone to sit and welcomed them before inviting God to address the meeting before they got started. Now Kevin and God had already discussed this, so it was not a surprise, but God was still nervous, being more of a whisper and less of a windstorm kind of guy.

“Umm...” he started. The sound system whistled and squealed with feedback and Ben motioned to God to hold the microphone up closer to his mouth. “I want to thank you all for coming. This is a very important plan and I appreciate your willingness to help.”

God sat down and Ben and Suzy began their presentation. There was an astonishing amount of information—a video demonstrating plate tectonics, a chart showing regional world population growth, a comparison of historical deaths by war and disease, a rundown of major religious schisms, and an in-depth review of extinctions by biological taxa over time. When they were done, Kevin got up again to moderate the discussion while Ben provided data or other information as needed and Suzy frantically took notes.

“Why are we even doing this?” asked a gray and disagreeable-looking woman of nearly 80. “Things have been going just fine for 6000 years. We don’t need all this newfangled stuff.”

Kevin stumbled through a response about progress and the need to be prepared for the inevitability of change and called on the next speaker.

“What are you going to do about property taxes? They keep going up and it’s getting harder and harder for people on a fixed income to stay in their homes.”

“Well,” said Kevin, “I think there could be some macro-economic solutions we could look at that may have indirect effects on that issue. And perhaps some political recommendations regarding the social safety net as well. Thank

you for the question. Next.”

The next man was in his sixties, tall with curly gray hair, holding a stuffed giraffe and wearing a headband on which he had glued two fuzzy animal ears. “I want to start by thanking you all for giving us this opportunity to meet as a community and talk. But more importantly...” he paused to point to the fuzzy ears on his head “...to listen. I wore these ears tonight to remind us all to listen. God gave us two ears, but only one mouth because listening is twice as important as talking.”

‘Well, that’s not the real reason,’ God thought to himself. Clearly, Mr. Giraffe Ears didn’t know anything about audiology.

But Mr. Giraffe Ears wasn’t done yet. Holding up the stuffed giraffe, he continued, “I also brought my friend Jeffy along with me tonight. Giraffes have the largest hearts of any land animals.”

‘At least he got that right,’ thought God.

“Jeffy’s here to remind us to not just listen, but to use our hearts. Too often we think we can reason our way out of problems with our brains, but let me lovingly challenge you all here tonight: let’s think and feel with our hearts. Jeffy and I thank you all again.”

God rolled his eyes as Kevin thanked the speaker and Jeffy for their valuable input.

Except for two brief moments when the meeting seemed about to be hijacked by environmentalists and anti-vaxxers, the input session continued on like this for nearly ninety minutes. By the end of the meeting, God looked down at his notepad and saw he had gleaned only one single useful idea from the whole discussion—a pretty fun suggestion regarding ants, whom God thought probably deserved more anyway. But Kevin told him that they had pages of great feedback and that they were getting

good traffic at the plan website's suggestion box. Sure enough, two days later, Suzy emailed God a 25-page document summarizing plan input to-date. After this, there were several more in-person meetings, and the planning team eventually had almost 300 pages of plan participant-sourced suggestions for God to review. To God's disappointment, almost all of it was terrible.

But Kevin, Ben, and Suzy, in their nearly maniacal dedication to providing "deliverables," continued collecting, editing, distilling, and synthesizing until somehow, eight months later, they delivered God a draft plan. They gave God a week to review it before scheduling another series of meetings to present the draft plan recommendations and take in a final round of feedback. The plan document itself was impressive; full of colorful photos, descriptive illustrations, diagrams, flowcharts, and graphs. Every page had bullet lists and call-out boxes. But it was just slim: only 250 pages.

"Isn't it kind of thin?" God asked. "The old one is 2000 pages."

"It's streamlined," said Kevin.

"People don't want to read something that long," said Ben. "Less text is a good thing."

"Plus, people really love the graphics," added Suzy. "That's what they're looking for. It really makes the document pop."

While God diligently read through the plan three times, red pen in hand, making corrections and necessary edits, his hired planning team scheduled a final round of public meetings to present draft plan recommendations and gather public feedback in order to make final edits. Unfortunately, now several dozen meetings in, the general public was suffering meeting fatigue and none of this final round of meetings was attended by more than a dozen participants. Worse, nearly all participants at this stage fell into two camps. Half had attended every

meeting but still continued to show up to lodge the same niche complaints, never adding anything new. The other half were entirely new to the planning process and demanded that it start over so they could shape the plan from the beginning as they saw fit. Neither group was particularly helpful.

Finally, some weeks later, a box with a dozen copies of The Plan was delivered to God's doorstep directly from the printer. It was spiral bound and printed on heavy glossy paper, ready for immediate implementation. God kept a copy on his living room bookshelf, filed another copy away, along with the planning contract under "Plan, New," and put the other copies, still in the box, in his basement storeroom.

A week later, a tailings dam broke in China and wiped out an entire mining village, the Karner Blue butterfly went extinct, and nine missing children were rescued from a megachurch pastor's kiddie porn dungeon.

'Next time,' God thought, 'I'm doing it in-house,' and had his secretary Genesis set up a meeting with Thomas Aquinas and Isaac Newton.

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