

THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT
THE GLUE OF THE BIBLE
HIGHLANDS – 7/13/14

Gen. 9:26-27 - *'Blessed be the LORD, the God of Shem, and may Canaan be his servant. May God enlarge Japheth, and may he dwell in the tents of Shem; and may Canaan be his servant.*

God's promised line for blessing for the world is promised through Shem. From Shem's seed, the Messiah would come. Abraham comes through Shem's line. We read the promise of God in Gen. 12:3 - that all the families of the earth would be blessed in Abraham – in his descendants. Again, the Messiah would come through Abraham's line.

We need to be careful to note that blessings would come to Japheth through Shem. The blessings do NOT come from Shem but through Shem. The blessing flows out of Shem's relationship with God (Dt. 28:7-9 – *the Lord will establish you as a holy people to Himself*). Again, the Messiah would come through Shem.

For 2,000 years, God dealt with MANKIND – no Jews or Gentiles, just “MANKIND.”

The mid-point of Genesis 11 records the genealogy of Shem through Peleg. Through Peleg's line we find Nahor who begot Terah and Terah begot Abram. Terah was a pagan – he served other gods (Josh. 24:2). Terah didn't believe in one God; he believed in many gods. Terah wasn't Jewish. So – Abram wasn't Jewish. Abram was a Gentile! From where did the Jewish people come? Isa. 43:1 – God CREATED Israel through Jacob – father of the 12 tribes.

The second part of the OT covers about 2,000 years. It begins with Genesis 12 and includes the rest of the OT. In Genesis 12 we read of God choosing Abram – and entering into an eternal, unilateral, unconditional covenant with him and his descendants.

Eternal means forever! (Jer. 7:7; 25:5) (the land is given forever and ever – min olam, v'ad olam. That verbiage, “forever and ever” is used of God!!)

Unilateral means one-sided.

Unconditional means that the outcome of an agreement/covenant rests on one party – GOD! God fulfills the workings of the Abrahamic covenant REGARDLESS of what Abraham and his descendants do.

Gen. 12:1-3 – God promises Abram and his descendants:

- Land – only believing Jewish people will inherit all the land that God had promised – in the Millennial Kingdom.
- Seed – a great nation – collective seed; and THE Seed (the Messiah) Who will sit on King David's throne in Jerusalem and reign for 1,000 years in the Millennial Kingdom.
- Blessing – salvation for both Jew and Gentile through the Messiah. Gal. 3:14 - *that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.*

The Abrahamic covenant is the GLUE of the Scriptures: The Abrahamic Covenant forms the FRAMEWORK for understanding God's plan of salvation and His end time program!

Gen. 15:4-6

Verse 6 is the first time "believe" is used in Scripture! And, it's connected with the promise of a – SON. AND – this is also the first time that Abram is said to have been RECKONED AS RIGHTEOUS – Abram was justified by faith – he was declared RIGHTEOUS by God – Abram was saved! Abram believed God's promises concerning a seed – a collective seed – Abram's multiple descendants – which included a SON! We MUST remember that God is indeed promising Abram a totally human son in his life. God is NOT telling Abram to hold on and wait for a son to appear in 2000 years.

The actual covenant is found in Gen. 12; the covenant ceremony is found in Gen. 15. God cut the covenant with Abram. God entered into a BINDING commitment/promise – the Abrahamic Covenant. And through this covenant God promised Abram and his descendants: land, seed, and a blessing.

Gen 15:7-21

In ancient times in this area of the world, when covenants were cut, the parties participating in the covenant walked in the ditch between the animals that were cut in two. Of course, the blood from the animals flowed into the ditch. The participating parties swore to one another – that they would each keep their part of the commitment. If one or both didn't fulfill what had been promised, they would end up like the animals on each side of the ditch – dead!

Who walked in the ditch? It was GOD ALONE!

GOD – symbolized by

- a smoking oven and a burning torch (Ex. 3:14 – burning bush; Ex. 13:21 – pillar of fire; Ex. 19:18 – God descended on Mount Sinai in fire; Psa. 97:2 – clouds and darkness surround Him; Dt. 4:24/Heb. 12:29 – God is a consuming fire.

GOD swore BY HIMSELF (Heb. 6:13) to carry out what HE PROMISED to Abram in the Abrahamic covenant (land, seed, blessing).

The Abrahamic Covenant works itself out in:

- The Land Covenant – the land
- The Davidic Covenant – the Seed
- The New Covenant – the blessing

The Abrahamic Covenant assures:

- Israel's permanent existence as a nation. Gen. 17:7-8 - *And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and your descendants*

after you. ⁸ Also I give to you and your descendants after you the land in which you are a stranger, all the land of Canaan, as an everlasting possession; and I will be their God. (since God declared it to be an everlasting covenant w/ Israel – and since the covenant is unilateral/unconditional – the nation of Israel must exist forever).

- Is Israel in existence today? YES!
 - Is the Israel of today the Israel of the Bible? YES! Israel was an unrestored nation in Biblical times and continues to be unrestored. Israel, as a nation, will be restored at the end of the Tribulation (Zech. 12:10ff).
- Israel's permanent ownership/inheritance of the Promised Land.
 - Are they inhabiting all the land that God had promised Abraham in Gen. 15? Not yet.
 - Have they been exiled from the land in the past? YES! Egypt, Assyria, Babylon. . . .
 - What were these exiles due to? Disobedience!
 - Enjoyment and continual habitation of the land prior to the Millennial Kingdom is based on their obedience to the Mosaic Covenant (Deut. 28:58-64) (John 5:45-46)
 - Only believing Israel – “the Israel of God” (Gal. 6:16) – Jewish believers – will inherit the Promised Land – in the Millennial Kingdom.
 - Oh – so it's OK that we reprimand Israel today. . . . NO!
 - Joel 3:1-2
 - Zech. 12:1-3
 - Psalms 122:6
- Salvation offered to all the families of the earth (Gen. 12:3).
- The Millennial Kingdom (Rom. 11:15).

If the Abrahamic Covenant is unilateral and unconditional – based on God alone; He alone passed through the animals in the ditch and swore by Himself (Heb. 6:13); God guarantees the fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant. . .

- . . . then every promise of that covenant must be fulfilled – or else God is unfaithful – a liar! What are those promises? Land, seed, blessing.

If the Abrahamic Covenant is conditional (dependent upon the obedience of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and the children of Israel for the fulfillment of those promises). . .

- . . . then not every promise of that covenant has to be fulfilled including Gen. 12:3, Rom. 11:15, Rom. 15:8-12, etc.
- . . . we can treat the Israeli/Palestinian struggle under the rules of social justice. We can view it as the UN views it!
- . . . there's no assurance of a Millennial Kingdom (no Seed/Messiah reigning from the throne of David in Jerusalem for 1,000 years)
- . . . salvation for both Jews and Gentiles would depend on Israel's obedience!!! (The Abrahamic Covenant is the constitution of our salvation. Just as the

fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant is NOT based on Israel's obedience, our salvation is NOT based on anything we DO. Jesus has done it all. It is finished! We do NOT earn our salvation!)

Jeremiah 31:34-37!

Some believers have said: "Israel has no divine right to be in the land of promise when she is breaking the covenant of promise." What is the covenant of promise? The Abrahamic Covenant:

Gal. 3:15-18 - *Brethren, I speak in the manner of men: Though it is only a man's covenant, yet if it is confirmed, no one annuls or adds to it.* ¹⁶ Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "And to your Seed," ^[i] who is Christ. ¹⁷ And this I say, that the law, which was four hundred and thirty years later, cannot annul the covenant that was confirmed before by God in Christ, ^[i] that it should make the promise of no effect. ¹⁸ For if the inheritance is of the law, it is no longer of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise.

Israel can break the Mosaic Covenant and has broken the Mosaic Covenant (Jer. 31:31) because the Mosaic Covenant is conditional - God required Israel's obedience. BUT the Mosaic Covenant does not do away with/annul the promises of the Abrahamic Covenant (Gal. 3:15)!

If God has "abandoned" Israel – why has He fought for Israel in 1948, 1956, 1967, 1973 – against all odds? God has chosen Israel for HIS purposes and God's purposes will be accomplished.

The fulfillment of end time Scripture revolves around an Israel that is in the land!

The Abrahamic Covenant is timeless – because it is solely dependent upon God. The Abrahamic Covenant was still in effect even after the patriarchs of Israel had sinned several times.

- Gen. 12:10-20 – Abram goes down to Egypt after God promises him the land.
 - Tells Sarai to lie to Pharaoh and claim that she was Abram's sister.
 - Pharaoh is punished.
 - God's promises were to come through Isaac (Gen. 17:19; Rom. 9:7). Isaac was to be born to Abram and Sarai.
 - Here was an attempt on the part of Satan to pollute the line of the Messiah!
 - God's purposes can NEVER be thwarted.
- Gen. 20:1-18 – "déjà vu" with Abimelech who took Sarah. After Abraham and Abimelech hashed things out, we read in Gen. 20:17-18 - *So Abraham prayed to God; and God healed Abimelech, his wife, and his female servants. Then they bore children;* ¹⁸ *for the LORD had closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech because of Sarah, Abraham's wife.*
- God later confirmed the covenant w/ Abraham's son, Isaac (Gen. 26:1-4).
- In spite of Isaac's sin after that confirmation (Gen. 26:6-11), God later confirmed the covenant with his son, Jacob (Gen. 28:13-15; 35:9-12; 48:3-4).

- Even though Jacob and his sons were guilty of various sins (Gen. 37:18-36; 38:12-26), Joseph regarded the covenant to be in effect at the end of his life and was convinced that it would continue to be so into the future (Gen. 50:24-26).
- Several generations after Joseph, when the people of Israel were enslaved in Egypt, God made it clear to Moses that the Abrahamic Covenant was still in effect (Ex. 2:24; 6:2-8)

Even after the nation of Israel had sinned in numerous ways over the course of several centuries, David regarded the Abrahamic Covenant to be in effect with Israel in his day.

I Chron. 16:15-18 David exhorted the Jews, *‘Be ye mindful always of his covenant; the word which he commanded to a thousand generations, even of the covenant which he made with Abraham, and of his oath unto Isaac, and hath confirmed the same to Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant, saying, unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance’*

Psa. 105:8-11 - *He remembers His covenant forever, the word which He commanded, for a thousand generations, the covenant which He made with Abraham, and His oath to Isaac, and confirmed it to Jacob for a statute, to Israel as an everlasting covenant, saying, ‘To you I will give the land of Canaan as the allotment of your inheritance’*

Why would David exhort Jews of his day to be mindful of the Abrahamic Covenant if it was no longer in effect? Why would he exhort Jews to remember the covenant always? He says it is an everlasting covenant – and includes the promise of the land.

Moses promised that even though Israel would become idolatrous and evil and would be scattered and suffer because of its sin, in the latter days it would have opportunity to return to God and be obedient because God would not fail Israel, nor destroy it, nor forget the Abrahamic Covenant which He swore to their fathers (Deut. 4:25-31) (Lev. 26:42, 44-45) (Dt. 30:6; Jer. 31:31-34; Eze. 36:24-27; Eze. 37:11-14; Zech. 12:10).

It is the same people – literal Israel (the descendants of Abraham) who would depart from God and be scattered from the land – who would also have the opportunity to return to Him and be obedient in the latter days. This implies that the literal nation of Israel will still exist in the latter days – in spite of its idolatry, evil, and traumatic history.

Even after Israel had sinned throughout the “OT” history – the Holy Spirit through Zacharias, John the Immerser’s father, indicated that the Abrahamic Covenant was still in effect, *‘Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed His people and hath raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant, David; That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us. To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant. The oath which He swore to our father, Abraham, that He would grant unto us that we, being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might serve Him without fear.’* (Luke 1:67-75)

Even though Israel committed its ultimate sin of rejecting the Son of God, Jesus, as its Messiah, the Apostle Peter still regarded the Jews (even the very Jews who had rejected Jesus) as the children of the Abrahamic Covenant (Acts 3:12-15, 25-26). The only way the covenant could still be in effect is if the covenant is unconditional.

Romans 9:1-5 - *I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, ² that I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart. ³ For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen^[a] according to the flesh, ⁴ who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises; ⁵ of whom are the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen.*

Hebrews 6:13-18 - *For when God made a promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no greater, He swore by Himself, saying, Surely, blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. . . For men verily swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us.*

Num. 24:1-9 – Balaam was hired by Balak, the King of Moab, to curse Israel. Could he? NO! Num. 25 – we read of Israel’s continuing in sin on the heels of this great statement in Numbers 24!

The Abrahamic covenant is the GLUE of the Scriptures:

The Abrahamic Covenant forms the FRAMEWORK for understanding God’s end time program! The Abrahamic Covenant will not be fulfilled until the Millennial Kingdom. . . SO – everything is moving along on this timeline – with the Abrahamic Covenant undergirding it/supporting it. The Jews won’t have all the land promised to them UNTIL the Millennial Kingdom. The Messiah won’t reign from Jerusalem seated on David’s throne until the Millennial Kingdom.

Even in the new heavens and the new earth, the descendants of Abraham will remain before God. Isa. 66:22 – *‘For as the new heavens and the new earth which I will make shall remain before Me,’ says the LORD, ‘So shall your descendants and your name remain.’*

ISAIAH 62

Storm Clouds on the Horizon, edited by Charlie Dyer (p. 10) – “If you believe in unconditional promises – then Israel becomes the strategic player in the future history of this world. Esp. when that belief encompasses the promise that Christ’s return is to the Mt. of Olives outside of Jerusalem and that He will establish His reign on the throne of David, fulfilling the Davidic Covenant.”