

Thursday Evening Bible Study

Series: the End Times – Bible prophecy about future events and periods

Teaching Summary for Week 6

The Kingdom and the Covenants

Resources:

1. Alva McClain, **The Greatness of the Kingdom: An Inductive Study of the Kingdom of God**. BMH Books, 2012. (originally published in 1959).
2. J. Dwight Pentecost, **Thy Kingdom Come: Tracing God's Kingdom Program and Covenant Promises throughout History**. Kregel Publications, 1995.
3. J. Dwight Pentecost, **Things to Come: A Study in Biblical Eschatology**. Zondervan, 1964.

Part 1. Covenants: an introduction

Definition of a covenant: A divine covenant is :

(1) a **sovereign decree** of God, whereby He establishes an unconditional compact with man, obligating Himself, in grace, with the declaration **"I WILL"**, to bring to pass definite blessings for the covenanted ones, OR

(2) a **proposal** of God, wherein He promises, in a conditional or mutual compact with man, by the contingent formula **"IF YOU WILL"**, to grant special blessings to man provided he fulfills perfectly certain conditions, and to execute definite punishment in case of his failure.

[from Pentecost, Things to Come, pages 67-68 , quoting Charles Lincoln]

There are two kinds of covenants:

UNCONDITIONAL = fulfillment depends on the one making the covenant alone – **the LORD**. It depends therefore upon the authority and integrity of the LORD apart from any merit or response of the recipient.

CONDITIONAL = fulfillment also depends on the recipient of the covenant – **Israel**.

God has made 5 major covenants with men (Israel):

- 1. The Abrahamic Covenant (UNCONDITIONAL)**
- 2. The Palestinian Covenant (UNCONDITIONAL)**
- 3. The Davidic Covenant (UNCONDITIONAL)**
- 4. The Mosaic Covenant (*conditional*)**
- 5. The New Covenant (UNCONDITIONAL)**

Part 2. The Abrahamic Covenant

The Abrahamic Covenant is an unconditional, eternal, literal covenant made by the Lord to Abraham. It consists of promises concerning **his seed** (innumerable descendants, nations, kings, one seed), a **land grant** deeded to the nation that would come from his loins, and the **blessings** that would ultimately extend to all the nations of the world.

Scriptures (read together): **Genesis 12:2-7; 13:14-17; 15:1-21; 17:1-21; 22:15-18; 26:1-5; 28:1-4, 10-15.**

As we read, let's note the basic **promises**, how they are **enlarged**, and to whom they are **confirmed**.

We will answer the following questions:

1. Which **category(ies)** of the promises are included in this passage : **personal, seed (kingly line or nation), land, and/or universal blessings?**
2. Have these promises been **fulfilled yet** ? Partially, completely, or not at all.
3. Does this passage **enlarge** what had earlier been promised?
4. Does this passage **confirm** the covenant made to Abraham? If so, to whom?
5. Are the promises **literal**?
6. Are the promises **unconditional** for the person or people to whom the covenant has been made?
7. Are the promises **eternal (forever)**, or can they end?

Next let's put this all together.

In the Abrahamic Covenant, the LORD promises Abraham the following rights and privileges:

Original: Genesis 12:2-3

1. **PERSONAL:** "I will make your name great" (Gen 12:2)
2. **SEED:**
 - a. Descendants
 - b. **Nation(s):** "I will make you a great nation" (Gen 12:2)
 - c. King(s)
 - d. **Preservation:** "The one who curses you I will curse". (Gen 12:3)
 - e. Line
 - f. Seed singular
3. **LAND:**
4. **BLESSING:**
 - a. **National:** "I will bless those who bless you" (Gen 12:3)
 - b. **Universal:** "In you all the families of the earth will be blessed." (gen 12:3)

Enlarged

1. **PERSONAL:**
2. **SEED:**
 - a. **Descendants** : innumerable natural descendants (Gen 13:16; 15:3-5; 17:1-2; 22:16-17), “as the dust of the earth”; “the stars of the sky”; “I will multiply you exceedingly”; “sand on the seashore”.
 - b. **Nation(s)**: “You will be the father of a multitude of nations.” (Gen 17:3-5)
 - c. **King(s)**: “Kings will come forth from you” (Gen 17:6)
 - d. **Preservation**: “ I will establish My covenant between me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and your descendants after you.” (Gen 17:7)
 - e. **Line**: “My covenant I will establish with Isaac”. (Gen 17:19-21; 21:12)
 - f. **Seed singular**: the promises will be fulfilled to Abraham’s seed, our Lord Jesus Christ . All the nations of the earth shall be blessed in Him. (Gen 22:17-18; Gal 3:16-19).
3. **LAND**: an everlasting and irrevocable title to a definite land area on earth (Gen 12:5-7; 13:14-17; 15:18-21; 17:7-8)
4. **BLESSING**:
 - a. **National**: The Lord would be his God and his descendants would be God’s people. (Gen 17:7-9)
 - b. **and Universal**: Final world supremacy through which great divine blessings would flow to all mankind (Gen 22:17-18)

Confirmed

1. **To Abraham**: Gen 22:15-18.
2. **To Isaac**: Gen 26:1-5
3. **To Jacob**: Gen 28:1-4, 10-15
4. **To the nation of Israel**: Eze 2:24; Lev 26:40-45; 2Ki 13:22-23; Psa 105:6-15; Jer 31:31-40; Mic 7:18-20; Rom 11:25-29
5. **To the Church (spiritual blessings)**: Gal 3:14-18,29; Heb 6:13-20; 11:8-21, 39-40