

## Thursday Evening Bible Study

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

### Teaching Summary for Week 8

#### The Kingdom and the Covenants

##### 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.

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

1. **PERSONAL:** “I will make your name great” (Gen 12:2).
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”.
  - a. **Nation(s):** “I will make you a great nation” (Gen 12:2).  
“You will be the father of a multitude of nations.” (Gen 17:3-5)
  - b. **King(s):** “Kings will come forth from you” (Gen 17:6)
  - c. **Preservation:** “The one who curses you I will curse”. (Gen 12:3)  
“ 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)
  - d. **Line:** “My covenant I will establish with Isaac”. (Gen 17:19-21; 21:12)

- e. **Identification:** The sign of the covenant people would be circumcision. (Gen 17:9-14)
  - 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:** "In you all the families of the earth will be blessed." (Gen 12:3). 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:** Exo 2:24; 32:7-14 (**to Moses**); 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.

*What can we conclude about the nature of the Abrahamic Covenant from the passages that confirm the covenant to the nation of Israel?*

## The significance of the Abrahamic covenant for Eschatology (end times)

The Abrahamic Covenant is the basis for the **entire covenant program** between God and His people.

Five aspects of the Abrahamic Covenant make it central to the **future events** of the end times.

The Abrahamic Covenant is **unconditional**: the promises are certain to occur.

The promises in the Abrahamic Covenant are **literal**.

The promises have not yet been fulfilled in their entirety. The fulfillment is in the **future**.

The Abrahamic Covenant is **eternal** in character.

The Abrahamic Covenant was made with a defined covenant people: **Israel**.

Eternal aspects of the Abrahamic Covenant include:

1. Israel is guaranteed a permanent **national existence**.
2. Israel is granted a perpetual title to the **promised land**.
3. Israel is certain to receive **material and spiritual blessing forever** through Christ.
4. **Gentile nations** will share in these permanent blessings.

The essential parts of the Abrahamic covenant: **the seed, the land, and the blessing**, are enlarged in subsequent covenants made with Israel. We will study each of these.

They include the **Palestinian Covenant** (land –final permanent restoration in the land of promise), the **Davidic Covenant** (seed – promises of a dynasty, nation, and throne), and the **New Covenant** (blessing – particularly Israel’s spiritual blessing and redemption) .

**What are the implications of these facts?**

The Abrahamic Covenant is an **unconditional** covenant made with **Israel**. It cannot be annulled, and it cannot be fulfilled by people other than the nation of Israel.

The seed promises and the land promises are made only to the nation of Israel: the **physical descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob**.

*Gen 17:6-8, 19; Psa 105:6-11*

*Ps 105:6-11*

*6 O seed of Abraham, His servant,  
O sons of Jacob, His chosen ones!*

*7 He is the Lord our God;  
His judgments are in all the earth.*

*8 He has remembered His **covenant forever**,  
The word which He commanded to a thousand generations,*

*9 The **covenant** which He made with **Abraham**,  
And His oath to **Isaac**.*

*10 Then He confirmed it to **Jacob** for a statute,  
To Israel as an everlasting covenant,*

*11 Saying, " To you I will give **the land of Canaan**  
As the portion of your inheritance,"*

So the Abrahamic Covenant promises Israel a permanent existence as a nation. The Abrahamic Covenant promises Israel permanent possession of the promised land.

But never in her history has she fully possessed all the land promised in the covenant. She certainly has not possessed the complete land grant uninterrupted until now.

So Israel as a nation has a **future** when the seed and land promises will be fulfilled.

Note that it is "spiritual Israel" who will possess the land in the future millennium. Spiritual Israel is **NOT the church**.

**Spiritual Israel** consists of the **physical descendants of Jacob** who also share in **the faith** of Abraham.

At that time when Israel will possess the land permanently, believing Gentiles (all the families of the earth) will receive a share of the blessings given to Israel.

In **Galatians 3:6-9**, the children of Abraham by faith who are Gentiles fulfill the universal promised blessings, but not the national promises, which are only given to the nation of Israel.

Finally, therefore, **the Church is NOT Israel**. Thus, the Church is NOT fulfilling Israel's seed and land promises.

Let's read **Romans 11** together.

Romans 11 says that God has taken Israel out of the place of blessing temporarily (until the fullness of Gentiles comes in), but will restore Israel to that place of blessing after His program for the Church is completed.

And all the promises of the Abrahamic Covenant - seed, land, and blessing – will ultimately be fulfilled and inherited by a single Person – the pre-eminent Seed, **our Lord Jesus Christ**.

*Gal 3:16*

*16 Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, "And to seeds," as referring to many, but rather to one, "And to your seed," that is, Christ.*

The church is receiving the spiritual blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant by virtue of **our union with Christ**.

*Gal 3:29 And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's descendants, heirs according to promise.*

### Part 3. The Palestinian Covenant

**The Palestinian Covenant** is an unconditional, eternal, literal covenant whereby the Lord **re-affirms the land promises** of the Abrahamic Covenant to the **nation of Israel**.

The nation of Israel had received **the Mosaic covenant** at Mount Sinai, but broke that conditional covenant again and again during their forty years in the wilderness.

The Palestinian covenant demonstrates that national failure does not nullify the agreement the Lord previously made in the Abrahamic Covenant. It is **unconditional** – though the time of fulfillment can be postponed as a result of disobedience.

Recall the land grant in the Abrahamic Covenant:

*Gen 15:18-21*

*18 On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying,*

*" To your descendants I have given this land,  
From the river of Egypt as far as the great river, the river Euphrates:*

*19 the Kenite and the Kenizzite and the Kadmonite 20 and the Hittite and the Perizzite  
and the Rephaim 21 and the Amorite and the Canaanite and the Girgashite and the  
Jebusite."*

The Palestinian covenant is established with the nation of Israel in the book of **Deuteronomy chapter 30 verses 1-10**.

Let's read that together now.

The Palestinian covenant answers the question of **Israel's relation** to the **land** promises of the Abrahamic covenant in the face of **national failure** under the Mosaic Covenant.

*Deut 5:1-3*

*Then Moses summoned all Israel and said to them:*

*"Hear, O Israel, the statutes and the ordinances which I am speaking today in your hearing, that you may learn them and observe them carefully. 2 "The Lord our God made a covenant with us at Horeb. 3 " The Lord did not make this covenant with our fathers, but with us, with all those of us alive here today.*

The Mosaic covenant was a different covenant from the Abrahamic covenant. It was a conditional covenant and thus required terms of performance on the nation of Israel .

Recall that a conditional covenant is a proposal of God, wherein He promises, in a 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.

So the fulfillment of the conditional Mosaic covenant depended on the recipient of the covenant – **Israel**.

*Ex 19:1-9*

*19 In the third month after the sons of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, on that very day they came into the wilderness of Sinai. 2 When they set out from Rephidim, they came to the wilderness of Sinai and camped in the wilderness; and there Israel camped in front of the mountain. 3 Moses went up to God, and the Lord called to him from the mountain, saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob and tell the sons of Israel:*

*4 ' You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings, and brought you to Myself. 5 'Now then, **if you will** indeed obey My voice and **keep** My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; 6 and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel."*

*7 So Moses came and called the elders of the people, and set before them all these words which the Lord had commanded him.*

*8 All the people answered together and said, "All that the Lord has spoken we will do!" And Moses brought back the words of the people to the Lord. 9*

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However, the generation of Israel that entered into the agreement of the Mosaic covenant failed and disobeyed the Lord, again and again.

*Heb 3:16-19*

*16 For who provoked Him when they had heard? Indeed, did not all those who came out of Egypt led by Moses? 17 And with whom was He angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness?*

*18 And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who were disobedient? 19 So we see that they were not able to enter because of unbelief.*

And under the **Mosaic** Covenant, the blessings of the promised land were **conditional**, meaning Israel would receive them only as long as they were obedient.

***Num 14:20-34; Deut 11:8-28***

In the final chapters of the book of Deuteronomy, the nation of Israel faces a grave crisis. Their leader Moses will soon die, and his successor, Joshua, is an unproven leader. Moreover, they are poised to enter the promised land, but that land is teeming with enemies.

Their future appears very uncertain.

Is the land of Palestine still their possession?

Did the establishment of the Mosaic Covenant, a conditional covenant, set aside the unconditional Abrahamic Covenant?

Would Israel ever be able to live in this new land in peace and possess it permanently, given the presence of so many enemies there?