

22T16a Abraham's Promises

Hello my friends. Thanks for joining me @ the PUNLA coffee table In recent years, I've heard a lot about the promises to the nation of Israel. These are the promises in the Bible, I mean. When I started doing a little research on these claims, it appeared all the claims seemed to believe that the promises made to Abraham in the Bible applied today to the nation of Israel or the Jewish people as a whole. This seemed logical to me but my questions were many. What are these promises? Why do we believe they apply to modern Israel? And so on.

Let us pray.

Heavenly Father. Thank you for your good news. Lord use me to share your message. If I say something in error, please let them remember what you wanted them to hear, not my errand words. Help us not to be confused by the many voices and opinions we hear. May we stay focused on your word Lord. Guide our discussion. We pay in your name Lord Jesus, Amen.

Okay, What are these promise that were made to Abraham in the Bible. Believe it or not people argue about these a lot. In Genesis 12, Abram is called by God to leave his home in Ur and go to a land he did not know. Abram had life and family. Life in Ur was probably pretty nice. Abram is asked by God to leave his comforts and go to a place he didn't know. In fact Abraham will live in a tent as a nomad for the rest of his life. So, Abraham trusted God. Abraham had faith in God's plan. Let's read Genesis 12:1- 4 (NIV) *¹The Lord had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you. ²I will make you into a **great nation**, and I will **bless you**; I will make **your name great**, and you will **be a blessing**. ³I will **bless those** who bless you, and **whoever curses you** I will curse; and **all peoples on earth will be blessed through you**." ⁴So Abram went, as the Lord had told him*

The way I read this; I see six promises. **Promise #1 make you a great nation, Promise #2 I will bless you, Promise #3 I will make your name great, Promise #4 you will be a blessing, Promise #5 I will bless those that bless you and curse those that curse you, Promise #6 all people will be blessed through you.** I've seen these summarized into 6 promises. But let's not worry about the number of promises, but instead what was promised.

A few verse later in Genesis 12:6-7 (NIV) *⁶Abram traveled through the land as far as the site of the great tree of Moreh at Shechem. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. ⁷The Lord appeared to Abram and said, "**To your offspring I will give this land**." So he built an altar there to the Lord, who had appeared to him.*

Promise #7 I will give this land to your offspring.

Later in Genesis 13:14-17 (NIV) *¹⁴The Lord said to Abram after Lot had parted from him, "Look around from where you are, to the north and south, to the east and west. ¹⁵**All the land that you see I will give to you and your offspring a forever**. ¹⁶I will make your **offspring like the dust of the earth**, so that if anyone could count the dust, then your offspring could be counted. ¹⁷Go, walk through the length and breadth of the land, for I am giving it to you."*

This is **promise #7** again, the land you can see I will give to your offspring forever. **Promise #1 and/or Promise #3** Abraham will be blessed with many descendants or many offspring.

Then again in Genesis 15 (NIV) ¹After this, the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision: “Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your very great reward. ²But Abram said, “Sovereign Lord, what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit my estate is Eliezer of Damascus?” ³And Abram said, “You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir.” ⁴Then the word of the Lord came to him: “This man will not be your heir, but a son who is your own flesh and blood will be your heir.” ⁵He took him outside and said, “Look up at the sky and count the stars—if indeed you can count them.” Then he said to him, “**So shall your offspring be.**” ⁶Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness. ⁷He also said to him, “I am the Lord, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans to **give you this land** to take possession of it.” ⁸But Abram said, “Sovereign Lord, how can I know that I will gain possession of it?” ⁹So the Lord said to him, “Bring me a heifer, a goat and a ram, each three years old, along with a dove and a young pigeon.” ¹⁰Abram brought all these to him, cut them in two and arranged the halves opposite each other; the birds, however, he did not cut in half. ¹¹Then birds of prey came down on the carcasses, but Abram drove them away. ¹²As the sun was setting, Abram fell into a deep sleep, and a thick and dreadful darkness came over him. ¹³Then the Lord said to him, “Know for certain that for four hundred years your descendants will be strangers in a country not their own and that they will be enslaved and mistreated there. ¹⁴But I will punish the nation they serve as slaves, and afterward they will come out with great possessions. ¹⁵You, however, will go to your ancestors in peace and be buried at a good old age. ¹⁶In the fourth generation your descendants will come back here, for the sin of the Amorites has not yet reached its full measure.” ¹⁷When the sun had set and darkness had fallen, a smoking firepot with a blazing torch appeared and passed between the pieces. ¹⁸On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram and said, “To **your descendants I give this land**, from the Wadi of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates— ¹⁹the land of the Kenites, Kenizzites, Kadmonites, ²⁰Hittites, Perizzites, Rephaites, ²¹Amorites, Canaanites, Girgashites and Jebusites.”

For today let's ignore the amazing prophecy that was fulfilled. But we see God again tell Abraham he will have many descendants Promise #1 & #3, then the promise #7 again the land but this time God is much more precise. God gives Abraham and northern boundary the Euphrates River and a Southern boundary the wadi of Egypt. There is no western boundary because well there is the Mediterranean sea and no mention of the eastern boundary because well past the Jordan river is wilderness and desert.

Here, Promise #7 also comes with specific people groups which currently occupied the land. We can see from history specifically what lands these were and are.

Later in Genesis 16, God promises Hagar that Abraham's son Ishmael will become a great nation. And in fact He did. All Islamic nations trace their origin to Ishmael.

And then in Genesis 17, Abraham receives a Covenant from God to be marked by circumcision. Genesis 17:1-14 (NIV) ¹When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to him and said, “I am God Almighty; walk before me faithfully and be blameless. ²Then I will make my covenant between me and you and will **greatly increase your numbers.**” ³Abram fell facedown, and God said to him, ⁴“As for me, this is my covenant with you: You will be the **father of many nations.** ⁵No longer will you be called Abram; your name will be Abraham, for I have made you a father of many nations. ⁶I will make you very fruitful; **I will make nations of you, and kings will come from you.** ⁷I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you. ⁸**The whole land of Canaan**, where you now reside as a foreigner, I will give as an **everlasting possession** to you and your descendants after you; and I will be their God.” ⁹Then God said to Abraham, “As for you, **you must keep my covenant**, you and your

descendants after you for the generations to come. ¹⁰This is my covenant with you and your descendants after you, the covenant you are to keep: Every male among you shall be circumcised. ¹¹You are to undergo circumcision, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and you. ¹²For the generations to come every male among you who is eight days old must be circumcised, including those born in your household or bought with money from a foreigner—those who are not your offspring. ¹³Whether born in your household or bought with your money, they must be circumcised. My covenant in your flesh is to be an everlasting covenant. ¹⁴Any uncircumcised male, who has not been circumcised in the flesh, will be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant.”

Let us pray. Heavenly Father. Thank you for you. You only are worthy of praise. You alone are king of kings. Help us to recognize you as the king of our lives. Help us to live like we know it. As your followers I pray that we act like it. Everyday in every moment. Thank you, Jesus, for what you did for me or all of us. We pray in your name Lord Jesus, Amen.

Okay you can see there are many promises made to Abram and then Abraham. I want to focus on four of them. Promise that Abraham will be the father of many nations and kings. Promise of the land of Canaan. Promise blessing the whole world and last Promise to bless those who bless Abraham and curse those that curse him.

In the next few sessions, we will explore these promises and see if the Bible supports us saying they apply to the modern nation of Israel.

- 1) Bless the whole world
- 2) Many descendants
- 3) The land
- 4) Bless/Curse

Thank you for joining me @ the PUNLA Coffee Table. I hope you will join me as we study more about the promises God made to Abraham.

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Until next time @ the PUNLA Coffee Table. God bless.