

## 22T16b Abraham's Promises- Bless the World

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.

People argue about exactly how many promises were made to Abraham, and I don't wish to enter that debate. Instead, 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.

Today I wish to concentrate on what I believed was the easiest one "Bless the whole world".

Let's read Genesis 12:1- 4 (NIV) *<sup>1</sup>The Lord had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you. <sup>2</sup>"I will make you into a **great nation**, and I will **bless you**; I will make **your name great**, and you will **be a blessing**. <sup>3</sup>I will **bless those** who bless you, and **whoever curses you** I will curse; and **all peoples on earth will be blessed through you**."* <sup>4</sup>So Abram went, as the Lord had told him

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, "**all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.**" This is a truly amazing promise. Do you think Abraham had any way of knowing what God meant by this. Well there is no indication in the Bible story that Abraham understood what God meant. Abraham just trusted God and did what God was asking.

This promise is not mentioned again to Abraham, several of the other promises like many descendants and the land are mentioned multiple times to Abraham but not this one. However, God reconfirmed it and several other promises that were made to Abraham to Isaac in Genesis 26: 2-5 (NIV) *<sup>2</sup>The Lord appeared to Isaac and said, "Do not go down to Egypt; live in the land where I tell you to live. <sup>3</sup>Stay in this land for a while, and I will be with you and will bless you. For to you and your descendants I will give all these lands and will confirm the oath I swore to your father Abraham. <sup>4</sup>I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and will give them all these lands, and **through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed**, <sup>5</sup>because Abraham obeyed me and did everything I required of him, keeping my commands, my decrees and my instructions."*

So, all nations blessed through the offspring of Isaac and Abraham. This is the only place in the story of Isaac that God confirms this promise. But, then later in the Bible story God confirms some of these promises to Jacob. Genesis 28: 10-15 (NIV) *<sup>10</sup>Jacob left Beersheba and set out for Harran. <sup>11</sup>When he reached a certain place, he stopped for the night because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones there, he put it under his head and lay down to sleep. <sup>12</sup>He had a dream in which he saw a stairway resting on the earth, with its top reaching to heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. <sup>13</sup>There above it stood the Lord, and he said: "I am the Lord, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac.*

*I will give you and your descendants the land on which you are lying. <sup>14</sup>Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. **All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring.** <sup>15</sup>I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.”*

**“All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring.”** Very much the same promise given to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

This promise was not reconfirmed by Moses, however. Instead, the blessing was a little different for the nation of Israel after the Exodus. They were to be a nation of Priests; God was going to reveal himself to the world through the nation of Israel. And of course, there are many Messianic scriptures throughout the Old Testament.

So, yes this is not a secret at all. Jesus is the fulfillment of this promise to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The nation of Israel did reveal God to the world. And of course, Jesus was born of the house of King David, in Israel. Jesus is the blessing to the whole world as the descendant of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

I'm sure you saw that coming. If you are a Christian, I'm sure you knew this already. The point to remember here is yes, this promise was reconfirmed to Isaac and Jacob but the how was not clearly stated. And the promises of Abraham are not all included in the reconfirmation of the promises to either Isaac or Jacob. Just keep that in mind.

In fact, in the New Testament, the Apostle Paul writes this in Galatians 3:7-16 (NIV) *<sup>7</sup>Understand, then, that those who have faith are children of Abraham. <sup>8</sup>Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: “All nations will be blessed through you.” <sup>9</sup>So those who rely on faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith. <sup>10</sup>For all who rely on the works of the law are under a curse, as it is written: “Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law.” <sup>11</sup>Clearly no one who relies on the law is justified before God, because “the righteous will live by faith.” <sup>12</sup>The law is not based on faith; on the contrary, it says, “The person who does these things will live by them.” <sup>13</sup>Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who is hung on a pole.” <sup>14</sup>He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit. <sup>15</sup>Brothers and sisters, let me take an example from everyday life. Just as no one can set aside or add to a human covenant that has been duly established, so it is in this case. <sup>16</sup>The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. Scripture does not say “and to seeds,” meaning many people, but “and to your seed,” **meaning one person, who is Christ.***

Paul is quoting from Genesis, Deuteronomy, Habakkuk and Leviticus. Paul main point is his last phrase here. God promised Abraham that the whole world would be blessed through his offspring, singular. A single descendant which was Jesus Christ our Lord. Paul is very specific here, that it is not through all descendants of Abraham or even through the national Israel or the Jewish people but through one person, Jesus Christ.

Back in the book of Acts, Peter and John say something very similar. Acts 3:24-4:2, this is one of those unfortunate chapter breaks in the middle of a story. *<sup>24</sup>“Indeed, beginning with Samuel, all the prophets who have spoken have foretold these days. <sup>25</sup>And you are heirs of the prophets and of the covenant God made*

*with your fathers. He said to Abraham, 'Through your offspring all peoples on earth will be blessed.'*  
*<sup>26</sup>When God raised up his servant, he sent him first to you to bless you by turning each of you from your wicked ways." <sup>8:1</sup>The priests and the captain of the temple guard and the Sadducees came up to Peter and John while they were speaking to the people. <sup>2</sup>They were greatly disturbed because the apostles were teaching the people, **proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead***

So, Peter and John are teaching about Jesus in the temple, what are they teaching, that all peoples of the earth will be blessed through one person, Jesus.

**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. Every day 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. Let me leave you with this today. God promised that all the peoples of the world would be blessed through a descendant of Abraham not through all descendants of Abraham. That was fulfilled when Jesus came and died for our sins, was resurrected so that we could have eternal life with Jesus.

Okay, this was an easy one. But I want to point out a fact we all know but it is important. This promise to Abraham was fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. This promise does not apply to the modern nation of Israel or the Jewish people as a whole. So obviously, not all the promises made to Abraham are perpetually applied to the nation of Israel or all of the genetic descendants of Abraham, Isaac or Jacob. Next time we will look at another promise to Abraham. The promise that Abraham will be the father of many nations and kings. So many descendants, they can't be counted.

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.