

22T16c Abraham's Promises- Nations & Kings

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 a few only. Today, the promise of nations and kings.

The promise Abraham will be the father of nations, kings and so many descendants they cannot be counted. Let's read Genesis 12:1- 4 (NIV) ¹*The Lord had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you. ²"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. ³I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."* ⁴*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, "*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.*" 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.

Later God reconfirms some of these promises in Genesis 13:14-17 (NIV) ¹⁴*The 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. ¹⁵All the land that you see I will give to you and your offspring 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."*

So even though Abram is pretty old by this time, God has promised he will have too many offspring to be counted. And then again in Genesis 15:3-6 (NIV) ³*And 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*

And then in Genesis 17, Abraham receives a Covenant from God to be marked by circumcision. Genesis 17:1-14 (NIV) ¹*When 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. ⁸The 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.”

So, Abraham is going to have lots of descendants, maybe not that many kids but grandchildren and so on will be many. And I don't want you to miss what God said in verse 6. ⁶**I will make you very fruitful; I will make nations of you, and kings will come from you**. Abraham will be the father of many nations. That is plural nations with a “s”. Not just the nation of Israel, but many nations and many kings.

Later, God reconfirmed some of the promises that were made to Abraham to Isaac in Genesis 26: 2-5 (NIV) ²The Lord appeared to Isaac and said, “Do not go down to Egypt; live in the land where I tell you to live. ³Stay 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. ⁴**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, ⁵because Abraham obeyed me and did everything I required of him, keeping my commands, my decrees and my instructions.”

So, lots of descendants for both Isaac and Abraham. This is the only place in the story of Isaac that God confirms promises made to Abraham to Isaac. But, then later in the Bible story God confirms some of these promises again to Jacob. Genesis 28: 10-15 (NIV) ¹⁰Jacob left Beersheba and set out for Haran. ¹¹When 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. ¹²He 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. ¹³There 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. ¹⁴**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. ¹⁵I 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.”

¹⁴**Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth**, Very much the same promise given to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. So the promise made to Abraham of many descendants was also given to Isaac and Jacob also. But did you see something different? The promise made to Isaac and Jacob was not the same as the promises made to Abraham. Abraham's promise was many descendants, many nations, many kings. The promise to Isaac was many descendants, no mention of many nations or many kings.

Even though we know Jacob became Israel and Esau became the nation of Edom. Two nations from Isaac, but this is not how I would define many. The promises to Jacob also includes many descendants and in fact Jacob saw many children and grandchildren and his descendants became the nation of Israel. If you really wanted to reach you could say the nations of Israel and Judah. But, it's really only Israel, one nation of God's people. So again, not really many nations and kings.

Okay the promise was a bit different for Abraham, so let's look at what we told in the bible. Abraham actually had many children in his old age. Most of us know Isaac and Ishmael. But there are six additional sons listed in the Bible and many sons from concubines. So, at the very minimum Abraham had 10 sons but this does not include girls and he could have had many more sons than ten, we just don't know an exact number. But many, sounds like many, don't you think. Ishmael is considered by most Islamic peoples to be their forefather. This is many nations and peoples. Isaac had at least two children Jacob and Esau. Esau is the father of the Edomites and of course Jacob became Israel. So there is no doubt that many nations, many people and many kings have come from the descendants of Abraham.

So, yes this is not a secret at all. The modern nation of Israel is one of these people. The Islamic nations are also considered descendants of Abraham. So, yes, this promise was realized through Israel and many others. But, this promise to Abraham was not specific to modern Israel. This promise required more than just the descendants of Isaac or Jacob to be fulfilled as the Bible clearly says.

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 many descendants to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. That has been fulfilled many times over. Abraham's descendants include Israel as well as many other nations and peoples. In fact, many of us probably have at least one descendant of Abraham in our family lineage. But it does not stop there, any Christian has also been grafted into the family of God. Making us "the people of God" or Israel. The name Israel literally means the people of God.

Okay, this was an easy one. Next time we will look at another promise to Abraham. The promise that Abraham's descendants will possess the land of Canaan, the Promised Land. Next time, the promise of the land.

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.