

# The Abrahamic Covenant

Genesis 12:1-3

By Scott Huckaby

5/4/2025



## Background of the Covenant, Genesis 11:10-31

Abraham and his family were descendants of the line of Shem. Terah took his son Abram and his grandson Lot and their wives and started out for the land of Canaan.

- However, when Abram's family came to Haran they settled down there until Terah died.

## What is a covenant?

A covenant is an agreement between two parties.

## What is the difference between a conditional and an unconditional covenant?

A conditional or bilateral covenant is an agreement that is binding on both parties for its fulfillment. Both parties agree to fulfill certain conditions.

- If either party fails to meet their responsibilities, the covenant is broken and neither party has to fulfill the expectations of the covenant.

An unconditional or unilateral covenant is an agreement between two parties, but only one of the two parties has to do something. Nothing is required of the other party.

## Genesis 12:1-3

*Now the Lord had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, from your family and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you. <sup>2</sup> I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing. <sup>3</sup> I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."*

## v1 – When did the Lord make His covenant with Abram?

In Acts 7:2-4, God revealed through Stephen that this promise was made to Abram when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Haran.

- God repeated the promise now that his father was dead and Abram was compelled to follow through.

## What does it tell us that Abram did not immediately obey God when His covenant was revealed?

Abram's partial obedience did not take God's promise away. Instead, it meant the fulfillment of the promise was

delayed until Abram was ready to do what the LORD told him to do.

- Abram would become a giant of faith; yet he did not start as a hero of faith. We see Abram as an example of growing in faith and obedience.

## What kind of covenant was the Abrahamic Covenant?

The Abrahamic Covenant is an unconditional covenant.

- Five times in Genesis 12, as God is giving the Abrahamic Covenant, He says, "I will." Clearly, God takes the onus of keeping the covenant upon Himself. The ceremony of the divided animal sacrifices recorded in Genesis 15 indicates the unconditional nature of the covenant.
- When a covenant was dependent upon both parties keeping commitments, then both parties would pass between the pieces of animals.
- In Genesis 15, God alone moves between the halves of the animals. Abraham was in a deep sleep.

## What was the land God would show Abram?

After stating He wanted Abram to leave his country and his relatives, God promised Abram the land of Canaan, what might be called "greater Israel."

## How do we know the Abrahamic Covenant promise of land should be taken literally?

It had specific borders specified in Genesis 15:18–21.

- In Genesis 13:15, God gives Abraham all the land that he can see, and the gift is declared to be "forever."
- The territory given as part of the Abrahamic Covenant is expanded in Deuteronomy 30:1–10, often called the Palestinian Covenant.

## When will the land covenant be fulfilled?

Centuries after Abraham died, the children of Israel took possession of the land under Joshua's leadership (Joshua 21:43). At no point in history, though, has Israel controlled all of the land God had specified.

- There remains, therefore, a final fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant that will see Israel occupying their God-given homeland to the fullest extent. The fulfillment will be more than a matter of geography; it will also be a time of holiness and restoration (see Ezekiel 20:40–44 and 36:1—37:28).

## **v2 – What did it mean that God would make Abram a great nation?**

God promised Abram that he'd have many descendants, enough to populate a great nation.

- God promised that the number of Abraham's children would be like the stars of the heavens, innumerable (15:5) rivaling *the dust of the earth* (15:16) and *the sand of the sea* (32:12).
- As Abram had no children at that time, the promise seemed too extensive to be true.
- Nations & kings would proceed from him (Gen 17:6).

## **What did it mean that God would make Abram's name great?**

There is probably no more honored name in history than the name of Abram, who is honored by Jews, Muslims, and Christians.

## **v3 – What does it mean that God would bless those who bless Abram and curse those who cursed him?**

This promise — inherited by the covenant descendants of Abram, the Jewish people is a root reason for the decline and death of many empires. Historically speaking, nations that have treated the Jewish people well have often been blessed.

- When the Greeks overran Palestine and desecrated the altar in the Jewish temple, they were soon conquered by Rome.
- When Rome killed Paul and many others, and destroyed Jerusalem under Titus, Rome soon fell.
- Spain was reduced to a fifth-rate nation after the Inquisition against the Jews;
- Poland fell after the pogroms;
- Hitler's Germany went down after its orgies of anti-Semitism;
- Britain lost her empire when she broke her faith with Israel.

## **What are the implications of the Abrahamic Covenant in the USA today?**

We have been greatly blessed for being a friend of Israel. And we have experienced God's curses when we have cursed Israel.

- Example: Hurricane Katrina immediately following our pressure to vacate Gaza.
- Other correlations like that are documented in the book "Eye to Eye" by William Koenig.

## **Given the correlation between blessings and cursings for how Israel is treated, why is Israel treated poorly?**

Unbelief... there is no spiritual discernment among unbelievers so such correlations are dismissed as a mere coincidence.

## **What are the long-term prospects for the USA being a friend of Israel?**

*Zechariah 12:3 – it shall happen in that day that I will make Jerusalem a very heavy stone for all peoples; all who would heave it away will surely be cut in pieces, though all nations of the earth are gathered against it.*

Eventually, the USA will turn on Israel like all the nations of the world. My hope is that this will not happen until after the Lord raptures the church.

## **What indications are there that the USA could turn on Israel despite our recent friendliness?**

There are plenty of antisemites in high places. And our media continues to advance the narrative that Israel is guilty of genocide while overlooking the hateful genocidal intentions of their Islamic opposition.

- The pro-Hamas demonstrations following their October 7<sup>th</sup> attack on Israel revealed the extent of antisemitism in the USA.

## **How would Abram be a blessing to all the families of the earth?**

This amazing promise was fulfilled in the Messiah that came from Abram's lineage.

- God's blessing to Abram was not for his own sake, or even the sake of the Jewish nation to come. It was for the whole world, for all the families of the earth through Jesus Christ.

This promise finds its fulfillment in the New Covenant (Jeremiah 31:31–34; cf. Luke 22:20), which was ratified by Jesus Christ, the son of Abraham and Redeemer who will one day "restore everything" (Acts 3:21).

## **How were Gentiles included in the Abrahamic Covenant?**

*Galatians 3:6-9 – just as Abraham "believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." Therefore know that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, "In you all the nations shall be blessed." So then those who are of faith are blessed with believing Abraham.*

Gentiles are blessed by God when they believe God by faith just as Abraham did.

### **How might false teachers use Galatians 3:6-9 to claim the church has replace Israel in the promises of God?**

All who are in the church are effectively spiritual descendants of Abraham. But to claim the church has replaced Israel would be to spiritualize the promises of God which were clearly intended to be taken literally.

Romans 11:25 – *For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.*

The day is coming when the *fullness of the Gentiles* will be complete. Then God will resume working through Israel as His representatives on earth for the final, Seventieth Week of Daniel.

### **What did circumcision have to do with the Abrahamic Covenant?**

In Genesis 17:9–14, God gave Abraham the rite of circumcision as the specific sign of the Abrahamic Covenant. All males in Abraham’s line were to be circumcised and thus carry with them a lifelong mark in their flesh that they were part of God’s physical blessing.

- Any descendant of Abraham who refused circumcision was declaring himself to be outside of God’s covenant; this was why God was angry with Moses when Moses failed to circumcise his son (Exodus 4:24–26).

### **What did Abram’s name change to Abraham have to do with the Abrahamic Covenant?**

In Genesis 17:5, God changed Abram’s name from Abram (“high father”) to Abraham (“father of a multitude”).

- Since the Abrahamic Covenant is unconditional, it should also be taken literally. There is no need to spiritualize the promise to Abraham.
- God’s promises to Abraham’s descendants would be fulfilled literally.

### **When will the Abrahamic Covenant be fully fulfilled?**

When the Messiah returns to rule in the Millennial Kingdom. This is when Israel will occupy all the land God gave them and the Messiah will rule the whole world which will be blessed with an abundance of peace, pleasure, and prosperity.

### **What is the significance of the Abrahamic Covenant?**

The covenant with Abram was a major step in divine revelation indicating that God was selecting Abram and his posterity to fulfill His purpose of revealing Himself to the world and bringing salvation for mankind.

- Though only eleven chapters were used to trace the whole history of the world prior to Abram, including Creation and all the major events which followed, the rest of the Book of Genesis is devoted to Abram and

his immediate descendants, indicating importance of this covenant.

### **What applications come to mind from this passage?**

- The Abrahamic Covenant is foundational and lays the groundwork for the New Covenant.
- The Abrahamic Covenant will be literally fulfilled.
- The Abrahamic Covenant is active today governing the fortunes of the nations.