

HISTORY OF REDEMPTION

BY

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Lesson 12 Covenants and Promises

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Let's pray,

Father, we just want to pause and just say thank You again for time to get together and to share Your Word together, Lord. And to look at You and just as we look and see how You are so faithful to fulfill Your Word. Lord, we want to praise You as we look at the Abrahamic covenant now since it is the first time You spoke. We just ask that You would help us, Lord, to see and to understand. We know that it takes revelation from You. So show us by Your Spirit things that will be important for our understanding, as we look at the whole of Scripture and how You unfold Your plan of redemption. So we commit this time to You now, in Jesus' name, amen.

Well. Let's turn to Genesis 12 real quickly. Genesis 12 says, and notice there is a sevenfold blessing here: 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. I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing. 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. (cf. Genesis 12:1-3)

So, God gives a sevenfold blessing to Abraham there in verses 1 through 3. But when you turn to Exodus 6:6–8 we see the sevenfold covenant that was made with Israel. First to Abraham, now as He is beginning to speak to Moses, we get also a sevenfold covenant with Israel. He says in verse 6,

Say therefore to the sons of Israel: “I am the LORD; I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, I will deliver you from their bondage, and I will also redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. I will take you for My people, and I will be your God. Then you shall know that I am the LORD your God who brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. And I will bring you to the land which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and I will give it to you for a possession: I am the LORD.”

So seven times He says He is going to do it. And so we see the sevenfold blessing given to Abraham, but then we see the sevenfold covenant promise given, you might say, to Moses.

Now are these conditional or unconditional promises? Does He say that they have to meet certain conditions for these things? Not really. He is saying that He will ultimately fulfill these things sovereignly. There might be conditions within the covenant that they have to meet in order to enjoy the covenant. But the covenant itself is promised and it will come about.

So when we are talking about a covenant we are talking about that sovereign act of God that He will do it.

Now there are four eternal unconditional covenants that He makes. The first one is Genesis 12:1–3. That is unconditional. The second one is Deuteronomy 30:1–10 is unconditional. 2 Samuel 7:10–16 and Jeremiah 31:31–40. Then there is one that is very conditional and that is Deuteronomy 28:1–68.

So we see there are two kinds of covenants, don't we? One is unconditional, the other is conditional. He puts the "if" there for the conditional covenant. Now the difference is this: there can still be conditions fit within an unconditional covenant. Not a condition as to whether the covenant will be fulfilled or not. Do you understand that? In an unconditional covenant it means God will fulfill it in His time. But the conditions that are within an unconditional covenant have to do with whether you get to enjoy it right now or not. We see that happening, you know, all through Scripture because—for example, when we read the book of Jude—Jude tells us what? "Keep yourselves in the love of God" (Jude 1:21). What does he mean by that? He means keep yourself in the place where God can bless you. Is God going to bless you? Well, yeah. And ultimately He is going to bless you with salvation, no doubt. But there might be things God wants to do in your life, He won't get to do them—or let's put it this way—you won't get to enjoy them unless you keep yourself in a place where you can enjoy them.

Let's say God wants to pay your way to an extension campus next semester, just your whole way, everything. But you go out and you do something really stupid and you get thrown in jail during the break. You cannot go because you are in jail. But God was going to pay your way. And it is not that God does not want to pay your way, or that it is even His wills to pay your way. He wants to do it, but you did not keep yourself in a place where God could bless you.

And your parents say, "Well, we want to buy you a new car. The one you always wanted." And you are sitting in jail. Well, they might go out and buy it and bring you a picture of it. "Here is your new car. We bought it for you. Are you liking it?" "Yeah, it is great. I love it." "Are you enjoying it?" "Oh, yeah, it's great, sitting right here in

jail.” It does not mean that the promise is not fulfilled. It means that you might not get to enjoy it because you are not meeting certain conditions.

And so we see that in the covenant relationship. And so these promises, these Scriptures here, are really eternal covenants. When He spoke to Abraham it was an eternal covenant there. When He spoke even to Moses about the land that was something God said He would do, not what they had to do. When He spoke to David in 2 Samuel and said, “I will do it. The seed is yours. I promise it.” In Jeremiah, the new covenant with the people of Israel, He says, “I will do it.” He is going to do it in His time.

But the land conditions, you might say, that was a conditional covenant. They have to meet those conditions for that to take place. But it does have a relationship to other covenants. And we are going to talk more about that because He made it with His covenant people.

In Ephesians 2 it says this:

At that time you were without Christ being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise [particularly to the one made with Abraham], having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus we are brought near by the blood and He Himself is our peace. He has made one new man and we are fellow citizens and members of the household of God. (cf. Ephesians 2:12-14)

So we have been brought in by Christ to a standing and relationship with Him we did not have before. But they had it because God chose them as a people. Now He has made two become one in Christ. But that is not going to be effected until Christ returns.

It is like someone was asking earlier today. What does it mean when Jesus said, “I am going to take the kingdom away from you”—and He was talking to the Jews—“and I am going to give it to a nation who will bring forth fruit” (cf. Matthew 21:43). Does that mean that God cast His people off forever? No. Because when He says “the kingdom,” what is He talking about? He is talking about the rule of faith. Up to that point, they were supposed to walk with Him in that faith relationship. But they had rejected it. God says, “I am going to turn to a new people, a new nation that brings forth fruit, a holy nation, a royal priesthood. And that is the church. “And they are going to walk with Me and they are going to produce fruit.”

Of course we find out later that, you know, we are not as perfect as thought either. And God will later, according to Romans 11, turn back to the nation again and bring them in. Personally, I think that is another reason why Jesus said, “Up until this point in time, people are seeking to enter the kingdom violently. And the kingdom has suffered violence. But from now on it is not going to be that way” (cf. Matthew 11:12). And I know there are different interpretations of that, but when you stand back and look at it as a whole; I think that what we see is that up until the time of Christ, it was okay for the nation Israel to pick up a sword and to drive people out of their land. They had God’s permission and God’s blessing to pick up a sword and say, “Get out of here! This belongs to us.” And there was violence.

But when Christ came, Christ said, “Lay that aside. Vengeance is Mine. I will repay. You guys, don’t do that anymore. We have a different thing going on here. I want you to go into every nation. I want you to go to every people and every ethnic and every country. I don’t want you to run them out of their land, even though all the earth belongs to Me. I want you to take the gospel into it.”

But when Jesus comes back the second time, that will be over. Because He is even coming back in flaming fire, taking vengeance on those who don’t know God and did not obey the gospel when it came to them. And He is coming back and He is ruling

with a rod of iron. So it is going to go back to violence, you might say. Before Christ came, it was taken and set up violently. Christ came and so we do not do that now. But when Christ comes the second time, it is going to happen again. See? So, things change and God is going to fulfill these things. And it is pretty amazing to see it.

So, there are three basic doctrines that we find in the Abrahamic covenant. The first one is this: the doctrine of salvation or soteriology which is found in the Abrahamic covenant. Because the blessings that were promised to Abraham, we find in Galatians and in Romans, are the blessings of salvation for the whole world that came through Abraham. And so the doctrine of salvation or soteriology is there. The Messiah came through that line of Abraham as God promised.

The second doctrine that we find in the covenant to Abraham is the doctrine of resurrection. Because Exodus 3:15 says that He is the God of three people: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Remember that?

Now when Jesus was here they came and questioned Him in Matthew 22. A particular group, the Sadducees came. And of course the Sadducees only accepted the Pentateuch. They did not accept the prophets. They did not accept, you know, the Psalms and the wisdom literature. The Sadducees said, "We only accept part of the Bible. We accept the Pentateuch, the Law, and that it is." And they just said, "There is no way you can prove resurrection from the Law." And what did Jesus answer them? In Matthew 22:29-32, He says, "You do not know God. You do not know the Scriptures, nor do you know the power of God." And the answer He gave was, "God is not the God of the dead. God is the God of the living. He is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." And Jesus stood right there in front of them and said, "Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are still living."

Same thing He confirms in John 8:58 when He said, "Before Abraham was, I AM. I am the God the living. I am the God of resurrection." And He proved to them from the

Pentateuch, from Exodus 3:15. He said, “That proves that God is the God of resurrection.”

Therefore the promise that was made to Abraham, the promise that was made to Isaac, and the promise that was made to Jacob is still good. And in God’s good time, that promise will be completely, 100 percent, fulfilled—even though people fell short of it in their day.

And that is why you have Hebrews 11 and that whole section there where everybody is dying but still looking forward, holding onto promises that God had made to them. Those people that died that way, sawed asunder and everything else, someday they are going to enter into the joy of the Lord and that promise will be fulfilled.

So the Abrahamic covenant gives us the doctrine of salvation, soteriology. It gives us the doctrine of resurrection. But it also gives us the doctrine of eschatology. And I want you to note that. What do you think was part of the reason the Sadducees got into such trouble? It was what?—their lack of understanding and ignorance of Scripture, and not knowing the power of God. Why?—they only accepted part of the Scriptures. And that is why it is so important you get a whole view of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. That you know every book of the Bible and that you know how every book of the Bible relates to the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. If you do not, you will be like the Sadducees. You will be ignorant of the Scriptures and you won’t understand the power of God. And that is what got them in trouble. They only accepted a portion of the Scriptures, little portions and bits of Scripture that they liked. And they do not have a whole view of the Scripture. And that is why I think it is so important to go through and see, as we step back and look at, the big picture of what God is doing and what God is saying in terms of redemption from Genesis to the book of Revelation.

So basically, there are three promises. The first is there is a promise concerning the land. That is the first promise. The second promise is the blessing. And the third is the seed.

So first, look at the land. He promises land. Now that is promised in Genesis 12:1 and it is promised in Genesis 13:14–15. What covenant goes with that, the land promise? The land promise is in Genesis 12:1 and Genesis 13:14–17. Now, what covenant goes with that? What covenant goes with that? The Palestinian covenant—where is that found? It is found in Deuteronomy 30:3–5 in particular. And it is found in Ezekiel 20:33–44. That is the land promise, okay.

Now there is also the second promise, the blessing. What is the blessing? Well, the blessing is basically redemption. And that is national and universal. He promises redemption to the nation, but He also promises redemption to the entire world. So it is redemption. It is nationally and it is universally. Now what covenant do we call that? We call that the new covenant. That is the blessing. And the new covenant is found in Jeremiah 31:31–40. And it is found in Hebrews 8:6–13. In Jeremiah 31 it is national. In Hebrews 8:6–13 it is universal.

And then thirdly, there is the seed promise, the descendants you might say, that is found in Genesis 12:2; 13:16; and 17:2–6. And what is the name of the covenant that goes with the seed promise? It is the Davidic covenant. In other words, this is the throne rights. And that is found in 2 Samuel 7:11–16. And it is also found in Jeremiah 31:35–37.

So what are the provisions of this covenant? Let me just read you a couple of the provisions of the covenant. The things God promises are this: He promises Abraham's name will be great. He says the nation would be built and come from him. He would be a blessing so great that in him all the families of the earth would be blessed. He promises him personally that his seed would be given to Palestine forever to inherit. He promises that a multitude of his seed would be like the dust of the earth and like

the stars of heaven. He promises that whoever blesses him would be blessed, and whoever curses him would be cursed. He promises that he will be a father of many nations, not just one. But he would also have many nations, plural. He said kings, plural, would come out of his loins. He would have many kings come from him. He said this would be an everlasting, perpetual covenant. And He said the land of Canaan will be an everlasting possession to you. And God will be God to him and to his seed. And that his seed will possess the gate of his enemies and in his seed all the nations of the earth would be blessed.

Wow! So that is pretty heavy. So what we see here—are three kinds of promises that were made in this covenant with Abraham. Note first of all, there is a promise made to an individual and that individual is Abraham. That is the first promise, to an individual, to Abraham. He is going to be the father of a great nation, this individual.

The second promise is national and that is made to Abraham's seed. That the nation itself, you know, is promised possession of the land, it is an everlasting possession. That is a national promise.

But the third promise is universal. All families of the earth get blessed. That is a promise to whom? If you are not part of Abraham's seed, in a sense, nationally, then who are you? You are a Gentile. So it was a promise to the Gentiles. So it was a promise to an individual, Abraham. There was a promise then to his nation, which means the Jews or the chosen people that come from his seed. But there is also a third promise to everybody else that is not part of that, the Gentiles. So in the Abrahamic covenant, you have got a promise to an individual, to a nation, and to the Gentiles and the whole world at large.

God is sharing what? He is telling him as a friend, "Abraham, here is my plan. I am going to start with you and I am going to bless you like you would never believe. I am going to build this nation. And from this nation the Messiah is going to come and bring national salvation [which we can read about in Romans 9–11] and then also you

are going to see every nation on earth blessed because of you, your friendship with Me, and your walk with Me.” Isn’t that amazing?

That blows me away. Because you never know—I am talking about you as an individual. You never know what might happen just because you are in a relationship with God. You just do not know what God is going to do. Because of your friendship with God and your walk with Him, your obedience—one act of obedience in your life can bless so many people. It is unreal. I mean, I can think back to a couple of times in my life where I actually obeyed God and because I obeyed God He blessed a bunch of people. And I can tell you right now, I would not take anything for those few times. You say, “Then why don’t you obey Him some more?” I am. But it is like you just never know if you just obey God what He might do. And He promised this to Abraham.

Now for this to take place, for them to have this title deed to the earth, the way it is promised in Revelation 5, what has to happen? Well, three things, basically, have to happen if this promise is going to be fulfilled to Abraham. The way it was given, to the individual, to the nation, and to the universe, three things have to happen.

First of all, Israel has to be preserved. You have got to see that the nation has to be preserved. It cannot happen if God does not preserve the nation. Now, has that been a remarkable thing throughout history, how God has preserved this nation? It has been an amazing thing to anthropologists in particular, and to sociologists. What in the world is going on with God preserving this nation after they have been through so much? But for this to happen to the nation, it must be preserved. And it is.

Secondly, at some point it has to be converted for it to happen. It cannot happen unless the nation gets converted.

And thirdly, it has to be restored. Now I do not know if you want to put restored first before converted. You can decide whether you want to put converted first, then

restored, or restored and then converted. In some ways I see restored might be first because look at what is happening. They are being restored to their land, right? But they are not quite converted. I see a restoration of Israel back to their land, particularly since 1948. But I do not see a real conversion of them yet. So, they have been preserved. They are in the process of being restored to their land, even though there is all this craziness going on in the world. It is amazing that in your generation, in your time, this has taken place in these last days. But the thing we wait for is the conversion of the people.

Will it happen? Yes, it will happen. When will it happen?—in His time—that is the key, in His time. What are we to do in the meantime? Expect it. Wait for it. Don't give up on it. Many Christians have given up on it and said, "Ah well, I will just go back to the old way of thinking, kind of the amillennial thinking that God is never going to do this. It ain't going to happen and I will just give up on it." Don't go that route in your thinking. It is going to happen in God's time. It will take place and He promises it.

So, this is one act of obedience.

Now, there is an interesting Scripture in Genesis 11. If you turn to Genesis 11:31, I just want you to note something there and also in Hebrews 11:8. If you compare Genesis 11:31 and compare it over with Hebrews 11. Genesis 11:31 says,

And Terah took his son Abram and his grandson Lot, the son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, his son Abram's wife, and they went out with them from Ur of the Chaldeans to go to the land of Canaan; and they came to Haran and dwelt there. So the days of Terah were two hundred and five years, and Terah died in Haran.

What I want you to notice is this: God did not bless Abraham or give the blessing to Abraham until when? Until after Terah died. As long as Terah was alive and was leading them around and they settled in Haran, Abraham did not get the blessing from God. But it was after he died that God spoke to him here in chapter 12 and said, “Now, get out of town. Get out of your country. I want to bless you.”

So in other words there was, in a sense, a condition within the unconditional covenant. And it is interesting when you compare it with Hebrews 11 and look at verse 8.

By faith Abraham, when he was called, [And you love this about the New Testament because they do not show your failures, they just show your obediences and your victories—when Abraham was called] he obeyed by going to a place where he was to receive for an inheritance and he went out not knowing where he was going. And he lived like an alien in the land of promise because he was looking for the city of God. (cf. Hebrews 11:8-10)

And so, you know, we see here that just one act of obedience can bless the whole world. Now I know Abraham was special and he was chosen, but in many ways you are special too and you are chosen. And who knows what is going to happen through you. God might call you to some foreign land to take the gospel to people who have never heard it. He might call you to who knows what. But if you step out and obey and follow Him, upon that condition of obedience you bring yourself into the place where God can bless you. Even though the covenant itself is unconditional and God is going to make it happen, your enjoyment of it is all dependent on your obedience and your faith response.

A lot of people don't understand the difference and only the Holy Spirit can show you that. I hope He does. I hope you can see it. That is the way it will be the rest of your

life. You have got all these promises from God and God will fulfill them in His good time. But your enjoyment of those promises depends on your stepping out and obeying and following Him in faith. And when you do it, you might be like Abraham and just bless a whole bunch of people, maybe even the whole world. So it is quite neat, just a few acts of obedience.

Now, there are a couple of things that I wanted to bring out. I cannot cover everything because we won't have time to do that. I mean, we certainly appreciate the way God came down and humbled Himself and swore by an oath that He would fulfill these things, and that God condescended in order to give us a note.

The other thing I think was neat was in Genesis 15, if you turn there for a second, Genesis 15 concerning the covenant, beginning in verse 9. He told Abraham that He needed five animals brought to Him. And He said, "I want you to bring them to Me." Why? In verse 8, he said, "Oh Lord, how may I know that I shall possess it? How am I going to know you get the land and everything? How do I know that, God?" In verse 9 and 10 God said, "Well, here is the deal. Bring Me a three year old female heifer, a three year old female goat, a three year old ram, and a turtle dove and a young pigeon." Abraham said, "Okay. Whatever." So he went and he got them. Then he brought them, all of these things, verse 10, to him, "and cut them in two." He cut the heifer in two, big old cow, just cut her right in two. Female goat, cut the female goat in two. Cut the three year old ram in two. Cut the turtle dove in two and cut the young pigeon, little baby pigeon in two.

So Genesis 15:12 says,

When the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell on Abram.
[He was tired from cutting everything up. It made him
tired, wore him out.] And behold, terror and great darkness
fell on him. Then God said to Abraham, "Know for certain
that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not

theirs, where they will be enslaved and oppressed four hundred years. But I will also judge the nation whom they will serve and afterward they will come out with many possessions. And as for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace and you shall be buried at a good old age. Then in the fourth generation they will return here for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.” It came about when the sun had set it was very dark and behold there appeared smoking oven, flaming torch passed between these pieces. (cf. Genesis 15:13-17).

That was God. Now what was Abraham doing all this time? He was sleeping, wasn't he? Abraham is sleeping and here is God walking like a smoking oven and a flaming torch between the pieces that Abraham cut up.

And on that day God made a covenant with Abraham saying: “To your descendants I have given this land from the river of Egypt as far as the great river Euphrates. (Genesis 15:18)

Wow, do you see it? Isn't that amazing? How many of you remember reading in the Psalms where it says, “He giveth to His beloved while he sleeps”? Why did God put Abraham to sleep? I think because in this kind of unconditional covenant where He promised him the land—who promised the land?—God. Abraham is sleeping. God is walking through the pieces of animals that had been cut apart, the blood covenant. And if so, then when Abraham wakes up, the only thing Abraham can do is what? He is just a recipient, isn't he? He was put to sleep because he is not participating in it. He just has to receive it by faith. And that is what it means. “God gives to His beloved while they sleep.”

It is the same with the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. What happened during that time of the burial and all of these Old Testament saints are loosed and they are brought out into freedom and victory? It is because God is fulfilling His Word. We just have to receive it by faith. We are not the participants. We are the recipients of it by faith.

And this is happening as God is making a covenant with Abraham that he is going to get the land. Do you think Abraham will get the land? I know he will! It is going to happen in God's good time.

And that is one of the reasons why I cannot go the amillennial route and the whole bit there. I just can't do it. There are times when I would have liked to have done it, because it would solve some of the little problems when we debate. What about this and this and this, you know. But I just cannot go that route because I see God is doing it. And I know He is going to do it in His time and that is what I have to expect, that God will do it. You know, it is a tremendous covenant that God is giving here.

Because we do not have time to cover everything, let's just look briefly at the Palestinian covenant that fits in with this. The Palestinian covenant is that covenant that is affirming here to Israel. It is found in Deuteronomy 30:1–10. So turn in your Bibles, Deuteronomy 30:1–10. Okay. And be reading that while we begin to look at these things. In the first ten verses of Deuteronomy 30 He is promising the land to them. There is the land promise, the blessing promise and the seed promise. The land promise was given to Abraham. And we saw it, while he was sleeping even. So God stated He would do it.

Now, Galatians 3:17 says this:

And this I say, that the law, which was four hundred and thirty years later, cannot annul the covenant that was

confirmed before by God in Christ, that it should make the promise of no effect.

That means that the promise made to Abraham really has nothing to do with the law. That was a personal promise given to Abraham that he—that his nation, and eventually the whole world—would enter into these blessings.

What are the provisions of the Palestinian covenant? There are seven of them. The first one is this—and they are not all just from Deuteronomy 30—the first one is this, Deuteronomy 28:63–68, which says that the nation is unfaithful and they are going to lose the land. They are going to be plucked off the land. They are going to lose the land because of unfaithfulness. So the first thing He says is that unfaithfulness will cause them to lose the land. We see that in the first three verses of Deuteronomy 30.

Now it shall come to pass, when all these things come upon you, the blessing and the curse which I have set before you, and you call them to mind among all the nations where the LORD your God drives you, and you return to the LORD your God and obey His voice, according to all that I command you today, you and your children, with all your heart and with all your soul, that the LORD your God will bring you back from captivity, and have compassion on you, and gather you again from all the nations where the LORD your God has scattered you. (Deuteronomy 30:1-3)

So God says through your unfaithfulness you are going to lose the land and you are going to be scattered. But He still is going to bring them back.

The second thing God says is that there will be future repentance. He says they will come back, won't they? They will repent. The same thing He said in Deuteronomy 28:63-64 it says:

And it will come about that as the Lord delighted over you to prosper you and multiply you, so the Lord will delight over you to make you perish and destroy you.

And you shall be torn from the land where you are entering to possess it.

Moreover, the Lord will scatter you among the nations, all nations of people, from one end of the earth to the other end of the earth.

You know, they are not going to have any rest. They are going to be in despair. But at the same time He says, "But if you repent," He goes and says, "I will bring you back." So that is conditional on how they are going to enjoy what God has promised them. They have to repent.

All right, thirdly, He says the Messiah will return. He will give them the Messiah. Deuteronomy 30:3-5 says,

That the LORD your God will bring you back from captivity, and have compassion on you, and gather you again from all the nations where the LORD your God has scattered you.

If any of you are driven out to the farthest parts under heaven, from there the LORD your God will gather you, and from there He will bring you back.

The LORD your God will bring you to the land which your fathers possessed.

Now, which land is He bringing them back into? The land their fathers possessed. Well, wait a minute. Their fathers possessed it, and then they lost it. Thought it was over. No, it is not over. Romans 9–11 says that it is not over. The land their fathers possessed. They didn't possess all. Joshua and those guys led them into it. They possessed it. The land their fathers possessed, that is the land He is going to bring them back to. Well, has He brought them back to it yet? No. So in the future He is going to bring them back to which land? The land they already possessed through their fathers. That is the land He is bringing them back to. We just have to be patient and expectant that God will do it.

And you shall possess it. He will prosper you and multiply you more than your fathers. And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul that you may live.
(cf. Deuteronomy 30:5-6)

Wow. So, that is grace, isn't it? That is the Jeremiah 31 covenant. God is going to do this for them. There will come a time when their hearts will change because God will circumcise their hearts. That is the third thing, the Messiah does return,

Fourthly, Israel is restored to the land. They are restored to the land. Not just restored in heart, but to the land.

Fifthly, they are converted as a nation. We just saw that. God changes their hearts. Deuteronomy 30:6. They are converted. "I will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants to love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, in order that you will live." So God does this work, converts the nation. That is fifthly.

Sixthly, their enemies will be judged. In verse 7 of Deuteronomy 30, “And the Lord your God will inflict all these curses on your enemies and on all those who hate you and persecute you.”

Now, didn't He promise Abraham that? He said, “I promise you that as an individual but it will happen to your nation too. They curse you, they will be cursed. They love you, they will be loved.”

And lastly, the seventh provision is the nation will then receive her full blessing. He says in Deuteronomy 30:8-9,

And you will again obey the voice of the LORD and observe all His commandments which I command you today.

Then LORD your God will prosper you abundantly in all the work of your hand, in the offspring of your body, in the offspring of your cattle, and in the produce of your ground; for the LORD will rejoice over you for good, just as He rejoiced over your fathers.

So there will be national prosperity. The only question is when will that happen?—in God's time. Some people say that happens before Jesus returns. Other people say no, that happens after Jesus returns. And that is where you have some debates in the body of Christ as to what the timing is there, in terms of Christ. But the fact remains, God will do it, won't He? He is going to do it.

Now, there are a couple of things that God affirms. Turn to Ezekiel 16, through His prophet, there are five things. We will write these down and these will be the last things we have. In Ezekiel 16 there are five things that are affirmed by Him.

And here is what I get out of this, as you are turning to Ezekiel 16. If these partial fulfillments that have taken place in history were literal fulfillments, if the partial fulfillments were literal fulfillments in history, don't you think the rest of the fulfillments are going to be brought about literally as well? Why would He fulfill part of them literally and then say, "Oh, all the rest of it is just to be spiritualized"? No. Not because it makes it easier for you to put together some kind of theology that makes you comfortable, because you can explain it with your brain now. It is not going to happen like that.

The partial fulfillments happened literally. God is going to fulfill the rest of these things literally, though you may or may not be able to understand it at all. It will happen. And you are to expect and believe that it will happen because you are the friend of God and He is showing you His plan for the entire world. And you fit in it. Right now you just take Jesus out to the people and you tell them the Good News about salvation through Him because time is running out.

So He says in Ezekiel—Let's just read and bring these things out—Ezekiel 16:60–63. It is an amazing Scripture.

“Nevertheless I will remember My covenant with you in the days of your youth, and I will establish an everlasting covenant with you.

Then you will remember your ways and be ashamed, when you receive your older and your younger sisters; for I will give them to you as daughters, but not because of your covenant.

Thus I will establish My covenant with you. Then you shall know that I am the LORD,

So that you may remember and be ashamed, and never open your mouth anymore because of your humiliation,

when I have forgiven you for all you have done,” the Lord GOD declares.

Wow. So, what is going to happen? Well, he explains in Ezekiel 16 in the first seven verses, God says this, that He loved Israel in the time of her infancy. Okay, Ezekiel 16:1–7, God loved Israel in the time of her infancy.

What does He say in verse 6 there? He says, “When I passed by you and saw you squirming in your blood, I said to you while you were in your blood, ‘Live! Live!’ and I made you numerous like plants of the field.” So God says, “In your infancy, when you were just birthed and you were squirming in your blood. You were just a baby,” God said, “I loved you.” That is what He is saying there.

Secondly, in Ezekiel 16:8-14, God says, “I want to relate to you by marriage.” In verses 8 through 14 He says,

“Then I passed by you and saw you, and behold, you were at the time for love; so I spread My skirt over you and covered your nakedness. I also swore to you and entered into a covenant with you so that you became Mine, declares the Lord GOD.

Then I bathed you with water, washed off your blood from you and anointed you with oil.

I also clothed you with embroidered cloth and put sandals of porpoise skin on your feet; and I wrapped you with fine linen and covered you with silk.

I adorned you with ornaments, put bracelets on your hands and a necklace around your neck.

I also put a ring in your nostril, earrings in your ears and a beautiful crown on your head.

Thus you were adorned with gold and silver, and your dress was of fine linen, silk and embroidered cloth. You ate fine flour, honey and oil; so you were exceedingly beautiful and advanced to royalty.

Then your fame went forth among the nations on account of your beauty, for it was perfect because of My splendor which I bestowed on you,” declares the Lord GOD.

So He says, “I married you. You were at the time for love. I took you in. I developed a relationship with you. I provided for you. I married you. You were great,” He says, “because of Me. I made you great.” Most guys think like that.

There is some relationship there to how husbands are to love their wives as Christ loved the church, no doubt.

But what happened? In verses 15 to 34, the third thing happened. God took her in and married her and loved her. But what did she do? In verses 15 to 34 it says she played the harlot. That is the third thing.

Ezekiel 16:15 says,

But you trusted in your beauty and played the harlot because of your fame, and you poured out your harlotries on every passer-by who might be willing.

That is Revelation 17 if I ever heard it, the harlot of the book of Revelation. God says, “I married this woman. I made her beautiful. I gave her everything. Then she took it and she went out and committed immorality with anybody who would even have her.” And it just broke God’s heart. And she played the harlot completely.

Therefore, what did He do? In verses 35–52, the Lord meted out judgment and He dispersed her. He got rid of them. He said in verse 35, “Therefore, O harlot, hear the word of the Lord.” This is His wife. He is calling His wife a harlot. “Because of your lewdness, et cetera, et cetera, your nakedness, you uncovered yourself through harlotries which your lovers—dot, dot, dot.” You know. He says in verse 39, “I am going to give you into the hand of your lovers. You can just go be with them then. If you are not going to be with Me anymore, just go be with them.” And He scattered them throughout the world. He said, “If you don’t want Me, go be with them. See how the world treats you, if you like it that much.”

But the final thing is in verses 53–63. He begins in verse 53 and He says there is going to be a restoration. “Nevertheless, I will restore their captivity, the captivity of Sodom and her daughters, the captivity of Samaria. I am going to restore you.” Verse 55 says, “And your sister Sodom with her daughters and Samaria with her daughters will return to their former state, and you with your daughters will also return to your former state.”

Now, how is that going to happen? It happens in verse 60. He says, I remember what? Why does this happen? God says, “I remember My covenant.” It will happen.

And so as we look at the Abrahamic covenant, I think it is eternal. I think it is unconditional. It is going to happen. Now there are some things within it that must take place for them to enjoy it. But God says in Jeremiah 31, God will do that. There is going to come a time, and Paul said it in Romans 9–11, God is going to work on them again. He is going to work in them again. He is going to work through them again. And He is going to bring them back.

And so, all of those promises were *yea* and *amen* in Christ Jesus. And I know many people struggle with these issues, but if you don’t get anything else, at least get this. Do you see that if you step back from the forest a bit and you are not so close to it, and you are not caught up in the little trees, and you step back and you look from Genesis

to Revelation in terms of its bigness, in terms of the things God did in history, and now as we go through the times He spoke, and how He spoke, and the content He gave with that speaking, when you put those two things together, as you step back, I think it is going to resolve some of the little issues and problems that are brought forth and discussed and argued over in the body of Christ. If nothing else it will at least tell you what is worth fighting for and what is not. Because the big thing is the redemption that is in Christ Jesus and He is doing it.

So where do we fit today? Well, we are in that special, wonderful time before Christ returns to fulfill these things. And we see it happening on the news. And it is amazing every time I turn on the television and see everything is in the Middle East, the whole world, you know, because that is going to effect us. And everything in the Middle East is effecting the entire world because God is remembering His covenant. That is why.

Lord, we thank You for the fact that You created us. You started this whole deal. We have rebelled. Man turned away from You. And that we once who were far off from this and strangers and aliens, now we have been brought into it by faith in Christ. And we are going to be part of it to the very end. And it is just amazing, Lord. So, I just pray that You would grant us a large view and a bigger picture of the Bible as we go through. Help us to see these things little by little so we can interpret maybe in their context more properly. So I pray You will help us as we go through and in time that it will come together and we will see the big picture here. For Your glory, Lord, so we can have confident, expectant faith and hope in You, Lord. So be with us today. Let us have the faith trusting relationship going on right now, expecting You to do all the things You promised, for Your glory, in Jesus' name. Amen.

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