

God's Conditional Gift of Land to Abraham

“Preterists” and “Futurists” disagree about Biblical prophecy. “Preterists” (from the Latin word for “past”) believe that most prophecies have already been fulfilled. Futurists believe their greater fulfillment lies in the future.

This paper argues that “The Promised Land” was promised to Abraham by God *conditionally*. Abraham was promised land *on the condition* that he obey God. Disobedience would be penalized by being kicked out of the land.

This paper takes the “preterist” position that the promise to Abraham was fulfilled in the past.

As I read the Bible I see two dominant themes. The first we might call “God’s Unconditional Love.” What this actually means is “God’s *Undeserved* Love.” We don’t *deserve* for God to love us, but He does. If God promises over and over and over to love us, we still don’t *deserve* God’s love. The Bible doesn’t say God loves us because we’re lovable. In fact the Bible denies this explicitly. God loves us because God is Love. God is a loving God. God overlooks our unworthiness.

Sometimes.

God is long-suffering, but sometimes we exploit God’s love, and God cannot allow His love to be taken advantage of beyond certain limits. God specifies in advance what these limits are and the consequences for transgressing those limits.

This specification of limits and consequences is called a “covenant.” In a covenant, God makes an undeserved promise to man, but states the limits of God’s patience and the consequences of disrespect that goes too far.

Being created is a gift. Having the Creator communicate with the created one is a gift—God could just as well remain totally silent, and enforce the limits without telling the creature what the limits were. The creature cannot say to the Creator, “Hey, that’s no fair!”

God reveals Himself as a God of Love. He offers gifts of love to man on the condition that man confesses, “I am the creature, not the Creator.” It is not an unreasonable condition.

The Creator owns the creation. We are mere stewards of God’s Property. The conditional granting of undeserved gifts of land by God to man has been the normal course of events since the beginning of

Creation. It was the case with Adam:

Genesis 2:15 The LORD God took the man and rested him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it.

God gave land to Adam. Adam didn’t “deserve” this gift of land. God could have tossed Adam into a lifeless desert. But there were conditions attached to this undeserved gift. Adam had to work and keep the Garden, and he could not eat of the forbidden fruit. Adam transgressed the covenant’s limits and lost the Garden-land. This is the Biblical paradigm

Some have claimed that God gave a promise of land to Abraham’s descendants without any limits or conditions. These same people also (usually) claim that God has not yet kept His promise, and that someday Abraham’s descendants will get the Promised Land.

It turns out that this issue results in two dramatically different versions of Christianity. One version is committed to working for the Christianization of the world, in which families, education, business, science, the arts, and every area of life is brought under the jurisdiction of God’s Word in the Bible. The other version is waiting for Christ to return and reinstitute Old Testament temple sacrifices, believing that families, education, business, science, government and the rest of life will become increasingly secular, if not more demonic, and life on earth gets worse and worse until the Second Coming.

The next 300 or so verses will prove

- That God gave the land with the usual covenant limits and conditions,
- that God in fact kept every single promise He made concerning Abraham’s descendants,
- that Abraham’s descendants transgressed the covenant limits and that
- God kicked them out of the land, just like Adam.

The story doesn’t end there, of course. One of Abraham’s seed was “the last Adam,” and unlike the first Adam, the last Adam was sinless, and God promises not just Palestine, but the entire earth to descendants of the first Adam who die and are born again as descendants of the Last Adam.

As was the case with the first generation of

Abraham's descendants to possess the Promised Land, we have to be faithful and do what God says to take possession of the entire planet. The New Promised Land is not given to us on a silver platter, just as it was not given to the generation of Joshua and Caleb without God's people having to lift a finger.

Here is an analogy to sum up this interpretation of the Covenant with Abraham. Imagine Smith and Jones are walking down a country road and pass a nice pasture. Smith says he would love to own a nice pasture like that. Jones says he owns that pasture, and will give it to Smith and his descendants. Smith is delighted, but Jones says there's a catch. Jones says the land is presently leased out to the Hatfields, who are at war with the McCoys. Jones believes that in four generations the Hatfields and McCoys are going to be so consumed with their feud that they're going to wipe each other out. At that time, Jones says, Smith's descendants can take possession of the land. Smith accepts the deal. Jones reminds Smith that Smith's descendants will be responsible to pay the taxes on the land, otherwise, the land will be repossessed. Smith says, "Of course."

As it turns out, Jones, an extremely far-sighted individual, knew that Smith's descendants were not going to be very good ranchers, would not keep the pasture in good shape, would squander their meager income on casino gambling, and would not pay the taxes. Jones knew his descendants would be more prudent, would take possession of the land given to Smith by paying the back-taxes on the land and build a high-rise apartment building that would house hundreds of families in luxurious comfort.

The first statement of God's Covenant to Abraham is in **Genesis 12**

- {1} 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.
{2} I will make you a great nation;
I will bless you
And make your name great;
And you shall be a blessing.
{3} 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."

Verse 3 states the ultimate goal of God's covenant: blessings to all the families of the earth, not

just Abraham's. In fact, this is "the Gospel" in a nutshell:

Galatians 3:8 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."

This was the real point of God's covenant with Abraham: The Christianization of the world.

Abraham knew this was a "conditional" covenant. He knew that if he refused to obey God's command to

Get out of your country,
From your family
And from your father's house,
To a land that I will show you,

that God would not be happy, and would not give Abraham the land He had conditionally promised. That's why we read in the next verse:

{4} So Abram departed as the LORD had spoken to him,

If you had been in Abraham's shoes, wouldn't you have done the same? If the Creator of the universe told you to "Get out of here!" wouldn't you skeedaddle? This isn't just friendly-advice-take-it-or-leave-it from a Century 21 Real Estate Broker; this is "the Lord of Hosts" making a promise that concerns "all the families of the earth." Abraham knew this was a momentous choice:

for he waited for the city which has
foundations, whose builder and maker *is* God.
Hebrews 11

Abraham was dimly aware of God's bigger plan, which would come with Christ:

John 8:56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad."

So Abraham packed up and went to Canaan. Once there, God reminds Abraham about the covenant. Note Abraham's reaction:

Genesis 12:7 Then the LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your descendants I will give this land." And there he built an altar to the LORD, Who had appeared to him.

This is exactly what Noah did when he got off the ark after God had wiped out the entire human race and God made a covenant with Noah: Noah built an altar (Genesis 8:20). Altars are built to Gods whose wrath needs to be propitiated, whose conditions must be met. Just because God has shown you grace, as He did to Noah and Abraham, we can't forget Whom we're dealing with here.

Is there any Biblical basis for concluding that Abraham's covenant was fundamentally different from Adam's? That Abraham had been relieved of the duties the creature normally owes the Creator? That God's covenant with Abraham was "unconditional?"

In order to prove that a given covenant was "unconditional," one should offer Biblical evidence which explicitly sets aside the normal assumed state of affairs between a Sovereign and a vassal, between the Potter and the clay, between a Holy, Righteous God and fallen man. God restates the covenant to Abraham several times, and in none of these cases is the normal responsibility of the sinful creature to the Righteous Creator set aside or suspended. Abraham is a model for us all, because he does what every human being should do:

Genesis 18:17-19 And the LORD said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am doing, ^{18} since Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? ^{19} For I have known him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the LORD, to do righteousness and justice, that the LORD may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to HIM."

God repeats the covenant in

Genesis 13:14-17 ^{14} And the LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him: "Lift your eyes now and look from the place where you are—northward, southward, eastward, and westward; ^{15} for all the land which you see I give to you and your descendants forever. ^{16} And I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth; so that if a man could number the dust of the earth, *then* your descendants also could be numbered. ^{17} Arise, walk in the land through its length and its width, for I give it to you."

In Genesis 15 God gives additional assurances to Abraham:

Genesis 15:7, Then He said to him, "I am the LORD, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to inherit it."

The Lord here says He "brought" Abraham to Canaan out of Ur, as if God used a transporter beam, or handed Abraham to Canaan on a silver platter. But if you remember reading Genesis 12:5, Abraham was the one who packed up all his possessions, left Ur, and traveled the distance to Canaan.

The Prophetic Timetable

Then God tells Abraham more details about the giving of the land to Abraham's descendants. In Canaan, God lays out a timetable:

Genesis 15:13-21 ^{13} Then He said to Abram: "Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land *that is* not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years. ^{14} And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions. ^{15} Now as for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried at a good old age. ^{16} But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites *is* not yet complete."

^{18} On the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying: "To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates— ^{19} the Kenites, the Kenezites, the Kadmonites, ^{20} the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, ^{21} the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites."¹

This passage is critical. Millions of Christians read the promise of land made to Abraham in Genesis 12, 13, and 15, and have no idea when the promise was supposed to be fulfilled. This passage answers that question precisely. God foretells of slavery in Egypt for 400 years, the Exodus, and the return of Abraham's descendants to Canaan in the fourth generation, after the sins of the people in the Promised Land reach an intolerable limit, and God is ready to kick them out of the land.²

Because of the timetable in Genesis 15, the first six books of the Bible are about God's Promise to Abraham, the sojourn in Egypt, the Exodus out of Egypt and journey to the Promised Land, and the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham in the fourth generation. In this essay we are going to go through the first six books of the Bible and see this. Joshua summed up the entire Pentateuch at the end of his life, noting the complete fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham, the conditions of which still apply:

¹ Our Smith&Jones analogy above is taken from this prophetic timetable.

² Just like Adam. The conditional possession of land is a fundamental characteristic of the human race in our relation to the Creator, who owns all land (Ps. 50:10).

Thus says the LORD God of Israel: “I took **your father Abraham** from the other side of the River. And I brought you into the land of the Amorites. But I delivered them into your hand. I have given you a land for which you did not labor, and cities which you did not build, and you dwell in them; you eat of the vineyards and olive groves which you did not plant.” And Joshua said unto Israel, behold, this day I am going the way of all the earth: and ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the LORD your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof.

But from the beginning, God has required obedience to His Word as a condition for His blessing. So Joshua continues, laying out the struggle that will occupy the rest of the Old Testament: Will Israel obey and enjoy the land, or will they disobey and be kicked out? Joshua answers:

Therefore it shall come to pass, that as **all good things are come upon you, which the LORD your God promised you**; so shall the LORD bring upon you all evil things, until He have destroyed you from off this good land which the LORD your God hath given you. When ye have transgressed the covenant of the LORD your God, which He commanded you, and have gone and served other gods, and bowed yourselves to them; then shall the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and ye shall perish quickly from off the good land which He hath given unto you.³

But after this apostasy and exile, God will promise a final return to the land, and after that, a New Covenant, with even greater promises, which Abraham looked for. The New Testament Scriptures begin with the descendants of Abraham back in Israel, and the temple re-built, which Jesus, the New Joshua, is going to destroy and rebuild, and conquer all the nations in the New Promised Land, which is the whole earth. Here is where the huge difference of opinion between futurists and preterists begins. Preterists believe the New Covenant in already in effect and we are the new temple, Christianizing the entire world. Futurists believe God is going to rebuild the old Mosaic temple and the seed of Abraham will occupy Palestine, not the whole earth.

³ Several passages have been combined here. We will look at each passage separately below.

God’s covenant with Abraham is restated in Genesis 17, including additional conditions, and God’s Sovereignty and Holiness are again stated, and Abraham reacts as one who understands that this is not an unconditional covenant, or a covenant between equals:

Genesis 17 When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, “I *am* Almighty God; **walk before Me and be blameless.** {2} And I will make My covenant between Me and you, and will multiply you exceedingly.” {3} **Then Abram fell on his face**, and God talked with him, saying: {4} “As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, and you shall be a father of many nations. {5} No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you a father of many nations. {6} I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. {7} And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and your descendants after you. {8} Also I give to you and your descendants after you the land in which you are a stranger, all the land of Canaan, as an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.”

{9} And God said to Abraham: “As for you, **you shall keep My covenant**, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations. {10} This *is* My covenant **which you shall keep**, between Me and you and your descendants after you: Every male child among you shall be circumcised; {11} and you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you. {12} He who is eight days old among you shall be circumcised, every male child in your generations, he who is born in your house or bought with money from any foreigner who is not your descendant. {13} He who is born in your house and he who is bought with your money must be circumcised, and My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. {14} And the uncircumcised male child, who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that person **shall be cut off from his people; he has broken My covenant.**”

{15} Then God said to Abraham, “As for Sarai

your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah *shall be* her name. ^{16} And I will bless her and also give you a son by her; then I will bless her, and she shall be *a mother of nations*; kings of peoples shall be from her.”

Abraham (Abram, actually) is renamed, as God exercises total dominion over his very definition. Abraham is told to “walk before Me,” that is, in constant awareness of God’s Prerogatives, “and be blameless.” This isn’t an easy unconditional covenant. This is a tough covenant. Abraham, appropriately, bows and falls on his face before God. Abraham recognizes that his relationship with God is full of conditions, even as God is loving and gracious beyond measure in His election of Abraham and the blessings He promises.

“**You** shall keep My covenant,” Abraham is reminded. Abraham and his descendants.

Then God further reveals the conditions: “and you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins.” Did I mention that the conditions of this covenant weren’t easy?

Abraham tells his servant:

Genesis 24:7 “The LORD God of heaven took me from my father’s house and from the land of my family, and spoke to me and swore to me, saying, ‘To your descendants I give this land.’

Isaac is part of this very same covenant, because the promise was to Abraham and his descendants, Abraham is his father, and Abraham kept the conditions of the covenant God made with him:

Genesis 26:2-5 Then the LORD appeared to Isaac and said: “Do not go down to Egypt; live in the land of which I shall tell you. ^{3} Dwell in this land, and I will be with you and bless you; for to you and your descendants I give all these lands, and I will perform **the oath which I swore to Abraham your father**. ^{4} And I will make your descendants multiply as the stars of heaven; I will give to your descendants all these lands; and in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed; ^{5} because **Abraham** obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws.”

The willingness of Abraham to obey every thing God commands is not a requirement which was unique to Abraham. Every human being created by God is required to be as obedient as Abraham was.

Isaac passes to his son Jacob the promise of the

covenant God made with Abraham:

Genesis 28:3-4 ^{3} “May God Almighty bless you,

And make you fruitful and multiply you,
That you may be an assembly of peoples;
^{4} And give you **the blessing of Abraham**,
To you and your descendants with you,
That you may inherit the land
In which you are a stranger,
Which God gave to Abraham.”

Genesis 28:12-14 ^{12} Then he dreamed, and behold, a ladder was set up on the earth, and its top reached to heaven; and there the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. ^{13} And behold, the LORD stood above it and said: “I am the LORD God of **Abraham your father** and the God of **Isaac**; the land on which you lie I will give to you and your descendants. ^{14} Also your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth; you shall spread abroad to the west and the east, to the north and the south; and in you and in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

This is the same covenant—which some call “unconditional”—which was given to Abraham.

Genesis 35:10-13 ^{10} And God said to him, “Your name *is* Jacob; your name shall not be called Jacob anymore, but Israel shall be your name.” So He called his name Israel. ^{11} Also God said to him: “I am God Almighty. Be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall proceed from you, and kings shall come from your body. ^{12} The land **which I gave Abraham and Isaac** I give to you; and to your descendants after you I give this land.” ^{13} Then God went up from him in the place where He talked with him.

Genesis 48:4 “and said to me, ‘Behold, I will make you fruitful and multiply you, and I will make of you a multitude of people, and give this land to your descendants after you as an everlasting possession.’

Joseph is told that the promise made to his father Abraham, his father Isaac, and his father Jacob, continues through to him:

Genesis 48:21

Then Israel said to Joseph, “Behold, I am dying, but God will be with you and bring you back to **the land of your fathers**.

And Joseph passed it on:

Genesis 50:23-25 {23} Joseph saw Ephraim's children to the third generation. The children of Machir, the son of Manasseh, were also brought up on Joseph's knees. {24} And Joseph said to his brethren, "I am dying; but God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land to the land of **which He swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.**" {25} Then Joseph took an oath from the children of Israel, saying, "God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here."

The promise God gave to Abraham is still in effect. Then the Pentateuch continues in the book of Exodus to show how God fulfilled His promise to Abraham, to bring his descendants out of Egypt and into the Promised Land [Gen. 15:13-21]:

Exodus 3:8 And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites.

Exodus 3:17 and I have said I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt to the land of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, to a land flowing with milk and honey."

Exodus 6:4 "I have also established My covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, in which they were strangers.

Exodus 6:7-9 I will take you as My people, and I will be your God. Then you shall know that I am the LORD your God who brings you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. {8} And I will bring you into the land **which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob;** and I will give it to you as a heritage: I am the LORD." {9} So Moses spoke thus to the children of Israel; but they did not heed Moses, because of anguish of spirit and cruel bondage.

Exodus 7:4 "But Pharaoh will not heed you, so that I may lay My hand on Egypt and bring My armies and My people, the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt by great judgments.

Exodus 12:25 "It will come to pass when you come to the land which the LORD will give you, just as He promised, that you shall keep this service.

Exodus 13:5 "And it shall be, when the LORD brings you into the land of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, **which He swore to your fathers to give you,** a land flowing with milk and honey, that you shall keep this service in this month.

Exodus 13:11 "And it shall be, when the LORD brings you into the land of the Canaanites, **as He swore to you and your fathers,** and gives it to you, that you shall [obey Me] . . .

Up to this point, the promise to Abraham seems in full effect. Some who believe the promise to Abraham was unconditional and hasn't yet been fulfilled also believe that in some sense the giving of the law of Sinai cancelled out or suspended the gracious promise made to Abraham, and inaugurated a new arrangement based on works (conditions) rather than grace (in the unconditional covenant made with Abraham). The Apostle Paul expressly denies this:

Galatians 3:17 What I am saying is this: the Law, which came four hundred and thirty years later, does not invalidate a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to nullify the promise.

Even without reading Paul's words, hundreds of verses throughout the Pentateuch leave the impression the promise to Abraham still seems to be in effect, and seems to be as conditional as it ever was, because no change in rhetoric concerning the promise made to Abraham can be seen from God after Sinai, as the following verses indicate:

Exodus 23:27-31 I will send my fear before thee, and will destroy all the people to whom thou shalt come, and I will make all thine enemies turn their backs unto thee. {28} And I will send hornets before thee, which shall drive out the Hivite, the Canaanite, and the Hittite, from before thee. {29} I will not drive them out from before thee in one year; lest the land become desolate, and the beast of the field multiply against thee. {30} By little and little I will drive them out from before thee, until thou be increased, and inherit the land. {31} And I will set your bounds from the Red Sea to the sea, Philistia, and from the desert to the River. For I will deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand, and you shall drive them out before you.

Exodus 32:12-14 {12} Why should the Egyptians speak, and say, 'He brought them out to harm them, to kill them in the

mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth'? Turn from Your fierce wrath, and relent from this harm to Your people. ^{13}

Remember **Abraham, Isaac, and Israel**, Your servants, **to whom You swore** by Your own self, and said to them, 'I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven; and all this land that I have spoken of I give to your descendants, and they shall inherit it forever.'"

^{14} So the LORD relented from the harm which He said He would do to His people

God shows His love through His commitment to us, and His commitment to bring about the Gospel: blessing to all the families of the earth. We do not "earn" anything by confessing and acting as though God is God and we are not. That's the very least we as creatures can do for our Creator:

Luke 17:10 So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, 'We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.'"

Obedying God is the right thing to do. It is the sensible, rational, moral thing to do. Failing to obey God denies who we are, our essential being. It's insane not to follow God's commandments. But we don't, and God shows His love for us by patiently enduring our insanity:

Exodus 33:1-3 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Depart and go up from here, you and the people whom you have brought out of the land of Egypt, to the land of **which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob**, saying, 'To your descendants I will give it.' ^{2} And I will send My Angel before you, and I will drive out the Canaanite and the Amorite and the Hittite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite. ^{3} Go up to a land flowing with milk and honey; for I will not go up in your midst, lest I consume you on the way, for you are a stiff-necked people."

This is God fulfilling the prophetic timetable made to Abraham in Genesis 15.

The Book of Leviticus continues this same theme:

Leviticus 14:34 "When you have come into the land of Canaan, which I give you as a possession. . . .

Leviticus 18:3 According to the doings of the land of Egypt, where you dwelt, you shall not do; and according to the doings of the land of

Canaan, where **I am bringing you**, you shall not do; nor shall you walk in their ordinances.

Leviticus 20:22-26 ^{22} 'You shall therefore keep all My statutes and all My judgments, and perform them, that the land where **I am bringing you** to dwell may not vomit you out.

^{23} And you shall not walk in the statutes of the nation which I am casting out before you; for they commit all these things, and therefore I abhor them. ^{24} But I have said to you, "You shall inherit their land, and I will give it to you to possess, a land flowing with milk and honey." I *am* the LORD your God, who has separated you from the peoples. ^{25} You shall therefore . . . be holy to Me, for I the LORD *am* holy, and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be Mine.

Leviticus 23:10 "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'When you come into the land which I give to you, and reap its harvest, then you shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest.

The land is a gift that God gives. The people do not earn their way into the Promised Land, God "brings" them in.

Leviticus 25:2 "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'When you come into the land which I give you, then the land shall keep a sabbath to the LORD.

Leviticus 25:19 'Then the land will yield its fruit, and you will eat your fill, and dwell there in safety.

Leviticus 25:24 'And in all the land of your possession you shall grant redemption of the land.

Leviticus 25:38 'I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, to give you the land of Canaan and to be your God.

Leviticus 26:4 then I will give you rain in its season, the land shall yield its produce, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit.

Leviticus 26:6 I will give peace in the land, and you shall lie down, and none will make you afraid; I will rid the land of evil beasts, and the sword will not go through your land.

Leviticus 26:41-43 and that I also have walked contrary to them and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if their uncircumcised hearts are humbled, and they

accept their guilt— 42 then I will remember **My covenant with Jacob, and My covenant with Isaac and My covenant with Abraham**⁴ I will remember; I will remember the land. 43 The land also shall be left empty by them, and will enjoy its sabbaths while it lies desolate without them; they will accept their guilt, because they despised My judgments and because their soul abhorred My statutes.

Numbers 13:2 “Send men to spy out the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the children of Israel; from each tribe of their fathers you shall send a man, every one a leader among them.”

Numbers 14:8 “If the LORD delights in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us, ‘a land which flows with milk and honey.’”

Notice the word “IF.” This is a conditional covenant. Would Abraham say, “No, wait, that’s not the way I understood it. I heard God say that it didn’t matter whether I obeyed or not. I get this land regardless of how I treat God.” ?

Numbers 15:2 “Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘When you have come into the land you are to inhabit, which I am giving to you,

Numbers 16:14 “Moreover you have not brought us into a land flowing with milk and honey, nor given us inheritance of fields and vineyards. Will you put out the eyes of these men? We will not come up!”

Even Moses and Aaron are not so special that they don’t have to obey God:

Numbers 20:12 Then the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, “Because you did not believe Me, to hallow Me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them.”

Numbers 20:24 “Aaron shall be gathered to his people, for he shall not enter the land which I have given to the children of Israel, because you rebelled against My word at the water of Meribah.

Numbers 21:34 Then the LORD said to Moses, “Do not fear him, for I have delivered him into

⁴ This is not a reference to three separate, conflicting covenants; it is simply the restatement of the covenantal arrangement with each successive generation. God addresses each generation individually.

your hand, with all his people and his land; and you shall do to him as you did to Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt at Heshbon.”

Numbers 27:12 Now the LORD said to Moses: “Go up into this Mount Abarim, and see the land which I have given to the children of Israel.

There is an interesting incident in Numbers 32 which we will print out in full. Notice in verse 21 that Abraham’s descendants were to be fully armed and ready for battle, but it was *the Lord* who drove out the enemy. In the same way, we today must be armed and ready to do battle, but God will get all the credit for victory.

Numbers 32

^{1} Now the children of Reuben and the children of Gad had a very great multitude of livestock; and when they saw the land of Jazer and the land of Gilead, that indeed the region *was* a place for livestock, ^{2} the children of Gad and the children of Reuben came and spoke to Moses, to Eleazar the priest, and to the leaders of the congregation, saying, ^{3} “Ataroth, Dibon, Jazer, Nimrah, Heshbon, Elealeh, Shebam, Nebo, and Beon, ^{4} the country which the LORD defeated before the congregation of Israel, *is* a land for livestock, and your servants have livestock.” ^{5} Therefore they said, “If we have found favor in your sight, let this land be given to your servants as a possession. Do not take us over the Jordan.”

^{6} And Moses said to the children of Gad and to the children of Reuben: “Shall your brethren go to war while you sit here? ^{7} Now why will you discourage the heart of the children of Israel from going over into the land which the LORD has given them? ^{8} Thus your fathers did when I sent them away from Kadesh Barnea to see the land. ^{9} For when they went up to the Valley of Eshcol and saw the land, they discouraged the heart of the children of Israel, so that they did not go into the land which the LORD had given them. ^{10} So the LORD’s anger was aroused on that day, and He swore an oath, saying, ^{11} ‘Surely none of the men who came up from Egypt, from twenty years old and above, shall see the land of **which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob**, because they have not wholly followed Me, ^{12} except Caleb the son of Jephunneh, the Kenizzite, and Joshua the son of Nun, for they have wholly followed the LORD.’ ^{13} So the LORD’s anger was aroused against Israel, and He made them wander in the wilderness forty years, until all the generation that

had done evil in the sight of the LORD was gone. {14} And look! You have risen in your fathers' place, a brood of sinful men, to increase still more the fierce anger of the LORD against Israel. {15} For if you turn away from following Him, He will once again leave them in the wilderness, and you will destroy all these people."

{16} Then they came near to him and said: "We will build sheepfolds here for our livestock, and cities for our little ones, {17} but we ourselves will be armed, ready *to go* before the children of Israel until we have brought them to their place; and our little ones will dwell in the fortified cities because of the inhabitants of the land. {18} We will not return to our homes until every one of the children of Israel has received his inheritance. {19} For we will not inherit with them on the other side of the Jordan and beyond, because our inheritance has fallen to us on this eastern side of the Jordan."

{20} Then Moses said to them: "If you do this thing, if you arm yourselves before the LORD for the war, {21} and all your armed men cross over the Jordan before the LORD until He has driven out His enemies from before Him, {22} and the land is subdued before the LORD, then afterward you may return and be blameless before the LORD and before Israel; and this land shall be your possession before the LORD. {23} But if you do not do so, then take note, you have sinned against the LORD; and be sure your sin will find you out. {24} Build cities for your little ones and folds for your sheep, and do what has proceeded out of your mouth."

{25} And the children of Gad and the children of Reuben spoke to Moses, saying: "Your servants will do as my lord commands. {26} Our little ones, our wives, our flocks, and all our livestock will be there in the cities of Gilead; {27} but your servants will cross over, every man armed for war, before the LORD to battle, just as my lord says."

{28} So Moses gave command concerning them to Eleazar the priest, to Joshua the son of Nun, and to the chief fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel. {29} And Moses said to them: "If the children of Gad and the children of Reuben cross over the Jordan with you, every man armed for battle before the LORD, and the land is subdued before you, then you shall give them the land of Gilead as a possession. {30} But if they do not cross over armed with you, they shall have possessions among you in the land of Canaan."

{31} Then the children of Gad and the children of Reuben answered, saying: "As the LORD has said to your servants, so we will do. {32} We will cross over armed before the LORD into the land of Canaan, but

the possession of our inheritance *shall remain* with us on this side of the Jordan."

{33} So Moses gave to the children of Gad, to the children of Reuben, and to half the tribe of Manasseh the son of Joseph, the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites and the kingdom of Og king of Bashan, the land with its cities within the borders, the cities of the surrounding country.

Numbers 33:53 'you shall dispossess the inhabitants of the land and dwell in it, for I have given you the land to possess.

Numbers 34:13 Then Moses commanded the children of Israel, saying: "This is the land which you shall inherit by lot, which the LORD has commanded to give to the nine tribes and to the half-tribe.

Numbers 36:2 And they said: "The LORD commanded my lord Moses to give the land as an inheritance by lot to the children of Israel, and my lord was commanded by the LORD to give the inheritance of our brother Zelophehad to his daughters.

As we go through Deuteronomy we will see very plainly that the promise made to Abraham is still in effect, and it is still conditional, and the prophetic timetable in Genesis 15 is ready to be fulfilled. The word "Deuteronomy" means "the second giving of the law." This is the generation that will actually move into the promised land and take possession, since the previous generation, who faithlessly refused to work and fight for the Promised Land, but wanted God to deliver it to them on a silver platter, had died out. God is now ready to fulfill the promise made to Abraham. Note in this first passage the language similar to words God spoke to Abraham in Genesis 13:14-17:

Deuteronomy 1

7-9 Turn and take your journey, and go to the mountains of the Amorites, to all the neighboring places in the plain, in the mountains and in the lowland, in the South and on the seacoast, to the land of the Canaanites and to Lebanon, as far as the great river, the River Euphrates. {8} See, I have set the land before you; go in and possess the land **which the LORD swore to your fathers—to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—to give to them and their descendants after them.'**

21 ‘Look, the LORD your God has set the land before you; go up and possess it, **as the LORD God of your fathers has spoken to you**; do not fear or be discouraged.’

25 “They also took some of the fruit of the land in their hands and brought it down to us; and they brought back word to us, saying, ‘It is a good land which the LORD our God is giving us.’

35-36 ‘Surely not one of these men of this evil generation shall see that good land of **which I swore to give to your fathers**, ^{36} ‘except Caleb the son of Jephunneh; he shall see it, and to him and his children I am giving the land on which he walked, because he wholly followed the LORD.’

Deuteronomy 2

5 “Do not meddle with them, for I will not give you any of their land, no, not so much as one footstep, because I have given Mount Seir to Esau as a possession.

12 The Horites formerly dwelt in Seir, but the descendants of Esau dispossessed them and destroyed them from before them, and dwelt in their place, just as Israel did to the land of their possession which the LORD gave them.)

24 “ ‘Rise, take your journey, and cross over the River Arnon. Look, I have given into your hand Sihon the Amorite, king of Heshbon, and his land. Begin to possess it, and engage him in battle.

29 ‘just as the descendants of Esau who dwell in Seir and the Moabites who dwell in Ar did for me, until I cross the Jordan to the land which the LORD our God is giving us.’

31 “And the LORD said to me, ‘See, I have begun to give Sihon and his land over to you. Begin to possess it, that you may inherit his land.’

Deuteronomy 3

2 “And the LORD said to me, ‘Do not fear him, for I have delivered him and all his people and his land into your hand; you shall do to him as you did to Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt at Heshbon.’

12-13 “And this land, which we possessed at that time, from Aroer, which is by the River Arnon, and half the mountains of Gilead and its

cities, I gave to the Reubenites and the Gadites. ^{13} “The rest of Gilead, and all Bashan, the kingdom of Og, I gave to half the tribe of Manasseh. (All the region of Argob, with all Bashan, was called the land of the giants.

18 “Then I commanded you at that time, saying: ‘The LORD your God has given you this land to possess. All you men of valor shall cross over armed before your brethren, the children of Israel.

20 ‘until the LORD has given rest to your brethren as to you, and they also possess the land which the LORD your God is giving them beyond the Jordan. Then each of you may return to his possession which I have given you.’

Deuteronomy 4

1 “Now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the judgments which I teach you to observe, that you may live, and go in and possess the land which **the LORD God of your fathers** is giving you.

5 Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the LORD my God commanded me, that ye should do so in the land whither ye go to possess it.

21 “Furthermore the LORD was angry with me for your sakes, and swore that I would not cross over the Jordan, and that I would not enter the good land which the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance.

31 (for the LORD your God is a merciful God), He will not forsake you nor destroy you, nor forget **the covenant of your fathers which He swore to them**.

37-38 “And **because He loved your fathers**, therefore He chose their descendants after them; and He brought you out of Egypt with His Presence, with His mighty power, driving out from before you nations greater and mightier than you, to bring you in, to give you their land as an inheritance, as it is this day.

Deuteronomy 5:3

The LORD did not make this covenant with **our fathers** alone, but with us, those who are here today, all of us who are alive.

Deuteronomy 5:31 ‘But as for you, stand here by Me, and I will speak to you all the commandments, the statutes, and the

judgments which you shall teach them, that they may observe them in the land which I am giving them to possess.’

Deuteronomy 6

Notice in this next passage language similar to that in **Genesis 26:2-5** above:

2-3 That thou mightest fear the LORD thy God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments, which I command thee, thou, and thy son, and thy son’s son, all the days of thy life; and that thy days may be prolonged. ^{3} Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do it; that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, **as the LORD God of thy fathers hath promised thee**, in the land that floweth with milk and honey.

10-11 “So it shall be, when the LORD your God brings you into the land of **which He swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob**, to give you large and beautiful cities which you did not build, ^{11} houses full of all good things, which you did not fill, hewn-out wells which you did not dig, vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant—when you have eaten and are full—

18 And you shall do what is right and good in the sight of the LORD, that it may be well with you, and that you may go in and possess the good land of **which the LORD swore to your fathers**,

23 ‘Then He brought us out from there, that He might bring us in, to give us the land of **which He swore to our fathers**.

Deuteronomy 7:8

but because the LORD loves you, and because He would keep **the oath which He swore to your fathers**, the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you from the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

Deuteronomy 7:12-13

“Then it shall come to pass, because you listen to these judgments, and keep and do them, that the LORD your God will keep with you **the covenant** and the mercy **which He swore to your fathers**. And He will love you and bless you and multiply you; He will also bless the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your land, your grain and your new wine and your oil, the

increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flock, in the land of **which He swore to your fathers** to give you.

Deuteronomy 8:1

“Every commandment which I command you today you must be careful to observe, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land of **which the LORD swore to your fathers**.

Deuteronomy 8:10 “When you have eaten and are full, then you shall bless the LORD your God for the good land which He has given you.

Deuteronomy 8:18

“And you shall remember the LORD your God, for it is He who gives you power to get wealth, that He may establish **His covenant which He swore to your fathers**, as it is this day.

Deuteronomy 9:4-6 “Do not think in your heart, after the LORD your God has cast them out before you, saying, ‘Because of my righteousness the LORD has brought me in to possess this land’; but it is because of the wickedness of these nations that the LORD is driving them out from before you. ^{5} It is not because of your righteousness or the uprightness of your heart that you go in to possess their land, but because of the wickedness of these nations that the LORD your God drives them out from before you, and that He may **fulfill the word which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob**. ^{6} Therefore understand that the LORD your God is not giving you this good land to possess because of your righteousness, for you are a stiff-necked people.

Deuteronomy 9:23 “Likewise, when the LORD sent you from Kadesh Barnea, saying, ‘Go up and possess the land which I have given you,’ then you rebelled against the commandment of the LORD your God, and you did not believe Him nor obey His voice.

Deuteronomy 9:28 Lest the land whence Thou broughtest us out say, Because the LORD was not able to bring them into the land which He promised them, and because He hated them, He hath brought them out to slay them in the wilderness.

Deuteronomy 10:11 “Then the LORD said to me, ‘Arise, begin your journey before the people, that they may go in and possess the

land **which I swore to their fathers** to give them.'

Deuteronomy 10:15

The LORD delighted only in **your fathers**, to love them; and He chose their descendants after them, you above all peoples, as it is this day.

Deuteronomy 10:22

Your fathers went down to Egypt with seventy persons, and now the LORD your God has made you as the stars of heaven in multitude.

Deuteronomy 11

9 "and that you may prolong your days in the land **which the LORD swore to give your fathers**, to them and their descendants, 'a land flowing with milk and honey.'

17 "lest the Lord's anger be aroused against you, and He shut up the heavens so that there be no rain, and the land yield no produce, and you perish quickly from the good land which the LORD is giving you.

21 "that your days and the days of your children may be multiplied in the land of which the LORD **swore to your fathers** to give them, like the days of the heavens above the earth.

25 "No man shall be able to stand against you; the LORD your God will put the dread of you and the fear of you upon all the land where you tread, just as He has said to you.

29 "Now it shall be, when the LORD your God has brought you into the land which you go to possess, that you shall put the blessing on Mount Gerizim and the curse on Mount Ebal.

31 "For you will cross over the Jordan and go in to possess the land which the LORD your God is giving you, and you will possess it and dwell in it.

Deuteronomy 12:1 "These are the statutes and judgments which you shall be careful to observe in the land which the LORD **God of your fathers** is giving you to possess, all the days that you live on the earth.

Deuteronomy 12:8-9 Ye shall not do after all the things that we do here this day, every man whatsoever is right in his own eyes. ^{9} For ye are not as yet come to the rest and to the inheritance, which the LORD your God giveth you.

Deuteronomy 13:17

So none of the accursed things shall remain in your hand, that the LORD may turn from the fierceness of His anger and show you mercy, have compassion on you and multiply you, **just as He swore to your fathers**,

Deuteronomy 15:4 "except when there may be no poor among you; for the LORD will greatly bless you in the land which the LORD your God is giving you to possess as an inheritance;

Deuteronomy 15:7 "If there is among you a poor man of your brethren, within any of the gates in your land which the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart nor shut your hand from your poor brother,

Deuteronomy 16:20 "You shall follow what is altogether just, that you may live and inherit the land which the LORD your God is giving you.

Deuteronomy 17:14 "When you come to the land which the LORD your God is giving you, and possess it and dwell in it, and say, 'I will set a king over me like all the nations that are around me,'

Deuteronomy 18:9 "When you come into the land which the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not learn to follow the abominations of those nations.

Deuteronomy 19:1-2 "When the LORD your God has cut off the nations whose land the LORD your God is giving you, and you dispossess them and dwell in their cities and in their houses, ^{2} "you shall separate three cities for yourself in the midst of your land which the LORD your God is giving you to possess.

Deuteronomy 19:8-10 "Now if the LORD your God enlarges your territory, **as He swore to your fathers**, and gives you the land **which He promised to give to your fathers**, ^{9} and if you keep all these commandments and do them, which I command you today, to love the LORD your God and to walk always in His ways, then you shall add three more cities for yourself besides these three, ^{10} lest innocent blood be shed in the midst of your land which the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance, and thus guilt of bloodshed be upon you.

Deuteronomy 19:14 "You shall not remove your neighbor's landmark, which the men of

old have set, in your inheritance which you will inherit in the land that the LORD your God is giving you to possess.

Deuteronomy 24:4 “then her former husband who divorced her must not take her back to be his wife after she has been defiled; for that is an abomination before the LORD, and you shall not bring sin on the land which the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance.

Deuteronomy 25:19 “Therefore it shall be, when the LORD your God has given you rest from your enemies all around, in the land which the LORD your God is giving you to possess as an inheritance, that you will blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven. You shall not forget.

Deuteronomy 26

1-3 “And it shall be, when you come into the land which the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance, and you possess it and dwell in it, ^{2} “that you shall take some of the first of all the produce of the ground, which you shall bring from your land that the LORD your God is giving you, and put it in a basket and go to the place where the LORD your God chooses to make His name abide. ^{3} “And you shall go to the one who is priest in those days, and say to him, ‘I declare today to the LORD your God that I have come to the country **which the LORD swore to our fathers** to give us.’

7 Then we cried out to the LORD **God of our fathers**, and the LORD heard our voice and looked on our affliction and our labor and our oppression.

9 ‘He has brought us to this place and has given us this land, “a land flowing with milk and honey”;

15 ‘Look down from Your holy habitation, from heaven, and bless Your people Israel and the land which You have given us, **just as You swore to our fathers**, “a land flowing with milk and honey.”’

18 And the LORD hath avouched thee this day to be His peculiar people, as He hath promised thee, and that thou shouldst keep all His commandments;

Deuteronomy 27:2-3 “And it shall be, on the day when you cross over the Jordan to the land which the LORD your God is giving you, that

you shall set up for yourselves large stones, and whitewash them with lime. ^{3} “You shall write on them all the words of this law, when you have crossed over, that you may enter the land which the LORD your God is giving you, ‘a land flowing with milk and honey,’ **just as the LORD God of your fathers promised** you.

Deuteronomy 28

1 “Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the LORD your God will set you high above all nations of the earth.

8 “The LORD will command the blessing on you in your storehouses and in all to which you set your hand, and He will bless you in the land which the LORD your God is giving you.

11 And the LORD will grant you plenty of goods, in the fruit of your body, in the increase of your livestock, and in the produce of your ground, in the land of **which the LORD swore to your fathers** to give you.

24-25 “The LORD will change the rain of your land to powder and dust; from the heaven it shall come down on you until you are destroyed. ^{25} “The LORD will cause you to be defeated before your enemies; you shall go out one way against them and flee seven ways before them; and you shall become troublesome to all the kingdoms of the earth.

52 “They shall besiege you at all your gates until your high and fortified walls, in which you trust, come down throughout all your land; and they shall besiege you at all your gates throughout all your land which the LORD your God has given you.

Moses’ Final Address

Deuteronomy 29:13

that He may establish you today as a people for Himself, and that He may be God to you, just as He has spoken to you, and **just as He has sworn to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob**.

Deuteronomy 29:25

Then people would say: ‘Because they have forsaken **the covenant of the LORD God of their fathers**, which He made with them when He brought them out of the land of Egypt;

Deuteronomy 30:5

Then the LORD your God will bring you to the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it. He will prosper you and multiply you more than your fathers.

Deuteronomy 30:9

The LORD your God will make you abound in all the work of your hand, in the fruit of your body, in the increase of your livestock, and in the produce of your land for good. For the LORD will again rejoice over you for good as He rejoiced over your fathers,

Deuteronomy 30:19-21 I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live; ^{20} that you may love the LORD your God, that you may obey His voice, and that you may cling to Him, for He is your life and the length of your days; and that you may dwell in the land **which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob**, to give them.”

Deuteronomy 31:7 Then Moses called Joshua and said to him in the sight of all Israel, “Be strong and of good courage, for you must go with this people to the land **which the LORD has sworn to their fathers** to give them, and you shall cause them to inherit it.

Deuteronomy 31:16

And the LORD said to Moses: “Behold, you will rest with your fathers; and this people will rise and play the harlot with the gods of the foreigners of the land, where they go to be among them, and they will forsake Me and break My covenant which I have made with them.

Deuteronomy 31:20

When I have brought them to the land flowing with milk and honey, of **which I swore to their fathers**, and they have eaten and filled themselves and grown fat, then they will turn to other gods and serve them; and they will provoke Me and break My covenant.

Deuteronomy 32:49 “Go up this mountain of the Abarim, Mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab, across from Jericho; view the land of Canaan, which I give to the children of Israel as a possession;

Deuteronomy 32:52 “Yet you shall see the land before you, though you shall not go there,

into the land which I am giving to the children of Israel.”

Deuteronomy 34:3-5 the South, and the plain of the Valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees, as far as Zoar. ^{4} Then the LORD said to him, “This is the land of **which I swore to give Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob**, saying, ‘I will give it to your descendants.’ I have caused you to see it with your eyes, but you shall not cross over there.” ^{5} So Moses the servant of the LORD died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the LORD.

Joshua

Joshua 1:2 “Moses My servant is dead. Now therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them; the children of Israel.

Joshua 1:6 “Be strong and of good courage, for to this people you shall divide as an inheritance the land **which I swore to their fathers** to give them.

Joshua 1:11 “Pass through the camp and command the people, saying, ‘Prepare provisions for yourselves, for within three days you will cross over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land which the LORD your God is giving you to possess.’”

Joshua 1:13-15 “Remember the word which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, saying, ‘The LORD your God is giving you rest and is giving you this land.’ ^{14} “Your wives, your little ones, and your livestock shall remain in the land which Moses gave you on this side of the Jordan. But you shall pass before your brethren armed, all your mighty men of valor, and help them, ^{15} “until the LORD has given your brethren rest, as He gave you, and they also have taken possession of the land which the LORD your God is giving them. Then you shall return to the land of your possession and enjoy it, which Moses the Lord’s servant gave you on this side of the Jordan toward the sunrise.”

Joshua 2:9 and said to the men: “I know that the LORD has given you the land, that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land are fainthearted because of you.

Joshua 2:14 So the men answered her, “Our lives for yours, if none of you tell this business of ours. And it shall be, when the LORD has given us the land, that we will deal kindly and truly with you.”

Joshua 2:24 And they said to Joshua, “Truly the LORD has delivered all the land into our hands, for indeed all the inhabitants of the country are fainthearted because of us.”

Joshua 5:6 For the children of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness, till all the people who were men of war, who came out of Egypt, were consumed, because they did not obey the voice of the LORD; to whom the LORD swore that He would not show them the land which the LORD **had sworn to their fathers** that He would give us, “a land flowing with milk and honey.”

Joshua 8:1 Now the LORD said to Joshua: “Do not be afraid, nor be dismayed; take all the people of war with you, and arise, go up to Ai. See, I have given into your hand the king of Ai, his people, his city, and his land.

Joshua 9:24 So they answered Joshua and said, “Because your servants were clearly told that the LORD your God commanded His servant Moses to give you all the land, and to destroy all the inhabitants of the land from before you; therefore we were very much afraid for our lives because of you, and have done this thing.

Joshua 11:23 So Joshua took the whole land, according to all that the LORD had said to Moses; and Joshua gave it as an inheritance to Israel according to their divisions by their tribes. Then the land rested from war.

Joshua 18:3 Then Joshua said to the children of Israel: “How long will you neglect to go and possess the land **which the LORD God of your fathers** has given you?”

Joshua 19:49 When they had made an end of dividing the land as an inheritance according to their borders, the children of Israel gave an inheritance among them to Joshua the son of Nun.

Joshua 21:2 And they spoke to them at Shiloh in the land of Canaan, saying, “The LORD commanded through Moses to give us cities to dwell in, with their common-lands for our livestock.”

Joshua 21:43-45 And the LORD gave unto Israel all the land **which He swore to give unto their fathers**; and they possessed it, and dwelt therein. ^{44} And the LORD gave them rest round about, according to **all that He swore unto their fathers**: and there stood not a man of all their enemies before them; the LORD delivered all their enemies into their hand. ^{45} There failed not ought of any good thing which the LORD had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass.

Joshua 22:4-5 And now the LORD your God hath given rest unto your brethren, as He promised them: therefore now return ye, and get you unto your tents, and unto the land of your possession, which Moses the servant of the LORD gave you on the other side Jordan. ^{5} But take diligent heed to do the commandment and the law, which Moses the servant of the LORD charged you, to love the LORD your God, and to walk in all His ways, and to keep His commandments, and to cleave unto Him, and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul.

Joshua 23:5-6 And the LORD your God, He shall expel them from before you, and drive them from out of your sight; and ye shall possess their land, as the LORD your God hath promised unto you. ^{6} Be ye therefore very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, that ye turn not aside therefrom to the right hand or to the left;

Joshua 23:10-16 One man of you shall chase a thousand: for the LORD your God, He it is that fighteth for you, as He hath promised you. ^{11} Take good heed therefore unto yourselves, that ye love the LORD your God. ^{12} Else if ye do in any wise go back, and cleave unto the remnant of these nations, even these that remain among you, and shall make marriages with them, and go in unto them, and they to you: ^{13} Know for a certainty that the LORD your God will no more drive out any of these nations from before you; but they shall be snares and traps unto you, and scourges in your sides, and thorns in your eyes, until ye perish from off this good land which the LORD your God hath given you. ^{14} And, behold, this day I am going the way of all the earth: and ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good

things which the LORD your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof. {15} Therefore it shall come to pass, that as all good things are come upon you, which the LORD your God promised you; so shall the LORD bring upon you all evil things, until He have destroyed you from off this good land which the LORD your God hath given you. {16} When ye have transgressed the covenant of the LORD your God, which He commanded you, and have gone and served other gods, and bowed yourselves to them; then shall the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and ye shall perish quickly from off the good land which He hath given unto you.

Nothing could be clearer than these verses. The promise to Abraham has been fulfilled, Israel has taken possession of the land, but the possession is conditioned on their future obedience. Four generations ago, God told Abraham this is the way it would be. And God's Word is true.

Joshua 24:2-4 And Joshua said to all the people, "Thus says the LORD God of Israel: 'Your fathers, including Terah, the father of **Abraham** and the father of Nahor, dwelt on the other side of the River in old times; and they served other gods. 3 Then I took **your father Abraham** from the other side of the River, led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his descendants and gave him Isaac. 4 To Isaac I gave Jacob and Esau. To Esau I gave the mountains of Seir to possess, but Jacob and his children went down to Egypt.

Joshua 24:8 'And I brought you into the land of the Amorites, who dwelt on the other side of the Jordan, and they fought with you. But I gave them into your hand, that you might possess their land, and I destroyed them from before you.

Joshua 24:13-21 'I have given you a land for which you did not labor, and cities which you did not build, and you dwell in them; you eat of the vineyards and olive groves which you did not plant.' {14} "Now, therefore, fear the LORD and serve Him in sincerity and truth; and put away the gods which your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. {15} "If it is disagreeable in your sight to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves today whom you will serve: whether the gods which

your fathers served which were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD." {16} The people answered and said, "Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods; {17} for the LORD our God is He who brought us and our fathers up out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and who did these great signs in our sight and preserved us through all the way in which we went and among all the peoples through whose midst we passed. {18} "The LORD drove out from before us all the peoples, even the Amorites who lived in the land. We also will serve the LORD, for He is our God." {19} Then Joshua said to the people, "You will not be able to serve the LORD, for He is a holy God He is a jealous God; He will not forgive your transgression or your sins. {20} "If you forsake the LORD and serve foreign gods, then He will turn and do you harm and consume you after He has done good to you." {21} The people said to Joshua, "No, but we will serve the LORD."

Judges 1:2 And the LORD said, "Judah shall go up. Indeed I have delivered the land into his hand."

From now on, with Israel in possession of the land, the Bible speaks of the land that has been delivered, past tense, to Israel. The Bible looks back on an event in the past that has already been fulfilled. The Bible speaks of the promise made to Abraham that God fulfilled, but whose conditions were not always observed by Israel. God was "forever" willing to continue blessing Israel's obedience, but Israel forsook the covenant the Lord made with her fathers.

The rest of the Old Testament is the history of Israel's failure to do what God put them in the Promised Land to do.

Notice also that even though Israel was required to be armed for battle, it was the Lord who miraculously delivered the Promised Land—on a silver platter, as it were.

Judges 6:9 'and I delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians and out of the hand of all who oppressed you, and drove them out before you and gave you their land.

Judges 11:21 'And the LORD God of Israel delivered Sihon and all his people into the hand of Israel, and they defeated them. Thus Israel

gained possession of all the land of the Amorites, who inhabited that country.

Judges 18:10 “When you go, you will come to a secure people and a large land. For God has given it into your hands, a place where there is no lack of anything that is on the earth.”

1 Kings 8 – Dedication of the Temple

36 “then hear in heaven, and forgive the sin of Your servants, Your people Israel, that You may teach them the good way in which they should walk; and send rain on Your land which You have given to Your people as an inheritance.

46 “When they sin against You (for there is no one who does not sin), and You become angry with them and deliver them to the enemy, and they take them captive to the land of the enemy, far or near;

48 “and when they return to You with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their enemies who led them away captive, and pray to You toward their land **which You gave to their fathers**, the city which You have chosen and the temple which I have built for Your name:

36 And it came to pass, at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near and said, “LORD God of **Abraham, Isaac, and Israel**, let it be known this day that You are God in Israel and I am Your servant, and that I have done all these things at Your word.

56 Blessed be the LORD, that hath given rest unto His people Israel, according to all that He promised: there hath not failed one word of all His good promise, which He promised by the hand of Moses His servant.

2 Kings 13:23 But the LORD was gracious to them, had compassion on them, and regarded them, because of **His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob**, and would not yet destroy them or cast them from His presence.

2 Kings 15:19-20 Pul king of Assyria came against the land; and Menahem gave Pul a thousand talents of silver, that his hand might be with him to strengthen the kingdom under his control. ^{20} And Menahem exacted the money from Israel, from all the very wealthy,

from each man fifty shekels of silver, to give to the king of Assyria. So the king of Assyria turned back, and did not stay there in the land.

1 Chronicles 16:18 Saying, “To you I will give the land of Canaan As the allotment of your inheritance,”

1 Chronicles 22:18 “Is not the LORD your God with you? And has He not given you rest on every side? For He has given the inhabitants of the land into my hand, and the land is subdued before the LORD and before His people.

2 Chronicles 1:9 Now, O LORD God, let Thy promise unto David my father be established: for Thou hast made me king over a people like the dust of the earth in multitude.

2 Chronicles 6:27 “then hear in heaven, and forgive the sin of Your servants, Your people Israel, that You may teach them the good way in which they should walk; and send rain on Your land which You have given to Your people as an inheritance.

2 Chronicles 6:36 “When they sin against You (for there is no one who does not sin), and You become angry with them and deliver them to the enemy, and they take them captive to a land far or near;

2 Chronicles 20:6-8 and said: “O LORD God of our fathers, are You not God in heaven, and do You not rule over all the kingdoms of the nations, and in Your hand is there not power and might, so that no one is able to withstand You? ^{7} Are You not our God, who drove out the inhabitants of this land before Your people Israel, and gave it to the descendants of **Abraham Your friend** forever? ^{8} And they dwell in it, and have built You a sanctuary in it for Your name, saying,

Job 15:19 To whom alone the land was given, And no alien passed among them:

Psalm 44:2-3 How Thou didst drive out the heathen with Thy hand, and plantedst them; how Thou didst afflict the people, and cast them out. ^{3} For they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them: but Thy right hand, and Thine arm, and the light of Thy countenance, because Thou hadst a favour unto them.

Psalm 47:9

The princes of the people have gathered

together,
The people of **the God of Abraham**.
For the shields of the earth belong to God;
He is greatly exalted.

Psalm 78:55 He cast out the heathen also
before them, and divided them an inheritance
by line, and made the tribes of Israel to dwell
in their tents.

Psalm 80:8-9 Thou hast brought a vine out of
Egypt: Thou hast cast out the heathen, and
planted it. {9} Thou preparedst room before it,
and didst cause it to take deep root, and it filled
the land.

Psalm 105 recounts the history of the Exodus
under Moses and conquest of the Promised Land
as a fulfillment of God's covenant with Abraham.

{1} Oh, give thanks to the LORD!
Call upon His name;
Make known His deeds among the peoples!
{2} Sing to Him, sing psalms to Him;
Talk of all His wondrous works!
{3} Glory in His holy name;
Let the hearts of those rejoice who seek the
LORD!
{4} Seek the LORD and His strength;
Seek His face evermore!
{5} Remember His marvelous works which He
has done,
His wonders, and the judgments of His mouth,
{6} **O seed of Abraham His servant,
You children of Jacob, His chosen ones!**
{7} He *is* the LORD our God;
His judgments *are* in all the earth.
{8} He remembers His covenant forever,
The word *which* He commanded, for a
thousand generations,
{9} **The covenant which He made with
Abraham,
And His oath to Isaac,
And confirmed it to Jacob for a statute,
To Israel as an everlasting covenant,**
{11} Saying, "To you I will give the land of
Canaan
As the allotment of your inheritance,"
{12} When they were few in number,
Indeed very few, and strangers in it.
{13} When they went from one nation to
another,
From *one* kingdom to another people,
{14} He permitted no one to do them wrong;
Yes, He rebuked kings for their sakes,

{15} *Saying*, "Do not touch My anointed ones,
And do My prophets no harm."

{16} Moreover He called for a famine in the
land;
He destroyed all the provision of bread.
{17} He sent a man before them—
Joseph—*who* was sold as a slave.
{18} They hurt his feet with fetters,
He was laid in irons.
{19} Until the time that his word came to pass,
The word of the LORD tested him.
{20} The king sent and released him,
The ruler of the people let him go free.
{21} He made him lord of his house,
And ruler of all his possessions,
{22} To bind his princes at his pleasure,
And teach his elders wisdom.
{23} Israel also came into Egypt,
And Jacob dwelt in the land of Ham.
{24} He increased His people greatly,
And made them stronger than their enemies.
{25} He turned their heart to hate His people,
To deal craftily with His servants.
{26} He sent Moses His servant,
And Aaron whom He had chosen.
{27} They performed His signs among them,
And wonders in the land of Ham.
{28} He sent darkness, and made *it* dark;
And they did not rebel against His word.
{29} He turned their waters into blood,
And killed their fish.
{30} Their land abounded with frogs,
Even in the chambers of their kings.
{31} He spoke, and there came swarms of flies,
And lice in all their territory.
{32} He gave them hail for rain,
And flaming fire in their land.
{33} He struck their vines also, and their fig
trees,
And splintered the trees of their territory.
{34} He spoke, and locusts came,
Young locusts without number,
{35} And ate up all the vegetation in their land,
And devoured the fruit of their ground.
{36} He also destroyed all the firstborn in their
land,
The first of all their strength.
{37} He also brought them out with silver and
gold,
And *there was* none feeble among His tribes.
{38} Egypt was glad when they departed,
For the fear of them had fallen upon them.

{39} He spread a cloud for a covering,
And fire to give light in the night.
{40} *The people* asked, and He brought quail,
And satisfied them with the bread of heaven.
{41} He opened the rock, and water gushed out;
It ran in the dry places *like* a river.

{42} **For He remembered His holy promise,
And Abraham His servant.**

{43} He brought out His people with joy,
His chosen ones with gladness.
{44} He gave them the lands of the Gentiles,
And they inherited the labor of the nations,
{45} That they might observe His statutes
And keep His laws.

Praise the LORD!

Psalms 135:10-12 Who smote great nations,
and slew mighty kings; {11} Sihon king of the
Amorites, and Og king of Bashan, and all the
kingdoms of Canaan: {12} And gave their land
for an heritage, an heritage unto Israel His
people.

Psalms 136:21-24 And gave their land for an
heritage: for His mercy endureth for ever: {22}
Even an heritage unto Israel His servant: for
His mercy endureth for ever. {23} Who
remembered us in our low estate: for His mercy
endureth for ever: {24} And hath redeemed us
from our enemies: for His mercy endureth for
ever.

After the Exile

Ezra 9:7 “Since the days of our fathers to this
day we have been very guilty, and for our
iniquities we, our kings, and our priests have
been delivered into the hand of the kings of the
lands, to the sword, to captivity, to plunder, and
to humiliation, as it is this day.

Nehemiah 9:7-38 Thou art the LORD the God,
who didst choose Abram, and broughtest him
forth out of Ur of the Chaldees, and gavest him
the name of **Abraham**; {8} And foundest his
heart faithful before thee, and madest a
covenant with him to give the land of the
Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, and the
Perizzites, and the Jebusites, and the
Girgashites, to give it, I say, to his seed, and
hast performed Thy words; for Thou art
righteous: {9} And didst see the affliction of our
fathers in Egypt, and heardest their cry by the
Red sea; {10} And showedst signs and wonders

upon Pharaoh, and on all his servants, and on
all the people of his land: for Thou knewest
that they dealt proudly against them. So didst
Thou get thee a name, as it is this day. {11} And
Thou didst divide the sea before them, so that
they went through the midst of the sea on the
dry land; and their persecutors Thou threwest
into the deeps, as a stone into the mighty
waters. {12} Moreover Thou leddest them in the
day by a cloudy pillar; and in the night by a
pillar of fire, to give them light in the way
wherein they should go. {13} Thou camest down
also upon mount Sinai, and spakest with them
from heaven, and gavest them right judgments,
and true laws, good statutes and
commandments: {14} And madest known unto
them Thy holy sabbath, and commandedst
them precepts, statutes, and laws, by the hand
of Moses Thy servant: {15} And gavest them
bread from heaven for their hunger, and
broughtest forth water for them out of the rock
for their thirst, and promisedst them that they
should go in to possess the land which Thou
hadst sworn to give them. {16} But they and our
fathers dealt proudly, and hardened their necks,
and hearkened not to Thy commandments, {17}
And refused to obey, neither were mindful of
Thy wonders that Thou didst among them; but
hardened their necks, and in their rebellion
appointed a captain to return to their bondage:
but Thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious
and merciful, slow to anger, and of great
kindness, and forsookest them not. {18} Yea,
when they had made them a molten calf, and
said, This is thy God that brought thee up out
of Egypt, and had wrought great provocations;
{19} Yet Thou in Thy manifold mercies
forsookest them not in the wilderness: the pillar
of the cloud departed not from them by day, to
lead them in the way; neither the pillar of fire
by night, to show them light, and the way
wherein they should go. {20} Thou gavest also
Thy good spirit to instruct them, and
withheldest not Thy manna from their mouth,
and gavest them water for their thirst. {21} Yea,
forty years didst Thou sustain them in the
wilderness, so that they lacked nothing; their
clothes waxed not old, and their feet swelled
not. {22} Moreover Thou gavest them kingdoms
and nations, and didst divide them into corners:
so they possessed the land of Sihon, and the
land of the king of Heshbon, and the land of
Og king of Bashan. {23} Their children also

multipliedst Thou as the stars of heaven, and broughtest them into the land, concerning **which Thou hadst promised to their fathers**, that they should go in to possess it. ^{24} So the children went in and possessed the land, and Thou subduedst before them the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, and gavest them into their hands, with their kings, and the people of the land, that they might do with them as they would. ^{25} And they took strong cities, and a fat land, and possessed houses full of all goods, wells digged, vineyards, and oliveyards, and fruit trees in abundance: so they did eat, and were filled, and became fat, and delighted themselves in Thy great goodness. ^{26} Nevertheless they were disobedient, and rebelled against thee, and cast Thy law behind their backs, and slew Thy prophets which testified against them to turn them to thee, and they wrought great provocations. ^{27} Therefore Thou deliveredst them into the hand of their enemies, who vexed them: and in the time of their trouble, when they cried unto thee, Thou heardest them from heaven; and according to Thy manifold mercies Thou gavest them saviours, who saved them out of the hand of their enemies. ^{28} But after they had rest, they did evil again before thee: therefore leftest Thou them in the hand of their enemies, so that they had the dominion over them: yet when they returned, and cried unto thee, Thou heardest them from heaven; and many times didst Thou deliver them according to Thy mercies; ^{29} And testifiedst against them, that Thou mightest bring them again unto Thy law: yet they dealt proudly, and hearkened not unto Thy commandments, but sinned against Thy judgments, (which if a man do, he shall live in them;) and withdrew the shoulder, and hardened their neck, and would not hear. ^{30} Yet many years didst Thou forbear them, and testifiedst against them by Thy spirit in Thy prophets: yet would they not give ear: therefore gavest Thou them into the hand of the people of the lands. ^{31} Nevertheless for Thy great mercies' sake Thou didst not utterly consume them, nor forsake them; for Thou art a gracious and merciful God. ^{32} Now therefore, our God, the great, the mighty, and the terrible God, who keepest covenant and mercy, let not all the trouble seem little before thee, that hath come upon us, on our kings, on our princes, and on our priests, and on our prophets, and on our

fathers, and on all Thy people, since the time of the kings of Assyria unto this day. ^{33} Howbeit Thou art just in all that is brought upon us; for Thou hast done right, but we have done wickedly: ^{34} Neither have our kings, our princes, our priests, nor our fathers, kept Thy law, nor hearkened unto Thy commandments and Thy testimonies, wherewith Thou didst testify against them. ^{35} For they have not served thee in their kingdom, and in Thy great goodness that Thou gavest them, and in the large and fat land which Thou gavest before them, neither turned they from their wicked works. ^{36} Behold, we are servants this day, and for the land that Thou gavest unto our fathers to eat the fruit thereof and the good thereof, behold, we are servants in it: ^{37} And it yieldeth much increase unto the kings whom Thou hast set over us because of our sins: also they have dominion over our bodies, and over our cattle, at their pleasure, and we are in great distress. ^{38} And because of all this we make a sure covenant, and write it; and our princes, Levites, and priests, seal unto it.

Jeremiah 7:1-7 ^{1} The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, ^{2} “Stand in the gate of the LORD’s house, and proclaim there this word, and say, ‘Hear the word of the LORD, all *you of Judah* who enter in at these gates to worship the LORD!’” ^{3} Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: “Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place. ^{4} Do not trust in these lying words, saying, ‘The temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD *are* these.’

^{5} “For if you thoroughly amend your ways and your doings, if you thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbor, ^{6} *if* you do not oppress the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and do not shed innocent blood in this place, or walk after other gods to your hurt, ^{7} then I will cause you to dwell in this place, in the land **that I gave to your fathers** forever and ever.

Jeremiah 11:1-5 ^{1} The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, ^{2} “Hear the words of this covenant, and speak to the men of Judah and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem; ^{3} and say to them, ‘Thus says the LORD God of Israel: “Cursed *is* the man who does not obey the words of this covenant ^{4} which I

commanded your fathers in the day I brought them out of the land of Egypt, from the iron furnace, saying, ‘Obey My voice, and do according to all that I command you; so shall you be My people, and I will be your God,’ ^{5} that I may establish **the oath which I have sworn to your fathers**, to give them ‘a land flowing with milk and honey,’ as *it is* this day.””

Jeremiah 16:13 ‘Therefore I will cast you out of this land into a land that you do not know, neither you nor your fathers; and there you shall serve other gods day and night, where I will not show you favor.’

Jeremiah 16:15 “but, ‘The LORD lives who brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north and from all the lands where He had driven them.’ For I will bring them back into their land **which I gave to their fathers**.”

Jeremiah 30:3 ‘For behold, the days are coming,’ says the LORD, ‘that I will bring back from captivity My people Israel and Judah,’ says the LORD. ‘And I will cause them to return to the land **that I gave to their fathers**, and they shall possess it.”’

Jeremiah 32:22 ‘You have given them this land, of **which You swore to their fathers** to give them; “a land flowing with milk and honey.”’

Jeremiah 34:17 “Therefore thus says the LORD: ‘You have not obeyed Me in proclaiming liberty, every one to his brother and every one to his neighbor. Behold, I proclaim liberty to you,’ says the LORD; ‘to the sword, to pestilence, and to famine! And I will deliver you to trouble among all the kingdoms of the earth.’

Ezekiel 11:15 “Son of man, your brethren, your relatives, your countrymen, and all the house of Israel in its entirety, are those about whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem have said, ‘Get far away from the LORD; this land has been given to us as a possession.’

Ezekiel 11:17 “Therefore say, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD: “I will gather you from the peoples, assemble you from the countries where you have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel.”’

Ezekiel 15:8 ‘Thus I will make the land desolate, because they have persisted in unfaithfulness,’ says the Lord GOD.”

Ezekiel 20:15 “So I also raised My hand in an oath to them in the wilderness, that I would not bring them into the land which I had given them, ‘flowing with milk and honey,’ the glory of all lands,

Ezekiel 20:28 “When I brought them into the land concerning which I had raised My hand in an oath to give them, and they saw all the high hills and all the thick trees, there they offered their sacrifices and provoked Me with their offerings. There they also sent up their sweet aroma and poured out their drink offerings.

Ezekiel 20:42 “Then you shall know that I am the LORD, when I bring you into the land of Israel, into the country for which **I raised My hand in an oath to give to your fathers**.”

In the next passage, those who were not important enough to be carried off in captivity but remain in the Promised Land think they are special descendants of Abraham. But Ezekiel reminds them that the promise to Abraham was conditional:

Ezekiel 33:23-25 Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying: ^{24} “Son of man, they who inhabit those ruins in the land of Israel are saying, ‘**Abraham** was only one, and he inherited the land. But we are many; the land has been given to us as a possession.’ ^{25} “Therefore say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD: “You eat meat with blood, you lift up your eyes toward your idols, and shed blood. Should you then possess the land?”

As we read these final verses from Ezekiel, we read words similar to those of Jeremiah, who prophesied the coming New Covenant. The way we interpret these passages will determine the integrity of the Bible as a whole. Was Ezekiel foretelling of a day when the temple would be literally restored, and under the New Covenant, would the same land promised to Abraham be given once again to genetic Abraham’s genetic descendants? Or was the New Covenant something dramatically new, a promise so vast that the Old Testament prophets only dimly saw it, awaiting its full revelation in the age of the New Covenant (Romans 16:25; Ephesians 3:3; Ephesians 3:9; Ephesians 6:19; Colossians 1:26; Colossians 4:3)?

Looking back on the verses we’ve covered, we can see that God has been faithful. God made promises and kept them. God had promised Abraham:

Genesis 15:5 “Look toward the heavens, and count the stars, if you are able to count them.”

And He said to him, “So shall your descendants be.”

And God kept His promise:

Hebrews 11:12 Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born *as many* as the stars of the sky in multitude—innumerable as the sand which is by the seashore.

But God had in mind so much more than a piece of real estate in Palestine. And so the writer to the Hebrews continues,

{13} All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. {14} For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a country of their own. {15} And indeed if they had been thinking of that country from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return. {16} But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He has prepared a city for them.

Not a City in Palestine with a literal temple, but the one that was

built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, **Ephesians 2:20**

The building of this City does not wait for a future second coming of Christ:

Hebrews 12:22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, {23} to the general assembly and church of the firstborn *who are* registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, {24} to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than *that of Abel*.

It is this new temple, the Greater Moses, the Seed of Abraham, the New Jerusalem, which the prophets foretold.

Ezekiel 36:25-28 {25} Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. {26} I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. {27} I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do *them*. {28} Then you shall dwell in **the land that I gave to your fathers**; you shall be My people, and I will be your God.

Ezekiel 37:25 “Then they shall dwell in the land that I have given to Jacob My servant, where **your fathers** dwelt; and they shall dwell there, they, their children, and their children’s children, forever; and My servant David shall be their prince forever.

Ezekiel 45:8 “The land shall be his possession in Israel; and My princes shall no more oppress My people, but they shall give the rest of the land to the house of Israel, according to their tribes.”

Ezekiel 47:14 “You shall inherit it equally with one another; for **I raised My hand in an oath to give it to your fathers**, and this land shall fall to you as your inheritance.

If Abraham, Moses and Joshua were to visit us today, they would surely tell us to have no doubts that God fulfilled His covenant with Abraham, but that each of them, Abraham, Moses and Joshua, were *really* looking forward to the New Covenant, and they would tell us to arm ourselves for battle, and take possession of the entire planet, making disciples of every nation. They would strongly warn us against waiting around for the old temple to be rebuilt.

This paper is published by Vine & Fig Tree, a non-profit tax-exempt educational organization dedicated to bringing about the fulfillment of Micah’s “Vine & Fig Tree” vision (Micah 4:1-7). To learn more about this worldview, see our website at www.VFTonline.com. Your tax-deductible donations are appreciated.