

II. THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT

A. THE PROVISIONS SET FORTH IN THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT (Gen. 12:6,7; 13:14-17; 15:1-21; 17:1-14; 22:15-18).

1. God's unconditional covenant with Abraham promised certain *individual* blessings to him personally.
 - a. God promised to bless Abraham and to make his name great (Gen. 12:2).
 - b. God promised to make Abraham the father of a great nation (Gen. 12:2) and of many nations (Gen. 17:5).
 - c. God promised to give the land of Canaan to him (as well as to his seed) as an everlasting possession (Gen. 13:15).
2. God's unconditional covenant with Abraham promised certain blessings to Abraham's seed as a *nation*.
 - a. God promised that Abraham's seed would be as the dust of the earth numerically (Gen. 13:16).
 - b. God promised that Abraham's seed would become a great nation and kings would come out of him (Gen. 17:6).
 - c. God promised that Abraham's seed, as a nation, would possess the land of Canaan as an everlasting possession (Gen. 17:8).
 - d. God promised that Abraham's seed, as a nation, would possess the gate of their enemies (Gen. 22:17).
3. God's unconditional covenant with Abraham promised certain *universal* blessings to the Gentile nations.
 - a. God promised that all the families, or nations of the earth, would be blessed through Abraham's seed (Gen. 12:13).
 - b. God promised that He would bless those nations that blessed Abraham and his seed and curse those that cursed him and his seed (Gen. 12:3).
4. God's unconditional covenant with Abraham was initiated in Gen. 12:1-3. Later it was confirmed to him and enlarged (Gen. 12:6,7; 13:14-17; 15:1-21; 17:1-14; 22:15-18).
5. The Abrahamic Covenant provided for three things generally speaking: a land, a seed, and a blessing. The *land* segment, we will see, is developed in the Palestinian Covenant; the *seed* segment is developed in the Davidic Covenant; and the *blessing* is developed in the New Covenant.

B. THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT TO THE CHURCH.

1. We should understand that while the church is the recipient of the spiritual blessing through Abraham's seed (Christ), the church is not Israel. Israel, as a nation, is mentioned in contrast to the church in the New Testament (Rom. 11:1-25; I Cor. 10:32).
2. We should also understand that the church is not the seed (Abraham's descendants) to whom the promises of the Abrahamic Covenant applies. And since these promises are literal and concern Israel only, they do not find fulfillment in the church, but refer to a future and literal fulfillment concerning Israel as a nation. Covenant theology, as well as progressive dispensationalism, fails to make this distinction and erroneously applies these covenanted promises to the church presently.

C. THE IMPLICATIONS WHICH THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT HAS UPON FUTURE EVENTS.

1. It should be noted that portions of the Abrahamic Covenant have already been literally fulfilled.
 - a. Abraham did have a son miraculously by Sarah (Gen. 21:2).
 - b. Abraham was blessed personally and his name became great. He was blessed with land (Gen. 13:14,15,17). He was blessed with servants (Gen. 15:7). He was blessed with material things (Gen. 13:2; 24:34,35). And Abraham was spiritually blessed with a life of peace and confidence (Gen. 22:5,8,10,12,16-18).
 - c. Abraham also became a channel of spiritual blessings through Christ, his seed according to the flesh, whereby all the families of the earth have been blessed through the gospel (Gal. 3:13-16).
 - d. Israel has also become a nation and has begun to possess the land of Canaan in part, but not in whole, according to God's promise to Abraham.
 - e. Finally, we see that nations have historically been blessed or cursed as a result of their treatment of Israel. Notice Gen. 14:12-16; 20:2-18; 23:1-20 as examples.
2. Notice there is no reason to believe otherwise or argue against the literal fulfillment of the remaining aspects of the Abrahamic Covenant.
 - a. This means according to God's covenant with Abraham, his seed, meaning the nation Israel, must literally possess the land of Canaan because God has promised it to Israel as an "*everlasting possession*" (Gen. 17:8).
 - b. This means, secondly, that people and nations will be blessed or cursed on the basis of how they deal with Israel (Gen. 12:3). This aspect of the covenant will certainly be realized during the Tribulation Period (Matt. 25:31-46) (Pentecost, 72-89).

Notice, contrary to God's promises to Israel in the Abrahamic Covenant, the Presbyterian Church USA with its reformed theology has publicly denounced Israel. In the Dec. 2004 issue of Israel My Glory an article entitled "*Presbyterians Come Out of the Closet*," the General Assembly, by a vote of 431 to 62, approved the following five resolutions aimed at Israel. Note the comments by Elwood McQuaid:

1. Gathering data to support selective divestment of holdings in multinational

corporations doing business in Israel/Palestine.

This divestiture involves its nearly \$8 billion portfolio, excluding those companies profiting from sale of products and services that cause harm to Palestinians or Israelis or both. Fact: Israel is the target, and the only country tagged for divestment.

2. Condemning Israel's security fence, which, in the view of the delegates, annexes land without negotiation.

Never mind that over the past four years of the Palestinian war on Israel, two thousand Israelis, Americans, and others have died from suicide attacks. These have been largely thwarted in areas where the fence now exists. Never mind the reason why the fence was built or that the Palestinians have resolutely rejected opportunities to negotiate with Israel.

3. Identifying Israel as espousing policies comparable to those of South Africa under the former apartheid regime.

This position conveniently overlooks the fact that more than 1 million Arabs hold full Israeli citizenship plus representation in Israel's ruling body, the Knesset.

4. Disavowing Christian Zionism as legitimate theological stance.

It is ironic that the very week the PCUSA was passing its resolutions, the Roman Catholic Church signed a document equating anti-Zionism with anti-Semitism. And what is the definition of *Zionism*? Basically, it is the belief that the Jewish people have a right to a secure homeland in *Eretz Yisrael*, sanctioned under international law. For Zionist Christians, that right is, without reservation, a God-ordained possession consistent with irrevocable biblical promises. In addition, though some seem to forget it, Israel is a legitimate state recognized under international law. The missing element at this juncture is secure, recognized boundaries.

5. Insisting on the Palestinians' right of return to Israel proper.

Implementing this position would effectively dismantle the Jewish nation by turning it into another state with a Palestinian majority, such as Jordan (12,13).