

## A Brief on my Views about the Nation of Israel and the Church

### The two major covenants of the Old Testament: The Abrahamic and the Davidic.

The Abrahamic Covenant progressively unfolded.

1. “And I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great; and so you shall be a blessing; and I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” (Gen 12:2-3).

Natural: Blessing

Spiritual: “...in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

2. “And the LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him, “Now lift up your eyes and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward; for all the land which you see, I will give it to you and to your descendants forever. And I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth; so that if anyone can number the dust of the earth, then your descendants can also be numbered. Arise, walk about the land through its length and breadth; for I will give it to you” (Gen 13:14-17).

Natural: The promise of the land

3. “On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, “To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt as far as the great river, the river Euphrates” (Gen 15:18).

Natural: The promise of the land. God cut an unconditional covenant with Abram.

4. “And I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come forth from you. And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you” (Gen 17:6-7).

Circumcision: sign of the covenant.

There is the natural aspect, but also a spiritual aspect is defined as “everlasting covenant”. This can only be fulfilled in the church.

5. “Indeed I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies. And in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.” (Gen 22:17-18).

The Abrahamic Covenant contains both natural and spiritual aspects.

Natural Descendants: The promise of blessing, prosperity and the land, commonly called the land of Canaan.

Spiritual Descendants: The promise of blessing, prosperity, power and a blessing to the world. “In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed” is certainly related to the Church of the New Testament. I do not believe that Israel lost its "chosen" status as a nation when they did not accept Jesus as their long promised Messiah. Because of the “election of God they are beloved for the sake of the fathers” (Ro. 11:28). What I understand about “replacement theology” is that I do not totally agree with it. I acknowledge there are prophecies that relate to natural Israel yet to be fulfilled.

However, I disagree with many theories about the Jews or Israel that are connected with the future theory of the millennial reign of Christ, Petra, 144,000 Jewish evangelists, training priests for the new temple, finding the ark of the covenant and finding a qualified red heifer, and many more, some of them hard to conceive they are actually believed to be out of the scriptures.

I am convinced that the Mosaic covenant ceased with the death of Jesus. The New Covenant replaced the Old Covenant, not just superseded it. My belief system cannot accept the idea that God will honor the reestablishment of the "sacrificial system" on behalf of Israel. Hebrews: Paul was alarmed at the possibility that the converted Jews would go back to offering sacrifices for their sins. He pointed out by disregarding the blood of Jesus there remained no other way of salvation. The same problem was addressed by Paul to the churches in Galatia.

To me there is the problem of making a distinction between Jews and Gentiles who are in Christ. Natural genealogy of all ethnic groups has lost its distinction in Christ. Paul constantly had to deal with the "pride" of the Jewish nation that was based on their genealogy.

"Nor to pay attention to myths and endless genealogies, which give rise to mere speculation rather than {furthering} the administration of God which is by faith" (1 Tim 1:4).

"But shun foolish controversies and genealogies and strife and disputes about the Law; for they are unprofitable and worthless" (Titus 3:9).

All the Israelites who came up out of Egypt were put down in a book of the living, called "the register of the house of Israel" (Ezek. 13:9) or "the book of life." Those who had died were excluded when the names were written out afresh each year. "Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous" (Psalms 69:28).

The destruction of the temple under the command of General Titus included the loss of the genealogy records of the Jews. Jesus Christ, the "seed of Abraham" fulfilled the Law and the Prophets and ushered in a new covenant and the registry of the Book of Life was moved into the heavens. "Indeed, true comrade, I ask you also to help these women who have shared my struggle in {the cause of} the gospel, together with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life" (Phil 4:3). And this special Book of Life is mentioned six times in the Revelations.

I do not favor the practice of many in the church community referring to Jew converts as Messianic- Jews and not merely as a Christian. I do advocate "one body" made up of believing Jews and Gen- tiles.

"Therefore remember, that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called "Un-circumcision" by the so-called "Circumcision," {which is} performed in the flesh by human hands {remember} that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who made both {groups into} one, and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, {which is} the Law of commandments

{contained} in ordinances, that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, {thus} establishing peace, and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity" (Eph 2:11-16).

"For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit" (1 Cor 12:13).

The main subject of the introductory book of the Bible, Genesis, was the purpose of God to have a family after His image and likeness. After briefly describing the creation, the great sin of Adam, the ejection of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden, the growing sin problem and the great flood, God said to Abram, "Go forth from your country..." After eleven chapters of introduction, God opened the main subject of Genesis— His desire to have a family. The "election of God" suddenly surfaced in the call of Abram.

The "election of God" as presented by Paul demonstrates the Lord's determination to have a people after His image and likeness. The promises never included all physical descendants of Abraham. Ishmael, though a child of Abraham, was not included in the covenant promises; only Isaac (Gen 21:12).

Later Jacob and Esau were born as twin sons of Isaac and Rebekah. But God's purpose included one, and excluded the other! Before the boys were even born (and thus before they could have done either good or bad, so that their actions were no basis for God's choice), God announced that one was chosen and the other rejected as a participant in the covenant line.

Paul continues on with the argument that God's elect, a remnant of believing Jews, was in every generation, including one at the time of the writing of the book of Romans. "For they are not all Israel who are descended from Israel; nor are they all children because they are Abraham's descendants...that is, it is not the children of the flesh who are children of God, but the children of the promise are regarded as descendants" (Ro. 9:6).

Isaiah wrote, "Though the number of the sons of Israel be like the sand of the sea, it is the remnant that will be saved" (Ro. 9:27).

A remnant of believers in Israel would provide the divine circumstance to bring forth the Son of God. Selected descendants of Abraham formed a nation out of which the Savior was born of a virgin named Mary. Because the Son, Jesus, surrendered to the will of God, became obedient unto death, died, rose again, applied his blood in the heavenly tabernacle, spoiled evil principalities and powers, was received into the heavens, and sat down at the right hand of God, whereby God highly exalted Him and Jesus having received from the **Father the promise of the Holy Spirit**, poured it forth and opened up a new age. The Holy Spirit was referred to as being the Promise of the Father.

When did the Father make that promise? Obviously, it was made before Jesus told the disciples to wait for it.

Now let us examine the Scriptures concerning when the Father made His promise. "For when God made the promise to Abraham, since He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, saying, "I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply you." And thus, having patiently waited, he obtained the promise. For men swear by one greater {than themselves} and with them an oath {given} as confirmation is an end of every dispute" (Heb 6:13-20).

God made the above promise to Abraham after he demonstrated his willingness to sacrifice his only son Isaac. Genesis 22:10-18. God raised his hand, "By Myself I have sworn..., because you have done this thing and have not withheld your son, your only son," and then God made a four-fold promise to Abraham:

1. I will greatly bless you,
2. I will greatly multiply your seed...
3. Your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies,
4. In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed.

Remember the promise made to Abraham included abundant blessing, abundant prosperity, conquering power and the power to bless all nations.

“In the same way God, desiring even more to show to the heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of His purpose, interposed with an oath” (Heb. 6:17).

Beyond God’s desire to bless, prosper, empower and commission Abraham, He desired to show to the heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of His purpose to bless, prosper, empower and commission them. Who are the heirs of the promise? Israel? Let the scriptures speak loud and clear to your heart. “Therefore, be sure that it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, {saying} “All the nations shall be blessed in you. So then those who are of faith are blessed with Abraham, the believer” (Gal 3:7-9). “And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise” (Gal 3:29). **The believers, not a race of people, are the true heirs of the promise made to Abraham.**

The promise made to Abraham, because of his faith in believing God’s word, is inherited by those who believe in the death, burial and resurrection, ascension and exaltation of Jesus Christ. Many years ago the believers in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost received the Promise of the Father in the form of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. In other tongues they magnified, glorified and testified of the conquering Jesus Christ. Now, Jesus is not only Christ, but Lord of lords and King of kings.

It is “in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we would receive **the promise of the Spirit** through faith” (Gal. 3:14). The blessing of Abraham is realized in the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.

The promise made to Abraham is translated into the believer as abundant blessing, abundant prosperity, empowerment for service, and the commission to take the good news into all the world. Note, God preached His first sermon, the gospel, to Abraham, “All the nations shall be blessed in you!” “Lift up your eyes” and see the great commission of God, then repeated by Jesus, “Go into all the world and preach the good news.”

I am convinced that the blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant flowed and flow through a remnant of believers by faith and not by race. Prophecies that were given concerning natural Israel will be fulfilled, however there is only one way to be saved and that is by faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ through grace. There is not any biblical clue that God will provide another way of salvation other than Jesus Christ.

God’s elect (Ro. 8) is the same as “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for {God's} own possession, that you may proclaim the excellency of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; for you once were not a people, but now you are the people of God; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy” (1 Pet 2:9-10). The “called out ones”, the church being built by Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit, is the body of Christ, wherein are people from “every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues.”

Paul issues this warning to those on the verge of turning back to the practices of the old Covenant: “Anyone who has set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on {the testimony of} two or three witnesses. How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled underfoot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace” (Heb 10:28-29)?

### **Davidic Covenant:**

"And your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever" (2 Sam 7:16).

The "dynasty" of David was a new addition to the promise plan: all that had been offered to the patriarchs and Moses was now being offered to David's dynasty. Moreover, it would last into the future, forever (v. 19).

"Once Thou didst speak in vision to Thy godly ones, and didst say, "I have given help to one who is mighty; I have exalted one chosen from the people. I have found David My servant; with My holy oil I have anointed him, with whom My hand will be established; My arm also will strengthen him" (Ps 89:19-21).

"So I will establish his descendants forever and his throne as the days of heaven" (Ps 89:29).

"Once I have sworn by My holiness; I will not lie to David. His descendants shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established forever like the moon, and the witness in the sky is faithful" (Ps 89:35-37).

"He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and His kingdom will have no end" (Luke 1:32-33).

"Brethren, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. And so, because he was a prophet, and knew that God had sworn to him with an oath to seat {one} of his descendants upon his throne, he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that He was neither abandoned to Hades, nor did His flesh suffer decay" (Acts 2:29-31).

"For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says: 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies a footstool for Thy feet. Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ this Jesus whom you crucified"' (Acts 2:34-36).

The third oath of God is recorded in Acts 2:30: "And so, because he was a prophet (David), and knew that God had sworn to him with an oath to seat one of his descendants upon his throne, he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that He was neither abandoned to Hades, nor did His flesh suffer decay. This Jesus God rose up again, to which we are all witnesses. Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear." An Eternal Throne!

The bible says, "I have made a covenant with My chosen; I have sworn to David My servant, I will establish your seed forever, and build up your throne to all generations" (Psa. 89:3,4). And again, "The Lord has sworn to David, a truth from which He will not turn back; of the fruit of your body I will set upon your throne" (Psa. 132:11). God swore to place one on the throne of David and that throne would be forever!

From David until now, the religious Jews continue to look for the fulfillment of that Oath. They are looking for something to happen that has already happened! Up to this point the Jews have missed their Messiah (the Christ that would be crowned king). The generation that lived during the life of Christ, some 2,000 years ago, had eyes but could not see the Christ, had ears but could not hear the words of the Christ. They in their blindness and deafness missed the fulfillment of the Oath of God!

The lawyers, experts in the law, knew this prophecy: "For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; and the government will rest on His shoulders; and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, and Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from then on and forevermore" (Isa. 9:6,7).

There is no doubt this prophecy was speaking of Jesus Christ. In Daniel's prophecy about the stone and four world empires in Dan. 2:28-45, Daniel declared, "And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and that kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever" (Dan. 2:44).

Pilate inquired of Jesus, "Are you the king of the Jews (St. Jn. 18:33)?" And Jesus responded, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting, that I might not be delivered up to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm" (St. Jn. 18:36).

In Luke 22:18 Jesus said, "I will not drink of the fruit of the vine from now on until the kingdom of God comes." The kingdom of God is the same as the kingdom of heaven, or it is the kingdom of the Holy Spirit of God, and it was set up on the earth on the day of Pentecost and shall never be destroyed! Paul claimed at the second coming of Jesus, He then would deliver up the kingdom to God after He had abolished all rule and authority and power (1 Cor. 15:24).

Jesus is the eternal king who sits on the eternal throne!