

The Promises

God made many "great and precious promises" to Abraham and to his descendent, Jesus Christ. We have the opportunity to be the children of God through faith in Christ Jesus, and if we have been baptized into Christ, we also may become Abraham's descendents and heirs to the same promises. These promises were outlined in the Book of Genesis starting in Chapter 12. **These Promises to Abraham are:**

"Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. (Gen 12:1-3)

The Promises continue in chapter 13:

"And the LORD said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever." (v 13-14)

Additional Promises

"And the angel of the LORD called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, And said, **By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD,** for because thou hast done

**PROMISED LAND
PROMISED BLESSINGS
PROMISED GREATNESS
PROMISED DESCENDENTS
PROMISED POWER
PROMISED FOREVER

PROMISES FULFILLED
THROUGH CHRIST**

this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;

And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice. (Gen 22: 15-18)

God's Oath

These precious promises were so special, and so sure and certain to be fulfilled that God swore by himself. The writer to the Hebrews tells us:

"Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: That by two immutable things, in which **it was impossible for God to lie**, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: (Hebrew 6:17-18)

This hope is the hope of the promises

Things Concerning

The Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ

"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." (Galatians 3:8 NKJV)

Among the notable men of God described in the Old Testament writings is one very special man. His name is **Abraham** and his many qualifications include such expressions as: "friend of God", "father of the faithful" and "heir of the world".



Abraham was a very faithful servant of God. His role in the plan and purpose of God began during his early life some 2000 years before Christ. God's plan for Abraham is still active with certain precious promises that will be fulfilled after Abraham is resurrected from the dead.

New Testament role

Many people think of Abraham as a character from history, confined to the early chapters of the book of Genesis. The truth is that the name Abraham appears over 60 times in the New Testament, which is a testimony to the importance of this man throughout the entire plan of God.

Abraham and the Gospel

In the verse quoted at the head of this page, we are told that the gospel of salvation was preached to Abraham.

Abraham was given the essence of the gospel message when he was told that through him and his descendent (Christ), all nations of the earth would be blessed.

The principle for that blessing is clearly described. God would justify the Gentiles (nations) **through faith**.

Strong in Faith

Abraham was a man with such strength of faith in God that he has become the father of the faithful from all ages.

He was promised a son when he was seventy five years old. He believed in God's promise and remained faithful for twenty five years before Isaac, the promised son was born.

His great faith is described thus: "Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be. And being **not weak in faith**, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb: He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was **strong in faith**, giving glory to God; And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. (Rom 4: 18-22)

Our Example

Abraham is an excellent **example for us** as we attempt to achieve the blessing of eternal life through our faith in the promises of God. The promises made to Abraham are well worth our consideration as we look for the motivation that inspired Abraham to faithful obedience.

Abraham was given very special promises. **We can inherit these same promises through Christ.**



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Hope and Comfort from the Scriptures

The Blessing Promised

Abraham was given a very brief synopsis of the entire gospel of salvation.

We are told in Galatians 3:

“And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, declared the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying,

In thee shall all nations be blessed.”(v 8)

Two-Fold Blessing

The promised blessing had two features. Both of these are a real comfort to sinful mortal men. The first blessing is described in the message from Acts 3: “Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.” (verse 25-26)

Forgiveness of Sin

The blessing described here is the **forgiveness of sins**, made possible through the sacrifice of Christ, who was the lamb of God to take away the sin of the world. Further evidence of this wonderful blessing is found in Romans 4:

“Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. **Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.**” (verses 6-8)

Abraham in Romans 4

The entire fourth chapter of Romans provides an excellent reference source for understanding the promises to Abraham related to justification through faith. Abraham was a man who demonstrated that he was strong in faith. He believed God, and displayed his faith through his actions.

God credited him with righteousness for his great faith. We are encouraged to follow Abraham's example of faith with these



words: “ He did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised. This is why "it was credited to him as righteousness." The words "it was credited to him" were written not for him alone, but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness--for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead“ (Rom 4:21-24 NIV)

Blessing of Life Everlasting

The forgiveness of our sins through faith and God's grace is only a beginning. The final stage of the blessing promised to Abraham is eternal life in God's glorious Kingdom on the earth.

Resurrection Promised

Abraham received the promise that he and his descendents would **inherit the land forever.**(see Genesis 13:15)

Abraham lived and he died. He now rests in the grave without having received his promised inheritance. (This is described in Acts 7:5)

Remember that the promise was from a God that cannot lie. He confirmed it by an oath. (Hebrews 6:17-18) Abraham knew that he would be raised from the dead so that the promised could be fulfilled.

So it was that Abraham rejoiced when he looked forward through faith to the day of the Messiah. (John 8:56)

His hope was to be resurrected to receive **the real blessing, even life evermore.** (Psa 133:3)

**“I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven,
and as the sand which is upon the sea shore”**



Abraham was promised that he would be the father of many nations.. (see Gen 22: 17-18) His descendents would be multiplied like the sand on the seashore and like the stars in heaven.

Natural Descendents

It is not readily apparent in this language that the promises refer to both the **natural** and the **spiritual** descendents of Abraham. As we learn more about the symbols of the Bible, we will understand this connection.

The natural descendents of Abraham included all of those nations that originated from him. Curiously, both the Jews and the Arab nations, that are so much at odds today, are among his natural descendents.

The Nation of Israel, restored into her ancient land as a modern miracle is a witness to the word of God. This nation is made up of the natural descendents of Abraham

Dust of the Earth

The prophesy used the symbol of sand to represent that natural descendents, for two reasons. The first is that **sand** and **dust** are very closely related. In fact, in some of the references the term dust is used. (See Gen 13:16)

When we think of dust, we are reminded of the nature of man. Condemned in the Garden, Adam and all of his descendents were sentenced to return to the ground at death: “Dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return.” (Gen 3:19)

The natural descendents of Abraham would enjoy only those blessings that were available in their own lifetimes. They were mortal, and when their lives were over, they would return to the dust, as all men do. Their connection to Abraham would be only temporal and not eternal.

Sand on the Seashore

Israel however, was not without special favour among the nations. They

were the chosen people, who entered into a covenant with God at Mt. Sinai.

We are told therefore: “When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel” (Deut 32:8) It is in this regard that we are introduced to another use of the symbol of “sand” as a type of Israel, prophetically in control of the nations of the earth, as the sand on the shore sets the boundary for the sea.

Stars of Heaven

In contrast to the natural descendents, who were symbolized by the sand or the dust, the **spiritual** descendents of Abraham are those who are his heirs through faith in Christ Jesus. They are said to be like the **stars** of heaven for multitude. In Daniel we read: “And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.” (Dan 12:3)

This promise of a multitude of spiritual descendents is best described in Galatians, where we are told about our own opportunity to become one of these “stars”.

“For in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith. **As many of you as were baptized into Christ** have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. And **if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise.**” (Gal 3:26-29 NRSV)

Heirs of the Promises

Abraham was given great and precious promises that would be fulfilled by Christ. We are fortunate to have an opportunity to share in the inheritance with them in the Kingdom.