

## ABRAHAMIC COVENANT – Study 2

Understanding the different covenants in the Old Testament and their relation to each other is critical to understanding God's Covenant relationship (which He will never break) with His Chosen People, and those grafted in, as well as gaining insight to His plan of redemption revealed in the Scriptures.

The participants understood each other to believe that if the covenant were broken by either partner, they were calling upon God to "do so to me as has been done to this animal if I break the covenant." More clearly "God kill me if I break this covenant!"

### God Calls Abram

<sup>1</sup> Then ADONAI said to Abram, "Get going out from your land, and from your relatives, and from your father's house to the land that I will show you. <sup>2</sup> My heart's desire is to make you into a great nation, to bless you, to make your name great so that you may be a blessing. <sup>3</sup> My desire is to bless those who bless you, but whoever curses you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth will be blessed. Genesis 12:1-3

- ✚ God gives Abram a promise of the Land and uncountable descendants before He makes the binding covenant with him in chapter 15.
- ✚ After Lot separated himself from him, ADONAI had said to Abram, "lift up your eyes, now, and look from the place where you are, to the north, south, east and west. <sup>15</sup> For all the land that you are looking at, I will give to you and to your seed forever. <sup>16</sup> I will make your seed like the dust of the earth so that if one could count the dust of the earth, then your seed could also be counted. <sup>17</sup> Get up! Walk about the land through its length and width—for I will give it to you." <sup>18</sup> So Abram moved his tent from place to place, and came and dwelt by Mamre's large trees, which are in Hebron, and there built an altar to ADONAI. Genesis 13:14-18

**SEED** – In a vision Adonai came to Abram: "But Abram said, "My Lord ADONAI, what will You give me, since I am living without children, and the heir of my household is Eliezer of Damascus?" <sup>3</sup> Then Abram said, "Look! You have given me no seed, so a house-born servant is my heir." <sup>4</sup> Then behold, the word of ADONAI came to him saying, "This one will not be your heir, but in fact, one who will come from your own body will be your heir. <sup>5</sup> He took him outside and said, "Look up now, at the sky, and count the stars—if you are able to count them." Then He said to him, "So shall your seed be." <sup>6</sup> Then he believed in ADONAI, and He reckoned it to him as righteousness." Genesis 15:2-6

**LAND** – Then He said to him, "I am ADONAI who brought you out from Ur of the Chaldeans, in order to give you this land to inherit it." Genesis 15:7

### HOW THIS COVENANT WAS MADE (unconditional covenant) – Genesis 15:9-21

- God told Abram to bring Him these animals: one each - 3 year old heifer, 3 year old ram, 3 year old female goat, a turtledove and a young pigeon
- He cut the large animals in two laying the halves opposite each other.
- Abram then waited until the sun was going down.

- While he waited, he fell into a deep sleep and had a terrifying vision. His descendants (not yet born) would be strangers in a land not theirs (Egypt) and live as slaves for 400 years. Then Adonai would bring them out of slavery with a mighty hand and many possessions (Exodus).
- The sun set, it was very dark and not Abram but Adonai (a smoking oven and flaming torch) did the “Walk Unto Death” between the sacrificed animals.
- Adonai that day cut the covenant – He will never break it. He also gave the promised Land to Abrams seed. Genesis 15:18-21

Then in Chapter 17 Adonai again appeared to Abram and made a **name exchange**:

- ✚ <sup>1</sup> When Abram was 99 years old, ADONAI appeared to Abram, and He said to him, "I am El Shaddai. Continually walk before Me and you will be blameless. <sup>2</sup> My heart's desire is to make My covenant between Me and you, and then I will multiply you exceedingly much." <sup>3</sup> Abram fell on his face, and God spoke with him, saying, <sup>4</sup> "For My part, because My covenant is with you, you will be the father of a multitude of nations. <sup>5</sup> **No longer will your name be Abram, but your name will be Abraham**, because I make you the father of a multitude of nations. <sup>6</sup> Yes, I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make you into nations, and kings will come forth from you. <sup>7</sup> Yes, I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your seed after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, in order to be your God and your seed's God after you. <sup>8</sup> I will give to you and to your seed after you the land where you are an outsider—the whole land of Canaan—as an everlasting possession, and I will be their God." Genesis 17:1-8

And God sealed the covenant with a lifelong mark – **the sign**: The circumcision of all males in Abraham's camp who are aged 8 days and older.

- ✚ This is My covenant that you must keep between Me and you and your seed after you: **all your males must be circumcised.** <sup>11</sup> You must be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin, and this will become a sign of the covenant between Me and you. <sup>12</sup> Also your eight-day-olds must be circumcised, every male, throughout your generations, including a house-born slave or a slave bought with money from any foreigner who is not of your seed. <sup>13</sup> Your house-born slave and your purchased slave must surely be circumcised. So, My covenant will be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. <sup>14</sup> But the uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin - that person will be cut off from his people; he has broken My covenant." Genesis 17:10-14

NOTE: Women are included in the covenant by way of the seed they bear. God said to Abraham that Sarai his wife will have a name exchange, and **He renamed her Sarah.**

- ✚ God also said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her by the name Sarai. Rather, Sarah is her name. <sup>16</sup> And I will bless her, and moreover, I will give you a son from her. I will bless her and she will give rise to nations. Kings of the peoples will come from her." Genesis 17:15-16

Abraham found this hilarious and laughed!

- ✚ Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said to his heart, "Will a son be born to a 100-year-old man? Or will Sarah—who is 90 years old—give birth?" <sup>18</sup> So Abraham said to God, "If only Ishmael might live before you!" <sup>19</sup> But God said, "On the contrary, Sarah your wife will bear you a son and you must name him Isaac. So I will confirm My covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his seed after him. <sup>21</sup> But My covenant will I establish with Isaac whom Sarah will bear to you at this set time next year." Genesis 17:17-19, 21 (Isaac - God's will and Ishmael - human will)

When Abraham was 100 years old and Sarah 90 years, God fulfilled His promise and they welcomed into their home their son Isaac. (Genesis 21:1-5, 12)

- ✚ An example of covenant making between Abraham and Abimelech is in Genesis 21:22-34. When a covenant was made, many times the covenanting parties erected a memorial as a witness or reminder of the agreement they had entered into. The types of memorials were quite varied: a tree or grove of trees could be planted, a common herd or flock of animals exchanged, or a pillar of stones might be set up. Sometimes amulets or phylacteries were worn by the covenanting parties as a reminder of their commitment in covenant.

Genesis Chapter 22:1-19 Abraham is tested by God regarding his covenant son Isaac on Mt Moriah (where Yeshua was crucified). When Isaac asked where the sacrificial lamb was Abraham responded: "God will provide for Himself a lamb for burnt offering my son."

- ✓ By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac. Yes, he who had received the promises was offering up his one and only son - <sup>18</sup> the one about whom it was said, "Through Isaac offspring shall be named for you." <sup>19</sup> He reasoned that God was able to raise him up even from the dead - and in a sense, he did receive him back from there. Hebrews 11:17-19
- ✚ <sup>15</sup> Brothers and sisters, I speak in human terms: even with a man's covenant, once it has been confirmed, no one cancels it or adds to it. <sup>16</sup> Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. It doesn't say, "and to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "and to your seed," who is the Messiah. <sup>17</sup> What I am saying is this: Torah, which came 430 years later, does not cancel the covenant previously confirmed by God, so as to make the promise ineffective. <sup>18</sup> For if the inheritance is based on law, it is no longer based on a promise. But God has graciously given it to Abraham by means of a promise. <sup>19</sup> Then why the Torah? It was added because of wrongdoings until the Seed would come - to whom the promise had been made. It was arranged through angels by the hand of an intermediary. <sup>20</sup> Now an intermediary is not for one party alone - but God is one. <sup>21</sup> Then is the Torah against the promises of God? May it never be! For if a law had been given that could impart life, certainly righteousness would have been based on law. <sup>22</sup> But the Scripture has locked up the whole world under sin, so that the promise based on trust in Messiah Yeshua might be given to those who trust. <sup>23</sup> Now before faith came, we were being guarded under Torah—bound together until the coming faith would be revealed. <sup>24</sup> Therefore the Torah became our guardian to lead us to Messiah, so that we might be made right based on trusting. <sup>25</sup> But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian. <sup>26</sup> For you are all sons of God through trusting in Messiah Yeshua. <sup>27</sup> For all of you who were immersed in Messiah have clothed yourselves with Messiah. <sup>28</sup> There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female—for you are all one in Messiah Yeshua. <sup>29</sup> And if you belong to Messiah, then you are Abraham's seed—heirs according to the promise. Galatians 3:15-29

In Genesis chapter 26:3-5 God confirms the Abrahamic Covenant with Isaac and He blesses Isaac in Genesis 26:12-25.

God passed the Abrahamic covenant promise to Jacob and his descendants...And the wonderful promise of the Messiah.

- ✓ He dreamed: All of a sudden, there was a stairway set up on the earth and its top reaching to the heavens - and behold, angels of God going up and down on it! <sup>13</sup> Surprisingly, ADONAI was standing on top of it and He said, "I am ADONAI, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. The land on which you lie, I will give it to you and to your seed." <sup>14</sup> Your seed will be as the dust of the land, and you will burst forth to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed - and in your seed. <sup>15</sup> Behold, I am with you, and I will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land, for I will not forsake you until I have done what I promised you." Genesis 28:12-15
  
- ✓ <sup>9</sup> God appeared to Jacob again, after he returned from Paddan-aram, and He blessed him. <sup>10</sup> God said to him: "Your name was Jacob. No longer will your name be Jacob, for your name will be Israel." So He named him Israel. <sup>11</sup> God also said to him: "I am El Shaddai. Be fruitful and multiply. A nation and an assembly of nations will come from you. From your loins will come forth kings. <sup>12</sup> The land that I gave to Abraham and to Isaac - I give it to you, and to your seed after you I will give the land." Genesis 35:9-12

Jacob (renamed Israel) had 12 sons. These 12 sons became fathers of the twelve tribes of Israel (Genesis 49:1-28).

And so we have the nation of Israel. The covenant promise made to Abraham was passed to Israel (Jacob and the nation). The book of Genesis closes with Israel and his 12 sons living in Egypt. They went to Egypt under the protection of Joseph, Israel's son, to escape the famine in Canaan, the land of their inheritance under the Abrahamic Covenant.

In Egypt they live as free men until the Pharaoh of Joseph's time died. Then they would become slaves of the Egyptians. For how long? The answer goes back to Genesis 15:13 when God cut His covenant with Abram. God's answer to the afflicted Israelites cries of despair will be through a man named Moses.

**LAND COVENANT:** Amplifies the land aspect that was detailed in the Abrahamic Covenant centuries after the Abrahamic Covenant made between God and Israel, right before Moses died (after the Mosaic Covenant) and before Joshua's leading Israel into the promised land (Joshua 21:43) while they were in Moab waiting to go into the land. (At no point in history has Israel controlled all the land God had specified).

Many similarities with Mosaic Covenant made at Mt Sinai but is a separate and distinct covenant; a reminder to the new generation of Israelites; a special covenant relationship with God as seen in Deuteronomy 29:1-29; 30:1-10

- ✓ Contains special promises to Israel that will not be completely fulfilled until the Millennial Reign of Yeshua the Messiah.
  - God promised to gather the scattered Israelites from all over the world and bring them back into the Land He had promised to their ancestors. Deuteronomy 30:3-5 (Although partially fulfilled when Israel returned from Babylonian captivity some aspects of this haven't been fully realized yet).

- God promised to regenerate the Israelites of that time and their descendents by circumcising their hearts so they would love Him totally. Deuteronomy 30:6 (The promised restoration of Israel to the Land wouldn't happen until all the blessings and curses promised them were fulfilled, and we know that Israel, other than a few individuals, has rejected her Messiah and once again cursed and cut off from the land in AD 70 when the Romans conquered Jerusalem).
- God promised to judge Israel's enemies. Deuteronomy 30:7
- God promised that the Israelites would obey God and God would prosper them in their obedience. Deut. 30:8-9 (repeated in Jeremiah 32:36-44 and Ezekiel 36:22-38 and are part of the blessings and promises of the New Covenant).
- The final and ultimate restoration of Israel to the Land and to an everlasting relationship with God is what Paul is looking forward to in Romans 11:25-26.
- The Land Covenant reinforces the promises God made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Deut 29:13).
- The ultimate outcome of this covenant doesn't depend on Israel and its obedience, but instead it depends on God and His faithfulness.
- A day is coming when God will return them to the Land (the full extent outlined in Genesis 15:18-21 and the seed of Abraham will possess the Promised Land and God will bless them forever).
- Unlike the Mosaic Covenant whose promises are conditional, dependent on Israel's obedience, the Land Covenant is unconditional and eternal, because it's part of the Abrahamic Covenant.