

THE SEED OF ABRAHAM

March 2, 2014

Galatians 3:1-29

**“And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed;
because thou hast obeyed my voice.” Genesis 22:18**

This was God’s promise to Abraham when He called him to leave his family and country (Gen. 12:1-3). It included additional promises of great blessing upon his descendents, who would multiply beyond human ability to number them. Years later, when Abraham offered his son Isaac as a sacrifice, God affirmed these promises again (Gen. 22:15-18).

I. Abraham’s Seed: The Physical Descendents of Abraham

History records how the promises have been fulfilled. Abraham’s descendents have suffered cruel oppression, yet have survived and excelled as an unusually able people. Although comprising only ¼ of 1% of humanity, yet 22% of Nobel Prizes have been awarded to them. Their application of these talents has produced inventions disproportionate to their population, by which all humanity benefits. Indeed, all nations of earth have received benefits traceable to Abraham’s descendents.

But God’s promise to Abraham encompasses far more than this. It is a multi-layered promise, reaching beyond earth and time to include eternal spiritual blessing. The Apostle Paul, a descendent of Abraham and a master of Jewish Scripture and law, applied “seed of Abraham” to two others. Those applications exhibit the rich significance of that title.

II. Abraham’s Seed: Christ

Paul wrote Galatians to refute the heresy that “jewishness” was necessary for entrance into heaven. He cited God’s promise to Abraham. “Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, and to seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ” (3:16). Paul argues that Abraham’s seed signifies more than his descendents; it is one descendent in particular: Jesus Christ. Blessings affirmed to Abraham are conveyed through Christ to all who believe.

III. Abraham’s Seed: The Spiritual Descendents of Abraham—All Who Believe

The promise included blessings to “all the nations of the earth,” not to Israel alone. Christ spoke to Nicodemus, who trusted his “jewishness,” and stressed “that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life” (John 3:15). John reported further that “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son” (John 3:16). The blessings of Abraham are to “whosoever believeth” in the entire “world.” Therein all nations of the earth are blessed in Abraham.

Paul explained that “the blessing of Abraham [comes] upon the Gentiles through Jesus Christ” (Gal. 3:14). God’s promise that “all nations of the earth” would be blessed in Abraham would be wrought by Christ and by faith. Abraham received it by faith: “he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness” (Gen. 15:6; Gal. 3:6). Consequently, “they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham” (Gal. 3:7). Therefore, “There is neither Jew nor Greek . . . for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise” (Gal. 3:28, 29).