

Part 5: Eternal Israel & the Land Promises
June 23, 2019

Introduction

1 – Abraham & the Land Promised

Gen. 12:1 Now the LORD said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. **2** And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. **3** I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

Gen. 15:17 When the sun had gone down and it was dark, behold, a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch passed between these pieces. **18** On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, “To your offspring I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates, **19** the land of the Kenites, the Kenizzites, the Kadmonites, **20** the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, **21** the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites and the Jebusites.”

When studying biblical theology = progressive unveiling of redemption in history

1. We must look the passage as related to God’s people in that time
2. And how this fits into the larger storyline of scripture
3. And how this fits into the typology – type & fulfillment

Oren Martin wrote:

In short, the dispensational argument that the OT land promise must be fulfilled by national Israel in the millennial age does not do justice to the biblical story line of God’s redemptive plan from creation to new creation, from Adam to Christ. Instead, the land promised to Abraham begins the process of recapturing the advancing what was lost in Eden and will not be fulfilled until a “new Eden” is regained. At every point in Israel’s history, the promised land served as a place that anticipated, in Edenic terms, an even greater land to come. Although the territorial promise related initially to Israel’s settlement in the land of Canaan, by divine design it also pointed to something greater. (Oren Martin, The Land Promise, Progressive Covenantalism, p255-256)

Land Promise as related to Eden

There are 4 promises to Abraham in the Covenant:

- 1) The son/offspring, 2) the mighty nation, 3) the land, and 4) the mutual blessings

Each of these is simply a promise for the return to the Kingdom of God:

1. Son/offspring is the redeemer & the King = God's Rule
2. Mighty nation = God's People
3. Blessings = is all people blessed through the kingdom
4. Land = God's PLACE

2 – The Temporal/Earthly Fulfillment of the Land

Joshua

Josh. 21:43 Thus the LORD gave to Israel all the land that he swore to give to their fathers. And they took possession of it, and they settled there. 44 And the LORD gave them rest on every side just as he had sworn to their fathers. Not one of all their enemies had withstood them, for the LORD had given all their enemies into their hands. 45 Not one word of all the good promises that the LORD had made to the house of Israel had failed; all came to pass.

3 – Heavenly Eternal Fulfillment of the Land

What was Abraham looking for?

Rom. 4:9 Is this blessing then only for the circumcised, or also for the uncircumcised? For we say that faith was counted to Abraham as righteousness. **10** How then was it counted to him? Was it before or after he had been circumcised? It was not after, but before he was circumcised. **11** He received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was to make him the father of all who believe without being circumcised, so that righteousness would be counted to them as well, **12** and to make him the father of the circumcised who are not merely circumcised but who also walk in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised. **13** For the promise to Abraham and his offspring that he would be heir of the world did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith. **14** For if it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void.

Gal. 4:24 Now this may be interpreted allegorically: these women are two covenants. One is from Mount Sinai, bearing children for slavery; she is Hagar. **25** Now Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia; she corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. **26** But the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother.

Pastor & Theologian Thomas Schreiner wrote:

The language of heirs and inheritance in Paul's writings is eschatological, looking to the final reward. Abraham and those who share in the Abrahamic promise are heirs "of the world" (Rom 4:13-14). Paul does not often refer to the land promise of the OT, but the promise of land given to Abraham finds its fulfillment here. According to Paul, the entire world is now the object of the promise, indicating that the whole earth will gladly serve the Lord as the sovereign king. This reading of inheritance is justified, for elsewhere Paul speaks of those who will inherit the kingdom of God (1 Cor 6:9-10; 15:50, Gal 5:21;

Israel

Eph 5:5). The entire world, then, will be God's kingdom, his inheritance. (Thomas Schreiner, The King in His Beauty, p561).

Heb. 11:8 By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. **9** By faith he went to live in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. **10** For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God. **11** By faith Sarah herself received power to conceive, even when she was past the age, since she considered him faithful who had promised. **12** Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born descendants as many as the stars of heaven and as many as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore. **13** These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. **14** For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. **15** If they had been thinking of that land from which they had gone out, they would have had opportunity to return. **16** But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city.

Fulfillment of the Land Promises found in Christ

Graeme Goldsworthy talking about the garden, the land, and the temple wrote:

These images of locality – garden, land, city, temple – all reach their fulfillment in the gospel. For the New Testament the locality of the kingdom is Jesus Christ himself. And, lest we be misled by a misplaced and unbiblical emphasis, Jesus Christ is shown as risen and seated on the right hand of God in the heavenly places. (Goldsworthy, Gospel & Kingdom, p115)

God's people...is Jesus Christ as true son (which includes all united to him)

God's rule...is Jesus Christ as true king (his rule/law on our hearts by H.S.)

God's place...is Jesus Christ (where God's kingdom is experienced & enjoyed here at the end of the age and in the age to come)

Oren Martin wrote:

“Thus, Israel's land promise ultimately reaches its fulfillment when redeemed people from every nation fill and inhabit the whole earth. What believing Israel obtains is far greater than the land of Canaan, for they – along with the nations – will inherit the whole earth in fulfillment of God's gracious and irrevocable promises. (Oren Martin, Progressive Covenantalism, The Land Promise, p271)

Read Revelation 21 & 22