

The Millennial Promise to Abraham

By Scott Moller (transcribed by Nathan Warner)

The literal reign of Jesus Christ on this earth is not a new idea. God first promised the future eternal Kingdom of the Messiah to Abraham back in the book of Genesis.

In chapter 15, God first makes His covenant with Abraham: *“To your descendants I give this land, from the Wadi of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates— the land of the Kenites, Kenizzites, Kadmonites, Hittites, Perizzites, Rephaites, Amorites, Canaanites, Girgashites and Jebusites”* (Genesis 15:18-21 NIV). This land is referred to often in Scripture as the *“land the Lord promised”* (Deuteronomy 6:18b) to Abraham and his descendants. Today, we call it the Promised Land.

There is something interesting about this geography. To this day, Israel has never possessed all these lands. Not even under King David or Solomon did Israel extend so far as the Euphrates River. Some might wonder if the promise included Abraham’s son Ishmael, via Hagar, *“but God said, ‘No, but Sarah your wife will bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; and I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him”* (Genesis 17:19 NASB). It is first through Abraham’s son Isaac, then Israel, that the blessing and the covenant came: *“Remember Your servants Abraham, Isaac and Israel, to whom You swore by Your own self: ‘I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and I will give your descendants all this land I promised them, and it will be their inheritance forever”* (Exodus 32:13 NIV).

God’s promise had some further details that are very important. He told Abraham, *“The whole land of Canaan, where you now reside as a foreigner, I will give as an everlasting possession to you and your descendants after you; and I will be their God”* (Genesis 17:8). As we pointed out earlier with the geography, Israel never possessed all of Canaan. This has not happened yet. But more importantly is the time God says they will possess the land. Here, God promised that the whole land of Canaan would be an “everlast-ing” possession to Abraham’s descendants, according to the promise, *“their inheritance forever”* (Exodus 32:13). Anyone who studies history knows that Israel was dispossessed of their land from 70AD to 1948AD. That means for 1,878 years, Israel did not possess the Promised Land. This everlasting possession clearly has not been instituted yet.

So, when will Israel possess the Promised Land forever as an everlasting possession? Hundreds of years after Abraham died, the prophet Daniel saw a vision of a distant future: *“Before me was one like a Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into His presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all nations and peoples of every language worshiped Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and His kingdom is one that will never be destroyed”* (Daniel 7:13b-14). Who is this “one like a Son of Man”? and where will the capitol of His kingdom be? We find our answer in the Gospels: *“Jesus said to them, ‘Truly I tell you, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on His glorious throne, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel’”* (Matthew 19:28). It is of this future time that Jesus told them, *“I confer on you a kingdom, just as My Father conferred one on Me, so that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel”* (Luke 22:28b-29). Indeed, those who attain to the first resurrection *“will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years”* (Revelation 20:6), ruling from Israel over the entire Earth during the Millennial reign of Christ.

From this point on, Jesus' Kingdom shall never end, fulfilling the promise made to Abraham all the way back in the Book of Genesis. How beautiful it is that in 2019 we can answer Isaiah's question: "*Do you not know? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning?*" (Isaiah 40:21) Indeed, it has. Praise God for His faithfulness! Amen.