

## Abrahamic Covenant

### Study Guide #1

Text: Genesis 12:1-3

The central covenant to understanding the history of the Old Testament hangs on the understanding of the Abrahamic Covenant. All covenants of scripture coverages and finds their meaning in Christ. From the very beginning, God was moving history towards an ultimate consummation in Christ. "For all the promises of God in him (Christ) are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us." 2 Corinthians 1:20--- **For all the promises of God find their Yes in him!**

His covenants with Noah, Abraham, Moses, and David were but stepping stones leading to the Messiah. Long ago, at many times and <sup>a</sup>in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets... (**Hebrews 1:1**). But His revelation of Himself and of His will for mankind was partial and incomplete. The purpose of this study is to show that all of the Old Testament history finds its culmination in fulfillment in Christ.

One thing that must be understood is the difference between shadow and substance as seen in the promises to Abraham and in the Mosaic and Davidic Covenants. A shadow is a one-dimensional representation of a real substance, whereas the real substance is usually complex, and has more depth and layers. **Colossians 2:17**, "Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ." The Greek word *skia*, translated as "shadow," can also refer to "shade, a sketch, or an outline." Paul contrasts this with the Greek word *sōma*, translated as "body." This word can also mean "reality or substance." This is the reason adherence to the Law is not a requirement: The Law was merely an outline; it is a shadow, or a hint of things to come. Christ is the actual substance.

**In this study guide:** We'll explore the new covenant as the fulfillment of promises made to Abraham in the Abrahamic covenant: 1) Land, 2) Seed (Offspring), 3) Blessing. You can see it as Property—Posterity—Pardon. It may be referred to as Land, descendants, and wealth.

**I. The Land Promise**—Genesis 12:1, 15:18, 17:8

A. **The Initial Fulfillment**—1 Kings 4:21; Joshua 21:43-45; Nehemiah 9:7-8

B. **The Shadows**—Hebrews 11:8-16

C. **The Greater Fulfillment**—Romans 4:13

D. **The Substance**—Hebrews 11:14-16, 12:22-24; 2 Peter 3:13

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-----*The Abrahamic Covenant (Abrahamic Promises) was a shadow of the New Covenant*-----

## **II. The Seed Promise**—Genesis 12:2-3, 15:5, 17:7-8

A. **The Initial Fulfillment**--Genesis 22:17; 1Kings 4:20

B. **The Shadows**---Genesis 17:6; Hebrews 11:13-16, 39

--*Nations plural*--

C. **The Greater Fulfillment**---Galatians 3:7, 26, 28-29; Romans 2:28-29

D. **The Substance**--- Galatians 3:16, 18; 1 Peter 2:9-10; Ephesians 2:19

----*The Old Testament asserts the Seed and Land promises are fulfilled, but the New Testament informs us it was not fulfilled. To understand this you must understand the difference between shadow and substance. You must ask, "What is the initial fulfillment and what is the greater fulfillment?"*----

## **III. The Blessing Promise**—Genesis 12:2-3, 15:5-6, 17:6

A. **The Initial Fulfillment**--- Genesis 24:1

Blessings were three things: Prosperity, Protection, and Pardon.

1. Prosperity--- Genesis 24:34-35

2. Protection--- Genesis 12:3

3. Pardon--- Genesis 15:5-6

B. **The Shadows**--- Genesis 22:18

----*God's hand of providential blessing of prosperity, protection, and pardon is the narrative of the whole Old Testament. In Genesis 22:18, it says that "...in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." This is much more than temporal blessing. In this chapter we have the promised seed Isaac willing becomes a sacrifice for his father Abraham. This was a shadow of Christ being obedient to the cross and the Father giving the Son. This chapter shows the shadow and points to the substance of the death and resurrection of Christ. Through the seed of Abraham we receive the true seed, Christ (Galatians 3:16).* -----

C. **The Greater Fulfillment**---

1. Pardon— Galatians 3:7-9, 13-14, 18, 26, 28-27; Romans 4:16

---Abraham believed God and he was saved by faith before he was circumcised and long before the Mosaic Law. Abraham's faith was a shadow of all who would believe on Christ alone for salvation.

**Acts 3:24-26** [Peter evangelizing the Jews] ... "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 (ethnic Israel), **in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.**" The essence of the blessing is to be turned from our wickedness. ----

**D. The Substance----** Galatians 3:16, 13-14

---Galatians 3:6-9 tells us all of us who are of faith are the children of Abraham. It also tells us that when God said all the nations would be blessed was God's way of preaching the Gospel to Abraham. All of us who believe like Abraham are part of that initial blessing in Genesis 12, 15, and 17. What was the blessing and promise of God in Galatians 3:13-14? The answer is found in Galatians 3:8! ----

#### **Questions:**

1. Is the promises of the Abrahamic Covenant limited to the physical descendants of Abraham?
2. Is an initial fulfillment in the Old Testament a stepping stone to a greater fulfillment?
3. Do you think there is physical and spiritual fulfillments in the Abrahamic Covenant?
4. Is the promises to Abraham made void since National Israel had their own covenant? -  
---See Romans 4:12-16, Galatians 3:16-18---
5. How long did the law stand in force? ---See Galatians 3:19---
6. Have you ever noticed how the bible uses the word promise in reference to the covenant God cut with Abraham?  
----See: **Acts** 2:39, 17:5,17, 13:23, 32-33, 26:6-7, **Romans** 1:2, 4:13-16, 9:4, 6-9, 15:8;  
**2 Corinthians** 1:20; **Galatians** 3:14, 16-22, 29, 4:23, 28; **Ephesians** 1:3, 2:12, 3:6;  
**2 Timothy** 1:1; **Hebrews** 6:12-18, 7:6, 8:6, 9:15, 10:23, 36, 11:9, 11,13, 17, 33, 39;  
**2 Peter** 1:4, 3:4, 9, and 13. -----
7. How are the gentiles included into the promises made to Abraham?

**Thoughts to Ponder:**

1. The physical descendants of Abraham are a shadow of the spiritual descendants of Abraham.
2. The spiritual descendants are the greater fulfillment of Abraham's seed.
3. The ultimate substance is Christ, THE SEED as of ONE. Christ is the seed of Abraham, and not seeds as many referring to the physical descendants of Abraham.
4. The physical nation of Israel was the shadow of True Israel, but the spiritual nation is the True Israel.
5. In the Old Testament there was a spiritual assembly within a physical nation, but in the New Testament there is a physical assembly within a spiritual nation.
6. In the age to come the Kingdom will be both a spiritual and physical nation.