

# THE SON OF ABRAHAM

Matthew 1:1

## INTRODUCTION

- For many Jews in the first century AD, the long wait for the promised Messiah may have felt like it would never be realised
- From the first promise of the woman's Seed in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:16), God had repeatedly, over 3600 years, promised mankind of a coming Saviour and King who would deliver them from their enemies and establish an everlasting kingdom
- But generation after generation passed without him coming
- Malachi was the last of the Old Testament prophets, and he also foretold the coming of the Messiah (Malachi 3:1)
- But 400 long years of silence then passed, without any further word from God
- When God finally sent his Messiah into the world to minister among the children of Israel, who were weary of waiting for him, he sent first his messenger to prepare the way of the LORD (Isaiah 40:1-3)
- It is important to understand that when Christ came in the flesh, the groundwork for his ministry had been laid out over the preceding 4000 years, and particularly through the covenants that God made with man

- Covenants are central to God's plan of redemption of mankind, and understanding the covenants is vital to understanding Christ's redeeming work
- A covenant is a compact made by God with his people which defines his relationship with them and promises blessings on his covenanted ones
- Matthew begins his Gospel account by presenting Jesus as the fulfilment of two covenants – the Davidic and the Abrahamic
- In God's covenant with David, he promised that his Son would sit on his throne have an eternal kingdom
- In God's covenant with Abraham, he promised that through his seed, all nations would be blessed
- Matthew is showing us that:
  - ✓ Jesus is the Son of David – the promised King who would rule the world
  - ✓ Jesus is the Son of Abraham – the promised Saviour who would bless the world
- The New Covenant is not separate from the previous covenants, but it is built upon them and is the fulfilment of them
- Abraham is the great patriarch of Scripture, regarded as the father of the Jewish nation

- His birth name Abram means “exalted father”, and his new name Abraham means “father of a multitude”
- Hence throughout Scripture he is referred to as “father Abraham”
- Abraham was from a family of idolaters, but God called him into an unknown land, and he believed God and obeyed
- The chief attribute that Abraham is known for is his *faith*
- He we will consider how Christ as the son and seed of Abraham is the fulfilment of the Abrahamic Covenant

## **I. JESUS IS THE PROMISED SEED WHO WILL BLESS ALL NATIONS**

### **A. The Abrahamic Covenant**

1. The Abrahamic Covenant is first made in Genesis 12:1-3, then confirmed and enlarged in Genesis 13:14-17; 15:1-21; 17:1-14 and 22:15-18
2. The covenant was further confirmed to Isaac (Genesis 26:2-5) and to Jacob (Genesis 28:13-14)
3. The various promises of the Abrahamic Covenant can be summarised under three headings:
  - a. A land
  - b. A seed

c. A blessing

4. Through Abraham, and particularly through his seed, God promised to bring the blessings of redemption to mankind
5. The promises of the Abrahamic covenant were partly fulfilled in Abraham's life, and in the life of the nation of Israel
6. Abraham had a seed through Isaac, then Jacob, then the twelve sons / tribes of Israel, which indeed became a nation
7. Abraham was blessed with prosperity, and his descendants were blessed both materially and spiritually
8. But not ALL families of the earth were blessed
9. Israel possessed the land under Joshua, but never the full extent that was promised Abraham (Genesis 15:18)

B. Who is the seed or son of Abraham?

1. There are numerous people called Abraham's sons
  - a. His immediate sons – Isaac, Ishmael and the six sons of Keturah
  - b. All Israelites are the sons of Abraham (Acts 13:26)

- c. Those who bear Abraham's character are called his sons (Luke 19:9)
- d. All believers are the sons of Abraham through faith (Romans 4:16; Galatians 3:7)
2. But the covenant promise designates a singular "seed" through which the blessing would come
3. Jesus Christ is the seed of Abraham (Galatians 3:16)
4. In his confrontation with the Jews, Jesus showed them that by their unbelief and evil deeds there were not true sons of Abraham, but that he, being sent of the Father was both the son of Abraham, and *before* Abraham (John 8:33-44,51-59)

## **II. JESUS IS THE PROMISED SAVIOUR WHO WILL BLESS ALL NATIONS**

### **A. The nature of the blessing**

1. The purpose of the son of Abraham is to bless the nations/families/kindreds of the world
2. Is this the blessing of material prosperity, of health and peace, etc?
3. Yes, but those material blessings are secondary – they flow from the essential blessing which is spiritual
4. Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, after his son was born, prophesied of Christ fulfilling the

Abrahamic covenant, which includes, “To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins” (Luke 1:67-79)

5. The apostle Peter preached to the Jews in Jerusalem of how Christ was sent by God as the seed of Abraham, “to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities” (Acts 3:25-26)
6. The apostle Paul shows that the blessing of Abraham’s seed is that “God would justify the heathen through faith” (Galatians 3:8-9)

#### B. The accomplishment of the blessing

1. Christ came as the son of Abraham to bless the world, but how did he accomplish this?
2. Even among those Jews who recognised Jesus as the son of Abraham through whom the blessings of salvation would flow to mankind, few would have understood the means by which he would accomplish the work
3. In order to bless a cursed humanity, the son of Abraham must remove the curse by becoming a curse for us! (Galatians 3:13-14)
4. The offering of Christ on our behalf was pictured in Abraham’s offering of his son on Mt Moriah, and the substitutionary sacrifice of the lamb (Genesis 22:9-13)

### **III. JESUS IS THE PROMISED SOVEREIGN WHO WILL BLESS ALL NATIONS**

A. Christ presently fulfils the Abrahamic covenant through the Gospel

1. The moment a sinner repents and believes, he becomes a recipient of the blessing of salvation
2. Being in Christ, who is the seed of Abraham, the believer himself becomes Abraham's seed, and an heir according to the promise (Galatians 3:29)

B. There awaits the complete fulfilment of the Abrahamic covenant

1. The believer is saved, yet awaits the completion of his salvation in glory (Romans 8:23)
2. The promise God made to Abraham concerning the land of Israel as an everlasting possession (Genesis 17:8) has not been abrogated
3. Though many seek to spiritualise these promises, they are to be taken literally, and will be fulfilled literally (Genesis 17:8)
4. A redeemed Israel, believing in Jesus Christ as their Messiah, will indeed possess the promised land eternally
5. Christ will reign on his throne from Jerusalem for 1000 years, with David his prince over Israel (Ezekiel 37:24-25), and the twelve apostles sitting upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Matthew 19:28)

## CONCLUSION

1. We can be thankful we have a gracious God who *makes* covenants and *keeps* his covenants
2. All nations are promised shall be blessed by Christ, Abraham's seed
3. Yet this does not mean that all people will be saved
4. To enter into the covenant blessings one must have faith in Jesus Christ
5. Those who do not believe are not parties to the blessings of salvation
6. Rather, they are under the curse – And I will bless them that bless thee, AND CURSE HIM THAT CURSETH THEE" (Genesis 12:3)
7. Are you a child of Abraham by faith in Christ Jesus, and enjoying the blessings of salvation?
8. Are you walking by faith, as Abraham, in this world as a stranger and pilgrim, desiring a better country, that is, an heavenly? (Hebrews 11:6)