

## **THE PROMISED KINGDOM (THE COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM)**

### **GENESIS 12, 15, 17**

#### RECAP

- The kingdom of God =  
God's people in God's place under God's rule and blessing

#### 1. THE CONTEXT OF GOD'S PROMISES TO ABRAHAM

- Looking back: Genesis 3-11 = a story of sin and judgment (and glimpses of grace). Genesis 12 is a free act of God's grace
- Looking forward: Genesis 1-11 = the story of the world. Genesis 12 onwards is the story of God's special people

#### 2. THE STRUCTURE OF GENESIS 12-17

Genesis 12:1-9	God's promises and Abram's faith
Genesis 12:10-20	Abram's distrust and God's faithfulness
Genesis 13-14	Abram's trust and God's reward
Genesis 15:1-6	God's promises and Abram's faith
Genesis 15:7-21	God answers Abram's doubts by committing Himself to his promises in a solemn covenant
Genesis 16	Abram's faith falters
Genesis 17	The covenant repeated, enlarged and confirmed

### 3. WHAT DOES GOD PROMISE? GOD'S PROMISES BEGIN THE REVERSAL OF THE FALL

- Abram will be blessed and be the means by which all people will be blessed (12:2-3)
- God will give Abram's descendants a land (12:7, 13:15-17, 15:7,18-21, 17:8)
- God will establish Abram and his descendants in a relationship with Himself (15:1, 17:7-8)
- God will give Abram many descendants and make them a great nation (12:2, 13:16, 15:5, 17:4-6)

### 4. SO WHAT? GOD'S PROMISES SHOW THE MAGNITUDE OF HIS GRACE

- The context of rebellion
- A unilateral act of grace (esp. Gen 15:9-20 / cf. Jeremiah 34:12-20)
- Abraham models faith (Genesis 15:6, cf. Romans 4:3, Galatians 3:6)... but he is still a sinner who is saved by grace (e.g. his lapses in Gen 12-17)
- The essence of saving faith is trusting the promises of God

## 5. SO WHAT? GOD'S PROMISES TO ABRAHAM ARE THE PROMISES OF THE GOSPEL

John Stott: "It may truly be said without exaggeration that not only the rest of the Old Testament but the whole of the New Testament are an outworking of these promises of God."

- **People – esp. Genesis 17:7 → Revelation 21:3**
- **Land – Canaan... A new creation (e.g. Hebrews 11:16)**
- **Blessing –**

<b>The kingdom of God</b>	<i>The pattern of the kingdom</i>	<i>The perished kingdom</i>	<i>The promised kingdom</i>
<b>God's people</b>	Adam and Eve	No-one	Abraham's descendants
<b>God's place</b>	The garden	Banished	Canaan, the promised land
<b>God's rule and blessing</b>	God's word; perfect relationships	Disobedience and curse	Blessing to Israel and the nations

## **GROUP BIBLESTUDY: LOOK AT GALATIANS 3:6-14**

The Galatian Christians are being led astray by false teaching that suggest that ti is not enough to believe in Christ but that they also need to obey the Jewish law if they are to be right with God. Paul counters this teaching by pointing them to Abraham.

- **Why are those who have faith in Christ Abraham's true children?**
- **What does it mean to "rely on observing the law" (v10)? How might we do that today?**
- **Why it is futile?**
- **How is it possible for us to receive God's blessing instead of the curse of judgment?**
- **How would you explain this Bible passage to a non-Christian?**

## **HOMEWORK: FOR NEXT WEEK PLEASE READ**

- **Exodus 19:1-7, 20:1-17 (God rescues his people, and gives them his Law)**
- **Joshua 1:1-9 (God brings his people into the promised land through Joshua)**
- **2 Samuel 7:1-17 (God gives the promise of an everlasting kingdom to David)**

## **RECOMMENDED READING / ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:**

**Vaughan Roberts, *God's Big Picture***