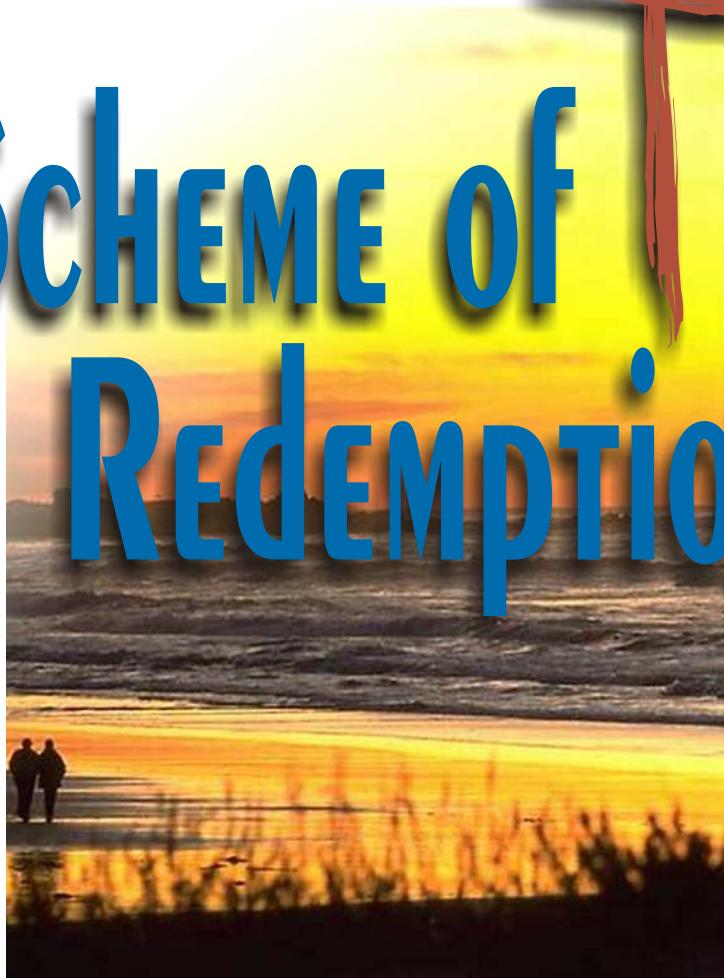


*Study Guide*

# SCHEME OF REDEMPTION



by Ed Wharton

**SUNSET**  
International Bible Institute



# THE SCHEME of REDEMPTION



INTRODUCTORY  
NEW TESTAMENT  
STUDIES

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## **DISCLAIMER**

The textbooks used in this course were selected because we consider them the best study helps and well adapted to this course of study. “***Redemption Is...***” and “***Christ and the Church***” both by Ed Wharton are used by him as reference books and contain additional information which will increase your understanding of God’s eternal purpose to redeem man. As with all books written by men, there may be some things with which you and I would not agree. The principle, “use what is good and discard what is not good” applies to all textbooks used with our courses. Please be wise enough to discard any and all teaching that is not biblical.

## **Instructions and Requirements for Level II Students (Non-Transferrable)**

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Each lesson is built around the instruction on either the VHS tape, DVD, CD, or audio cassette tape. Listen to/view the lecture as you follow along in the course Study Guide book.

**Tests and Self Exams:** There is a Self Exam at the end of each lesson. Preview each lesson by reading these questions first. There will be only ***two tests*** to complete for this course. One test is to be done at the end of lesson six (6) and the other will be done at the end of the study. (**90% of your over all grade**)

**Memory work:** You will have fourteen (14) verses to memorize in your study of “The Scheme of Redemption.” These are to be done as you go through the study and the appropriate passage done at the appropriate time. Memory work will be done on the honor system. You are asked to *either*: Write your verses out, in the presence of the administrator, correct them with a different colored pen and turn them in to your administrator at the time of your mid-term or final test, or quote them to the test administrator. He will keep track of the verses completed. Please be diligent in doing all your memory work. All memory work must be completed to pass this course. (**This will be 10% of your grade**)

**Due with your Mid-term exam:** (7 verses)

Ephesians 1:9-11; 3:10-11; 1 Corinthians 2:6-7.

**Due with your Final exam:** (7 verses)

Genesis 3:15; 4:25; 12:1-4, 7.

**Assignments:**

- The Self Exam for each lesson is to be read previous to listening or viewing the material on the tapes and completed at the conclusion of each lesson.
- You must read Ephesians chapters 1-3; Colossians chapters 1-3, and we suggest you obtain and read the book: ***Christ and the Church*** by Ed Wharton.
- The two tests will make up 90% of your grade. The other work (Reading and Memory work) will constitute the other 10% of your total grade.
- All assignments must be completed in order to pass this course.

## **Instructions and Requirements for Level III Students (Transferable)**

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Each lesson is built around the instruction on either the VHS tape, DVD, CD, or audio cassette tape. Listen to/view the lecture as you follow along in the course Study Guide book.

**Reading:** Two textbooks will be required: *Redemption Is. . .* and *Christ and the Church* both by: Ed Wharton. These books will be supplied with the course at additional cost. They must be read in their entirety by the time the course is completed. (**Reading these books will be worth 5% or your total grade**)

**Memory Work:** You will have thirty (30) Bible verses to memorize. These can be interspersed throughout the course and are to be done by the time the course is completed. You are asked to *either*: write your verses out, in the presence of the administrator, then correct them with a different colored pen and turn them in to your administrator at the time of your mid-term or final test, or quote them to the test administrator. He will keep track of the verses completed. Please be diligent in doing all your memory work. All memory work must be completed to pass this course. (**This will be 10% of your grade**)

**Due with the Mid-term exam:** (14 verses)

Ephesians 1:9-11; 3:10-11; 1 Corinthians 2:6-7;  
Genesis 3:15; 4:25; 12:1-4, 7

**Due with the Final exam:** (16 verses)

2 Samuel 7:11-16; Acts 2:29-38).

**Tests and Self-Exams:** You must complete all the “Self-Exam”questions in your Study Guide and show this to your Test Administrator at the completion of the course. There are two tests to be taken: a *Mid-term exam* and *Final Exam* completed with the grade for each test being 70% or better. (**These test will be worth 85% of your total grade**)

**Suggested Readings:**

1. *God's Prophetic Word* by Foy E. Wallace chapters 3-6.
2. *Colossians or The All Sufficient Christ* by William Barclay.

**Grading:**

Reading	5%
Memorization	10%
Testing	85%
TOTAL	100%

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## LESSON ONE

# REDEMPTION PURPOSED AND PROMISED

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### INTRODUCTION:

**T**his course of study will be a consideration of God's scheme of human redemption as it extends from eternity before the foundation of the world to eternity after the consummation of the Christian age. It will be the aim of this course to present Christ and His church as the full and final realization of the great redemptive acts of God which were wrought within the framework of human history and which have been recorded in the world's great history book - the Bible.

Christ's purpose for coming into the world was to save ruined humanity from sin.

*"She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."* (Matthew 1:21 NIV)

*"For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost."* (Luke 19:10 NIV)

*Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst.* (1 Timothy 1:15 NIV)

Christ's purpose was not to save the world from war, poverty, famine, heartache, disease, etc. The church must not lose site of its purpose. The fringe benefits of world evangelism will naturally result in less war, less poverty, less famine, less heartache as the hearts of men are changed by the gospel, but this is not the central thrust of Christianity.

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**LESSON TEXT:** Ephesians 1:9-11; 3:10-11; 1 Corinthians 2:6-7

**LESSON AIM:** To show that the church was planned in the mind of God before time began and will last until the consummation of time.

**LESSON PREVIEW:** You will . . .

1. Investigate the relationship between God's Scheme of Redemption and the grand purpose of history.
  2. Study the redemption plan of God as viewed from God's eternal purpose.
  3. See how this eternal purpose is spoken of as God's wisdom and referred to as the wisdom of God
-

## GOD'S ETERNAL PURPOSE AND HISTORY

### **A. The Relationship Between God's Scheme of Redemption and the Grand Purpose of History**

1. History is directed by God.
2. God is working out humanity's destiny according to a purpose that He had in His mind from before the beginning of time.
  - a. History is very significant.
  - b. Every individual in it has a very significant place in History.

### **B. God's Eternal Purpose as it Extends from Eternity Before Time Began and after the End of Time**

1. History is not cyclical, it is not going around in circles and going nowhere.
2. History is linear. It had a beginning and will have an end.
3. The purpose of history and man in history is to glorify God!

## REDEMPTION VIEWED FROM GOD'S ETERNAL PURPOSE

**(Ephesians 1:9-11)**

### **A. God's Purpose to Be Summed up in Christ**

*“ . . . making known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he purposed in him unto a dispensation of the fulness of the times, to sum up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens, and the things upon the earth; in him, [I say,] in whom also we were made a heritage, having been foreordained according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his will.”*

1. The word “purpose” used in the **verb** form (v. 9). “. . . which he hath purposed in himself.”
2. The word “purpose” used in the **noun** form (v. 11). “. . . according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.”
3. What God purposed: Redemption in Christ. “He purposed to sum up all things in Christ” (v. 10).
  - a. God’s plan to save man from his sin, from death and from hell, is to be summed up in Christ.
  - b. God purposed to do something, that is to save man, He purposed to sum up His plan in Christ.
4. God’s purpose to be after the counsel of His own will (v. 11). He says in verse 11, that He “. . . works all things after the counsel of His will” according to the purpose.
  - a. According to the good pleasure of His will.
  - b. “Unto a particular time” unto a dispensation of the fullness of the times.

### **B. God's Purpose Planed in Eternity (Ephesians 3:10-11)**

*“To the intent that now, (that would be in the Christian age), unto the principalities and the powers in the heavenly [places] might be made known through the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord:”*

1. This purpose fore-ordained by God was purposed before time began.  
Cf. 1 Corinthians 2:6-7, “... *foreordained before the worlds;*” (1 Peter 1:20), “... *foreknown indeed before the foundation of the world.*”
  - a. God’s foreknowledge that man would fall through sin is not to be equated with God foreordaining man to sin.
  - b. God foreknew that man would sin and so foreordained (predetermined) a plan for his redemption.
2. This purpose made known unto the powers in the heavenly places.
  - a. To be made known through the church.
  - b. To the principalities and powers, these angelic beings, in heavenly places.
  - c. This was to the glory of God (Ephesians 1:6, 12, 14).
    - 1) “*To the praise of the glory of his grace.*”
    - 2) “*That we should be to the praise of his glory.*”
    - 3) “...*unto the praise of his glory.*”
3. This purpose included the church. The church is a part of that purpose (3:20-21).

### **SUMMARY:**

God planned a plan from eternity to save man whom He knew would sin. And He planned for the church to make known this plan to angelic beings according to His eternal purpose. So then God planned to save man in Christ and the church is a part of that purpose.

### **GOD’S ETERNAL WISDOM (1 Corinthians 2:6-7)**

“*We speak wisdom, however, among them that are fullgrown: yet a wisdom not of this world, nor of the rulers of this world, who are coming to nought: but we speak God’s wisdom in a mystery, even the wisdom that hath been hidden, which God foreordained before the worlds unto our glory.*”

- A. The Wisdom of God Spoken by Paul.** “*We speak God’s wisdom in a mystery.*”
1. God’s wisdom is the Gospel of Christ (v. 2). “*I was determined not to know anything among you save Christ and him crucified.*”
  2. Here’s the same wisdom that in Ephesians the church is to make known to angelic beings and this is the wisdom that Paul is speaking of to the church at Corinth.

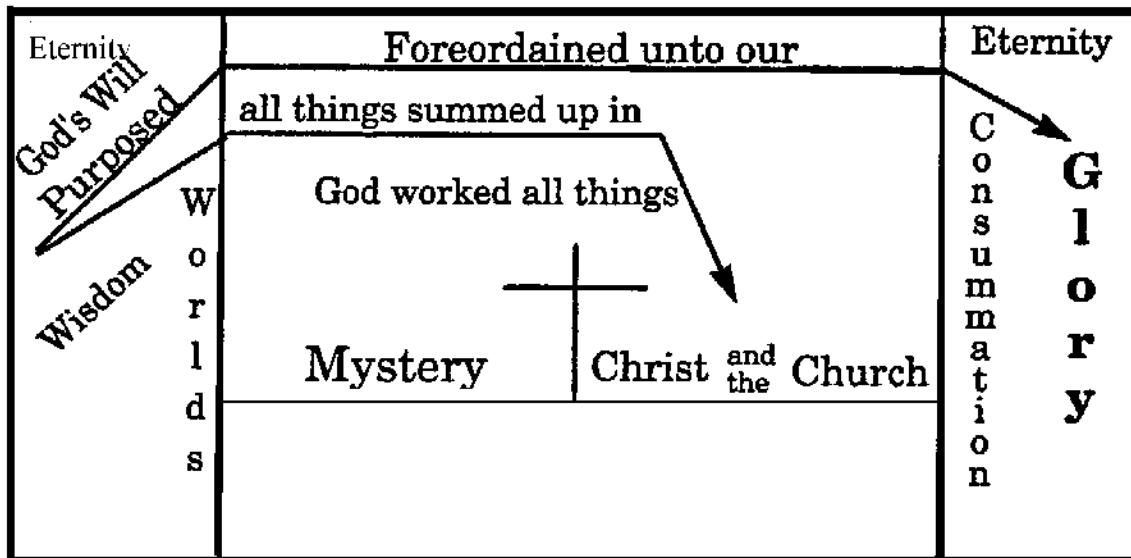
**B. This Wisdom Foreordained unto Our Glory**

He says of this wisdom, “... *we speak God’s wisdom in a mystery, even the wisdom that hath been hidden which God foreordained before the worlds unto our glory.*”

1. Here is the great plan of God from eternity and it extends into the eternity after the consummation. (See the chart below)
2. We give God glory in the church and in Christ. “*Now unto him that is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him [be] the glory, in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all generations for ever and ever. Amen.*” (Ephesians 3:20-21).

### CONCLUSION:

Where do we give God the glory? Not just in Christ but in the church and in Christ. And all of this is according to the eternal purpose of God. What we're seeing then is that history is very significant and it has a direct relationship to the Scheme of Redemption.



**SELF EXAM FOR LESSON ONE:**

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1. What is the stated aim of this course?

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2. Name some things for which Christ did not come into the world.

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3. God's eternal purpose extends from \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

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4. Give two ways in which the word "purpose" is used in Ephesians chapter one.

1) \_\_\_\_\_  
2) \_\_\_\_\_

5. In what two ways does Paul speak of God's eternal purpose in 1 Corinthians 2:6-7?

1) \_\_\_\_\_  
2) \_\_\_\_\_

6. From Ed's book "Redemption Is" Christ, the church, and remission of sins is:

1) \_\_\_\_\_  
2) \_\_\_\_\_

7. Write a paragraph summarizing the teaching in this lesson.



## LESSON TWO

# THE SEED PROMISE FROM ADAM TO NOAH

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### INTRODUCTION:

he book of Genesis reveals to us the origin of the universe, the origin of mankind, the origin of the home, the origin of sin, and the beginning of redemption. In Genesis 3:15 God promised that the Seed of the woman would bruise the serpent's head. That seed is traced from Adam to Abraham in the first eleven chapters of Genesis. After the flood, when the world plunged into idolatry, God chose Abraham through whom the seed should come. The rest of the Old Testament is the revelation of the historical fulfillment of that great redemptive promise.

After the murder of Abel this seed-line is traced from Seth to Noah and his son, Shem who spanned the flood tide. After the flood God chose Abraham, who was a direct descendant of Seth and of Shem. Abraham was the one chosen as the one through whom the redemptive Seed should come (Genesis 12:1-3).

The purpose of the genealogies in Genesis Chapters 5 and 11 is not to tell us the age of the earth, but to show the historical tracing of the seed line from Adam to Abraham.

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**LESSON TEXT:** Genesis 4 – 12

**LESSON AIM:** To show that the great redemptive plan of God is brought to fruition through the seed-line of the woman and that the “Seed” is Christ.

**LESSON PREVIEW:** You will . . .

1. Trace the seed-line from Seth to Noah through the genealogies in Genesis chapter 5.
  2. See the seed-line being preserved in the Ark as God brings a world-wide flood upon the earth.
  3. Trace the seed-line from Shem all the way down to Abram and study the three-fold promise God made to Abram.
-

## REDEMPTION FROM ADAM TO CHRIST

### A. The Historicity of Genesis

1. Jesus endorses Genesis as History – Compare the teaching of Jesus in Matthew with the historical record in Genesis (Matthew 19:3-9; Genesis 1:27-28).
  - a. Concerning the creation of man.
  - b. Concerning marriage – leaving and cleaving.
2. Paul endorses Genesis as History (Romans 5:12-14).
 

*"Therefore, as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; and so death passed unto all men, for that all sinned: for until the law sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the likeness of Adam's transgression, who is a figure of him that was to come."*

  - a. **The first man Adam.** Paul's doctrine of universal condemnation and the consequent need of universal salvation is based on the historical truthfulness of the book of Genesis.
  - b. **Authority for man/woman relationship** (1 Timothy 2:13-14). Paul's doctrine of the place of the man and of the woman in the church based on the historical truthfulness of the book of Genesis.
    - 1) Order of creation – Adam was created before Eve.  
He said that Adam was first formed and then Eve. That is the first of two reasons that Paul gives for his theology of man and woman in the body of Christ. He appeals first of all to the order of creation. God made Adam first, then God made the woman, Eve. And Paul is using that as his authority for his instruction.
    - 2) The temptation of Eve – Eve was tempted and convinced Adam to eat of the forbidden fruit. *"And Adam was not beguiled, but the woman being beguiled hath fallen into transgression."* Paul appeals to the great temptation that the serpent made against the women, when she ate the fruit and died.

### B. The New Testament Views the Genesis Events as Literal

The New Testament views, the record in Genesis as a record that literally took place in historical space and time.

## THE MESSIANIC SEED-LINE FROM ADAM TO CHRIST

### A. The Original Messianic Promise (Genesis 3:15)

1. The first prophecy of Christ. In the presence of man and the woman, God addresses the serpent. He says, *"I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; He shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."*
  - a. How can we know this is a prophecy of Christ?
  - b. The Seed was to come through Abel whom his brother, Cain, slew.
  - c. Seth becomes the one through whom the Seed will come.

2. The seed-line is traced from Seth all the way down through the generations to Noah and his three sons (Genesis 5).
3. The genealogical record from Adam to Noah.
  - a. Seth – instead of Abel.
    - 1) God had intended that the Seed promised to bruise the serpent’s head would have come from Abel but Cain slew him.
    - 2) Seth is now the seed to take the place of Abel.
  - b. Enosh – the son of Seth.
  - c. Kenan – the son of Enosh.
  - d. Mahalalel – the son of Kenan.
  - e. Jared – the son of Mahalalel.
  - f. Enoch – the son of Jared.
  - g. Methuselah – the son of Enoch.
  - h. Lamech – the son of Methuselah.
  - i. Noah – the son of Lamech.
  - j. Shem – the son of Noah.

**NOTE:** We have actually traced the seed promise from Adam, all the way down to the days of Noah and his sons Shem, Ham and Japheth. The emphasis here is not on time. God, in giving us this record, is not interested in telling us how many years lapsed from Adam until Noah. But rather, He is showing us the seed line, from Adam through Noah. Direct descendants all male seeds and that is a miracle in itself, from Adam in whose presence the promise was originally made, in Genesis 3:15, that the seed of woman would bruise the serpents head.

#### **B. The Seed-Line Spans the Great Flood (Genesis 7-9)**

1. We learn the great lesson of obedience from the story of the flood and the ark.
2. We are going to see that Jesus was actually in the loins of Shem when he went into that ark.
3. The flood and the ark are not naive tales but are historical events.
  - a. Viewed by Jesus – as authentic history (Matthew 24).
  - b. Viewed by Peter – an actual event of history (2 Peter 2).

#### **C. The Seed-Line from Shem to Abraham (Genesis 11:10-26)**

1. The genealogical pattern – the generations of Shem. Genesis 11:10 – *“These are the generations of Shem. Shem was 100 years old when he begat Arpachshad two years after the flood. Shem lived after he begat Arpachshad 500 years, and begat sons and daughters.”*
  - a. Arpachshad – the son of Shem.
  - b. Selah – the son of Arpachshad.
  - c. Eber – the son of Selah.
  - d. Peleg – the son of Eber.
  - e. Reu – the son of Peleg.
  - f. Serug – the son of Reu.
  - g. Nahor – the son of Serug.
  - h. Terah – the son of Nahor.

- i. Abram – the son of Terah.
- 2. Abram (Abraham) to whom the promises are given (Genesis 12:1-7).

**NOTE:** Chapter 5, and chapter 11 of the book of Genesis follow a pattern of presenting the genealogical reckonings. The male off-spring from Adam all the way down to the man named Terah, and it says in Genesis 11:26, “*Terah lived 70 years and begat Abram, Nahor and Haran.*”

### THE TWO-FOLD PROMISE TO ABRAM (Genesis 12:1-7)

#### A. Three Promises Given to Abram by God

- 1. He would make Abram a great Nation.
- 2. He would give that Nation so much land – a certain land.
- 3. He would bless all nations through Abram (his descendants).

**NOTE:** In Genesis 22:18, He said, “*... in thy seed, shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.*” So here you have a great seed promise. Abraham’s descendant, Abraham’s offspring, seed, would be the blessing that was to come upon all families and all nations.

#### B. New Testament Interpretation of These Promises (Galatians 3:8, 16)

- 1. The Seed through whom God would bring a great world-wide blessing is Christ (Galatians 3:16).
  - a. The Seed promised is Christ.
  - b. The blessing promised is “justification by faith” (Galatians 3:8).
- 2. In Christ all men of all races, for all time, can be justified.
  - a. We can regain the tree of life.
  - b. The serpent’s head will be bruised.
  - c. Satan’s power will be taken away.
  - d. Death will be dissolved in life everlasting.

#### SUMMARY:

What we need to see is that history, when viewed from eternity to eternity, can be seen to be redemptive and all those who are students of the great seed-promise can catch it at a glance.

#### C. Fulfilled in Christ, the Church, and Remission of Sins

Paul’s inspired interpretation of the promise is set forth in Acts 26:6-7. He declared that “*the hope of the promise*” was fulfilled in the gospel he preached, for which he was “*accused by the Jews.*” There was a world of difference between Paul’s inspired presentation of that promise and the Jews’ desired interpretation of it.

- 1. Christ the Seed. In Galatians 3:16 Paul quotes Genesis 22:18 and says that the seed of Abraham is Christ. Hence, the promised blessing was to come through Christ.
- 2. Justification or remission of sins is the promised blessing.
  - a. Paul teaches in Galatians 3:8 that the promised blessing of Genesis

- 22:18 is the justification of Gentiles by faith in Christ.
- b. Peter teaches in Acts 3:25-26 that the promised blessing of Genesis 22:18 is turning away Jews from their iniquities.  
It should be clear that “all nations” are Jews and Gentiles, and that the promised blessing is forgiveness of sins – justification.
  - 3. The Church is the saved body of the reconciled (Acts 2:47; Ephesians 2:16). Those who receive the promised blessing of forgiveness of sins are added to the church, reconciled in the body. Thus the promise to Abraham is fulfilled in those who having been saved from sin become the church.

**NOTE:** Now the apostle Paul wrote the book of Galatians, and quoted this and told us what it means. We can jump completely through history from the great promise that God made to Abraham to the interpretation of that promise as given to us by the apostle Paul in Galatians 3. In chapter 3 verse 16 Paul says, “*Now to Abraham were the promises spoken, and to his seed. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one.*” Singular he says. “*And to thy seed, which is Christ.*” Paul takes the passage from the promise God made to Abraham in Genesis 12, and said the Seed, through whom God would bring a world wide blessing, is Christ.

Now what is the great worldwide blessing? He says, “*. . . in thy seed shall all nations be blessed.*” Paul again quotes the promises of Genesis 12:3 in Galatians the third chapter. He quotes it in verse 8, and tells us what the blessing is.

“*And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand unto Abraham, saying, in thee shall all the Nations be blessed.*” Paul, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, has interpreted for us not only the seed promise, who it is, but the blessing promise, what it is. The Seed, verse 16, is Christ, and the blessing, verse 8, is justification by faith. This is what is meant when Paul says that God preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham

**CONCLUSION:** God’s great redemptive plan for mankind which He purposed before time began was promised to come through Abraham’s seed. The Bible reveals that this redemption was fulfilled in Christ and the church according to His own eternal purpose. Hence, “*. . . glory to God in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all generations for ever and ever. Amen*” (Ephesians 3:21). This is the central theme of the Bible.

**“Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring; it does not say, ‘And to offsprings,’ as of many; but it says, ‘And to your offspring,’ that is, to one person, who is Christ.”**

(Galatians 3:16 NRSV)

**SELF EXAM FOR LESSON TWO:**

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1. How does Jesus view Genesis concerning its historicity? Give a scripture which shows His view.

Jesus' view: \_\_\_\_\_

Scripture: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Give two passages of Scripture which show Paul's view of Genesis.

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3. In what passage of Scripture is the original Messianic promise found? \_\_\_\_\_

4. How does Abel and Seth fit into the Messianic seed-line? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. What is the significance of the genealogical records in Genesis 5 and 11? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. In whom did the seed-line span the flood-tide? \_\_\_\_\_

7. What were the three promises given to Abraham and where are they first found?

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

Scripture: \_\_\_\_\_

8. Who does the New Testament say that the "seed" is and in what Scripture is this found?

The Seed is: \_\_\_\_\_

The Scripture is: \_\_\_\_\_

9. What does the New Testament say is the blessing and in what Scripture is this found?

The Blessing is: \_\_\_\_\_

The Scripture is: \_\_\_\_\_

## LESSON THREE

# THE TWO-FOLD PROMISE

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### INTRODUCTION:

hristianity did not just happen, it was planned. The Old Testament is the record of the development of that plan in Israel's history. And there are certain implications of magnitude arising out of that history which reflect upon traditionally held doctrines concerning the Jew's return to Palestine, the intent and success of Jesus' ministry, and the place of the church in God's scheme of redemption. We should see that this Old Testament material is not merely the presentation of history, whether interesting or otherwise, but that it is the revelation of the redemption of the human race as God worked it in the framework of world history.

After the flood when the world was going into idolatry God chose Abraham as His servant through whom the Seed should come. This section considers the great theme of the entire biblical narrative – that marvelous promise God made to Abraham and its relation to the scheme of redemption. The importance of this study in comprehending the redemption theme is shown by Willis J. Beecher in his excellent book, *The Prophets And The Promise*. He has stated: “The main line of the Old Testament record, for any purpose, is that which presents the history of Israel. Properly, this begins with the account of the calling of Abraham from Ur of the Chaldees, as found in the twelfth chapter of Genesis, the contents of the preceding eleven chapters being preliminary . . . Dismissing these preliminary chapters, we turn to the calling of Abraham, and there begin our search for the main line of Messianic doctrine. Both at the beginning and afterward, we shall find it to be the principal thing in the Old Testament.” This particular study seeks to trace the development of that promise.

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**LESSON TEXTS:** Genesis 12:1-7 and Genesis 15:1-21

**LESSON AIM:** Continue our tracing of the seed-line in Abraham through whom the redemptive Seed should come.

**LESSON PREVIEW:** You will . . .

1. Review the promises given to Abraham in Genesis 12:1-7.
  2. Trace the Nation/Land promise given to Abraham in Genesis 12 and renewed in Genesis 13 and 15.
  3. Study the circumstances and events that take place as God confirms the promise to Abraham and makes it into a covenant in Genesis 15.
-

## THE TWO PROMISES (Genesis 12:1-7; 22:15-18)

### A. The Nation-Land Promise (Genesis 12:1-2, 7)

1. Abraham would become a great nation (Genesis 12:1-2).
  - a. “*And I will make of thee a great nation*” (v. 2).
  - b. “*And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will give this land*” (v. 7).
2. The promise renewed (Genesis 13:14-18).
  - a. The **land promise** renewed. “*The LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him, ‘Raise your eyes now, and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward; for all the land that you see I will give to you and to your offspring forever’*” (Genesis 13:14-15).
  - b. The **nation promise** renewed. “*I will make your offspring like the dust of the earth; so that if one can count the dust of the earth, your offspring also can be counted*” (Genesis 13:16).

### B. The Promise Becomes a Covenant (Genesis 15:1-21)

1. Abraham's heir to be his own son not Eliezer (v. 4). “*And, behold, the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir.*”
2. The nation promise stated again (v. 5) “*He brought him outside and said, ‘Look toward heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them.’ Then he said to him, ‘So shall your descendants be.’*”
3. The covenant-making process: Cf. Jeremiah 34:18-19.
  - a. Animals sacrificed by cutting them in half (except the birds) (vs. 9-11).
  - b. The vision of Abraham (v. 12). “*And lo, a dread and great darkness fell upon him.*”
  - c. A smoking fire pot and a flaming torch passed between the animals. “*On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram*” (vs. 17-18).
  - d. The importance of the covenant God made with Abram is seen in the value of the animals used to ratify or confirm the covenant.

**NOTE:** In antiquity, men confirmed important covenants by halving sacrificial animals and passing between the pieces (Jeremiah 34:18-19). When Phillip of Macedon was murdered, Alexander made a covenant with Phillip's army to become his own army and remain loyal to him. Roger Lane Fox writes in his book, *Alexander the Great*:

“Then, the army would be purified by ancient ritual, being led by Alexander between two halves of a dog's corpse.” The ritual would bind them to him. (Pg. 39, *The Dial Press, 1974*)

4. Israel was to sojourn in Egypt for 400 years (vs. 13-16). The land of Canaan would belong to Abram's descendants after five conditions had been met:
  - a. His descendants would spend four hundred years in a strange land where they would become slaves.
  - b. The land which enslaved them would be judged.

- c. His descendants would come out of that land with great substance.
- d. Abram would die in peace at an old age.
- e. The sin of the Amorites would have reached its full measure.

**C. The Extent of the Land to be Received (Genesis 15:18-21)**

- 1. The Land boundaries. From the River Euphrates (above Damascus) to the River of Egypt
  - a. This is not the Nile River.
  - b. This is the little Wadi-el-Arish in the middle of the wilderness.
  - c. Some 60,000 square miles of land area which Bible maps call the Dominion of Solomon.
- 2. The boundaries by nations. The territory where the Kenites, the Kenizzites, the Kadmonites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Gergashites and the Jebusites dwelt.
- 3. See also Exodus 23:31, Deuteronomy 1:7 and Joshua 1:1-4.

**D. Receiving the Land Delayed for Four Hundred Years (Genesis 15:13-16)**

- 1. The land of sojourn – Egypt.
  - a. First of all Israel had to sojourn in Egypt for a long time before they could get that land.
  - b. They went into Egyptian bondage.
  - c. God would bring them out at the appointed time.  
*“And also that nation whom they serve will I judge and afterwards shall they come out with great substance.”*
  - d. God’s promise to Abraham – *“But thou,”* God said, this to Abram, *“shall go to thy fathers in peace. Thou shall be buried in a good old age.”*
- 2. God wouldn’t give Abraham’s seed the land while Abraham is yet alive.
- 3. They would come out in the fourth generation (v. 16). *“And in the fourth generation they, shall come hither. . .” “. . .for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet full.”*

**NOTE:** Before the Abrahamic promise, of the nation and the land, could be fulfilled, Israel had to develop into a great nation, down in Egypt. So then God would give to Abraham’s seed this great land in possession, but first, they had to wait until God accomplished His purpose in Egypt.

**SUMMARY:**

This appearance of Jehovah to Abraham included the promise that Abraham’s seed would dwell in a foreign land (Egypt), then return to the land of Canaan which they would receive for a possession, and carefully details how much land area – the extent of land – that they would receive when they returned from Egypt. Then He confirmed His promises by passing His fire between the covenant sacrifices.

**SELF EXAM FOR LESSON THREE:**

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1. What was the two-fold promise made to Abraham in Genesis 12:1-2 and renewed in 13:14-16?

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2. Describe the process used in Genesis 15 which made the promise into a covenant.

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3. What five conditions are given before Israel would inherit the land of Canaan?

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

4) \_\_\_\_\_

5) \_\_\_\_\_

4. Give the boundaries of the land to be received by Abram's descendants.

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5. The promised land consisted of how many square miles? \_\_\_\_\_

## LESSON FOUR

# CIRCUMCISION – SIGN OF THE COVENANT

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### INTRODUCTION:

**J**n this lesson we are going to consider the subject of circumcision as it is presented to us in Genesis the 17th chapter. This will be the subject of circumcision as it pertains to God's promise to Abraham to make him a nation, and give that nation the land of his sojourn.

In Genesis the 12th chapter, God originally gave the promise to Abraham to make him a nation. And He said in Genesis 12 and in verse 7, that He would give to that nation the land of Canaan. Then we moved on to Genesis the 15th chapter where God confirmed that promise and that promise took the form of a covenant. So when God made a promise to Abraham to make him a nation, and to give that nation the land of Canaan, He covenanted with him to fulfill that promise.

In Genesis the 17th chapter, God makes yet another covenant with Abraham, and with his seed after him. This is the covenant to be their God. Something brand new then is added to the Nation-Land promise that God would be the special God of Israel. That is the special God of Abram and his off-spring throughout their generations. Then God assigns a very special sign that they would have in their flesh as a token of that covenant to be their God. Circumcision didn't begin with Abraham. It was practiced by several of the surrounding nations. The Ammonites, the Edomites, the Moabites, even the Egyptians practiced circumcision. The Egyptians looked upon circumcision as a sign of the ruling race

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**LESSON TEXTS:** Genesis 17:1-14 and related texts

**LESSON AIM:** To see that circumcision is given by God to Abraham and his seed as a token of the covenant.

**LESSON PREVIEW:** You will . . .

1. See the relationship between circumcision and the nation/land promise.
  2. Learn God's part and Abraham's part in the covenant given by God and that the seed of Abraham was born into this covenant relationship.
  3. Discover what the duration of this covenant was by learning how the word translated "everlasting" is used in various sections of Scripture.
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## CIRCUMCISION, THE COVENANT SIGN

### A. The Nation-Land Promise and Circumcision (Genesis 17)

1. Another covenant:
  - a. To be their God.
  - b. Throughout their generations.
  - c. A special sign of the covenant given by God – circumcision.
2. Circumcision practiced before Abraham by several surrounding nations.
  - a. The Ammonites, the Edomites, the Moabites, and even the Egyptians practiced circumcision.
  - b. And the Egyptians looked upon circumcision as a sign of the ruling race. Perhaps that explains the statement in Joshua 5 where God commanded Joshua to circumcise Israel the second time.
3. The relation of circumcision to inheriting the land (Joshua 5:2-9).
  - a. The children of Israel circumcised before going into the land.
  - b. All the men who had been circumcised when leaving Egypt died in the wilderness.
  - c. All the people that were born in the wilderness had not been circumcised.
  - d. Their uncircumcised condition was referred to in Joshua 5:9 as “the reproach of Egypt.”
  - e. They had sustained their uncircumcised condition as long as they were bond slaves in Egypt. (See 2b above)

**NOTE:** For Israel, as God told Abraham, circumcision was a special sign for their off-spring as it pertained to the land. He was to be their God and they were to be His people. And so the circumcision of Israel had a very national significance and it pertained directly to the land.

### B. Circumcision Was a Condition to Keep the Land (Genesis 17:1-14)

1. The renewal of the nation promise: *“I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.”*
2. The covenant from God’s side (vs. 4-8). *“As for me, behold my covenant is with thee.”* God’s pledge included:
  - a. The Spiritual-Seed promise. Notice once again that it is connected to the physical part of the promise immediately following (vs. 4-5). Paul’s inspired interpretation of the intended meaning of this statement is recorded in Romans 4:16-17. The “multitude of nations” to which Abraham is father are Christians from among all nations, whose faith led them to Christ, who is the Seed of Abraham.
  - b. The promise to give the land to Abraham’s seed (vs. 6-8). This is the same promise as recorded in Genesis chapter 15.

- 1) God would bless the world with redemption through the seed of Abraham.
- 2) First that seed would receive a land as an inheritance.
3. The covenant from Abraham's side (vs. 9-14). "*As for thee, thou shalt keep my covenant, thou, and thy seed after thee throughout their generations.*"  
  - a. Abraham's obligation included the Covenant of Circumcision.  
 This covenant was for Abraham and his seed. It would be the "token" or sign of their special relation to God. Since Israel was chosen out of all the nations of the earth to serve God's special purpose (Exodus 19:4-6), they were to have a special token identifying them as such.
  - b. The Israelites were automatically born into a covenant relationship with Jehovah.
    - 1) All Abraham's seed were covenant related children of God.
    - 2) From this point on "throughout their generations" circumcision would be the sign in their flesh that Israel sustained a special relationship to God as His own chosen people.
    - 3) God's people had been promised the land. Circumcision was necessary if they were to retain the land. (See verses 12-14)
4. Israelites were **born** into a covenant relationship with God.
  - a. God's covenant was made with Abraham "*and his seed.*" God is making His covenant with those who are in Abraham's loins at this time.
  - b. If the Israelites became covenant children on the eighth day, (via circumcision) then all the female Hebrews would be eliminated from the covenant.
  - c. The uncircumcised male was to be cut off from his people because he had "broken" the covenant. He couldn't break it if he were not in it.

### C. The Duration of the Covenant

It is stated in verse eight that the land was to be "*an everlasting possession,*" and in verse thirteen that the covenant of circumcision was to be "*an everlasting covenant.*" The Hebrew word for "everlasting" does not mean eternal as we would think of it. Rather it means "age-lasting." Consequently when that particular age had run its course it would end as would also **all covenants which were made for that age.** Otherwise circumcision would yet be binding upon the seed. But see the following comments by Paul upon this subject:

1. God does not recognize circumcision in the flesh any longer (Romans 2:28-29; Philippians 3:3; Galatians 5:6).
2. Circumcision is now spiritual. It is a cutting off of the sins of the flesh (Colossians 2:11-12).
3. Any appeal to fleshly circumcision for salvation is useless and cannot be done with impunity (Galatians 5:2-4).

#### D. A Study of the Word “Everlasting”

1. Defining the Hebrew word *holam*.
  - a. In some places it can mean “age-lasting.”
    - 1) Exodus 40:12 – “*. . . and their anointing shall be to them for an everlasting priesthood throughout their generation.*”
    - 2) Hebrews 6:20 – The Aaronic Priesthood is replaced by the Melchizedekian Priesthood.
    - 3) Hebrews 7:12 – “*For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law.*” See also Hebrews 7:17, 25.
    - 4) Leviticus 16:29 – “*. . . it (the day of atonement) shall be a statute forever (holam) unto you.*” The New Testament teaches us that forgiveness is granted to God’s people, not through animal sacrifices, but, through the great sacrifice of Jesus on the cross.
    - 5) Galatians 5:6 – “*For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith working though love.*”
    - 6) Galatians 6:14-15 – “*Far be it from me to glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world hath been crucified unto me, and I unto the world. For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.*”
  - b. In some places it means “eternal.”

#### CONCLUSION:

We read in Genesis 17, that they would be a special people, they were to have in their flesh, a special token of the covenant, to be a special people. That special token was circumcision. How long was circumcision to last? It was to last everlastingly (Genesis 17:13). But we have seen that circumcision was never intended to last eternally. It was age lasting. So how long then is God to owe them that land? Age lasting.

When Christ came, He did away with the Law of Moses and He did away with the requirement of circumcision and then passed on a 1500 year history, the requirement of circumcision, and the Israelites claim to that land.

**SELF EXAM FOR LESSON FOUR:**

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1. In what chapter of Genesis is the covenant of circumcision found?

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2. In what way did the Egyptians view circumcision?

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3. How does Joshua 5:9 describe the uncircumcised condition of Israel as they were about enter the promise land?

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4. What was God's part of the covenant? \_\_\_\_\_

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5. What was Abraham's part in the covenant? \_\_\_\_\_

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6. At what point in life did a Hebrew enter the covenant relationship with God?

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7. Give three points which would show when the Jews entered their covenant relationship with God.

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

8. Present some information which would indicate that the word *everlasting* would not mean eternal in relation to the covenant given by God.

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## LESSON FIVE

# ABRAHAM BECOMES A NATION

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### INTRODUCTION:

he great nation-land promise was renewed to Isaac (Genesis 26:1-5) and then to his son Jacob (Genesis 28:3-4, 13-14). From this point the Bible details how Jacob grew into a great family, went to live in Egypt in time of famine, and increased greatly in the land of Egypt.

A nation must have a constitution and law to govern it. The only law ever revealed from heaven was received by Israel at Mt. Sinai. Upon receiving this Law, they became the great nation of promise.

The Scriptures indicate at least six reasons for the revelation of this law. The Law:

- (1) revealed God's glory and holiness (Deuteronomy 5:22-28);
  - (2) manifested the sinfulness of man (Romans 7:7, 13; 1 Timothy 1:9ff.);
  - (3) marked Israel as God's chosen people (Psalm 147:19-20; Ephesians 2:11-12);
  - (4) gave Israel a Godly standard by which they might continue to inhabit Canaan (Deuteronomy 5:29ff.; Judges 2:19-21);
  - (5) prepared Israel for the coming of the Promised Seed (Galatians 3:24); and
  - (6) illustrated in various forms and ceremonies the person and work of Christ (Hebrews 10:1).
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**LESSON TEXTS:** The passages listed in this lesson.

**LESSON AIM:** To see the development of the promised nation and the working of God in accomplishing the fulfillment of His promise.

**LESSON PREVIEW:** You will . . .

1. Learn three things that are necessary to form a nation.
  2. See God's providential working in the lives and circumstances of His people as He forms the nation of promise.
  3. Discover that the Law given at Mt. Sinai was critical in making Israel into a nation of promise.
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### THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NATION

#### A. What it Takes to Make a Nation

1. It takes a land.

2. It takes a law.
3. It takes a people.

#### **B. The Promise Renewed**

1. To Abraham (Genesis 17:2-6, 15-19).
2. To Isaac (Genesis 26:1-4). “*. . . for unto thee and unto thy seed will I give all these lands. And I will establish the oath which I swear unto Abraham, thy father, and I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven and will give unto thy seed, all these lands.*”
3. To Jacob (Israel) (Genesis 28:3-4, 10-13). “*And give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee; that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave unto Abraham.*”

**NOTE:** So the original promise God made to Abraham has now been renewed to Isaac his son, and Jacob, his grandson.

#### **C. The Descent into Egypt (Genesis 46-1-7)**

1. Joseph is sold into slavery in Egypt by his brothers.
  - a. At first he is a slave in Potiphar’s house.
  - b. Then after being falsely accused by Potiphar’s wife, he is made a slave in Potiphar’s prison.
2. Joseph is elevated to the position of Prime Minister of Egypt through a series of providential instances.
  - a. He became second in power only to Pharaoh.
  - b. God sent a famine over the land.
  - c. God providentially prepared Joseph to care for his family in Egypt.
3. Israel made into a great nation in Egypt. “*And God spoke to Israel in a vision at night and said, ‘Jacob! Jacob!’ ‘Here I am,’ he replied, I am God, the God of your father, he said. Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will make you into a great nation there*” (Genesis 46:2-3 NIV).
4. Joseph’s charge to his brethren to carry his bones from Egypt and take them to the promised land (Genesis 50:24). “*Then Joseph said to his brothers, ‘I am about to die. But God will surely come to your aid and take you up out of this land to the land he promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.’*”

#### **SUMMARY:**

Into Egypt came the twelve tribes of Israel (Joseph already being there). These families dwelt in the land of Goshen and there they grew into a great nation of people. Like a nursing mother succoring her child at her breast, Egypt nurtured Israel until she became a great multitude of people. This was their temporary dwelling until the time of Moses.

You find that God’s plan to make Abraham a nation is being fully developed in the land of Egypt. And we are finding that God’s pledge for that nation to spend time in Egypt, as He stated in Genesis 15:13 through 16, is now taking place. But remember, that God said to Abraham in Genesis 15:16 in the fourth generation they would come out of Egypt and come back to the land that God had promised to him for his seed, to receive as a possession.

#### D. The Exodus Out of Egypt in the Fourth Generation

1. The statement of God to Abraham (Genesis 15:16 NIV). "*In the fourth generation your descendants will come back here, for the sin of the Amorites has not yet reached its full measure.*"
2. Counting the four generations. Marked from the time they went down into Egypt.
  - a. Levi.
  - b. Kohath, Levi's son.
  - c. Amram, Kohath's son.
  - d. Moses and Aaron, Amram's sons. Four generations from the time they entered the land of Egypt.

**NOTE:** What Moses is doing is tracing these Patriarchs. There was Abraham, there was Isaac, there was Jacob, and then Jacob had his twelve sons. Which of these sons is going to be traced to the great deliverer Moses? It won't be Reuben, it won't be Simeon, it will be Levi. Levi had his sons. One of these sons names was Kohath. And so Moses picks up the genealogy of Kohath in Exodus 6:18-20, "*And the sons of Kohath: were Amram, Izhar, Hebron and Uzziel.*" He states in verse 19, "*These are the families of the Levites*" And he says in verse 20, "*Amram*," that was one of the sons of Levi, "*took him Jochebed his father's sister to wife, and she bear him Aaron and Moses.*"

He's actually showing the fulfillment of God's pledge to Abraham in Genesis 15:16, that God would bring up that seed again in the fourth generation. And here is what we have come to, to Moses and to Aaron. So we have traced it from Levi, his son, Kohath, his son Amram, and his sons Moses and Aaron under whose leadership Israel came out into the wilderness in that fourth generation.

### THE LAW FOR THE NATION GIVEN AT SINAI

#### A. The Exodus out of Egypt to Sinai

1. Going out of Egypt in the fourth Generation (Exodus 6:16-20, 25, 26).
 

The promise to Abraham as recorded in Genesis 15 was that his seed would return to the promised land in the fourth generation. It seems as though God meant they would return four generations after they left Canaan to go down into Egypt. Hence, Levi, Kohath, Amram, Moses and Aaron. Moses and Aaron were the fourth generation from Jacob from the time the Patriarchs went to live in Egypt. The prophecy of Genesis 15:16 is herein seen to have been fulfilled.
2. Giving the Law at Sinai (Exodus 19:1-6; 20:1-17; 34:27-28).
  - a. To Israel as a Nation.
 

Three things required to form a nation are: a people, a law, and a land area. Israel had received her government at Sinai. Since the land of Canaan had already been given in promise to the Israelites, for all good purposes Israel became a nation at Sinai. This fulfills God's promise in Genesis 12:2 to make of Abraham a great nation. At this point it only remains for the nation to possess the land which was promised.
  - b. The Law of Moses was never intended for Gentiles. It was a national covenant given only to Israel as a nation. Cf. Exodus 34:37-38; Deuteronomy 4:1, 8; 5:1-3; 33:4; Psalm 147:19-20.

**B. The Law Given by God Through Moses (Exodus 20- 24)**

1. The Ten Commands given first (Exodus 20:1-17).
2. The ordinances of the Law given (Exodus 21-23).
3. The Law ratified (Exodus 24).
  - a. Animals are slain and blood taken.
  - b. Moses writes out the Law word for word.
  - c. The Law and the people are sprinkled with the blood of the animals.
  - d. The Law read to the people and the commitment of obedience by the people (v. 7).

**NOTE:** Now the people are whole, a nation. They have come out of Egypt a great number of people, they have a land by promise and now they have a law.

**CONCLUSION:**

The promise of God to Abraham that He would make of him a nation and give to that nation the land of Canaan has been traced to a partial fulfillment. The first part of the nation-land promise is now realized. Abraham is a great nation. Only the land is yet to be possessed.

**THINGS TO LOOK FOR**

1. The promise renewed to Isaac (Genesis 26:4).
2. The promise renewed to Jacob (Genesis 28:10-14).
  - a. The vision (dream) of the ladder between heaven and earth (vs. 10-12).
  - b. The seed promise is most likely the interpretation of the ladder vision since it comes immediately after it (vs. 13-14).
  - c. Jesus claims to be the fulfillment of Jacob's ladder dream in John 1:51. In that He claimed to be the fulfillment of the Abrahamic promise.
3. Jesus is pictured in John 1:51.
  - a. As Prophet (descending) of God bringing His words to man.
  - b. As Priest (ascending) of God offering Himself as sacrifice for the sins of men.
4. The promised Seed to come through the tribe of Judah (Genesis 49:8-10).

**SELF EXAM FOR LESSON FIVE:**

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1. What three things are necessary to make a nation?

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

2. List the chapters in Genesis where the promise is renewed to Abraham and given to Isaac and Jacob.

Abraham: \_\_\_\_\_

Isaac: \_\_\_\_\_

Jacob: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Where did Israel become a great nation of people? \_\_\_\_\_

Where is this so stated? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Israel came out in the fourth generation. Explain this concept and give the names of the descendants of Abraham involved.

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5. What happened at Mt. Sinai which was a part of making Israel into a great nation?

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## LESSON SIX:

# THE NATION-LAND PROMISE THE COVENANT OF BLESSING AND CURSING

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### INTRODUCTION:

**J**n this lesson Israel stands on the brink of entering the land of Canaan. At last the conquest is to begin. The new nation of Israel shall press the battle till Canaan is finally her own possession, and God's promise to give the land to Abraham's seed is fulfilled.

Prior to the conquest Moses must perform a final and important duty. That is to charge the nation to faithfully keep the covenant made at Sinai (the Law of Moses) *as a condition necessary to retaining the land*. This study takes into consideration (1) Moses' charge to the nation, and (2) the inheriting of the land.

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**LESSON TEXTS:** Deuteronomy chapters 28, 29, 30

**LESSON AIM:** To see the requirements by which the nation of Israel was to continue to hold possession of the land of promise.

**LESSON PREVIEW:** You will . . .

1. Discover that the covenant of blessing and cursing was given to the nation of Israel as they were preparing to enter the land.
  2. See that Israel's continued inhabiting of the land was contingent upon their obedience to the Law of Moses.
  3. Consider all the blessings promised and the curses guaranteed in Deuteronomy chapters 28-30.
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### THE COVENANT OF BLESSING AND CURSING (Deuteronomy 28 – 30)

#### A. The Covenant of Blessing (28:1-14)

1. The possession of the land was conditional.
  - a. The conditional word "if" is used four times in the verses 1-14.
  - b. The condition expressly stated in Exodus 19:5 – "*Now therefore, if you obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession out of all the peoples.*"
    - 1) The word "voice" and "covenant" are the same.
    - 2) Now 40 years later God reminds them they must be faithful to the Law of Moses.

2. The nature of the blessings promised.
  - a. Abundance and victory in the land – “*In the city, in the field, the fruit of your body, the fruit of the ground, the fruit of your beast, the increase of your cattle, the young of your flock, in the basket and the kneading trough when you come in and go out.*”
  - b. Protected and plenty in the land – “*Their enemies smitten before them, they would be the head and not the tail, above only and not beneath.*”
  - c. God would be their protector – “*Jehovah will cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thee; they shall come out against thee one way, and shall flee before thee seven ways.*”
  - d. They will be established – a holy people (v. 9). “*Jehovah will establish thee for a holy people unto himself, as he hath sworn unto thee; if thou shalt keep the commandments of Jehovah thy God, and walk in his ways.*”
3. Warning against serving idols.
  - a. The idolatry of the Canaanites an abomination before God – the cause of God’s judgment upon them.
  - b. God is going to use Israel as His nation to purge Canaan.

**NOTE:** So these people now, must remember that when they go in to possess this land they must also stay free from idolatry or they will become abominable. Here is the pronouncing of the great blessing. Here is the condition that God has for the nation of Israel. He says, go into the land, enjoy the land, He says I will bless your coming in and going out. I will bless you in every way. Make you the head and not the tail, here is the condition; hear My voice, keep My covenant. Keep the Law of Moses.

**B. The Covenant of Cursing.** “*But if you will not obey the LORD your God by diligently observing all his commandments and decrees, which I am commanding you today, then all these curses shall come upon you and overtake you . . .*” (Deuteronomy 28:15 NRSV).

1. The nature of the cursing.
    - a. In every area they were to be blessed for obedience to God’s voice they would be cursed for disobedience to His Law.
    - b. God would bring upon the nation final destruction (v. 20).
    - c. Instead of abundance and victory there would be want and defeat.
    - d. Instead of protection and plenty they would be left unprotected and in need. In much the same fashion God removed His hedge from around Job, He would leave the Israelites open to all kinds of destruction.
  2. The character and extent of the curse (vs. 36-44).
    - a. First the curse is to motivate toward repentance.
    - b. If there is no repentance then destruction will be the end of the curse. He says, eventually, these curses that I will send upon you strictly to warn you, to try to get you to repent and turn back to Me, He says if that doesn’t work, then finally I will destroy you, I will cause you to perish.
  3. The agent of destruction (vs. 45-49) the nations of Assyria and Babylon. He says in verse 49, “*Jehovah will bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand; a nation of fierce countenance, that shall not regard the person of the old, nor show favor to the young.*”
- a. They are preparing to enter the promise land.

- b. If they are disobedient to the commands of God He will cause them to be scattered among all the peoples. This will occur for the 10 northern tribes in the year 722 B.C. and the 2 southern tribes in 586 B.C.

**NOTE:** There is the great statement of the curse that God would bring upon them. They are getting ready to go into the land. They are getting ready to take the land and possess it. And they will be a full fledged nation. They have the Law, they have developed into a nation. God has already given them the land in promise. It only remains for them to possess it. But they must keep the conditions, in order to keep the land. They must be faithful according to the terms, God's covenant, the Law of Moses.

#### C. Return to the Land Promised (Deuteronomy 30:1-10)

1. The fact of their return – “*Jehovah thy God will turn thy captivity.*”
2. The conditions of returning – “*... return to the LORD your God, and you and your children obey him with all your heart and with all your soul, just as I am commanding you today ...*” (Deuteronomy 30:2 NRSV).
3. The reward of returning – “*... then the LORD your God will restore your fortunes and have compassion on you, gathering you again from all the peoples among whom the LORD your God has scattered you*” (Deuteronomy 30:3 NRSV).

#### D. Conditions for Repossessing the Promise Land

There are some people today who actually believe that the Jews, one of these days, according to prophecy, will go back to that land and possess it. But in order for the Jews to reposess the promise land, they have to meet certain conditions. THEY HAVE TO KEEP THE LAW OF MOSES! What does the New Testament teach us? It teaches us:

1. Romans chapter 7 and verse 4 that the “*Jews were discharged from that Law.*”
2. In 2 Corinthians chapter 3 verse 14, Paul says that God had “*taken away the Law in Christ.*” It was done away, in Christ.
3. He says in the book of Galatians, chapter 3 verse 23 through 25 that the Law was like a tutor to bring us to Christ, but now that Christ and faith have come, we are no longer under a tutor. “*No longer under the Law.*”
4. In Ephesians 2 and verse 15 he says that “*Christ abolished the Law.*”
5. In Colossians 2:14 through 15 he says that “*Christ nailed that Law to the cross.*”
6. In Hebrews 7 and verse 12, he says “*the Law was changed,*” which was necessary since the priesthood changed from Aaronic to Melchizedekian.

There is no way, then, that the Jew can return to the land of Canaan's day according to prophecy; in as much as in order to do it according to prophecy they had to keep the Law.

#### E. Israel Inherited All the Land

1. Joshua 21:43 – “*So Jehovah gave unto Israel all the land which he sware to give their fathers.*” “*... they possessed it and dwelt therein.*” How much land

- did God promise to give them? Joshua says He gave them all the land He promised to give them. Further more he said they possessed it and dwelt there in it.
2. Joshua 23:14, 16 – “Behold this day I am going the way of all the earth; you know in all your hearts and all your souls, that not one thing has failed of all the good things Jehovah your God spake concerning you; all has come to pass, not one good thing has failed.”
  3. 2 Chronicles 20:5-8 – “Did you not, O our God, drive out the inhabitants of this land before your people Israel, and give it forever to the descendants of your friend Abraham?”
  4. Jeremiah 32:21-23, “... and didst bring forth thy people Israel, out of the land of Egypt with signs, and wonders, and with a strong hand, and with an outstretched arm and gave them this land; which thou didst swear to their fathers to give them, a land flowing with milk and honey; they came in and possessed it.” Again, and again the inspired record tells us they got the land, they dwelt in it and they possessed it. Joshua says it. Jehoshaphat thanked God for it. The prophet Jeremiah reminded the people of it. There is no doubt about it, they got that land.
  5. 1 Kings 4:21 – “Solomon was sovereign over all the kingdoms from the Euphrates to the land of the Philistines, even to the border of Egypt; they brought tribute and served Solomon all the days of his life.” The very boundaries of the extent of the land God promised to give them in Genesis 15:18-21.

### **SUMMARY:**

Lets go to the book of Nehemiah and put a wrap upon this lesson. In Nehemiah 9, we find the Levites are praising God and they state in Nehemiah 9 and verses 7 and 8 “*Thou art Jehovah the God, who didst choose Abram, and brought him forth out of the Ur of the Chaldees, and gave him the name of Abraham, and foundest his heart faithful before thee, and madest a covenant with him to give him the land of the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Amorite, and the Perizzite, the Jebusite, the Gergashite, to give it unto his seed, and hast performed thy words; for thou art faithful.*” Do you believe they got that land? The Bible said they got it. All of it. Why? Because God is faithful. He kept His promise. They got the land. This nation was a nation blessed.

**SELF EXAM FOR LESSON SIX:**

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1. The possession of the land was conditioned on what action by the people?

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2. What two things describe the nature of the blessings promised?

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3. What was the abomination of the Canaanites which caused God's judgment upon them?

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4. How would you describe the cursing in relation to the blessings?

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5. What was the two-fold character or purpose of the covenant of cursing?

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

6. By what agency would God bring destruction upon the nation when they became disobedient to His voice or covenant?

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7. Under what conditions would the Jews be restored to the land from which they had been driven? \_\_\_\_\_

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8. Under what condition could the Jews go back today and repossess the promise land?

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9. List five (5) Scripture references which plainly tell us that Israel inherited all the land as promised.

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

4) \_\_\_\_\_

5) \_\_\_\_\_



## LESSON SEVEN

# THE APOSTASY OF ISRAEL AND THE COVENANT OF CURSING

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### INTRODUCTION:

he promise to receive the land had been unconditional. The actual receiving of the land was due to the promise made to Abraham, but the condition for retaining the land was to keep the covenant, the Law of Moses. The ultimate penalty for disobedience was the destruction of the nation and scattering the nation out of the land into the captive land of a foreign nation (Deuteronomy 28:63-64).

God stated that after both blessing (possession of the land) and cursing (destruction and captivity of the nation) had come upon Israel that while they were in the land of their captors, “if” they would return to a heartfelt obedience of the Law, that “then” He would turn their captivity and bring them home.

Under Joshua, Israel inherited all the land promised. Later, under David the King, Israel became a very powerful nation in the earth. During Solomon’s reign the nation reached the height of her glory. But following the death of Solomon (about 935 B.C.) and the ascension of his son Rehoboam to the throne, the empire split (1 Kings 11-12). The great United Kingdom had perished. Now existed the ten tribes to the north – Israel, and Judah to the south; two separate nations.

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**LESSON TEXTS:** The passages listed in the study notes.

**LESSON AIM:** To see the eternal purpose of God to fulfill His promise to Abraham to make of his seed a great nation and to bless all families of the earth.

**LESSON PREVIEW:** You will . . .

1. Discover that even the apostasy of His people cannot defeat the eventual working out of God’s purposes.
  2. Trace the history of God’s people through the period of the Judges, and the Monarchy as the kingdom is divided and judged.
  3. Know that the reason for Israel’s captivity by pagan nations is their apostasy and involvement with idolatry.
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## THE APOSTASY AND SCATTERING OF ISRAEL

### A. Apostasy in the Period of the Judges

1. The cycle of apostasy.
  - a. Sin – Israel goes into idolatry.
  - b. Servitude – God lets other nations enslave them. God would raise up an enemy against them, they would put them into bondslavery.
  - c. Sorrow and supplication. After a while, they would turn back to God and cry to God for deliverance.
  - d. Salvation – God sends a judge to save them.

**NOTE:** This happened for 400 years until finally it says in the book of Judges chapter 21 and verse 25, “*in those days*,” the days of the judges, “*there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes*.”

2. The extent of apostasy – “*Every man did that which was right in his own eyes*” (Judges 21:25).
3. The contradiction of apostasy – When you go into that land, “*Ye shall not do after all the things that we do here this day, every man whatsoever is right in his own eyes*” (Deuteronomy 12:8 ASV).

### B. Apostasy in the Period of the United Kingdom

1. **The desire and request for a king.**
  - a. Israel wanted to be like all the nations around them. The elders of Israel, “*... gathered themselves together and they came to Samuel unto Ramah; and said behold, thy sons walk not in thy ways; now make us a king to judge us like all the nations*” (1 Samuel 8:4).
  - b. The character of Samuel’s sons prompted the request for a king. “*Yet his sons did not follow in his ways, but turned aside after gain; they took bribes and perverted justice*” (1 Samuel 8:3 NRSV).
  - c. They rejected God as their King. They had rejected God’s government as He had set it up over them. “*Jehovah said unto Samuel, hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee; for they have not rejected thee, they have rejected me, that I should not be king over them*” (v. 7).
2. **Saul – the king of the people’s choice.**
  - a. He had a good beginning – a man of humility and obedience.
  - b. He became arrogant and unfaithful – like the people he ruled.
3. **David – the king of God’s choice.** David led them in 40 years of victory and restoration of the land they had lost under the Judges.
4. **Solomon, David’s son, – led them into idolatry.** “*So Solomon did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, and did not completely follow the LORD, as his father David had done*” (1 Kings 11:6 NRSV).

**NOTE:** Before Solomon died and was succeeded by Rehoboam, a prophet from Shiloh

called Ahijah had already taken steps to divide the kingdom. He not only predicted that division, but conveyed the word of Jehovah to Jeroboam that he was to be king of the northern tribes. He tore a new cloak into twelve pieces, and handed ten of them to Jeroboam as a symbol and pledge of what Jehovah purposed for Jeroboam and for Israel (1 Kings 11:26-39). Such symbolic action is another characteristic of the Old Testament prophets. The torn robe signified that there could be no escaping the word of God; what God willed, must be. Thus Ahijah pronounced the irrevocable fate of the united Hebrew kingdom. Political realists of the time might have foreseen that the tensions within the kingdom must inevitably lead to division; but the prophets did not operate on the ground of political analysis and assessment.

For Ahijah, the imminent disruption of the monarchy was not a political inevitability, but God's plan and decision in the light of Solomon's idolatry. Solomon, in other words, had breached the solemn covenant with Yahweh; he had in some measure failed to observe the First Commandment, and to some degree oppressed the covenant people.

### C. Apostasy in the Period of the Divided Kingdom

1. The kingdom divided.
  - a. Rehoboam, Solomon's son, is king in Judah. He was arrogant and oppressive, driving the people toward Jeroboam.
  - b. Jeroboam, the son of Nebat is king in the Northern ten tribes.

### D. The Sin of Jeroboam, the Son of Nebat (1 Kings 12:25-30)

1. Jeroboam's excuse for unfaithfulness. "*Then Jeroboam said to himself, 'Now the kingdom may well revert to the house of David. If this people continues to go up to offer sacrifices in the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, the heart of this people will turn again to their master, King Rehoboam of Judah; they will kill me and return to King Rehoboam of Judah.'*" (1 Kings 12:26-27 NRSV)
2. Jeroboam's seemingly wise solution. "*So the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold. He said to the people, 'You have gone up to Jerusalem long enough. Here are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt.' He set one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan*" (1 Kings 12:28-29 NRSV).
  - a. Bethel was in the extreme southern part of the land.
  - b. Dan was in the most northern part of the land.
3. The consequences of Jeroboam's unfaithfulness. "*And this thing became a sin, for the people went to worship before the one at Bethel and before the other as far as Dan*" (1 Kings 12:30 NRSV).

### E. Israel and Assyrian Captivity

The northern ten tribes – now to be known as Israel under Jeroboam the son of Nebat, rushed headlong into idolatry (1 Kings 12:25-33). Moses had warned in Deuteronomy 28-30 (the covenant of blessing and cursing) that such a departure from the law would bring national destruction and deportation. Heedless of the Law

and the efforts of God's prophets to bring them to repentance, Israel stampeded toward sinful corruption and reached the point of no return.

At last Jehovah brought against her the cruel Assyrians who smashed Israel and carried away the people into captivity (2 Kings 17:1-22; esp. vs. 1-6, 18, 22-23). This is called the Assyrian Captivity. It happened about 722-721 B.C.

#### **F. Judah and Babylonian Captivity**

Judah to the south continued a separate nation because of the spiritual influence of king Hezekiah and the great prophet Isaiah. But eventually idolatry in the nation ate away the moral fibre and she reached the point of no return (see 2 Chronicles 36:15-16).

Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, came into his power in about the year 606 B.C. At that time he subjugated Judah and deported many of the Judahites to Babylon (among whom was Daniel, cf. Daniel 1).

Another deportation occurred in 597 B.C. when 10,000 captives were carried off, and finally Jerusalem itself was destroyed in 586 B.C. and the major portion of the people departed to Babylon (2 Kings 24-25; 2 Chronicles 36).

**NOTE:** With these events came the end for the theocratic nation. The curse had come. The once proud capitol of David now lay in ashes. The glory had departed.

#### **SUMMARY:**

They went into the land, they possessed it, they dwelt therein, they were faithful until Joshua died, and after that, during the period of the Judges they apostatized and this apostasy extended into the period of the Monarchy. And finally idolatry actually was reinstated by a king until the time when God had to raise up the Assyrians and the Babylonians to carry away a totally apostate covenant people. The curse did come. What a terrible thing. But now God has fulfilled his promise to Abraham, to make him a nation. And to give that nation the land. Now He has made a promise to the nation that if they would return to Him, by returning to the Law, He would bring them back.

*"Now it shall come to pass, when all these things come upon you, the blessing and the curse which I have set before you, and you call them to mind among all the nations where the LORD your God drives you, and you return to the LORD your God and obey His voice, according to all that I command you today, you and your children, with all your heart and with all your soul, that the LORD your God will bring you back from captivity, and have compassion on you, and gather you again from all the nations where the LORD your God has scattered you. If any of you are driven out to the farthest parts under heaven, from there the LORD your God will gather you, and from there He will bring you. Then the LORD your God will bring you to the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it. He will prosper you and multiply you more than your fathers. And the LORD your God will circumcise*

*your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.”*

*“Also the LORD your God will put all these curses on your enemies and on those who hate you, who persecuted you. And you will again obey the voice of the LORD and do all His commandments which I command you today. The LORD your God will make you abound in all the work of your hand, in the fruit of your body, in the increase of your livestock, and in the produce of your land for good. For the LORD will again rejoice over you for good as He rejoiced over your fathers, if you obey the voice of the LORD your God, to keep His commandments and His statutes which are written in this Book of the Law, and if you turn to the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.”*

*(Deuteronomy 30:1-10)*

**SELF EXAM FOR LESSON SEVEN:**

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1. List the cycle of apostasy that characterized the period of the Judges.

1) \_\_\_\_\_  
2) \_\_\_\_\_  
3) \_\_\_\_\_  
4) \_\_\_\_\_

2. What statement in Judges 21:25 reveals the extent of apostasy during this era?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. List the three kings of the United Kingdom and give a brief description of each.

1) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
2) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
3) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. What two men became kings of the Northern and Southern kingdoms after the nation divided?

Northern kingdom: \_\_\_\_\_  
Southern kingdom: \_\_\_\_\_

5. What was Jeroboam's great sin that led the people into idolatry?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. What happened to Israel (northern 10 tribes) which fulfilled the covenant of cursing in Deuteronomy? What was the date and who was involved?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. What happened to Judah (southern 2 tribes) which fulfilled the covenant of cursing in Deuteronomy? What was the date and who was involved?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## LESSON EIGHT

# THE HISTORICAL PROGRESSION OF THE PROMISED SEED

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### INTRODUCTION:

he Bible was written by some 40 different writers over 1,500 to 1,600 years from all parts of the ancient world and they wrote 66 different books and when these are put together they form our Bible.

Every serious Bible student will eventually have to ask himself this question. What is the theme or the subject that ties all these 66 books together? What is it that makes the Bible a unit? The answer to that is God's great scheme of redemption. It is the historical seed-line. The historical tracing out of that grand purpose of God to save man from sin, death and hell, that we can find from the book of Genesis through the book of Revelation.

In our study so far we have seen the great progression of God's plan to save man. We have seen the involvement that God had with Abraham and the nation of Israel in bringing this great promise to pass. In the book of Genesis chapter 12 verses 1 and 2, God said He would make of Abraham a great nation, and then in verse 7 He said He would give that nation the land of his sojourn. And we have seen that promise completely fulfilled in our prior lessons.

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**LESSON TEXTS:** Matthew 1; Luke 3; Genesis 5 and the other passages listed in the study notes.

**LESSON AIM:** To trace the progression of the seed-line from Adam to Christ.

**LESSON PREVIEW:** You will . . .

1. Study the genealogies given by both Matthew and Luke and their historical relation to the promise made to Abraham.
  2. Trace the seed line from Adam to Christ in God's fulfilling of the promise made in Genesis 3:15.
  3. Know that the promise initially stated in Genesis 3:15 is restated to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah and David.
- 

But God also made the promise to Abraham in Genesis 12:3, that in him, through his seed, that He would bless all the nations of the earth. And we've seen in the book of Galatians chapter 3 and verse 8 that Paul quotes that very promise saying that Jesus is

the Seed and the blessing is justification by faith.

What we want to do in these next two lessons, is to look at the historical progression and the fulfillment of the great seed promise.

## THE HISTORICAL PROGRESSION OF THE SEED PROMISE

### A. In the Gospels of Matthew and Luke

1. Matthew 1:1 – “*...these are the generations of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.*”
2. Luke begins with Jesus and carries the genealogy all the way back to Adam.
  - a. These are not meaningless genealogies.
  - b. These are important records of the historical progression of God’s seed-line to save man from sin.
  - c. They show God’s reliability to fulfill His salvation promises.

### B. Tracing the Seed Line from Adam to Abraham

From the initial stating of the seed promise in Genesis 3:15 the seed is traced historically from Adam to Abraham.

1. The initial promise stated (Genesis 3:15).
  - a. Enmity between the serpent and the woman.
  - b. Enmity between the seed of Satan and the seed of woman.
  - c. Enmity between the serpent and all Christians.
2. The seed of the woman was Christ, who, at the cross bruised the serpent’s head.
  - a. 1 John 3:8 – “*To this end was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.*”
  - b. Hebrews 2:14 – “*Since, therefore, the children share flesh and blood, he himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil.*”
  - c. Luke 11:21-22 – Jesus is stronger than the devil and defeated the devil in his own domain.
3. Tracing the seed from Seth to Noah (Genesis 5).
  - a. Cain murdered Abel. This was Satan’s attempt to stop the seed-line.
  - b. Seth chosen through whom the Seed would come (Genesis 4:25).
  - c. The progression of the seed-line in Genesis 5:1-32.
    - 1) Seth. . . begat Enosh,
    - 2) Enosh. . . begat Kenan,
    - 3) Kenan. . . begat Mahalalel,
    - 4) Mahalalel. . . begat Jared,
    - 5) Jared. . . begat Enoch,
    - 6) Enoch. . . begat Methuselah,
    - 7) Methuselah. . . begat Lamech,
    - 8) Lamech. . . begat Noah,
    - 9) Noah. . . begat Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

**NOTE:** The concern here is not with time but with the tracing of the historical seed line, from Adam all the way down to Noah.

- d. God chose from Shem, Ham and Japheth that the seed-line should continue through Shem.
- e. God chooses from the descendants of Shem, Abraham through whom the seed should come (Genesis 12:1-7).

**C. The Promise Renewed to Isaac and Jacob (Genesis 26:4; 28:10-15)**

- 1. The promise renewed to Isaac (Genesis 26:4).
- 2. The promise renewed to Jacob (Genesis 28:10-14).
  - a. The vision (dream) of the ladder between Heaven and earth (vs. 10-12).
  - b. The seed promise is most likely the interpretation of the ladder vision since it comes immediately after it (vs. 13-14).
  - c. Jesus claims to be the fulfillment of Jacob's ladder dream in John 1:51. Here He claimed to be the fulfillment of the Abrahamic promise.
- 3. Jesus is pictured in John 1:51:
  - a. As Prophet of God bringing His words to man (descending).
  - b. As Priest of God offering Himself as sacrifice for the sins of men (ascending).

**D. The Promise to Come Through the Tribe of Judah (Genesis 49:1, 8-10)**

Judah was the chosen tribe out of Israel through whom the Seed would come. "Shiloh" – a messianic term.

**E. The Promise from Judah to David (2 Samuel 7:11-16)**

The book of Genesis has traced the historical development of the seed promise from Adam, through the flood, through the world wide famine, to the tribe of Judah. At this point we focus upon David who was of the tribe of Judah as the one out of that tribe through whom the Seed should come.

### TWO HISTORICALLY CONNECTING LINKS IN GENESIS

**A. The Relationship of Judah and Tamar to the Seed-line (Genesis 38)**

- 1. Judah's immoral act with his daughter-in-law produces a son named Perez.
- 2. This story is a connecting link in the promised seed-line.
  - a. Shows God's control over events.
  - b. Shows God's faithfulness to fulfill His promises.

**B. The Seed-line from Perez to David (Ruth 4:18-22)**

*"Now these are the descendants of Perez: Perez became the father of Hezron, Hezron of Ram, Ram of Amminadab, Amminadab of Nahshon, Nahshon of Salmon, Salmon of Boaz, Boaz of Obed, Obed of Jesse, and Jesse of David."*

**C. The Genealogies of Matthew and Luke**

- 1. Matthew traces the seed-line through Joseph's genealogy through David's son Solomon.

2. Luke traces the seed-line through Mary's genealogy through David's son Nathan.
3. Both genealogies from David back to Abraham are in agreement.

**CONCLUSION:**

What have we seen? There is one grand story in your Bible. It is the story of redemption. It is the great story of the Seed promise that God has made. It is a story that says God before time began planned to save man by faith in Christ, and God worked all that out in history. We have traced this marvelous seed line in history. We have seen the importance of that and how it reflects the reliability of God to keep His salvation promises. What a story!

**SELF EXAM FOR LESSON EIGHT:**

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1. State the seed promise to Abraham from Genesis 12:3 and 22:18.

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2. Give three New Testament passages which show that the promise is fulfilled in Christ.

1) \_\_\_\_\_  
2) \_\_\_\_\_  
3) \_\_\_\_\_

3. List the Scriptures where the promise is made to:

Abraham: \_\_\_\_\_  
Isaac: \_\_\_\_\_  
Jacob: \_\_\_\_\_  
Judah: \_\_\_\_\_

4. What is the significant difference between the genealogies of Matthew and Luke?

Matthew: \_\_\_\_\_  
Luke: \_\_\_\_\_

5. What part of the seed-line is found in Genesis chapter five?

From: \_\_\_\_\_ To: \_\_\_\_\_

6. What part of the seed-line is found in Genesis chapter 11?

From: \_\_\_\_\_ To: \_\_\_\_\_

7. What relationship does the story of Judah and Tamar have with the promise in Genesis 3:15 and 12:1-7?

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8. Who is Perez and what significance does he have concerning the seed-line?

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## LESSON NINE

# THE SEED IN PROMISE AND PROPHECY

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### INTRODUCTION:

**J**n this particular lesson our attention will be directed to the Seed in prophecy. We will continue to trace the Messianic seed-line through the events of the Old Testament to its fulfillment in Jesus Christ.

Our study now takes a great leap in point of time, from the days of Jacob's son Judah, through whom the Seed was to come, to the days of king David, whom God now selects, through whom the Seed is to continue. Whereas others were in the Messianic Seed line coming from Judah, it is David who is of prime interest. This is made clear from the opening words of the New Testament: "*The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham*" (Matthew 1:1). Thus Abraham, David, Jesus. The opening verse of the New Testament is a connecting link between the record of the promised seed-line in the Old Testament and the record of its fulfillment in the New Testament.

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**LESSON TEXTS:** The Scriptures in this study guide.

**LESSON AIM:** To trace the seed in promise and in prophecy.

**LESSON PREVIEW:** You will . . .

1. Study carefully 2 Samuel 7:11-6 in relation to the unbreakable promise that the Seed would be established on David's throne.
  2. Investigate several Scripture references showing God's continued involvement in fulfilling His promise to David.
  3. Examine Old and New Testament Scriptures which provide evidence that the "Seed" promise is fulfilled in Jesus Christ.
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### FULFILLMENT OF THE SEED PROMISE

#### A. The Seed in Promise (2 Samuel 7:11-16)

1. The house of David of the tribe of Judah selected through whom the Seed should come (2 Samuel 7:11-16).

- a. God would make David a house (vs. 11), a physical house, a house of his descendants, his seed.
  - b. God would establish the Seed's throne – authority (vs. 12-13).
    - 1) The physical house of his seed and that would be Jesus.
    - 2) He would establish Jesus' authority and kingdom forever.
  - c. David's house, throne, and kingdom to be established forever.
  - d. This is speaking of Jesus (see Hebrews 1:5, 8).
2. God has a relationship to this Seed of David (v. 14).
    - a. This is a father/son relationship.
    - b. Hebrews 1:5 – *"For unto which of the angels said he at any time thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee, and I will be to Him a Father, and he shall be to me a son."*
  3. God would build a house for His name (v. 13). This is the church of God (Matthew 16:18; 1 Timothy 3:15; Ephesians 3:20-21).
  4. The time that all this would happen – *"When thy days are fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed who will accomplish all of these deeds."*

**B. The Seed in Prophecy.** Prophetic references to the Seed promise:

1. Psalm 89:3-4 – **Throne established forever.**  
*"I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant: Thy seed will I establish for ever, And build up thy throne to all generations."*  
 The promise of 2 Samuel 7:11-16 is here spoken of:
  - a. It is called "a covenant."
  - b. The "seed" of David to be established forever.
  - c. David's throne is established to all generations. The promises of 2 Samuel is repeated.
  - d. The "Seed" claims to be the Son (See Romans 8:29; Revelation 17:14).
  - e. It is an "unbreakable" covenant (v. 34).
2. Isaiah 7:14 – The Seed was to be **born of a virgin**. This is picked up in Matthew 1:18 – *"Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit."*
3. Isaiah 9:6-7 – He would have the **burden of the government of the kingdom of God**. *"Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder."* Notice that:
  - a. The child is to be born. Here is the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem.
  - b. The Son is to be given. This is the cross. (See John 3:16, "God gave His only begotten son").
    - 1) His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
    - 2) No end of His government and of peace.
    - 3) Upon the throne of David, and upon His kingdom.

- 4) To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness forever.
4. Zechariah 6:12-13 – He would be a **priest reigning upon His throne.**
    - a. He will build the temple (church) of Jehovah.
    - b. He shall be a priest upon His throne.

### C. The Promise to be Fulfilled in Jesus Christ

1. Christ Jesus is the Seed of the Abrahamic Promise (Genesis 12:3; 22:18). Paul quotes these promises in Galatians 3 explaining that Jesus is the “Seed” of Abraham (Galatians 3:16), and that the blessing for all nations is justification by faith in Christ (Galatians 3:8). See also Acts 3:25-26.
  - a. Jesus was of the Tribe of Judah (Hebrews 7:14).
  - b. Jesus is the one whose seed we have been tracing for thousands of years.
2. Christ is the Seed of the David Promise (2 Samuel 7:11-16).
  - a. The announcement to Mary of the virgin conception and birth of Jesus (Luke 1:26-35). Notice particularly vs. 32-33, “*. . . shall give him the throne of his father David.*” “*. . . shall reign over the house of Jacob* (i.e. Israel) *forever.*” “*. . . of his kingdom there shall be no end.*” This is the language of 2 Samuel 7.
  - b. The angel claims as clearly as any passage in the New Testament that Jesus is the fulfillment of the great Davidic covenant.

### D. Peter’s Sermon on Pentecost: Christ Now on David’s Throne (Acts 2:22-36)

1. Peter’s proposition: Christ crucified, but raised from the dead (Acts 2:22-24).
2. The evidence to sustain the claim (Acts 2:25-35).
  - a. David’s testimony in Psalm 16:8-10 (Acts 2:25-28). Peter clearly states that David spoke of Christ. Verse 27 is the key verse, “*Thou will not leave my soul unto hades, neither will thou give thy holy one to see corruption.*”
  - b. Peter’s inspired interpretation (Acts 2:29-31).
    - 1) Peter makes it clear that David could not have fulfilled the Psalm inasmuch as his tomb proves that he had already seen corruption (v. 29).
    - 2) Peter then reminds them of the promise to David in 2 Samuel 7:11-16 that God had sworn “*. . . that of the fruit of his (David’s) loins he would set one upon his (David’s) throne.*” That corresponds to Nathan’s words, “*seed. . . of thy bowels.*”
3. Peter then says that when David wrote the 16th Psalm he had this promise in mind (v. 31). We are told that David did two things:
  - a. He foresaw that his seed would sit on his throne.
  - b. He spoke of the resurrection of Christ.

David foresaw that God would set his seed on his throne, and he spake in the 16th Psalm of Christ’s resurrection. Both the foreseeing and speaking were accomplished in writing the 16th Psalm. Thus, David’s 16th Psalm

foresaw that when Christ was raised from the dead He was raised to sit on David's throne!

- c. Then Peter states, that since Jesus was raised He must be the Christ of these prophesies (v. 32).

Peter says the promise to set David's seed on his throne was foreseen to take place when Jesus was raised from the dead.

- d. Peter's interpretation of Psalm 110 (Acts 2:33-36).

Peter declared that Jesus was "THEREFORE" exalted to the right hand of God as Psalm 110:1 had foretold. The "therefore" comes out of the resurrection.

In other words, since Jesus was resurrected to sit on David's throne, "therefore" He was exalted or crowned king – at God's right hand in heaven. Since David had died and had seen corruption he could not have ascended to heaven to the throne at God's right hand. Since Jesus was raised He ascended, was exalted, was crowned, and proclaimed by the Holy Spirit to be the Lord and Messiah (Christ) of Psalm 110:1.

If Jesus is not now sitting on David's throne neither has He been raised from the dead!

**SELF EXAM FOR LESSON NINE:**

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1. From which tribe was the Seed to come? \_\_\_\_\_

2. What kind of a house did God promise David in 2 Samuel 11-13?

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3. Four things are said by four different prophecies concerning the Seed. List the Scripture references and the thing stated by each prophecy.

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

4) \_\_\_\_\_

4. In what place does God refer to the promise He made to David as a “covenant?”

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5. To what do the two following statements have reference?

*A child is born:* \_\_\_\_\_

*A son is given:* \_\_\_\_\_

6. What is Peter’s propositional statement in Acts 2:22-24?

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7. What Scripture does Peter use to prove his propositional statement?

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## LESSON TEN

# THE ETERNAL PURPOSE SUMMARIZED

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### INTRODUCTION:

**A**ll Messianic prophecy is fulfilled in redemptive Christianity. God's great scheme to redeem mankind from sin, death, and hell is actually the central thrust of the entire Bible. All of God's purposes, promises, and prophecies are realized in Christ's consummating work at Calvary and in His establishment of the church at Pentecost.

Christ came to save us from sin (Matthew 1:21; 20:28; Luke 19:10; 1 Timothy 1:15). He did not come to right every wrong; He did not come to save us from war, poverty, famine, or social disintegration. Do not equate His intended purpose with restoring the earth to a garden paradise.

Secure and keep a biblical perspective. All of the Bible's revelation of the out-workings of God in history from the beginning until now are to be seen as the expediting of God's purpose from eternity.

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**LESSON TEXTS:** The Scriptures in this study guide.

**LESSON AIM:** To see that Christianity is the complete realization of everything that God planned to do for man on his way to eternity.

**LESSON PREVIEW:** You will . . .

1. Show conclusively that all Old Testament messianic promises and prophecies are completely fulfilled in Christ, the church, and in redemption from sin.
  2. Establish the fact that all Old Testament promises and prophecies of a messianic nature have been fulfilled in a redemptive context. Learn to see Old Testament prophecy with a redemptive meaning.
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### A POPULAR THEORY OF PROPHECY INTERPRETATION AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

#### A. The Literal Interpretation of Prophecy Theory

1. The claims of this theory.
  - a. That the Abrahamic promise has not yet been completely fulfilled.
  - b. That the Davidic promise has not yet been fulfilled.

- c. That the kingdom prophecies were not fulfilled with the establishment of the church.
- d. That the Old Testament prophets did not foresee Christianity.
- 2. The circumstances created by this interpretation.
  - a. It makes a distinction between the church and the kingdom. Because of the rejection of Jesus He postponed the kingdom and set up the church instead.
  - b. Jesus could not or chose not to fulfill Old Testament prophecies when He came the first time. That with the end of the church age and with the second coming of Christ, God will then fulfill all the Old Testament kingdom prophecies.
  - c. He will fulfill them with the establishment of the kingdom of God for a literal 1,000 years on earth.

#### **B. The Implication of Teaching this Theory**

- 1. If Jesus had established the kingdom, then He would have been accepted and would not have been rejected by the Jews. But having been accepted:
  - a. He would not have been crucified.
  - b. He would not have purchased our salvation and nobody would have been able to be saved.
- 2. If the Jews had accepted Him:
  - a. He would never have gone to the cross.
  - b. He would have never bought the church.
  - c. The church would never have been established and man would have never been saved.
  - d. Sin would still be in control for it took the death of Jesus to do away with the guilt and penalty of sin (Hebrews 2:14).
- 3. The realization of God's involvement in history is seen in:
  - a. The establishment of Christianity by Christ.
  - b. The fulfillment of all Old Testament prophecies in Christianity and the church.

### **THE ETERNAL PURPOSE OF GOD, REDEMPTION FOR FALLEN MAN**

#### **A. The Great Eternal Purpose of God (Ephesians 1:9-11)**

Man would be saved by faith in Christ.

- 1. God purposed a purpose (vs. 9-11).
- 2. He planned, before time began, to sum up all things in Christ.

#### **B. The Church Included in the Eternal Purpose of God (Ephesians 3:10-11; 1 Corinthians 2:7)**

#### **C. Christianity Is the Complete Fulfillment of God's Plan That He Planned for Man Before the World Began**

#### **D. What God Purposed Is What God Promised to Abraham in Genesis 12**

## GOD'S PURPOSE AND PROMISE IS THE SAME AS WHAT GOD PROPHECIED

### **A. Jesus' Understanding of God's Eternal Plan (Luke 24:44)**

1. Jesus interprets the Law of Moses, the prophets and the Psalms, as finding their fulfillment in Christ's death, burial, resurrection and in the proclamation of the gospel of Christ and the forgiveness of sins unto all nations.
2. Christianity is the summing up of what was predicted Messianically in the Law of Moses, in the prophets, and in the Psalms.

### **B. Peter's Understanding of God's Eternal Plan (1 Peter 1:10-12)**

1. Peter says the prophets concerned themselves with salvation by grace.
2. Peter said that it was revealed to the Old Testament prophets that what they predicted in the sufferings of Christ, salvation by grace, glories to follow, he said all of this was made known to them though they didn't understand it.
3. What was made known to them was that they were ministering the redemption prophecies to those people who became members of the body of Christ in the first century like those to whom Peter is addressing himself.
4. What the prophets in the Old Testament prophesied the apostles and prophets in the New Testament preached.

**NOTE:** What God purposed to do was to save us by faith in Christ. What God promised to Abraham was to save us by faith in Christ. And what Jesus and Peter say the prophets predicted was to save us by faith in Christ.

### **C. Paul's Understanding of God's Eternal Purpose (Acts 26:22-23)**

1. What Paul claimed: That what he was preaching was nothing but what the prophets and Moses did say should come.
2. What Paul preached: The gospel: Christ's cross, His resurrection, the proclamation of repentance and remission of sin and the forgiveness man receives from sin.

**NOTE:** Jesus, Peter and Paul completely agreed that what God prophesied is identical to what God promised Abraham, and the same thing that God purposed in His mind before the world began.

### **D. The “Hope of Israel”**

1. Preached by Paul. Yet Paul was accused by the Jews for preaching Christ (Acts 26:7).
2. Paul was in prison for preaching the gospel – for the hope of Israel (Acts 28:20).

**CONCLUSION:**

The plan of God was and is to save us from sin. He purposed salvation to be fulfilled in Christ and in the church. He promised that same thing to Abraham and prophesied that same thing through all the prophets. Let us rejoice that in Christ, in the church, and in redemption from sin is the full and final realization of all of God's purpose, promises, and prophecies. AMEN!

**DISCUSSION:**

1. Premillennialists teach that Jesus came to fulfill Old Testament prophecies of the kingdom, but because the Jews rejected Him He was not able to do so. Therefore, they teach, those prophecies were postponed to be fulfilled in the one thousand year reign. How does this reflect on the following:
  - a) **God's power and foreknowledge.** What guarantee do we have God could do with a second attempt what He could not do at first?
  - b) **How does this reflect on Christ's purpose and crucifixion?** If Jesus came intending to set up the kingdom but the Jewish rejection aborted that attempt and resulted in Christ's crucifixion, then that means that the cross was not Christ's intention! That means that the cross of Christ was the result of Christ's failure. That means that the church – all of those who are saved by the blood of Christ – was not an institution, but an accident!

Also, that means that **Jesus did not know the meaning of the Old Testament prophecies** which He and the apostles taught predicted His coming to die at Calvary!

Premillennialism is nonsense inasmuch as it is at cross purposes with salvation from sin.

2. Premillennialists teach that the church is the result of Christ's not fulfilling the kingdom prophecies, and that at the end of the "church age" Jesus will come to fulfill those prophecies and establish that kingdom for a thousand years. What does Ephesians 3:10-11 and 3:21 say about the church's beginning; about how long the church is going to last? Does not premillennial doctrine then see the church as the result of a failure? Not an intention of God to establish?

Who are those that make up the church? The saved by Christ's blood (Acts 2:47; Ephesians 2:16). If millennialism is right then redemption from sin was not uppermost in Christ's purpose for coming – it was an accident, an afterthought! Can you believe it?

**SELF EXAM FOR LESSON TEN:**

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1. Name a popular theory of prophecy interpretation giving four claims of this theory.

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1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

4) \_\_\_\_\_

2. Give two implications of the teaching of this theory.

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3. What was the eternal purpose of God in relation to mankind?

---

4. List some Scripture references which show that God's purpose and promise is the same as what God prophesied.

1) Jesus' understanding of God's plan: \_\_\_\_\_

2) Peter's understanding of God's plan: \_\_\_\_\_

3) Paul's understanding of God's plan: \_\_\_\_\_

5. What Scripture clearly includes the church in the eternal plan and purpose of God?

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## LESSON ELEVEN

# GUIDELINES FOR INTERPRETING PROPHECY

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### INTRODUCTION:

If you are a Bible student you know that the interpretation of Bible prophecy is a real challenge. You also know that it is a requirement since nearly one fifth of our Bible is written under the heading of prophecy. For an illustration, you begin in the Old Testament prophecy of Isaiah, you go to the end of the Old Testament which is the prophecy of Malachi, and fully one quarter of the Old Testament is under the heading of prophecy. Add to that the New Testament book of Revelation and twenty percent of the Bible is under the heading of prophecy.

Our Lord and the apostles also said that Moses prophesied, so somewhere in the Law of Moses you find prophecies. Then there was the non-writing prophets. There was Ahijah, Nathan, Elijah and Elisha, and then there were the prophecies of David. One of them is in 2 Samuel chapter 23. And other prophecies of David are in the book of the Psalms. Psalm 2, Psalm 110. We are going to look at the interpretation of the 16th Psalm as a Messianic Psalm, fulfilled in the resurrection of Jesus.

Then we come to the New Testament and find Jesus was a prophet. Jesus actually prophesied His own death, His burial, His resurrection. He prophesied the destruction of Jerusalem, and He prophesied that at His next coming He would take us home to heaven. And then there were the prophecies of Paul. He prophesied that the church would fall away into apostasy, that it would fall away from the pattern of Christianity. Peter prophesied the end of the world in 2 Peter chapter 3. So your Bible is filled with prophecy, and we are going to need some guide lines to interpret it. Most people who think of prophecy, however, think of only the predictive element of prophecy. Actually, a prophet was one who spoke for God, as the Spirit put the words into the prophet's mouth. Prophecy then, is any word that comes from God.

At that rate we see the whole Bible as prophecy. Most people think of the predictive element of prophecy. But we know that when Moses said, "*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth,*" that was prophecy. But it wasn't predictive. Prophecy is when the prophets preached to the people to return to the Law of Moses and be faithful to the Law and God. They prophesied to the people.

Then there is the predictive element of prophecy. But even there we have a challenge because not all Old Testament or New Testament prophecies are couched in literal terms. So we are going to need help to interpret prophecy. We are going to give you some guide lines in these last two lessons. But before we give you the four guide lines for a correct interpretations of prophecy, we want to point out just two things about the nature of the Bible.

**LESSON TEXTS:** The Scriptures in this study guide.

**LESSON AIM:** To see that there is a need for guidelines for interpreting Old Testament prophecy.

**LESSON PREVIEW:** You will. . .

1. Learn that by its very nature the Bible is meant to be understood and thus can be interpreted correctly.
  2. Discover some misconceived ideas concerning the Bible and methods of interpretation.
  3. Learn one guideline for a correct interpretation of Old Testament prophecy.
- 

## THE NATURE OF THE BIBLE

### A. The Bible is a Propositional Revelation

1. The whole Bible is prophecy.
  - a. A prophet was one who spoke for God.
  - b. Some spoke about what had occurred in the past.
  - c. Some spoke about what would occur in the future – the predictive element.
2. God has written the Bible in words that men use to communicate meaningfully to other men. (Deuteronomy 29:29 NRSV) “*The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the revealed things belong to us and to our children forever, to observe all the words of this law.*”

### B. Two Misconceptions of Some People Concerning the Bible

1. Misconception one: **The Bible is out-dated.**
  - a. We can't expect to read and understand that old book. It was written so far into the past, in a culture that doesn't match our own.
  - b. God intended the off-spring of the original people who received the Law of Moses to be able to understand it forever.
2. Misconception two: **The Bible cannot be learned and understood.**
  - a. Paul said that God by revelation made known to him the mystery.
  - b. When we read what Paul wrote we can know and understand what the mystery is (Ephesians 3:3).
  - c. Ephesians 5:17 – “*So do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.*”
  - d. The Bible is its own best interpreter.

## GUIDELINES FOR A CORRECT INTERPRETATION OF PROPHECY

### A. We must Accept the Bible's Own Interpretation of Prophecy

1. Some prophecies are to be interpreted literally.
2. Examples of prophecies to be interpreted literally.
  - a. Isaiah 7:14 – “*Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.*”
  - 1) Matthew 1:18-23 quotes Isaiah 7:14 which says this prophecy literally came to pass.
  - 2) The New Testament interprets the meaning of the Old Testament prophecy of the name Immanuel as being God with us.
  - b. Micah 5:2 – “*But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.*” Matthew presents this as a prophecy to be interpreted literally.

### B. Illustrations from New Testament Interpretations of Old Testament Prophecies

1. Isaiah 40:3-5 – Interpreted and explained by Matthew 3:1-3, Mark 1:1-4 and Luke 3:3-6.
  - a. This prophecy is fulfilled in the ministry of John the Baptist.
  - b. If fulfilled literally it would make John a road engineer.
  - c. This prophecy is to be interpreted figuratively.
2. Malachi 3:1 and 4:5-6 – Interpreted and explained by Matthew 11:1-14.
  - a. Fulfilled in the coming of John the Baptist.
  - b. Again the New Testament reveals to us that the prophecy of Malachi is figurative.
3. Amos 9:11-12 – “*In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen.*”
  - a. This is quoted by James in Acts 15 and applied to the salvation of the Gentiles
  - b. It is a matter of divine revelation and inspired interpretation through James that we know the meaning of Amos 9:11-12.

### CONCLUSION:

There is a theology that interprets all of these very passages, these prophecies, that we have just seen as being interpreted literally, and use them as having a yet future fulfillment. Despite the fact that we have taken the Bible itself and showed you how the Bible in the New Testament quotes these Old Testament prophecies and places upon them an interpretation that says they are already fulfilled. How can we say they are future, when the New Testament says they have already been fulfilled? And then not only are they looked upon as being future, but they are looked upon as being literal, in their fulfillment according to the language in which those prophesies were originally couched. Yet the New Testament quotes those passages and puts the interpretation on them, and has interpreted them in such a way as for us to have to agree that they were intended to be fulfilled figuratively, not according to the literal interpretation of those words.

We must conclude that the **Bible's interpretation of its own prophecy is the only correct interpretation that we can have.**

1. We have no authority to place a different meaning upon a prophecy than the

- meaning the Bible has assigned to that prophecy.
2. We have no authority to put a prophecy of Scripture which has been labeled to have been fulfilled to a yet future fulfillment.
  3. We must agree that the Bible's own interpretation of its own prophecies is the only interpretation we have a right to accept.

### **SELF EXAM FOR LESSON ELEVEN:**

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1. The Bible is said to be a \_\_\_\_\_
2. Three things are said about Bible prophecy and prophets. List these.  
1) \_\_\_\_\_  
2) \_\_\_\_\_  
3) \_\_\_\_\_
3. God has written the Bible in words that men use to communicate meaningfully to other men. What Scripture proves this statement? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What two misconceptions do some people hold concerning the Bible?  
1) \_\_\_\_\_  
2) \_\_\_\_\_
5. Give the two guidelines for a correct interpretation of prophecy discussed in this lesson.  
1) \_\_\_\_\_  
2) \_\_\_\_\_
6. List two Old Testament prophecies used as examples that must be interpreted literally and how we know this.  
1) \_\_\_\_\_  
2) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Give three Old Testament prophecies used by Ed to show that some prophecies are to be interpreted figuratively.  
1) \_\_\_\_\_  
2) \_\_\_\_\_  
3) \_\_\_\_\_  
How do we know that these prophecies are to be interpreted this way?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. What is the only way we can be sure how a prophecy is to be correctly interpreted?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## LESSON TWELVE

# GUIDELINES FOR INTERPRETING PROPHECY (2)

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### INTRODUCTION:

**J**t will become obvious, upon thoughtful consideration of the following principles of interpreting Bible prophecy, that these guidelines have actually been determined by the very structure and teaching of the Scriptures themselves. These principles of interpretation are not the product of human ingenuity, though some ingenuity is required in both the discovery and application of them, but are in fact the simple genius of divine revelation. In contrast, it should be observed that it is not the prerogative of any interpreter to foist upon the Scripture an interpretive structure of his own creation and developed in accordance with his preconceptions as to the meaning and fulfillment of prophecy. Such procedure always results in arbitrary interpretations, which often require twisting the otherwise plain meaning of Scripture.

The guidelines, elaborated here are without exception productive of the truth when honestly, consistently, and impartially applied. Since they constitute a structure of the Scripture's own making, they are not therefore merely recommended for consideration, but are strictly required of those students who would engage in the serious determination of the meaning of biblical prophecy and of its central doctrine of the kingdom of God.

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**LESSON TEXTS:** The Scriptures in this study guide.

**LESSON AIM:** To see the importance for three more guidelines for interpreting old Testament prophecy.

**LESSON PREVIEW:** You will . . .

1. Learn that no interpretation of an Old Testament prophecy can contradict another Old Testament prophecy and be correct.
  2. See that no interpretation of an Old Testament prophecy can contradict the New Testament interpretation of that same prophecy.
  3. Learn that the time element the Lord sets for the fulfillment of His prophecy must be considered.
- 

### GUIDELINE TWO FOR INTERPRETING PROPHECY

**A. No Interpretation of an Old Testament Prophecy Can Contradict Another Old Testament Prophecy**

1. The Branch and the King – David or David’s offspring (Jeremiah 23:5-6 and Ezekiel 37:22).
  - a. David’s offspring predicted to reign as king (Jeremiah 23:5). “*The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king.*”
  - b. David predicted to reign as king (Ezekiel 37:22). “*I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king over them all.*”  
(v. 24) “*My servant David shall be king over them . . .*”
  - c. A literal translation of these passages will produce a contradiction.
2. Lion or no lion (Isaiah 11:6-7 and Isaiah 35:9).
  - a. “*And the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together.*”
  - b. “*No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it . . .*”
  - c. To literalize both of these prophecies is to find a contradiction.

### GUIDELINE THREE FOR INTERPRETING PROPHECY

**A. No Interpretation of an Old Testament Prophecy Can Contradict the New Testament Interpretation of That Same Prophecy**

1. A preacher of righteousness or a road construction engineer.
  - a. The Prophecy – Isaiah 40:3-5: “*The voice of one that crieth in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of Jehovah; make level in the desert a highway for our God.*”
  - b. The Interpretation – Matthew 3:1-3: Matthew as well as Mark and Luke interpret this Old Testament prophecy as being fulfilled in the preaching and baptizing ministry of John the Baptist.
2. This prophecy must be interpreted **figuratively**.

**B. Interpretation of Isaiah 11:6-7**

1. The historical background of Isaiah 11 (Isaiah 10).
  - a. God is going to bring judgment upon Israel because she is profane.
  - b. God is going to use Assyria as a chastening rod to correct Israel.
  - c. Israel is pictured as the forest of Lebanon.
  - d. God will use Assyria who is referred to as an axe and a saw to cut down the trees of Lebanon.
  - e. The picture is of stumps and stocks of old destroyed trees.
2. The Lebanon forest of Israel will once again flourish.
  - a. A branch out of Jesse will bear fruit.
  - b. Jesse was the father of David and Jesus was the off-spring of David.
  - c. This prophecy is fulfilled in Jesus Christ.
3. A kingdom of peace (Isaiah 11:9).
  - a. The circumstances or “what” described – a condition of peace.
    - 1) Peace with God is described here.
    - 2) This is a figure describing peace that sinners can have when they hear and obey the gospel of Jesus Christ.
    - 3) John 14:27 – “*Jesus said, “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you . . .*”

- 4) Romans 5:1 – “*Being therefore justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*”
- b. The location or the “where” described – “*in all my holy mountain.*”
  - 1) Psalm 132:19: God has chosen Zion – that is His mountain.
  - 2) Hebrews 12:22-23: God’s mountain, Zion, is the church of Jesus Christ. See also Colossians 3:15.
- c. The why: “*The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea*” (v. 9).
  - 1) Colossians 1:23 – “*The gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven.*”
  - 2) The knowledge of Jesus has filled the earth for the past 2,000 years and that is the reason why we have peace with God.
- d. The when: In the “latter days” (Daniel 2:1-45). The time element when these prophecies will be fulfilled (Isaiah 11:10).
  - 1) The Gentiles will seek the root of Jesse in that day.
  - 2) When the Gentiles glorify God for His mercy (Romans 15:8).
  - 3) Titus 3:4-5 – “*But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.*”

#### **GUIDELINE FOUR FOR INTERPRETING PROPHECY**

##### **A. We must Agree with the Time Element the Lord Sets for the Fulfillment of His Prophecy**

- 1. The kingdom was “at hand.” Mark 1:15: Jesus said, “*The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*”
- 2. The plain statement of its nearness. “*There are some of you standing here with me that will not taste of death until you see the kingdom of God come with power*” (Mark 9:1).

#### **CONCLUSION:**

Let’s draw a conclusion. We cannot believe that Isaiah 11 is yet future, and accept Paul’s interpretation of Isaiah 11:10. We cannot believe that Paul’s interpretation of Isaiah 11 is yet future and still believe that Isaiah 11 is literal.

Now, if we believe that the kingdom is yet future, then we are going to have to ask this question. When did the prophets predict that Christ would fulfill these Old Testament prophecies of the establishment of the kingdom? If we say that the prophecy is predicted that Jesus would set up His kingdom at His first coming, that would make the prophecies fail if we believe that the kingdom is yet future.

Someone may answer, well, but the kingdom was postponed. Postponed or not, if the Old Testament prophets said that the kingdom would be set up, with the first coming of Jesus, then the prophets have failed. But if the prophets are interpreted to say that Jesus would set up the kingdom at His second coming, then Jesus failed. Because He said the time is fulfilled, the kingdom is at hand, and some people would still be alive while that kingdom came.

One thing we must agree on. And that is we must agree with the Bible's time element, for the prophecies to be fulfilled. I hope these guidelines will assist you in interpreting prophecy.

### **SELF EXAM FOR LESSON TWELVE:**

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1. Give the three guidelines studied in this lesson for the correct interpreting of prophecy.

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. List the Scriptures where the following statements are found.

David's offspring predicted to reign as king: \_\_\_\_\_

David predicted to reign as king: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Give one Scripture that would prove that Isaiah 11:6-7 cannot be interpreted literally and show why not.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. What is the prophecy of Isaiah 40:3-5 and how does the New Testament interpret it?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Supply the correct statement to go with the following phrases.

The "what": \_\_\_\_\_

The "where": \_\_\_\_\_

The "why": \_\_\_\_\_

The "when": \_\_\_\_\_

6. What was Jesus' statement concerning when the kingdom would be set up?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# ~~Study Guide~~

## Edward C. Wharton

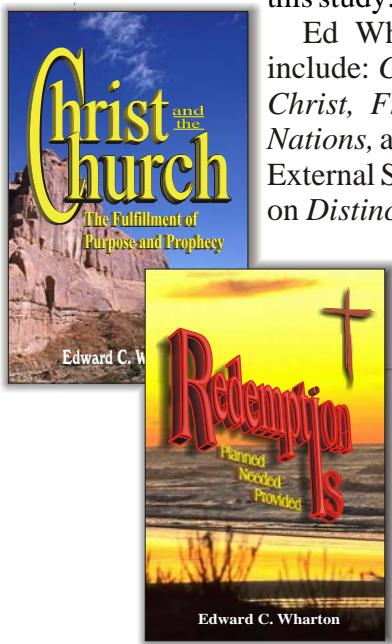
Ed Wharton has preached the Gospel for more than 50 years and helped establish Sunset International Bible Institute in Lubbock, Texas, where he continues to serve on the faculty. He also serves as both teacher and evangelist in Asia, Australia, Europe, and South America.



Ed is married to Martha Lee Van Landingham. They have three children.

In this study Mr. Wharton discusses the topic entitled "Scheme of Redemption." The eternal purpose of God to save mankind from sin is the central theme of the entire Bible and can be traced through all the books of the Bible. The redemptive work of Christ is first announced in Genesis 3:15 and can be traced through the Old Testament into the New Testament. Your faith will be strengthened as you study along with Ed in this enlightening study of God's Scheme of Redemption. Ed's style of delivery makes this a delightful experience and very beneficial to all who will be involved in this study.

Ed Wharton has written many books, to include: *Christ and the Church*, *The Church of Christ*, *Freed for Freedom*, *God Among the Nations*, and *Redemption Is*. Working with SIBI External Studies Ed has produced video courses on *Distinctive Nature of the Church*, *Historical Christian Evidences*, *Galatians*, *Scheme of Redemption*, *Homiletics I*, and *Baptism*.



→ "Christ and the Church" and "Redemption Is" are companion books to this study.

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