

The Promised Land

- I. The doctrine of *the promised land* is best understood through the teachings/writings of the N.T.
 - A. The apostles of Jesus Christ under the Holy Ghost's direction are the final judges of truth. **1JO 4:6.**
 - B. The O.T. prophecy must be understood through their word of prophecy. **1PE 1:10-12; 2PE 1:19-21.**
 - C. One does not need to choose between the O.T. prophets and the N.T. apostles, but one does need to choose between the N.T. apostles and any teaching contrary to theirs.

- II. It is common among modern Christians to assume that the geography of the modern State of Israel is theirs by divine grant as their promised land. Major pillars of this assumption are:
 - A. The promised land was meant for all the descendants of Abraham without qualification.
 - B. The modern State of Israel is the fulfillment of the many promises in the O.T. of a return to the land.
 - C. O.T. Israel never completely inherited the land of Canaan as God promised them; therefore the re-establishing of the Israelite state was necessary to complete the promise.

- III. The promised land was of the Abrahamic Covenant, the covenant of promise.
 - A. God swore this to Abraham 430 years before the Law was given on Mt. Sinai. **GEN 12:1-3, 6-7; 13:12-17; 15:18-21 c/w GAL 3:17.**
 - B. The Abrahamic Covenant of promise included unique relationship to God. **GEN 17:7-8.**
 - C. This Covenant was restated in Isaac and Jacob. **GEN 26:3-4; 28:13-15.**
 - D. Neither Abraham, Isaac or Jacob received any geographical inheritance in Canaan. **ACT 7:2-7; HEB 11:8-9.**
 - E. God cannot lie (**TIT 1:2**); therefore the promised land was not limited to earthly inheritance, and the fathers knew this. **HEB 11:10-16.**
 1. stranger: One who belongs to another country, a foreigner; chiefly (now exclusively), one who resides in or comes to a country to which he is a foreigner; an alien.
 2. pilgrim: One who travels from place to place; a person on a journey; a wayfarer, a traveller; a wanderer; a sojourner. (Now *poet.* or *rhet.* in general sense.)
 3. sojourn: *intr.* To make a temporary stay in a place; to remain or reside for a time.
 4. Even when the Jews were well established as a nation in Canaan, the spiritually-minded deemed themselves as strangers, pilgrims, sojourners. **1CH 29:15; PSA 119:19, 54.**
 5. When Israel was to enter and possess Canaan, God advised them of their place and that the land was His. **LEV 25:23 c/w 2CH 7:20.**
 6. No place on earth is the real promised land to the spiritual man. **1PE 2:11; HEB 13:14.**

- IV. The Abrahamic covenant of promise was to Abraham and his Seed, Jesus Christ. **GAL 3:16.**
 - A. If God had intended "seeds" instead of "seed," this would have included all the natural posterity of Abraham, including Ishmael, the sons of Keturah, and Esau. **GEN 17:18-19; 25:1-2; MAL 1:1-3.**
 - B. The spiritual posterity of Abraham only were/are the *children of the promise and counted for the seed*. **ROM 9:6-8; GAL 3:29; GAL 4:28-29.**
 - C. Earthly Canaan was/is Immanuel's land. **ISA 8:8.**
 - D. Those who were only the natural posterity of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob were/are

NOT the *children of the promise* although they were along for the ride. The true and rightful possessors of the promised land are Jesus Christ and all in Him.

- V. The descendants of Abraham by Moses and Joshua did eventually enter and possess the land of promise under the later Law Covenant from Sinai. **EXO 6:7-8.**
- A. They got everything God had promised. **JOS 11:23; 21:43-45 c/w NEH 9:7-8.**
 - B. Therefore it is wrong to assume that God had to, thousands of years later, re-establish the Jews in Palestine to fully inherit it.
 - C. Modern Israel in Palestine has many geopolitical implications that are fraught with potential for great strife and is curiously there with the support of Christians.
 - D. Israel's former possession of the land was conditioned upon compliance with the terms of the Sinaitic covenant which has become the Old Covenant/Testament.
 - 1. If Israel broke the Sinaitic covenant, they would be cursed and ultimately dispossessed of their land and scattered. **LEV 26:14-15, 31-35.**
 - 2. This happened first to the ten tribes by the hand of the Assyrians, then to Judah (and Benjamin) by the Babylonians.
 - 3. As long as the Sinaitic Covenant was in force, there was a chance of return to the land by repentance. **LEV 26:40-46.**
 - 4. There is a large difference between a restoration to the land by humble confession of sin, repentance, etc. and being financially and politically shoehorned back into the land in spite of repentance.
- VI. The divine promises of a certain return to the land are virtually all speaking of the return from the Babylonian captivity.
- A. Ezekiel and Jeremiah were prophets at the time of the Babylonian captivity who both spoke of such return but Jeremiah was prolific about it. **JER 16:14-15; JER 23:3; JER 24:5-6; JER 29:10-14; JER 30:3; JER 30:10; JER 30:18; JER 31:8-10; JER 32:37; JER 33:7; JER 46:27; JER 50:18-19.**
 - B. The return from the 70-year captivity fulfilled Jeremiah's words. **JER 29:10; EZR 1:1-3.**
 - C. Of that momentous season and the rebuilding of the land, city and temple in the days of Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, etc., the Lord also declared that He had returned (**ZEC 1:16; ZEC 8:2-3**). This was no minor return!
 - D. Mind that their return was to be "...as at the first..." (**JER 33:7, 11**), according to the *bless v. curse* order of the Sinaitic covenant. They could lose the land again, and did.
 - E. There is a curious lacking of "return" promises after the return from Babylon.
- VII. Jeremiah singularly declared a coming new covenant with Israel and Judah. **JER 31:31-34.**
- A. The New Covenant/Testament was made and ratified by Jesus Christ. **MAT 26:28.**
 - B. The Old Covenant/Testament was by this made of no effect. **HEB 9:15-17.**
 - C. Israel and Judah have only one Covenant by which they can relate to God: the New Covenant which is devoid of promises of return to and repossession of Canaan.
 - D. The New Testament terminated that vain hope in favor of a better hope: Jesus Christ as king over a superior nation, a *holy nation*: the spiritual house which is His church (**1PE 2:5-9**), and a *lively hope* of heaven by His resurrection. **1PE 1:3-4.**
 - E. The pathway to this hope is not a return to *the land* but to *the LORD* by repentance, faith and baptism. **2CO 3:14-16 c/w ACT 2:36-41.**
- VIII. The true promised land is heavenly Jerusalem, heavenly Zion. **GAL 4:26; HEB 12:22-24.**