

Abraham and His Seed Never Received the Promised Land

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Promised the Land of Canaan to Abraham and His Seed Forever
(*Genesis 13:14-17; 17:8*)

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(*Acts 7:5; Hebrews 11:9, 13*)

Since the beginning of man's history, he has been faced with moral and ethical choices. In far too many situations, he has chosen the easiest course of action which involves ignoring or disobeying the rules that God commanded for the ultimate benefit of mankind. To make matters worse, the Adversary of mankind, Satan, has worked diligently to make the case that God's way of doing things is unfair, oppressive, or erroneous, in one way or another. By doing so, Satan has created doubt about God's motives and His word.

... (Satan said) **Has God indeed said** (creating doubt in God's word), 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?' (Gen. 3:1b; Ed. notes in parentheses; NKJV used throughout unless otherwise noted; emphasis added).

(Eve said) But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, **nor shall you touch it, lest you die**'. ⁴And **the serpent** (symbol of Satan) **said to the woman, 'You will not surely die'** (blatant lie; cf. Jn. 8:44) (Gen. 3:3-4; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

One of Satan's lies is that mankind can disobey God without any consequences. In fact, he goes a step further and suggests that mankind will

actually be better off by ignoring and disobeying God.

For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God (i.e. better off according to Satan's reasoning), knowing good and evil (Gen. 3:5; Ed. note in parenthesis).

It is from this same rebellious mindset that some people claim God contradicted His word regarding the promise He made to Abraham. To add insult to injury, some believe that Abraham's descendants should have remained in the Promised Land whether they disobeyed God or not (Gen. 13:14-17). This is the same position many religions take today. For example, in Christianity, many believe there is no need to obey God's law (Mt. 4:4; 19:17) because all they have to do is believe in Jesus Christ and then they will go to heaven when they die (see study: Do We Go to Heaven When We Die?). This sense of entitlement, without any conditions attached, will now be examined.

When God re-affirmed the promise He made previously to Abraham, He added a condition that many either ignore or simply have not recognized.

Also I (God) give to you and your descendants after you the land in which you are a stranger, all the land of Canaan, as an everlasting possession; and **I will be their** (Abraham's descendants) **God** (Gen. 17:8; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

According to this last scripture, as long as Almighty God was the only One recognized, and worshipped by Abraham's descendants, they would retain their right of inheritance to the Promised Land. However, if they started worshipping foreign gods, they would forfeit their right to the land.

You shall have no other gods before Me (Almighty God). ⁴You shall not make for yourself any carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; ⁵you shall not bow down to them nor serve (worship) them. For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God (see study: Envy and Jealousy), visiting (punishing) the iniquity (sin; 1Jn. 3:4) of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, ⁶but **showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments** (Ex. 20:3-6; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

This command stresses the importance of, and connection between, loving God and obeying what He says. This truth is confirmed again in the New Testament.

Now by this we know that we know Him (Almighty God), if we keep His commandments. ⁴He who says, 'I know Him,' and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. ⁵But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected (has been completed) in him. By this we know that we are in Him (1Jn. 1:3-5; Ed. notes in parentheses).

By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. ³**For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments.** And His commandments are not burdensome (1Jn. 5:2-3; emphasis added).

Without this deep desire to obey the law and commandments, there cannot be any relationship between God and His people. Without this relationship, God's promise to Abraham is no longer in effect.

But it shall come to pass, if you do not obey the voice of the Lord your God, to observe carefully

all His commandments and His statutes which I command you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you (Dt. 28:15ff).

One of the curses for disobedience involves being removed from the land that God promised to Abraham and his descendants.

The Lord will bring you and the king whom you set over you to a nation which neither you nor your fathers (i.e. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) have known, and there you shall serve other gods – wood and stone. ³⁷And you shall become an astonishment, a proverb and a byword among all nations where the Lord will drive you (Dt. 28:36-37; Ed. note in parenthesis; cf. 28:64).

To state that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob never entered the Promised Land demonstrates a lack of Biblical knowledge because there are multiple scriptures confirming that Abraham and his descendants did possess this inheritance (Gen. 11:31; 12:5; 13:12; 16:3; 23:2, 19; 31:18; 33:18; 35:6, 36:6; 37:1; 42:7, 13, 29, 32; 44:8, 17, 25; 46:6, 12, 31; 47:4; 48:3; 49:30; 50:13). However, Abraham's descendants did not retain it for any extended period of time, due to their rebellion against God's law and commandments.

Our fathers had the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness, as He (God) appointed, instructing Moses to make it according to the pattern that he had seen (while on Mt. Sinai), ⁴⁵which our fathers, having received it in turn, also brought (it) with Joshua **into the land possessed by the Gentiles** (the Promised Land), **who God drove out before the face of our fathers until the days of David** (Ac. 7:44-45; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

However, following the death of King David, the 12 extended families comprising the nation of Israel began to lose their inheritance because of

disobedience, and eventually 10 were taken captive by the Assyrians and the remainder by the Babylonians. It is correct to state that Abraham never saw the ultimate fulfillment of all God's promises because one of them included the future birth and death of Jesus Christ who would come through Abraham's lineage. Therefore, it required faith on the part of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to believe this promise would ultimately be fulfilled.

...And in you (one of Abraham's descendants) all the families of the earth shall be blessed (through the birth and sacrifice of Jesus Christ) (Gen. 12:3b; Ed. notes in parentheses).

These (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) all died in faith (trusting in God's promises including the birth and sacrifice of Christ), not having received the promises (in the ultimate sense), but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth (i.e. their kingdom was not of this world; cf. Jn. 18:36) (Heb. 11:13; Ed. notes in parentheses).

So although Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob lived in the Promised Land, their descendants did not remain there forever due to disobedience. However, to state that God contradicted Himself because Abraham never entered the Promised Land or received any of the promises God gave him, is erroneous and misleading.

Finally, one of the promises that God made could not logically be fulfilled in the lifetime of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Therefore, it was prophetic and pointed to Abraham's descendants that would exist many generations later.

Then He (the angel of the Lord) brought him (Abraham) outside and said, 'Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to

number them.' And He said to him (Abraham), 'So shall (in the future) your descendants be' (Gen. 15:5; Ed. notes in parentheses; cf. 22:17; 26:4; Ex. 32:13).

Therefore, no contradiction exists between the scriptures used to claim that Abraham and his descendants never received the Promised Land. God always keeps His word whether mankind understands that fact, or not.

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