

Fulfillment: New Covenant Fulfills Abrahamic Covenant Promises

Session 4

Review: This series is ostensibly about NCT, but really it is about Jesus! Jesus is what makes the New Testament so new and wonderful. New Covenant Theology is Jesus-centered theology.

The Early Church (Henry Chadwick): “The central questions of the apostolic age turned on the continuity or discontinuity of the church with Israel.” It is: The church *and* Israel, or the church *is* Israel? NCT is an answer to this question. Its name comes because of its emphasis on the New Covenant—not an implied theological covenant, not a future dispensation regarding Israel. NCT concludes that the Church *is* Israel.

Promises Made

Today’s Lesson: We’ll explore the NCT view of the new covenant as *the* fulfillment of promises made to Abraham in the Abrahamic covenant: 1) Land, 2) Seed (Offspring), 3) Blessing.

1). Land Promise:

ESV Genesis 12:1 Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country ... to the land that I will show you.

The land is located where modern Israel is today.

2) Seed Promise:

ESV Genesis 12:2 ... the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country ... to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation ...

ESV Genesis 15:5 And he brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them." Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring be."

3) Blessing Promise

ESV Genesis 12:2-3 "Go from your country ... to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you ...

The blessing promise included three types of blessing:

a) Prosperity:

ESV Genesis 24:34-35 “I am Abraham's servant. The LORD has greatly blessed my master, and he has become great. He has given him flocks and herds, silver and gold, male servants and female servants, camels and donkeys.”

b) Protection:

ESV Genesis 12:3 I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse ...

c) Pardon:

ESV Genesis 15:5-6 “Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them.” Then he said to him, “So shall your offspring be.” And he believed the LORD, and he counted it to him as righteousness.

This is a big deal! When God promised him offspring as numerous as there are stars, Abraham simply believed what God told him. He responded in faith. The truth of justification by faith runs straight through from Genesis to Revelation.

ESV John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

The Covenant Cut

What did God tell Abram to do in Genesis 15:7-11?

Why did God want Abram to cut these animals in half and then arrange the halves opposite each other (15:9-11)? See *Jeremiah 34:18-19*. Though the meaning of all this is obscure to society today, it was quite common then. Archaeology has revealed that during Abram's lifetime, this is the way that treaties or covenants were made between kings. The technical term describing the event was that they would “cut a covenant”, which points to the ancient rite of cutting an animal as part of a ritual used in the forming of the covenant. The animal was slaughtered and cut into two or three parts.¹ This may be the origin of our phrase, “Let's cut a deal”.

As seen in **Jeremiah 34:18-19**, the two parties of the covenant then passed between the pieces of the animals. The symbolism apparently was that if either party broke the covenant, then he would be killed just like the animals had been.²

ESV Jeremiah 34:18-19 ... the men who transgressed my covenant and did not keep the terms of the covenant that they made before me, I will make them like the calf that they cut in two and passed between its parts ...

Significant: According to the normal treaty custom of the day, Abraham expected God to somehow appear and walk through the pieces along with Abraham.

¹ *New Bible Dictionary*, 240.

² Aalders, 296.

10. Why is the information contained in Genesis 15:11 significant? Perhaps it is included to indicate that a lengthy amount of time passed after Abram cut the animals. Abraham obviously had to wait a long time. Since 15:5 occurred at night (“number the stars”), perhaps Abram got up early the next morning to prepare the animals, and then waited patiently all day (birds of prey do not fly at night) for God to appear. However, it was not until after sundown that God acted, 15:17.

According to Genesis 15:12, what happened to Abram as the sun was setting? A deep sleep fell on Abram (15:12a). It is an important fact that Abraham was out cold. He was You’ve heard of Rip Van Winkle: this is Abraham Van Winkle.

Teacher’s Note: Skip the rest of the paragraph (15:13-15) and go to 15:17-18.

What did God promise in this covenant (Ge 15:17-21)? God promised Abraham Middle Eastern real estate, roughly the land possessed by modern Israel.

How did the LORD ratify this covenant (Ge 15:17-18)? God ratified this covenant by walking alone between the pieces.

Note: We are not told why God appeared in the form of a smoking oven. Perhaps it was a precursor to later leading Israel in a pillar of fire by night and a pillar of smoke by day.

What was Abram doing during all this (Ge 15:17-18)? See 15:12. Abraham was sleeping. This necessarily meant that he did not walk between the pieces as would normally have been the custom.

What is the significance of the smoking oven passing between the pieces alone (Ge 15:17-21)? See *Jeremiah 34:18-19*, *Galatians 3:16-18*. Normally both parties of a covenant passed between the pieces. The oven’s solo movement between the pieces suggests this is a one-sided covenant. God alone is responsible for the fulfillment of the promises of the covenant.

Test: Is this covenant conditional or unconditional (Ge 15:17-21)? Why? See *Galatians 3:15-18*. It is unconditional since its fulfillment is guaranteed by God. Abram slept through its ratification.

Illustration: Though Abraham was a man of faith, he kept doing dumb things that would have made the promises null and void if their fulfillment depended on Abraham. For example, he later moved out of the Promised Land and down to Egypt and twice tried to give away his wife to save his life!

Shadow/Substance (The New Testament): God's covenant with Abraham is very much like the New Covenant in that both are unilateral covenants, both are based on promise (and not law), both are totally dependent on God's performance (not ours). I would not trust the best five minutes I ever lived to get me into heaven.

Shadow/Substance (Christ's Death): The Abrahamic Covenant was unilateral; God took all the responsibility on Himself. Normally if one party failed, the other could do to him as had been done to the animals. Abraham clearly would have failed to live up to the covenant, just as we would have failed. In a sense, since God is totally responsible, He became a man and died in Abraham's place as payment for Abraham's failure.

The Duration of the Covenant

How long did God declare that this covenant would be in effect (Ge 17:7)?

ESV Genesis 17:7 I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant ...

The Sign of the Covenant

Every covenant in the Bible had a sign of the covenant to remind the parties of their covenant obligations. What is the sign of God's covenant with Abraham (Ge 17:11)?

ESV Genesis 17:11 You shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant ...

The Fulfillments of the Covenant

God's covenant with Abraham had both near and far fulfillments.

Promised Land Fulfillments

R.C. Sproul: "The principle rule of interpreting scripture is that scripture interprets scripture."

Comparing Ge 15:17-18 to 1 Kings 4:21, what can we learn about the fulfillment of the land promise? Land promise was clearly fulfilled (the near fulfillment).

ESV Genesis 15:17-18 "To your offspring I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates ..."

1 Kings 4:21 Solomon ruled over all the kingdoms from the Euphrates ... to the border of Egypt.

What did Joshua 21:43-15 and Nehemiah 9:7-8 declare about the Promised Land? Israel got all the land God promised. We must allow Scripture to interpret Scripture. The land promise was fulfilled. Remember this later (it is very significant).

ESV Joshua 21:43-15 Thus the LORD gave to Israel all the land that he swore to give to their fathers. And they took possession of it, and they settled there ... Not one word of all the good promises that the Lord had made to the house of Israel had failed; all came to pass.

ESV Nehemiah 9:7-8 You are the Lord, the God who chose Abram ... and made with him the covenant to give to his offspring the land of the Canaanite ... And you have kept your promise ...

New Covenant Perspective on the Promised Land

Land promise was clearly fulfilled. Why, then, did Abraham live in tents, like a stranger in Paradise? (*Rhetorical*). The answer is found in Hebrews 11, and is the essence of New Covenant Theology.

According to Hebrews 11:8-10, why did Abraham live in tents as in a foreign land even after he moved to the Promised Land? Abraham was looking for something far more significant than Middle Eastern real estate. The difference between what Abraham was promised and what he got was like living in a foreign country. He understood the Promised Land was just a shadow of a much greater spiritual reality. He longed for a heavenly city, a supernatural city.

Application: Like Abraham, this world is not really our home. We should not get too worked up over politics or nationalism:

ESV Philippians 3:20 . . . our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ . . .

Application: We need to learn from Abraham's example: Everything in the Hebrew Scriptures is just a shadow of the reality we have in Christ and the New Testament.

What is this city with foundations that has God as its designer and builder (11:10)? See 12:18-24, 13:14 and Revelation 3:12, 21:2. It was neither Atlantis nor Shangri-la. Abraham was looking for what we know as the Heavenly Jerusalem or the New Jerusalem.

Read Hebrews 12:18-24.

We have come to Mt Zion, not Mt. Sinai. We have come to the Heavenly Jerusalem not the earthly Jerusalem. We have to Jesus and the New Covenant, not Moses and the Old Covenant.

According to Hebrews 13:14, what city to come do we seek?

ESV Revelation 21:2 I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

The church already is the bride of Christ. In one sense this is another way of describing the church. The church exists right now on earth. But in the future the church will be exalted as Christ's bride upon His return at the marriage banquet of the Lamb. This city is both now and not yet.

Shadow/Substance (Heaven): The Promised Land was a shadow of heaven, our eternal home.

What does the Promised Land represent (Heb 11:13-16)? It represents a heavenly country.

This is really huge: Abraham got nothing promised! What does 11:13 declare about the Promised Land? See 11:39-40. It boldly states that he did take possession of what was really promised; he did not live to see the land promise fulfilled!

ESV **Hebrews 11:39-40** And all these, though commended through their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had provided something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

How many of God's promises did Abraham live to see fulfilled (11:13)? None of them! Although they saw the initial shadow fulfillments of God's promises, they knew there was something better and died in faith awaiting it: Jesus and the New Covenant. The Old Testament declares they got it, that the promises were fulfilled, but the New Testament declares they didn't get what was promised, so great is the difference between shadow and substance.

Based on 11:14-16 what were these people really looking for? See 2 Peter 3:13. Real estate is not what was *really* promised. Abraham understood that the Promised Land was only a shadow/type of something much better. They were seeking a heavenly country. Just as the tabernacle was a copy of heavenly reality, so too the Promised Land was only a type, only a shadow, only a picture of the true, the real, the ultimate heavenly country.

ESV **2 Peter 3:13** ... according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

Summary: The Promised Land was a shadow of heaven.

The Seed Promise Fulfilled

R.C. Sproul: "The principle rule of interpreting scripture is that scripture interprets scripture."

ESV **Genesis 22:17** I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore.

ESV **1 Kings 4:20** Judah and Israel were as many as the sand by the sea.

NCT Premise: The Seed promise was clearly fulfilled (the near fulfillment). The physical offspring of Abraham were only a shadow, a type, of something much more important ...

According to Galatians 3:16, what was God really promising Abraham when He promised him offspring?

ESV **Galatians 3:16** ... promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, "And to offsprings," referring to many, but referring to one, "And to your offspring," who is Christ.

Singular Offspring: The New Testament states that what God really promised Abraham was one particular ultimate offspring (singular) and that it was a prophecy about the coming of Jesus, Abraham's ultimate descendant. The word offspring can be either singular or plural without changing form. (The word seed is the same way—Burpee puts out a seed catalog not a seed_s catalog.)

Shadow/Substance (Jesus): Abraham's son Isaac was the shadow; Jesus is the substance. Jesus is the true Offspring.

Plural Offspring: God promised that from Abraham would come an entire nation of people, as numerous as the sands of the sea. We know those offspring as the ancient Israelites. They were the near fulfillment. **As regards the plural aspect of the word offspring, what does Galatians 3:28-29 declare about the far fulfillment?**

ESV **Galatians 3:28-29** There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.

Shadow/Substance (Church): Israel was the shadow, the church is the substance. The church is the true Israel. Anyone with the faith of Abraham is the true, promised offspring of Abraham.

R.C. Sproul: "The principle rule of interpreting scripture is that scripture interprets scripture."

ESV **Romans 4:11-12** He received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was to make him the father of all who believe without being circumcised ...

Not Offspring Anymore

ESV **Romans 4:11-12** He received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was ... to make him the father of the circumcised who are not merely circumcised but who also walk in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised.

In the truest sense, Abraham is father only of the circumcised who have the faith of Abraham. That's why Jesus said:

NIV John 8:39 "If you were Abraham's children," said Jesus, "then you would do the things Abraham did."

Paul clarified:

NIV Galatians 3:6-7 Consider Abraham: "He believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness." Understand, then, that those who believe are children of Abraham.

The Church, the True Israel

ESV Galatians 6:15-16 ... neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation. And as for all who walk by this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God.

What is the "rule"? The rule is that what counts is a new creation, not whether one is Jew or Gentile.

Paul prayed peace and mercy upon "them." Who is them? Upon those who walked by the rule that what counts in a new creation.

Who is the Israel of God (3:16)? The Israel of God is made up of those who walk by the rule that what counts is a new creation. The word "and" is from *kai* and can be "even." The church is the true Israel of God. Believers (Jew or Gentile) are the true, promised children of Abraham. The church is now the true Israel.

Seed Summary: The near fulfillments of the seed promise were Isaac and the physical descendants of Abraham through Isaac. The far and physical seed promise was fulfilled in Jesus, a direct descendant of Abraham. The ultimate metaphysical fulfillment lies with all those, Jew or Gentile, who have the same faith as Abraham (the church).

Blessing Promises Fulfilled

God's blessing promise included: a) Prosperity, b) Protection, and c) Pardon. These were clearly fulfilled:

ESV Genesis 24:1 Abraham was old, well advanced in years ... the LORD had blessed Abraham in all things.

R.C. Sproul: "The principle rule of interpreting scripture is that scripture interprets scripture."

Let's go back the blessing part of God's promise. Who did God promise to bless in addition to Abraham (Ge 12:2-3)? Compare 22:18, 26:4.

ESV **Genesis 12:2-3** ... in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

The blessing promise involved not only blessing Abraham personally but also promised a blessing to all the families of the earth. This theme is repeated throughout Genesis:

ESV **Genesis 22:18** . . . in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed ...

ESV **Genesis 26:4** ... in your [Isaac's] offspring [Jesus] all the nations of the earth [Gentiles] shall be blessed.

ESV **Genesis 28:12-14** And he (Jacob) dreamed there was a ladder set up on the earth ... And behold, the Lord stood above it and said, " ... in you and your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

God promised to bless all the families of the earth through Abraham. According to Galatians 3:7-9 how the Promised Blessing been fulfilled? God's promise to bless all nations in Abraham was fulfilled in the blessing of justification by faith, a blessing offered to Gentiles. This blessing was made possible through the ultimate descendant's (Jesus') death on the cross.

Based on 3:7, who are the sons of Abraham? Anyone with faith in Jesus is a son of Abraham. That's why NCT holds that the church is the true Israel. This is not replacement theology, it is fulfillment theology. Really, there is nothing to replace. God's promises to ethnic Israel were only and ever to those within ethnic Israel who also had the faith of Abraham.

Shadow/Substance (Church): Physical Israel was a shadow of the true Israel, the church.

In 3:8, how was the Gospel preached beforehand in the saying, "In you shall all the nations be blessed"? The Gospel was found in prototype form in God's promise to bless all nations through Abraham's offspring Jesus. The blessing is that just as Abraham was saved by faith, so also Gentiles could be saved by faith (apart from the Law).

Shadow/Substance (Gospel): The things of the Hebrew Scriptures are shadows of the substance we have in Christ. The Blessing Promise was a shadow of the Gospel.

What is true of all who rely on works of law (Ga 3:10-14)? All who rely on works of law to be justified are under the curse of the law.

Shadow/Substance (Hell): The curses of the Book of the Law are shadows of a much more terrible reality: the fires of hell.

According to 3:13, how did Jesus save people from the curse of the law? Christ became a curse for us, in our place. Jesus took the curse so we get the blessing (**De 21:23**).

Substitutionary Atonement: Jesus' death on the cross atoned for our sins. He died as our substitute. *The 1st London Baptist Confession of 1646* says, "Christ ... hath ... put away sin by ... offering ... Himself a sacrifice for sin, by which He hath fully finished and suffered all things God required for the salvation of His elect, and removed all rites and shadows ..." (**Insight:** the shadows are have been removed!).

According to 3:14, how does the blessing of Abraham come to the Gentiles? See also Acts 3:24-26. The blessing comes in through faith in Christ.

ESV **Acts 3:24-26** [Peter evangelizing the Jews] ... You are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant that God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, 'And in your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed.' God, having raised up his servant [Jesus], sent him to you first [ethnic Israel], to bless you by turning every one of you from your wickedness."

The essence of the blessing is to be turned from our wickedness. Repentance and faith are opposite sides of the same coin.

Summary: The Promised Blessing to all nations was fulfilled in the Gospel of Christ's death and resurrection preached to all nations offering justification by faith apart from the Law. The blessing to all nations is the blessing of justification by faith, just as Abraham was justified by faith. The Ultimate *offspring*: Jesus, bought ultimate *blessing*: forgiveness, and the ultimate *promised land*: heaven.

Impact of Final Fulfillments on Near Fulfillments

Every promise to Abraham had a near and a far fulfillment:

immediate . . . ultimate
physical . . . metaphysical
foreshadow . . . reality
type . . . fulfillment
temporary . . . eternal
outward . . . inward, internal
sign . . . substance
interim . . . permanent.

Once the final fulfillments came, how are we to view the initial fulfillments? One way to answer this is to use circumcision as a test case.

Genesis 17:9-14 Every male throughout your generations ... shall surely be circumcised. So shall my covenant be in your flesh be an everlasting covenant. Any uncircumcised male who is not circumcised ... shall be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant.

Failing to be circumcised was a capital offense. **Example:**

NIV Exodus 4:24-26 ... the LORD met Moses and was about to kill him. But Zipporah took a flint knife, cut off her son's foreskin and touched Moses' feet with it. "Surely you are a bridegroom of blood to me," she said. So the Lord let him alone.

What does the New Testament teach about circumcision? It doesn't matter:

ESV 1 Corinthians 7:18b-19 Was anyone at the time of his call uncircumcised? Let him not seek circumcision. For neither circumcision counts for anything nor uncircumcision ...

ESV Galatians 5:6 ... in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love.

ESV Galatians 6:15 ... neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.

Philippians 3:2-3 Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the false circumcision; for we are the true circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh ...

ESV Colossians 2:11 ... you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ ...

ESV Colossians 3:11 Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised ... but Christ is all, and in all.

Big Problem: How can the New Testament take the eternal sign of an eternal covenant and discard it?

Genesis 17:9-14 Every male throughout your generations ... shall surely be circumcised. So shall my covenant be in your flesh be an everlasting covenant.

Joke: Does everlasting mean forever? Not always!

1. "everlasting" (17:14) is from *olam*, which fundamentally means "a long time." The context determines if it means "everlasting." **Examples:**

ESV 1 Samuel 27:8 David and his men went up and made raids against the Geshurites ... for these were the inhabitants of the land from of old (*olam*) ...

NAS 1 Samuel 27:12 "He [David] has surely made himself odious among his people Israel; therefore he will become my [King Achish's] servant forever (*olam*)."

2. There was a radical shift from physical circumcision to spiritual circumcision, from outward sign to inward reality. *Something fundamental changed*. All the promises to Abraham have two fulfillments: short term & long term, intermediate & ultimate, shadow & substance. The physical is no longer relevant. The ultimate made the interim obsolete.

Since this is true of the sign of the covenant, what impact did the metaphysical fulfillments have on the other physical fulfillments?

The Land Promise Impacted

How does Galatians 4:22-26, Revelation 11:3-8, Hebrews 13:10-14 describe earthly Jerusalem?

ESV Galatians 4:22-26 Abraham had two sons, one by a slave woman and one by a free woman ... Now this may be interpreted allegorically: these women are two covenants. One is from Mount Sinai, bearing children for slavery; she is Hagar ...she corresponds to the present Jerusalem ... But the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother.

ESV Revelation 11:3-8 I will grant authority to my two witnesses ... And when they have finished their testimony, the beast that rises from the bottomless pit will ... kill them, and their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city that symbolically is called Sodom and Egypt, where their Lord was crucified.

ESV Hebrews 13:10-14 For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the holy places ...are burned outside the camp. So Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood. Therefore let us go to him outside the camp ...For here we have no lasting city ...

James wrote to Jewish believers “scattered among the nations.” Did he tell them to move back to Palestine and reclaim their Canaan? Did he tell them that they were the rightful heirs of the Promised Land?

The Hebrew Scriptures describe the Jews as the apple of God’s eye. Does the NT teach that the Roman Empire would fall because it attacked the Promised Land? It does not. In fact, the Empire survived another 300 years after destroying Jerusalem. Jesus said:

ESV Luke 21:20-22 ... when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation has come near ... for these are days of vengeance, to fulfill all that is written.

Summary of New Testament writers toward physical Jerusalem:

Hagar/Mount Sinai /Slavery
Sodom, Egypt
Christ suffered outside the camp/Go outside
Here we have no lasting city
Days of Vengeance: *Run!*

Conclusion: The Land Promise is Obsolete! Like a shot-gun shell that has been fired, its duty is done and it is tossed on the ground.

The Seed Promise Impacted

ESV Matthew 21:43-46 The kingdom of God will be taken away from you ...

ESV John 8:39-47 If you were Abraham's children, you would be doing the works Abraham did, but now you seek to kill me ... This is not what Abraham did ... You are of your father the devil ... you are not of God.

Romans 2:28-29 ... no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit ...

ESV Revelation 2:9 I know ... the slander of those who say that they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.

ESV Revelation 3:9 ... those of the synagogue of Satan who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie ...

Summary Statements About the Physical Offspring:

- the kingdom of God will be taken away from you
- you are of your father the devil
- you are not of God
- no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly
- those who say that they are Jews and are not
- synagogue of Satan.

Conclusion: The Seed Promise is Obsolete! (Except for the elect remnant previously studied). Israel was like a rocket with booster stages that fall off once the capsule is in orbit (Jesus and the church are the capsule). Mission accomplished, thank you very much!

Physical Blessing Impacted

The physical blessing included protection:

ESV Genesis 12:3 I will bless those who bless you ... him who dishonors you I will curse ...

ESV Zechariah 2:8 For thus said the LORD of hosts ... he who touches you touches the apple of his eye ...

However, Jesus indicated something had changed:

ESV Luke 11:49 ... the blood of all the prophets, shed from the foundation of the world ... will be required of this generation.

ESV Luke 21:20-22 ... when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation has come near ... for these are days of vengeance, to fulfill all that is written. Paul said:

ESV Romans 9:27 Isaiah cries out concerning Israel: "Though the number of the sons of Israel be as the sand of the sea, only a remnant of them will be saved ..."

ESV Romans 11:7-8 Israel failed to obtain what it was seeking ... as it is written, "God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that would not see and ears that would not hear, down to this very day."

YLT Revelation 1:7 Lo, he doth come with the clouds, and see him shall every eye, even those who did pierce him, and wail because of him shall all the tribes of the land.

Conclusion: The Blessing Promise of protection and prosperity is Obsolete! They are now like typewriters and phonographs.

So What?

So many Christians never understand this, never put this all together. The New Covenant is the fulfillment of everything promised to Abraham. The impact of these ultimate, metaphysical fulfillments has made the interim, physical fulfillments obsolete. They have been superseded.

Example: The physical things of Abraham were like scaffolding on a house being built; once the house is built, the scaffolding is removed.

Example: Ancient Israel was like a car that you used to get you to some destination. Once there, you don't sit in the car. You get out and leave the car! Israel was the means to and end (Christ and the church).

Overview:

Promised Land → Canaan → Heaven

Promised Seed → Jews → Jesus → Church

Promised Blessing → Prosperity → Gospel

Jesus and the Church are terminal station. NCT is Jesus-centered theology.

First London Baptist Confession of 1646 "Jesus Christ is ... the mediator of the new and everlasting covenant of grace between God and man ... the prophet, priest, and king of the Church of God for evermore."

What's So New About the New Testament? God promised Abraham land, offspring and blessing. The initial **land** was Canaan, the initial **people** were ethnic Israel and the initial **blessing** was property, protection and a special status as God's unique people.

Shadow/Substance: These early fulfillments were simply shadows and types of the real ultimate substance fulfillments found in the New Testament. The true Offspring was the Lord **Jesus**. The true blessing was **justification by faith**, made possible by Jesus' death on the cross. The true land is our **heavenly country**.

Shadow/Substance: The New Testament cancelled the Old Testament, but it is the fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant.

1st London Baptist Confession of 1646: "Jesus Christ is ... the mediator of the new and everlasting covenant of grace between God and man ... the prophet, priest, and king of the Church of God for evermore."

The 1st London Baptist Confession of 1646: "... Christ ... hath ... put away sin by ... offering ... Himself a sacrifice for sin, by which He hath fully finished and suffered all things God required for the salvation of His elect, and removed all rites and shadows ..."

Insight: the shadows have been removed!).

• You can hear this series taught at SermonAudio.com/NTRF under "New Covenant Theology."

Stephen E. Atkerson
NTRF.org
Revised 09/10/21