



The Abrahamic Seed of Blessing

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THE ABRAHAMIC SEED OF BLESSING

COMMENCING the subject "The Abrahamic Seed of Blessing", we have the Lord's words to Abram, as he was called before he entered the land of promise, as recorded in Gen. 12:1-3—"Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." In these opening verses of this 12th chapter of Genesis, we see that the Lord says "in thee", Abram alone, shall all the families of the earth be blessed. We notice that there is no reference here from the Lord of any "seed." God must have looked into the heart of Abram and saw in this patriarch one who would be so faithful and true that He could at this early stage say to him—"In **thee** shall all the families of the earth be blessed." That was really something important to receive this assurance from

the Lord, before he had even obeyed the call to leave his own country and go to the land that the Lord would show him.

In Gen. 12:6, 7 we read further—“And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh . . . And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him.” Here we see that after Abram had started to obey, God tells him now—“to **thy seed** will I give this land.” God had this wonderful plan mapped out, He knew that Abram would be obedient, He knew that his seed would fulfil what was required, so this extra promise could be given respecting Abram’s seed. That was an earthly inheritance, but it was important in the Plan of God, for this was the first place where Abram’s seed is mentioned.

Then Gen. 13:14-17 reads—“And the LORD said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. And I will make thy

seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee." Here we see a further development of the promise to this wonderful servant of the Lord.

From Gen. 15:1-7 we have further helpful information—"After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward. And Abram said, Lord GOD, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus? And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir. 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. And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness. And he said

unto him, I am the LORD that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it." "He believed in the LORD, and he counted it to him for righteousness." Abram was justified by faith—he took God at His word. Following the vision given to Abram as outlined in this 15th chapter of Genesis it is recorded—"In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates"—Gen. 15:18.

In Gen. 17 it is recorded—"And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee.

And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God"—Gen. 17:1-8. The Lord was here building up Abraham's expectation and his faith, in all these messages to him.

After the birth of Isaac, and with the differences arising between Sarah, Abraham's wife, and Hagar the mother of Ishmael, we have God's instructions to Abraham in Gen. 21:12—"And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad (Ishmael), and because of thy bondwoman (Hagar); in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called." Isaac was here shown to be the special earthly seed of Abraham.

In Genesis 22, we have the record of God requesting Abraham to sacrifice his son of promise, Isaac, and Abraham's willingness to obey, thus exercising so great faith in God's ability to raise Isaac

from the dead to fulfil His promise, had he been actually sacrificed. God was greatly pleased with Abraham as outlined in Gen. 22:15-18—"And the angel of the LORD called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, and said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son; that in blessing, I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice." We note particularly here the two seeds of Abraham distinctly pointed out; we shall refer especially to the "stars of heaven" seed, for they represent the seed which is above—the spiritual seed of Abraham. The "sand by the sea shore" represents an earthly seed of Abraham. Both these seeds are very important indeed in accomplishing God's promise to Abraham to bless all the families of the earth. Not only those living when this promise of God comes into operation are to be blessed, but all who have ever lived of all nations, all people, are going to be blessed through

Abraham's seed—through the "stars of heaven" and the "sand by the sea shore."

Passing to Gen. 26:2-5 we have God's promise to Isaac—"And the LORD appeared unto Isaac, and said, Go not down into Egypt (during the famine); dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of: sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father; and I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws." Here we find Isaac receiving the continuation of the promise; because of Abraham's obedience and faith, he inherited the same assurances from God to the full.

Then in Gen. 28:10-14 we have God's promise to Jacob, the chosen son of Isaac. This refers to the time when Jacob had that wonderful vision of the ladder reaching from earth to heaven. The verses read—"And Jacob went out from Beer-

sheba, and went toward Haran. And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And, behold, the LORD stood above it, and said, I am the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." We believe that ladder Jacob saw in his dream is a beautiful illustration of the communication that will exist and operate between heaven and earth when God's kingdom is established; that is, the co-operation and communication between the "stars of heaven" seed above, and the "sand by the sea shore" seed below. The power of God will come down from the heavenly seed to the earthly seed, to lift up humanity—the angels of God ascending

and descending on "Jacob's ladder" picture the time when "the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea"—Hab. 2:14.

God's further promise to Jacob is recorded in Gen. 35:9-12—"And God appeared unto Jacob again, when he came out of Padan-aram, and blessed him. And God said unto him, Thy name is Jacob: thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name: and he called his name Israel. And God said unto him, I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins; and the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land." There we have the promise brought down from Abraham, Isaac, and to Jacob—"In thee and thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

The confirmation of God's oath-bound covenant, spoken by David in 1 Chron. 16:13-19, is also of great importance. The verses read—"O ye seed of Israel his servant, ye children of Jacob, his chosen ones. He is the LORD our God; his judgments

are in all the earth. Be ye mindful always of his covenant; the word which he commanded to a thousand generations; even of the covenant which he made with Abraham, and of his oath unto Isaac; and hath confirmed the same to Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant, saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance; when ye were but few, even a few, and strangers in it." This shows the continuation of God's promise right through the faithful patriarchs, assuring us of the complete fulfilment in the wonderful kingdom age of all God had spoken.

Then in the New Testament we have Peter's words to Israel following the Day of Pentecost. When he had prophesied respecting the "times of restitution of all things", he followed with the words in Acts 3:25, 26—"Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities." "Unto you first"—God was then appealing through

the Apostle Peter to the Israelites after the Day of Pentecost, inviting "as many as the Lord our God shall call" into the wonderful heavenly calling of the Gospel Age.

We come now to the Apostle Paul's masterly presentation of our subject. Paul was given revelations of so much of God's wonderful Plan of the Ages, every feature of it, even the most spiritual understanding which he revealed in all his epistles. From Gal. 3:6-9 Paul declared—"Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham." God preached the gospel unto Abraham—"In thee shall all nations be blessed"—that is the Gospel, the Gospel that was proclaimed at the birth of Jesus—"Good tidings of great joy, which shall be to **all people.**" If any message from God's Word does not contain the promise of God with reference to the blessing of

all the families of the earth, it is not the Gospel. There is very little preaching of the Gospel today, outside of the Truth movement.

Following on in Galatians 3:16-18, the apostle shows that while Abraham thought of Isaac and his descendants as being his seed of blessing, and rightly so to a degree, yet God had in mind particularly the spiritual seed of Abraham, for Christ was to be the main seed of blessing, as Head over the "stars of heaven" seed of many members. The verses read—"Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God (the Abrahamic covenant), the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise." "By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD." God had no need of any intermediary; God had in mind—"which seed is Christ"—as the Chief of Abraham's seed of blessing.

How clearly does the apostle continue in this 3rd chapter of Galatians to show that the "stars of heaven" seed of Abraham, Christians in his day and since, who were being selected and developed in Paul's day and onward were not to be attached to the Law Covenant arrangements, for he outlines their position so definitely in verses 24 to 29 in this chapter as follows—"Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." We note that those to whom Paul was writing had been "baptized into Christ", not baptized in water at that time, but baptized into Christ's death, though the symbol of water immersion is quite rightly taken after the real baptism into Christ's death has been sealed by God's spirit.

We would digress here to refer to Christ's baptism into death; it is such an important matter, because those who are Christ's are **baptized into His death**, and our Lord set the example for all His followers, both as respects the reality of baptism and the symbol, as outlined in Matt. 3:13-17—"Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straight-way out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: and lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." In this record we have our Lord described as taking the symbol of baptism into death, He having previously committed His perfect human life into the Father's hands, to be "the lamb of God, to take away the sins of the world." As the Head of the "stars of heaven" seed of Abraham, our Lord in delighting to do the Father's will, would

consecrate His all to God in private, to "taste death for every man", then seek out John the Baptist to take the symbol of death baptism, which was indicated by the spirit descending in the form of a dove, particularly for John's instruction, so that he could proclaim Jesus as the Lamb of God as stated in John 1:29-37—
"The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me. And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. And John bare record, saying, I saw the spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the holy spirit. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God. Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples; and looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God! And the two disciples heard him

“speak, and they followed Jesus.” Here we have John the Baptist introducing his own disciples to the one whom God indicated to him to be the true one, the Lamb of God, by the spirit descending at the time John gave Jesus the symbol of water baptism, which pictured His death baptism previously entered into with the Heavenly Father.

We note in verse 37 just quoted, that John the Baptist’s disciples “followed Jesus” when He was pointed out to them. John knew his mission, he did not desire to keep his disciples to himself—he introduced them to Jesus, where we have the result indicated in John 1:40-47—“One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone. The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me.” We notice here, the disciples were “finding Jesus”,

and Jesus was "finding the disciples"—what a lovely record! This was the early period of Jesus' ministry. Reading on—"Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see. Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!" We realise that those who were being "found" were later, after Pentecost, to come into Christ to be "Abraham's seed, heirs according to the promise"—"stars of heaven" seed under Christ, the Head of Abraham's spiritual seed.

Further, in John 3:22-30 we have outlined again the lovely disposition of John the Baptist at the time Jesus was entering upon His ministry to find those who were worthy to be His true disciples. The passage reads—"After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judaea; and there he tarried with them, and baptized. And John also was baptizing

in AEnon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized. For John was not yet cast into prison. Then there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying. And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him." As much as to say, here's that one to whom you bare witness in competition with you, and gaining disciples that you should have. But John did not think that way about the matter, for—"John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven. Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease." What a lovely disposition John the Baptist had; no thought of competing with our Lord, handing his own disciples over to Jesus. He knew he was not to be of the Bride Class; he knew he was not to be of the "stars of heaven"

class, not of the heavenly "seed." He was the one to prepare the way of our Lord, the Head of the seed, and those he was introducing to Jesus, by the begetting of the spirit after Pentecost, were the foundation members in the "stars of heaven" seed of Abraham, to participate with Christ and the "sand by the sea shore" seed, in the blessing of all the families of the earth, in the age to come. "He must increase, but I must decrease"—that was God's Plan, and that was all John the Baptist was concerned about.

All this Gospel Age, Christ has been "increasing", taking out a people for God's name, first of all from Israel, then from the Gentiles—"as many as the Lord our God shall call"—from "afar off"—even down to our day. We rejoice that the Lord is still **finding** the Philips, and Peters, and Johns, and James, the Marthas and Marys, one here, one there, to make up the "stars of heaven" seed of Abraham, to bring about through the power of God, the blessing of all the families of the earth. "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." **"If ye be Christ's."** How beautifully the Apostle Paul explains what it means to be

Christ's, in 2 Cor. 4:5, 6—"For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Notice, here, Paul is saying—"God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness"—He who said in the beginning of creation—"Let there be light"—this same Almighty God, Paul says, hath shined into our hearts, **if we are Christ's**, to give us "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." And if we be Christ's, then are we Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise—God's promise—developed under the Abrahamic Covenant.

As our Lord was nearing the end of His earthly life, in the last few hours, He was preparing His little band of disciples for the time He must leave them in an unfriendly world. He encouraged them to approach the Heavenly Father direct—"in His name"—in the words of John 16:26, 27—"At that day (after Jesus had left them) ye shall ask in my name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for

you: for the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God." The Father Himself loveth you—they were to deal direct with the Father from that time onward. Our Lord was to leave them, the holy spirit would be with them, now through the merit of Christ, "in His name" they were to approach the Father direct, and that is also our privilege when we are fully consecrated to God's service. "**Our Father** who art in heaven"—and that prayer really belongs only to those who can rightly call God their Father—consecrated followers, baptized into Christ's death—"If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed."

In Col. 1:24-27 the Apostle Paul explains further those who are of Abraham's spiritual seed, along with Christ as the Head seed, to accomplish the blessing of all the families of the earth. The passage reads—"Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church: whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God; even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and

from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is **Christ in you, the hope of glory.**" Christ in you, the Christ-life in you—"If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed."

Then we have Paul's masterly presentation of God's oath-bound covenant for the encouragement of the "stars of heaven" seed, in Heb. 6:13-20. A most beautiful explanation we have here; Paul knew all the details about the Abrahamic Covenant under which all true Christians are developed during the Gospel Age—all who are true followers of Christ. The verses read—"For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself." There was no one greater than God, that is why we read in Gen. 22:16 previously—"By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD." "Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of prom-

ise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." **"By two immutable things"**—God's word and His oath, in which it is impossible for God to lie. Impressing again the surety of God's promise to bless all the families of the earth—through Abraham's seed—Christ and the Church from on high. "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." What an assurance we have there with reference to the surety of God selecting Abraham's seed, to fulfil His promise to bless all the families of the earth—"If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

Turning to Heb. 2:14, 16, we have a helpful reference to Christ's supervisory care over His followers by comparing translations. We read in verse 14—"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took

part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." We see here our Lord was made "a little lower than the angels", as was Adam, so that He may pay the ransom, the corresponding price, for Adam and all mankind condemned in Adam. Verse 16 is taken by some students as a repetition of verse 14, reading in the King James Version—"For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham." Weymouth's translation renders this verse—"For assuredly it is not to angels that he is continually reaching a helping hand, but it is to the descendants of Abraham." The descendants of Abraham here are those being selected during the Gospel Age as the "stars of heaven" seed—"If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed." Our Lord, as the sympathetic High Priest, is reaching forth a helping hand to all these, to assist them to make their calling and election sure—"Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the age"—Matt. 28:20.

An appreciation of the earthly seed of Abraham is also most appropriate, when we think of the immense and important work to be accomplished by the "sand by

the sea shore" seed of Abraham in the earthly phase of the kingdom. Think of the great work when the billions of humanity are resurrected to inhabit the restored earth; we are not surprised that the Lord has set aside one thousand years of His Kingdom for this great restoration project, when all the obedient of mankind who have ever lived will have the opportunity of gaining lasting human life under the New Covenant which God will make "with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah"—Jer. 31:31—and extend its blessing to all mankind as provided in His oath-bound promise to Abraham. The prophet Isaiah foretold this time in chapter 29:18-20, 22-24—"And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness. The meek also shall increase their joy in the LORD, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel. For the terrible one is brought to nought, and the scorner is consumed, and all that watch for iniquity are cut off. Therefore thus saith the LORD, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob, Jacob shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale. But when he seeth his children, the work of mine hands,

in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel. They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding, and they that murmured shall learn doctrine." We note—"Jacob shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face wax pale"—no indeed, in the resurrection day Jacob will not grow old and become feeble, but shall live forever, as one of the "sand by the sea shore" seed of Abraham, and as one of the "princes in all the earth" to administer the earthly phase of the Kingdom, directed by the "stars of heaven" seed — Christ and His Church above. Through Isaiah again the Lord declares—"I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: afterward thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city"—Isa. 1: 26. "At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the LORD; and **all the nations** shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart"—Jer. 3:17.

Our Lord's words to those who rejected Him at His first advent, are also very revealing as found in Luke 13:28, 29. Jesus

explained the situation when the Pharisees and others who were so opposed to Him are resurrected in the Kingdom Age, because of His great sacrifice on behalf of His enemies, as well as on behalf of His friends. Jesus said—"There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out"—they will be "thrust out" until transformed in tune with the Lord and the laws of the Kingdom. When they obey and learn righteousness, they will go up the "highway of holiness"—Isa. 35:8—to eternal life on earth. We note our Lord did not say you will see Peter, James and John and other apostles in the kingdom He described, because He spoke of the earthly phase of the kingdom. "And they (mankind generally) shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God"—yes, indeed, they shall "sit down" as pupils under tutors, and what perfect tutors they will have—"the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein"—Isa. 35:8. "The ransomed of the Lord shall return (all mankind shall "come again from the land of the enemy"—death), and come to

Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away"—Isa. 35:10.

In view of all the wonderful assurances in God's Word confirming the fulfilment of God's covenant promises to Abraham, it was surely fitting that our Lord declared to the descendants of Abraham at His first advent—"Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it and was glad"—John 8:56. Abraham very truly saw Christ's "day" by faith; he believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

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