

BLESSED

Genesis 12:1-3 Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew 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.

Galatians 3:26-29 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.

A Biblical covenant is comprised of 3 parts: the **promises** of the covenant, the **blood** of the covenant, and the **seal** of the covenant. This is one of the reasons God revealed Himself through 3 manifestations: as the **Father**, He spoke the promises; as the **Son**, He shed His blood; as the **Holy Ghost**, He actually becomes the seal of His own covenant!

There are nine grand covenants initiated by God in the Bible: Edenic, Adamic, Noahic, Abrahamic, Mosaic, Palestinian, Davidic, New, and Everlasting. God expressed His purpose in creating man in the Edenic Covenant, but Adam broke its terms. This ushered in the seven redemptive covenants of God (including the New Covenant in which the church is included). These "**7 steps**" take man back to his original state of fellowship under the Edenic covenant.

Among the redemptive covenants, the most comprehensive one is the **Abrahamic Covenant**, which either explicitly or implicitly includes in itself all previous and subsequent covenants. Its ultimate fulfillment is not found in earthly Israel, but in the New Testament Church!

The Abrahamic Covenant is rightly referred to by Stephen as "**the Covenant of Circumcision**," for that act served as the covenantal seal. From the very moment God made this covenant with Abraham, the world would forever be divided into two ethnic groups: the uncircumcised and the circumcised, the Gentile and the Jew.

Acts 7:8 And he gave him the covenant of circumcision: and so Abraham begat Isaac, and circumcised him the eighth day; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat the twelve patriarchs.

Galatians 2:11-12 Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:

Only after the physical act of circumcision did a covenant relationship exist in God's mind, thus **no circumcision, no covenant!** Can God be that demanding? Remember that we would not have the chance of a relationship with God if it were not for His love in initiating the covenant! God has a right to demand that we enter His covenant on His terms! It is important to note that this "covenant of circumcision" was an outward physical act ("in your flesh"), but it initiated man into a spiritual covenant ("everlasting covenant"). **If this covenant was indeed "everlasting," then there must still exist a "covenant of circumcision" today!**

Genesis 17:13 He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant.

The church is the fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant! That is why they are called: a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, the sons of God, kings and priests unto God, heirs of the kingdom, children of God, trees of righteousness, household of God, children of Abraham, children of promise, heirs of the promise, the elect of God, the true circumcision, priests of the Lord, ministers of God, the holy people, the redeemed of the Lord, heirs of God, the people of God, the election, the remnant of grace, the church of the firstborn, the seed of Abraham, the Jew inwardly, and the Israel of God.

In the New Testament, the term "circumcision" can refer to either the **physical ritual** practiced by the Jews, or to the **spiritual seal** of the New Birth, which is the fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant! It is crucial to make this distinction, for while the Apostles preached that the temporal form of circumcision was passing away, they also declared that spiritual circumcision was an absolute necessity for salvation!

Here is what Paul says about the **PHYSICAL RITUAL** of circumcision:

Romans 2:28-29 For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.

Galatians 6:15 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.

But notice how he speaks about the **SPIRITUAL SEAL** of circumcision:

Colossians 2:10-14 And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;

Galatians 3:26-29 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.

Baptism in Jesus' name is New Testament circumcision. There is absolutely no way to be in the salvation covenant without it! And once I am in covenant with God, I am blessed!

There are basically three ways to bless someone:

- By **REWARD** – you can give them something to bribe them to become better (but the problem with this is that as soon as the rewards stop, they are not “blessed”)
- By **PERSUASION** – you can convince them to better themselves (but the problem with this is that as soon as an argument for an easier way comes along, they are no longer motivated)
- By **ATTRIBUTION** – you can call them “blessed” before they ever evidence that behavior! (this is the method that God uses – He puts us in covenant and then “calls” new behaviors out of us!)

Abram (high father) – became Abraham (father of a multitude)
Sarai (princess) – became Sarah (mother of nations)
Jacob (supplanter) – became Israel (having power with God)
Simon (God has heard) – became Peter (rock)

Romans 4:17-21 (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were. Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be. And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb: He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.

There is a difference between PROCESS and PROMISE – if we don't trust God in the PROCESS, we are not worthy of the PROMISE.

Abraham had a PROMISE so big that it was staggering. But he had such a faith and trust in God that he didn't waver, even when the PROCESS looked like it was moving in reverse!

In spite of Abraham's failures and sins, God kept His promise and Isaac was born. Many of God's promises do not depend on our character (which can waver) but on His faithfulness (which cannot).

Hebrews 6:13-18 For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, 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 shew unto the heirs of promise 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:

God not only gave Abraham a promise, but He also confirmed that promise with an oath. (Genesis 22:15-18) When a witness takes an oath in court, he says the words "so help me God." We call on the greater to witness for the lesser. None is greater than God, so He swore by Himself! His promise and his oath are BOTH immutable.

God said to Abraham, “I swear I'm going to bless you.” Why did He swear? To make a covenant that He was telling the truth!

- Sometimes, it will look like I'm a liar.
- Sometimes, it will look like serving me doesn't work.
- Sometimes, things will get worse before they get better.
- Sometimes, it will look like you're going backward instead of forward.
- Sometimes, it will look like I'm trying to kill you instead of bless you.

BUT I SWEAR I'M GOING TO BLESS YOU!

You cannot get the PROMISE unless you go through the PROCESS!

David, Joseph, Paul, etc ... **I swear I'm going to bless you!**

IN SPITE OF EVERY CIRCUMSTANCE, I AM BLESSED!

Joel 3:10 Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruninghooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong.

Galatians 3:13-14 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

JESUS TOOK MY SIN, MY SICKNESS, MY CURSE, AND MY PAST. I AM REDEEMED FROM ALL OF THAT – AND I AM BLESSED!

James 3:10 Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.

Proverbs 10:22 The blessing of the LORD, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it.