

The Gospel of Abraham – Gen 12:1-3, Gal 3:8

The Strong Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ #5

Introduction – The gospel of Jesus Christ can actually be found in the Old Testament. God always had a plan for the salvation of the world (even going back to Gen 3:15). In our passage we find that through Abraham the world would be blessed. This is the gospel of Abraham. The New Testament quotes this and related passages in several places. Jesus Christ came not to change these plans, but to fulfill them. Let us examine what was promised that He came to fulfill.

Commands and Promises (Gen 12:1-3) – God spoke to Abraham with a command, “*Get out...*” followed with a string of promises. God works out His plans not with an invitation system, but with commands that often demand separation of some kind (Ex 3:10, Jer 1:7, Jonah 1:1, Matt 9:9; 28:19, Acts 1:8). They also require faith in His promises because He regularly does not give all the details of His plan. “*We must quit the things that are seen for the things that are not seen, and submit to the sufferings of this present time in hopes of a glory that is yet to be revealed*” - Matthew Henry. God does not simply call us to obey, but to obey because of the promises.

Promises to Abraham – God promised Abraham that he would be great and a great blessing (v2). All the earth is to be affected for blessing or for cursing from this covenant (v3), and the ultimate outcome will be a blessing to the all the families (nations, peoples) of the earth (v3).

The Faithful Testimony of Stephen – Full of faith, Stephen preached from these verses (Acts 6:8-15; 7:1-5). He is accused of blasphemy against the words of Moses, but His face shined like Moses’. He was not speaking of new-fangled things; he was preaching a reformation to the old paths and promises.

The Blessing of a People (Gal 3:7-9) – Sons of Abraham are defined by their faith and not by their physical ancestors. The promised blessing to Abraham and his descendants is a preaching of the gospel. In that gospel, the nations, the Gentiles, have always been destined to become sons of Abraham. How would God do this? By granting the same faith that Abraham had.

The Faith of Abraham – God spoke to Abraham on other occasions about these promises, including promises of innumerable descendants (i.e. Gen 13:16, 15:5-6). And so Abraham believed God for an heir, a descendant. But he also believed God for a people innumerable. In fact, he believed that he would be heir of the world (Rom 4:13). He believed God when it looked impossible that this could happen.

The Blessing of a Land – Abraham is promised a land in Gen 12:1, 4-7, and again in 13:14-15. Moses later refers to this as a promise to those who are keeping the fifth commandment (Deut 5:16). Paul refers to the same promise when speaking to Gentile children far from the land of Palestine (Eph 6:1-3). But notice the change of language; “*that it may be well with you and that you may live long on the earth.*” God never intended to only give Abraham’s descendants one little portion of land along the Mediterranean Sea. In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus says, “*Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth*” (Matt 5:5), presumably all of it. Abraham believed that he would be heir of the world (Rom 4:13) when it looked impossible that this could happen.

Seed and Seeds – The principal application of the word “descendant” or “seed” is Christ (Gal 3:16). But the issue is not whether the word is singular or plural. The issue is that all who are the seed of Abraham are son only because of the promise through the Seed, the Lord Jesus Christ. We must be in Christ to be the seed of Abraham (Gal 3:26-29). And if we are Christ’s then we are heirs according to the promise. What does this mean?

The Strong Gospel of Abraham and His Seed – How do we enter into this worldwide family? By faith alone, that is, by believing the gospel of Abraham, the promises given to Abraham and to his descendants – those who join with him by faith. We are to believe that our sins are forgiven, that we have been justified by the once for all sacrifice of Jesus Christ. We are to then believe those promises for us and for our children. We are to believe that we are joint-heirs with Abraham’s Seed (with Christ) of the whole world. We are to believe that the world will be saved. Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen (Heb 11:1) – that is, we are to believe when it looks impossible that this could happen, for nothing is impossible for God.

Look Like Abraham – Abraham believed God, went to the land promised to him and built a place of worship (Gen 12:8). Later God told him to “*Lift up your eyes now and look from the place where you are – northward, southward, eastward, and westward; for all the land which you see I give to you and your descendants forever.*” Well – here we are.

World conquest is complete (John 12:31-32, Col 2:15) and is being completed (Matt 28:18-20). He has ordained both the ends and the means. Our ineffectiveness to change the world is not because of the impotency of the gospel, but because of the lack of faith and faithfulness of God’s people. We are under chastisement and the call to us is, as always, to repent and believe. Here is the gospel: Through Abraham all of the nations of the earth will be blessed. In faith, build your place of worship. Walk the land, live in it, and act like you own the place. Because we do.