

GOD'S PROMISES OF LAND TO ISRAEL

1 - THE SEVENFOLD PROMISE OF LAND

God uttered His promise of land to the Hebrews seven times – five times to Abraham, once to Isaac, and once to Jacob. The promise was then confirmed by Moses.

- **1st Promise – given to Abraham:** “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” (Genesis 12:7).
- **2nd Promise – given to Abraham:** “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” (Genesis 13:14-17).
- **3rd Promise – given to Abraham:** “And he said unto [Abram], I am the LORD that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it” (Genesis 15:7).
- **4th Promise – given to Abraham:** “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: The Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites, And the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims, And the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites” (Genesis 15:18-21).
- **5th Promise – given to Abraham:** “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” (Genesis 17:8).
- **6th Promise – given to Isaac:** “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” (Genesis 26:3).
- **7th Promise – given to Jacob:** “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” (Genesis 28:13).

- **Moses's confirmation of God's promise of the land.** "When the LORD thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee, the Hittites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than thou; And when the LORD thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them: Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son. For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly. But thus shall ye deal with them; ye shall destroy their altars, and break down their images, and cut down their groves, and burn their graven images with fire. For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt" (KJV Deut 7:1-8).

2 - THE EXTENT OF THE PROMISED LAND.¹

God was not vague about the extent of the land that he was promising to Israel. No matter what you think of the Jews. No matter what you think of their presence in Palestine. No matter what you think of their property claims. You cannot change what the Bible, which is God's Written Word, says about the boundaries of the land which he has deeded to the Jewish people.

- **Certain territory.** In His fourth promise of the Land (Genesis 15:18), God defined the territory that He was giving as all the land between the Euphrates River in the north and the River of Egypt (now the Wadi El Arish in the Sinai peninsula) in the south. Moreover, God and Moses mentioned the following people that must be driven out of the land or destroyed: the Amorites twice, the Canaanites twice, the Girgashites twice, the Hittites twice, the Hivites, the Jebusites twice, the Kadmonites, the Kenites, the Kenizzites, the Perizzites twice, and the Rephaims. In addition, in his sixth promise of the land, God appears to have included Philistia. Thus, the Promised Land includes all the land between the Euphrates on the north and the Wadi El Arish on the south, and between the Jordan River on the east and the Mediterranean Sea on the west – that is, Lebanon, Syria south of the Euphrates, Israel, Jordan west of the Jordan River (i.e. the west bank), and Sinai north of the Wadi El Arish.

¹ The Promised Land is synonymous with Canaan - see fourth and fifth promises.

- **Probable territory.** The Promised Land probably also includes Gilead, the land on the east bank of the Jordan River that was occupied by Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh. “And the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh returned, and departed from the children of Israel out of Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan, to go unto the country of Gilead, to the land of their possession, whereof they were possessed, according to the word of the LORD by the hand of Moses” (KJV Joshua 22:9).

3 - THE BASIS OF GOD’S GIFTS: GRACE

In the case of both His gift of election and His gift of land, God made clear to the Jewish people that He was giving them these things for His own reasons, one of which was that He had decided to love them, and one of which was that He wished to demonstrate that He always keeps His Word. Neither gift was merited in any way. - indeed, God went out of His way to point out that they were insignificant in number, unrighteous in character, and generally “stiff-necked” (i.e. stubborn and troublesome).

- **Grace, not merit, was the basis of God’s election of Israel:** “For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations” (Deuteronomy 7:6-9).
- **Grace, not merit, was the basis of God’s gift of the Land:** “Speak not thou in thine heart, after that the LORD thy God hath cast them out from before thee, saying, For my righteousness the LORD hath brought me in to possess this land: but for the wickedness of these nations the LORD doth drive them out from before thee. Not for thy righteousness, or for the uprightness of thine heart, dost thou go to possess their land: but for the wickedness of these nations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee, and that he may perform the word which the LORD swore unto thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Understand therefore, that the LORD thy God giveth thee not this good land to possess it for thy righteousness; for thou art a stiffnecked people” (Deuteronomy 9:4).