

The Abrahamic Covenant

Over the centuries scholars have generated many systematic theologies in many languages. Some such volumes bring blessing. All of them are systems of philosophy that explain God and the Bible. They appeal to rational reasoning creatures, like ourselves, who long for reasonable explanations of the Ultimate Reality, God, and His activity in the earth. We reasoning creatures desire a reasonable, consistent, somewhat comprehensible deity. But who wants to read tomes of theology to find Him. Though a Bible student for 50 years, I have read only one systematic theology and a systematic study of the Kingdom of God by George Peters, “The Theocratic Kingdom,” plus a few score other Bible oriented books. I am not a scholar; this is not a tome. I have no degrees, no lexicons, no successful ministry, no title of any kind. As a matter of fact I’m a retired longshoreman from the Port of Portland, Oregon.

But I have walked with God. More accurately, He has walked with me, and picked me off the ground on many occasions as I stumbled along. While walking with me and supporting me He has revealed one truth that I suspect many theologians have treated rather superficially, if at all. It is this: **That the Abrahamic Covenant, with its detailed provisions and promises, is the Fountainhead of all subsequent Biblical Revelation and Human History.** The Bible flows like a stream from this Fountain. The Bible is the Covenant revealed. History is the Covenant applied. To use another figure of speech: The Covenant is the key, or the code breaker that unlocks the Bible and history. Do you want to understand history? Study it in the light of the Abrahamic Covenant. Do you want to know God? Study the Covenant. Do you want to experience God, the new birth, and eternal life? Enter the Covenant. Without this Covenant, the Bible is a collection of sixty-six books, and history is a mystery. With the Covenant the Bible reveals itself to be a history of Abraham and his descendents on their journey toward the everlasting Kingdom of Heaven and the New Jerusalem, The Kingdom of Yeshua the Messiah.

This Covenant between God and Abraham, in its many details and outworkings, is God’s systematic theology—the one we desperately need to understand. Before examining the Covenant, it will help us to consider several qualities of God, all of them operative in the Covenant.

First: God's personhood. God is not less than a person. He is not a force, a power, an influence. He is a person. He thinks; He plans; He speaks; He instructs; He promises; He blesses; He curses; He owns property; He relates to us on our level. Best of all He covenants with us as only a person can do.

Second: God's unchangeable purpose, plan, and character. This Person who is God has planned from creation to accomplish certain things. "Come you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matt 25:34.). God created the world as a stage on which to manifest His eternal kingdom when the time comes for Jesus and His co-heirs to inherit that kingdom. All Biblical and secular history moves toward the manifestation of that ultimate Theocratic Kingdom of Heaven. His purpose has never changed. Nor has His plan. "For I am Yahweh, I do not change; therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob" (Malachi 3:6). "Known unto God from eternity are all His works" (Acts 15:18).

Third: Because his purpose, plan, and character does not change, neither does His Word. God gave His Word to communicate in the clearest possible terms what He planned to do. He said what He wanted to say. And what God said, He wanted us to understand. Otherwise why would He say anything at all? If God had spoken words that meant something different than their plain grammatical sense, then who is to say what He "really" meant. Your hunch is as good as mine. Many doctrines have been built on these "hunches" or "revelations." Like a thick cloud, these revelations usually camouflage the plain text. In this study of the Abrahamic Covenant, we will accept God's simple unadorned words at face value. God's Covenant with Abraham, with its detailed provisions and promises, is the fountainhead of all subsequent Biblical Revelation. This Covenant is the spring from which all else flows. This Covenant explains why God instructed the Israelites in Isaiah 51:2 "Look to Abraham your father, and to Sarah who gave birth to you in pain; when he was one I called him, then I blessed him and multiplied him." This Covenant with Abraham also explains why Yeshua the Messiah had to be a Son of Abraham (Matt 1:1), and why all believers in Jesus/Yeshua also become children of Abraham. "If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise (Gal 3:29).

On the following page I have numbered, coded, and listed in alphabetical order, twenty-seven details of the Abrahamic Covenant. The next page after the list contains a written

summary of the Abrahamic Covenant with numbers inserted that correspond to the numbered details on the list. As you print the pertinent letter code in the margin of your Bible alongside appropriate texts, you will soon understand this fact: The Bible from Genesis chapter twelve through Revelation chapter twenty-two is an unfolding of God's covenant with Abraham (the book of Job excepted).

Robert Rand, robertrand@juno.com