

## **THE PROMISED LAND**

It all began with God's promise to Abraham in Genesis 12:1.

### **Genesis 12:1 (NKJV)**

**1** Now the Lord had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, From your family And from your father's house, **To a land that I will show you.**

We read in Genesis that Abraham came to live in the Promised Land with his family, but never really possessed it. The only thing that Abraham ever owned was a burial plot (cf. Gen. 23:1-20).

In that context, God told Abraham that the family would depart from the land and be in a foreign land for 400 years, as predicted in Gen. 15:13.

### **Genesis 15:13 (NKJV)**

**13** Then He said to Abram: "Know certainly that your descendants will be **strangers in a land that is not theirs**, and will serve them, and they will afflict them **four hundred years**.

This was fulfilled as Joseph was sold into slavery and ended up in Egypt. The family followed him there, where they remained for 400 years and ended up in slavery – exactly as God prophesied to Abraham hundreds of years in advance. At the end of the 400 years, it is estimated that the family of Jacob had grown to be about 2-3 million people. They were then birthed as a NATION in the Exodus. Not only was it God's intention to bring them out of Egypt as a NATION, but also to then give them the Land of Promise. They were being delivered to inherit a LAND.

### **Exodus 3:8 (NKJV)**

**8** So I have come down **to deliver** them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land **to a good and large land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites** and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites.

God's "nation-building" included both a people and a land. It would be this combination of people and land that God would use as a special witness to the world. Through Israel, the One True God would reveal Himself.

However, on the way to the Promised Land, the people rebelled; and because of their rebel unbelief, God caused them to wander in the wilderness for 40 years (cf. Num. 13, 14:11).

God's blessing on Israel is consistently seen in relation to the land, and God's discipline of Israel is consistently seen in relation to the land. And in both cases, whether in blessing or in discipline, Israel is a testimony to the truth of God. Whether in blessing or in discipline, God is ever shown to be a God of loyal, covenant-keeping love.

A special word in the OT that defines God's "**covenant loyalty**" is the Hebrew word "*hesed*". This word is used 248 times in the OT. It has been called an "undefinable word", being translated at least 14 different ways. Commonly, it is translated as "steadfast love", "loyal love", or "loving-kindness". It underscores God's FAITHFULNESS.

**Hesed** is the kind of love expressed in God's COVENANT relationship with Israel. **Hesed** goes right along with the Name **YHWH**, as both stress His covenant faithfulness.

### **Jeremiah 9:24 (NKJV)**

**24** But let him who glories glory in this, That he understands and knows Me, That I am the Lord, exercising **lovingkindness**, [*hesed*] judgment, and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight," says the Lord.

### **Lamentations 3:22–23 (NKJV)**

**22** Through the Lord's **mercies** [*hesed*] we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not.

**23** They are new every morning; Great is Your **faithfulness**.

God ever shows Himself to be FAITHFUL whether in blessing or in discipline. This means that all the covenant promises to Israel will literally be fulfilled. It's just a matter of time.

Discipline may interrupt Israel's experiencing the blessing, but it does not cancel out God's covenant promises to national Israel.

Note that the issue of Israel's relationship to the land is always related to covenant faithfulness. The ONE thing that God demands is that Israel recognize HIM ALONE AS GOD. As they do so, they would enjoy God's blessings in the land, but if they failed to properly recognize Him as God, they would be put out of the land as a matter of discipline.

So, after 40 years when the older generation had all died in the wilderness (with the exception of Joshua and Caleb), Moses gave His final messages to Israel.

He told them over and over that OCCUPATION of the land was dependent upon covenant faithfulness, of which the first and greatest command was to have no other gods before Him (cf. Ex. 20:3).

**Deuteronomy 5:33 (NKJV)**

**33** You shall walk in all the ways which the Lord your God has commanded you, that you may live and that it may be well with you, and that you may prolong your days in the land which you shall possess.

Thus, what has happened to Israel in relation to the Promised Land has consistently happened in perfect accord with what God had foretold them regarding blessings and curses.

**Amos 3:1–2 (NKJV)**

**1** Hear this word that the LORD has spoken against you, O children of Israel, against the whole family which I brought up from the land of Egypt, saying:

**2** “You only have I known of all the families of the earth; Therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.”

**Amos 3:7 (NKJV)**

**7** Surely the Lord GOD does nothing, Unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets.

Want proof of the Bible? Observe that at each step what God has said regarding Israel has been fulfilled to the letter. And this trend related to the LAND of Israel continues to this very day! Stay tuned the LAST DAYS centers around the land of Israel.

The PROMISED LAND remains the land of promise for the Jews!