

Restoration of the Kingdom of God – 17

Genesis 13:14 records how *“The LORD said to Abram ... all the land that you see I will give to you and to your offspring forever”*. Where was that land? It was on this earth. It was that same land of which God said in **verse 17** *“Arise, walk in the land through its length and its width, for I give it to you.”*

- So when did God give the land to Abraham? Stephen explained in **Acts 7:5** that God *“gave him no inheritance in it, not even a foot’s length, but promised to give it to him as a possession and to his offspring after him...”*

Of Abraham and the other faithful ones, **Hebrews 11:13** states, *“These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth”* - nor did Abraham’s family and descendants inherit the land forever.

- Actually, the “offspring” refers to one person - **Galatians 3:16** *“Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, ‘And to offsprings,’ referring to many, but referring to one, ‘And to your offspring,’ who is Christ.”* So both promises applied to Abraham’s offspring, Jesus (**Matthew 1:1**) - first, the blessing of all nations - **Genesis 22:18**, and second, the everlasting inheritance of the land where God sent Abraham - **Genesis 13:14**.

As Paul explained, *“as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ....and if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s offspring, and heirs according to the promise”* - **Galatians 3:26** - referring to God’s “promise that he would be the heir of the world” - **Romans 4:13**.

- Jesus told the church of the Laodiceans, *“to him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne”* - **Revelation 3:21**. While Jesus is with the Father in heaven, he is looking forward to his return and restoring the kingdom of God under David’s dynasty, centred in **the land promised to Abraham**.

All who *“are Christ’s”* have that same hope, referred to by Paul while he was awaiting trial at Rome’s supreme court. He explained to his fellow Israelites, *“for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain”* - **Acts 28:20**. That hope was expressed by the apostles of Jesus just before his ascension - *“they asked Him, saying, ‘Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?’”* - **Acts 1:6**.

- They clearly did not think that kingdom was in heaven. They knew that the kingdom of David, which God had overturned, would not be restored *“until He comes whose right it is, and I will give it to Him”* - who is Jesus - **Ezekiel 21:27**.

The disciples had been under the tutorship of Jesus for more than three years, so this was neither a silly nor an ill-informed question. Jesus had clearly led them to expect David’s kingdom to be restored in the Promised Land. The reply of Jesus was that they had some preaching to do, and God had not yet revealed the timing of that restoration.

- The answer they heard from the attendant angels, was that it would happen when Jesus returns, *“Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven”* - **Acts 1:11**. More next time, God willing.