

**Caribbean Graduate School of Theology**  
**Biblical Theology**  
**Lecture 8 – God’s Promise Plan**

**January 2021 - Sheldon Campbell**

**God’s Promise Plan**

God's Promise-Plan in Both Testaments (Kaiser 2008:17-31)

Kaiser (2008, 17) notes,

I believe that a Biblical center and its accompanying unity were strongly attested especially by the writers of the New Testament who taught is that the doctrine of the Messiah the anointed one of God was preserved has a record of the promise or promise plan made by God; let it first appeared in all parts of the Old Testament even though it appeared they're under a constellation of different but synonym has names such as word, rest, blessing, and the like). This case can be presented by describing 10 scriptural generalizations of the promise-plan of God. But first, let us seek to define the unifying plan that scripture displays.

Kaiser 2008, 19 defines the promise-plan as,

The promise plan is God's word of declaration beginning with Eve and continuing on through history, especially in the patriarchs and the Davidic line, that God would continually be in his person and do in his deeds and works (in and through Israel, and later the church) his redemptive plan as his means of keeping that promised word alive for Israel, and thereby for all who subsequently believed. All in that promised seed were called act as a light for all the nations so that all the families of the earth might come to faith and to new life in the Messiah.

## Ten Characteristics of the Promise-Plan of God (pp. 19-25)

1. *“The doctrine of the promised Messiah is found throughout all the scriptures and not just in isolated or selected passages as understood by the Promise-Fulfillment Scheme (p. 19).*

He said to them, “This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.” (Luke 24:44).

He said to them, “How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken! 26 Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?” 27 And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself” (Luke 24:25-27).

2. *“The Old Testament Messianic teaching was regarded as the development of a single promise, repeated and unfolded through the centuries with numerous specifications and in multiple forms but always with the same essential core. So central is this article of faith that the apostle Paul when he was on trial for his life wrapped up his total life and ministry by saying” (p. 20):*

And now it is because of my hope in what God has *promised* our fathers that I am on trial here today. This is the *promise* our twelve tribes are hoping to see fulfilled as they earnestly serve God day and night ... that God raises the dead. (Acts 26:6-7a, emphasis mine)

3. *“The New Testament writers equate the single definite promise as the one made Abraham when God called him from the Ur of Chaldeans. Instead of treating this definite promise as one that was recently received in the New Testament era, the writer of the book of Hebrews linked it with the transaction God made with Abraham long ago” (p. 21):*

When God made his *promise* to Abraham... he swore by himself, saying, “Surely I will bless you and give you many descendants.” (Hebrews 6:13-14 emphasis mine)

Because God wanted to make the unchanging nature of his purpose very clear to the heirs of what was *promised*, he confirmed it with an oath. (Hebrews 6:17; cf Genesis 22:17, emphasis mine)

...Isaac and Jacob ... we're heirs with him of the same *promise*. (Hebrews 11:9 , emphasis mine)

The apostle Paul makes the same argument in Romans (p. 21):

It was not through the law that Abraham and his offspring received the *promise* that he would be heir of the world, but through the righteousness that comes by faith. 14 For if those who depend on the law are heirs, faith means nothing and the *promise* is worthless ..... Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the *promise* of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God (Romans 4:13-14, 20, emphasis mine)

4. *“While the New Testament writers occasionally speak of the promises, using the plural form of the word, the manner in which they do so does not weaken the case for a single definite promise in the Scriptures”* (p. 21).

“In those rare instances where the New Testament writers use the plural word “promises”, they do so to indicate that the one promise is made up of many specifications” (p. 21).

Kaiser (2008:23) expounds,

Theirs [the people of Israel] is the adoption to sonship; theirs the divine glory, the covenants, the receiving of the law, the temple worship and the *promises*. (Romans 9:4, emphasis mine)

For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the Jews[b] on behalf of God's truth, so that the *promises* made to the patriarchs might be confirmed 9 and, moreover, that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. (Romans 15:8, emphasis mine)

5. *“The New Testament writers regard this single, definite promise, composed of many specifications, to be the theme of both the Old and New Testaments”* (pp. 22-23).

Kaiser (2008:23) notes,

“Brothers and fathers, listen to me! The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham while he was still in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Harran. 3 ‘Leave your country and your people,’ God said, ‘and go to the land I will show you.’ ...“As the time drew near for God to fulfill his *promise* to Abraham, the number of our people in Egypt had greatly increased. (Acts 7:2-3, emphasis mine)

6. “*The promise made to Abraham is represented as both being partially fulfilled in the events of the exodus and yet still to be fully fulfilled in the distant future.* That was Stephen’s point in Acts 7:17, for God was fulfilling the plan made to Abraham and in the days of the exodus, which was later to be called “the promise.” (pp. 22-23).

After removing Saul, he made David their king. God testified concerning him: ‘I have found David son of Jesse, a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do.’<sup>23</sup> “From this man’s descendants God has brought to Israel the Savior Jesus, as he promised. (Acts 13:22-23, emphasis mine)

7. “*The New Testament writers not only declare the promise-plan of God is seen through the whole Old, but they adopt the Old Testament phraseology as part of their own way of expressing God’s revelation to them*” (p. 23).

8. “*The New Testament writers teach that the promise of God is operating eternally and is irrevocable.* Despite the fact that “a hardening in part” has come over Israel (Romans 11:25), nevertheless, God’s gifts and his call are irrevocable (Romans 11:29)” (p. 23).

Kaiser (2008:23) explains,

15 Brothers and sisters, let me take an example from everyday life. Just as no one can set aside or add to a human covenant that has been duly established, so it is in this case. 16 The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. Scripture does not say “and to seeds,” meaning many people, but “and to your seed,”<sup>[i]</sup> meaning one person, who is Christ. 17 What I mean is this: The law, introduced 430 years later, does not set aside the covenant previously established by God and thus do away with the promise. 18 For if the inheritance depends on the law, then it no longer depends on the promise; but God in his grace gave it to Abraham through a promise. (Galatians 3:15-18, emphasis mine)

9. *“The New Testament writers make a strong connection between the promise and a number of other doctrines. God’s promise, as originally given in Genesis 12:3, was not to be limited only to Abraham’s people, but it was to be for all the Gentiles, families, and nations of the earth”* (p. 24).

Kaiser (2008:24) notes,

Abraham “believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.”<sup>7</sup> Understand, then, that those who have faith are children of Abraham. Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and *announced the gospel in advance* to Abraham [saying]: “All nations will be blessed through you.” (Gal 3:6-8, emphasis mine)

10. *“The culmination of all the specifications (i.e., the individual predicted doctrines that support the one unifying promising-plan) are wrapped up in the one promise doctrine, or promise-plan, which focuses on Jesus Christ”* (p. 25) .

#### **Five Different Ways of Relating Israel and the Church (pp. 29-31).**

1. The Replacement Covenant – “The blessings originally made out for Israel were now to be fulfilled in the new covenant and were made out instead to be with the church” (p. 29).
2. The Super Covenant – “Covenant theology” – “in its mature form, it saw Israel and the church as one and the same in the history of the human race” (p. 29).
3. The Dual Covenant – “Jewish people did not need the saving gospel of Jesus Christ, for they had a separate covenant, one made with Abraham. Therefore, evangelizing Jewish people was not only wrong, but it failed to recognize that God had already saved them in another covenant” (p. 30).
4. The Separate Covenant – “Traditional or classical dispensationalism affirmed that the Israel and the church had separate identities, promises, programs, and destinies” (p. 30).
5. The Renewed Covenant – “It agrees with the covenantal position that the plan of salvation in Scripture is one that there is one “people of God.”... “It noted that the content of each the covenants and promises in the Scripture was both retained and progressively enriched, enlarged, and incorporated into a body of foundational truths that carried the main burden of the whole message and plan of the Bible. It did all of this without jettisoning God’s promises to the ancient nation of Israel or barring the door for the Gentile inclusion while grafting all believers, Jew and Gentile, into the same olive tree” (p. 31).