

Genesis 17:3-8

ABRAM IS PROMISED TO BE FATHER OF MANY NATIONS

- I. The promise.
 - A. First, the God of the covenant promised Abram that He would multiply him exceedingly (2).
 1. The promise has two parts.
 2. Physically, this is Abram's natural seed: the seed of Ismael, of Esau, and of Jacob.
 3. Spiritually, Abram is the father of all believers (Rom. 4:11,16; 9:7,8; Gal. 3:7,16,29). And it also speaks of the King of kings, Christ Jesus the Lord.
 - B. Second, the God repeats the promise to give to Abram and his seed the land of Canaan (8).
 - C. In anticipation, God changes their names.
- II. The basis for these renewed and expanded promises is the fact that God establishes His covenant with Abraham and his seed.
 - A. Notice that it is identified as "My covenant."
 - B. Further, God describes the relationship as His being "a God to thee" (cf. Ps. 63:1a).
 1. Jehovah is theirs in all His greatness, riches, and glory, and in His truth, righteousness, and grace.
 2. This makes clear that the covenant is a relationship of intimate communion/love, not a promise, a contract, or a way.
 - C. And this makes Abraham and his seed to be God's people, for it is a mutual fellowship: Friend/Sovereign with friend/servant.
- III. The implications.
 - A. This assures Abraham that Jehovah will do all that is necessary to maintain the covenant and to realize His promises.
 - B. And the same is true with respect to The Seed, the Messiah (Gal. 3:16).
 - C. Those with whom the covenant is established may know God promises to maintain it forever: "everlasting."