Promises Made to the Fathers – Part Two

The promises made to the fathers undergird the four standard works

Instructions

Complete the following in the same way you learned about the Enochian and Abrahamic Covenants.

Introduction

We learned in the last reading assignment that God began making covenants—each called an “everlasting covenant”—with righteous individuals that would have a profound affect upon all of Heavenly Father’s children in the final outcome of the second estate, the earth during its seven thousand years of temporal existence (D&C 77:6-7).

The promises made with Enoch were that God would not destroy the wicked by a flood of water again, but would call upon all of Noah’s posterity to repent. Enoch was shown the fulfillment of these promises “in the last days” in a time of great wickedness, even as wicked as it was in the days of Noah (JS Matt. 1:41). God would not destroy wickedness by a flood of water, but He would through a flood of righteousness and truth that would “gather out [His] elect from the four quarters of the earth, unto a place with I shall prepare, an Holy City . . . called Zion” to prepare a people for the second coming of Jesus Christ (Moses 7:62). This gathering would be taking place on both sides of the veil (see Russell M. Nelson, “The Gathering of Scattered Israel, Ensign, Nov. 2006, 80-1), for majority of Noah’s posterity are in that spirit prison.

Enoch saw that Zion would not be found in a city, alone, but throughout the entire earth. And a people would be prepared for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ and with Him, Enoch’s city as well as all the righteous dead (Moses 6:63-4; JST Gen. 9:22-3).

We learned in the last reading that the promises made to Enoch would be fulfilled through the promises made to Abraham. He was promised that he would have a posterity that would become a great nation, who would receive the fulness of the Gospel and be blessed to live in a land where they could worship God freely. Through Abraham’s posterity, “all the families of the earth” would “be blessed, even with the blessings of the Gospel, which are the blessings of salvation, even life eternal” (Abr. 2:6-11).

How will the Lord fulfill the promises made to Abraham? This question is the focus of this reading assignment.

Covenant Made with the House of Israel—A National Covenant

The covenant made with Abraham was made with his son, Isaac (see Gen. 26:2-5). Likewise, this covenant was made with Jacob, the second of two sons born to Isaac (see Gen. 28:11-17; 35:9-14). Jacob’s name was changed by the Lord to Israel (Gen. 32:25-30). To Israel were born twelve sons. The promise made to Abraham that from him would come a great nation that would bless all the nations of the earth was to be fulfilled through these sons. The posterity of Jacob would grow to become the size of a great nation in the land of Egypt where Jacob and his moved to survive a catastrophic famine reeking havoc over the lands among whom they had been living (Gen. 46:1-7). While in Egypt, the posterity of the twelve sons of Jacob grew to become twelve tribes. As they grew in size, they became known as “the tribes of Israel” or “the house of Israel” or “the Israelites.”

As the house of Israel grew in size, the Egyptians became frightened that they might side with an invading enemy, giving the Egyptian enemy the advantage, with Egypt being conquered. So the Egyptians made the brought the Israelites into a state of bondage, using them to build their cities (Ex. 1:9-14). When they were sufficiently large enough, the Lord “remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob” (Ex. 2:24) and called Moses to redeem Israel from Egyptian bondage and bring them to Mt. Sinai where they might become Jehovah’s nation on earth (see Ex. 3-18).

After freeing the Israelites from bondage, Moses led them through the desert until they came to Mt. Sinai. It was here, that Jehovah would organize the twelve tribes into a nation that would be the means of blessing all the nations of the world.

How would this be accomplished?

1. The house of Israel was to become a unified nations with Jehovah as their God and King.

Read Exodus 19:1-6. What kind of nation was the Lord intending Israel to become?

Look up the article titled, “Peculiar,” in the Bible Dictionary. What is the meaning of this word as it is being applied to the house of Israel?

Read Leviticus 26:9-12. This is similar to Exodus 19:5-6. What do these verses add to what the Lord is offering Israel?

2. God would establish a government based upon the ten commandments.

Read Exodus 20. List the Which commandments—list them—focused upon Israel’s relationship with their God? Which commandments—list them—concerns their relationship with others in the community? If a community in this world today were to follow these commandments, what kind of a community would that be like?

3. As nation, the house of Israel were to enter into a covenant to keep these laws. If they kept these commandments, God would bless them with certain
blessings. If they broke their covenant and turned against Jehovah, they would receive curses. There are a number of places in Exodus, Leviticus and Deuteronomy that discuss the national covenant. We will look at a few verses from them:

**Read Deuteronomy 28:1-12.** List the kinds of blessings promised Israel for obedience. Would these be blessings you would like to have?

**Read Deuteronomy 28: 15-25.** What were the curses?

**Read Leviticus 26:21-23.** What does verse 23 reveal about the purpose of the curses?

**Read Deuteronomy 4:27-28.** What is the ultimate curse Israel would face for breaking the covenant?

**Read Deuteronomy 4:29-31.** What does the Lord state in this verse that offers hope for ancient (as well as modern) Israel?

4. After entering into a national covenant with Jehovah, then they will inherit the land of Canaan as their land where they can freely live the commandments of Jehovah. The land of Canaan was the land link between three continents: Africa, Asia, and Europe. It was at the center of that world. It was through this land that all the trade routes passed. The house of Israel could be in no better place to become a blessing to all the world than in the land of Canaan.

   By keeping God’s commandments, they would reap great blessings that would be visible to all the Gentiles.

**Read Deut. 4:5-8; 28:1, 9-10; Isaiah 49:6.** What do these verses promise ancient Israel?

5. As noted in Deuteronomy 4:29-31, if Israel breaks the covenant and is scattered and then turn back to Jehovah, then the Lord promises them great blessings.

**Review Deut. 4:30.** When would this take place?

As we proceed with this course, we will learn more about the great promises to the house of Israel if in their scattered condition, they turn back to Jehovah. Many prophets among ancient Israel spoke of Jehovah’s great promises that would be fulfilled in the last days. Let’s look an one right now, as a preview to more we will study throughout this semester.

**Read Jeremiah 32:21-25, 36-42; 33:7-11.** List some of the great promises made by God of Israel. What kind of a God would you say these verses describe God to be? A harsh God? Or a loving God?