

Question Sheet #2

1. Genesis 12:1-3 – Explain the Abrahamic Covenant.

The Abrahamic Covenant as initiated by God in Genesis 12 came to Abram after they had already left Ur with Abram's father Terah and were dwelling in Haran.

This covenant was initiated by God with no conditions placed on Abram. He was simply commanded to leave his home country, relatives and father's house. Although Abram was commanded, the promises of God were not conditional on his obedience seeing that Abram had already left his home country (interestingly God takes the credit for bringing Abram out of Ur – Gen. 15:7), his father was dead and he did take relatives with him when he left Haran (Lot and Sarai).

2. If Abram would get out of Ur, God said He would do 3 things for him. Explain each of the three promises.

- a. Land: God promised to give Abram a land that would be his and that of his descendants. This is further explained in Genesis 13:14-17.
- b. Great Nation: God promised to give Abram numerous descendants and make his name great.
- c. Blessing for all nations: God promised to bless (or redeem) all the families of the earth through Abram descendants.<sup>1</sup>

3. When does the third promise take on its fulfillment?

The third promise made to Abram is still being fulfilled today. The means for its ultimate fulfillment was provided in Abram's greatest descendant Christ. Through Christ all nations and all people can partake of the eternal promises of God. Finally this will be fulfilled in the Millennium.

4. How do Genesis 13:14-17; 15:1-21 & 17:1-21 relate to Genesis 13:1-4?

- a. Genesis 13:14-17 => This contains the continuation to the promise God made to Abram for a land and multitude of descendants.
- b. Genesis 15:1-21 => This contains the continuation to the promise God made to Abram for a great nation, with more details regarding their captivity in Egypt, along the their return to the land of promise.
- c. Genesis 17:1-21 => This contains further revelation establishing the eternal aspect of the covenant with Abraham. It establishes the promise that Abraham will be the father

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<sup>1</sup> From Eschatology syllabus – Spring 2003, pg. 23.

of a great nation and many nations. It also gives the land of Canaan to his descendants for ever.

5. What is a unilateral covenant? How is it seen in Genesis 13 and 15?

A unilateral covenant is one that is uni-directional. It is made from one in a higher position to one in a lower position with no conditions placed on the lower. The higher authority promises to “grant” particular benefits on the lower individual and does not require any action on the lower for the fulfillment of such promises.

Nowhere in Genesis 13 or 15 are there conditions placed on Abraham. God promises to grant him the promises of Genesis 12:1-3 (with more detail) for all eternity with not condition.

The only two possible conditions one could see in these passages is the command to leave his country in Genesis 12:1 and the command to circumcise every male in Genesis 17:10. However as has been demonstrated above the command to leave in 12:1 was not a condition seeing that he had already left. The command to circumcise every male was not a condition to God’s fulfillment as seen in Joshua 5:3-8. God was lead this generation of Abraham’s descendants back into the Promise Land even though they had not been circumcised for their 38 years of wondering.

6. How do Galatians 3:8 and 3:15-17 relate to the promises in Genesis 13,15 & 17?

In Galatians 3:8, Paul is confirming that the Gentiles being brought into the “family” of God by the preaching of the gospel of Christ is a direct fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant given all the way back in Genesis.

In Galatians 3:15-17, Paul is demonstrating that the covenant with Abraham was unconditional and nothing, not even the Law can cancel the promises made to Abraham. Now in Christ, Abraham has one seed, and the complete fulfillment of God’s covenant with Abraham is being accomplished.