

## Abraham Made Sterile because of Adultery with Hagar; Starts 13-Year Advance to Maturity; Covenant Expanded to Include Eternity Clause, Gen 17:1-8; Church Age Diaspora; Millennial Regathering; False Theology & Doctrine of Preterists

22. Abraham is said not to have become weak in his faith. He was able to orient and adjust to the fact that his poor decisions had led to the delay in fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant: (1) submitting to his wife's stupid idea, (2) thinking it was a good idea, and (3) following through on the adultery.
23. At the end of Genesis 16 we learn that Abram was 86 years old. When Chapter 17 begins it is 13 years later and he is 99. Romans 4:17-21 covers what happened during these 13 years. Abram concentrated on the promises given to him by the Lord: (1) the promise that he would be the father of a great nation (Genesis 12:2), (2) the location of that nation (Genesis 13:14), and (3) the boundaries of the nation (Genesis 15:18-21).
24. If such a nation is to be developed then it is going to require that Abram procreate. At age 86, Abram and Sarai are sexually functional but since Sarai is barren they are unable to procreate. This motivated Operation Ishmael which is the subject of Genesis 16.
25. During the 13 years between chapters 16 and 17, Abram had to put up with a lot of crap. The birth of Ishmael caused constant friction between Hagar and Sarai and Abram's adultery with Hagar rendered him sterile while Sarai's barren condition became permanent.
26. The Lord's revelation to Abram in chapter 17 indicates that during the 13-year interim, Abram made great advance in the Old Testament's spiritual life – the faith-rest drill.
27. The covenants to Abraham now take on eternal proportions:
 

**Genesis 17:1** - When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to him and said, "I am the sovereign God [ **אל שדי** *El Shaddai: the God All-Powerful* ]. Walk [ **הלך** *halach: path; way: behavior patterns or lifestyle* ] before Me and be perfect [ **תמים** *tamim: mature, i.e., experiential sanctification* ].

**Genesis 17:2** - "I will confirm My covenant between Me and you, and I will give you a multitude of descendants."
28. In verse 1, the Lord tells Abram to grow in grace and in doing so orient and adjust to the divine promises. To rivet Abram's attention, He identifies Himself as *El Shaddai*: the All-Powerful One which emphasizes divine omnipotence.
29. God is able to fulfill the promises He grants to Abram. Their fulfillment does not depend on anything Abram does but on the sovereignty and power of God.
 

**Genesis 17:3** - And Abram bowed down with his face to the ground [ **authority orientation** ], and God spoke to him, saying,

**v. 4** - “As for Me, this is My covenant with you and you will be a father of a great multitude of nations.”

30. In Genesis 13:14-15, the Lord took Abram up on a mountain to look in all four directions and informed him that all the land he could see was decreed to him and his progeny.
31. In Genesis 17:4, the Lord expands the covenant to include a multitude of nations, those ruled by Jewish and Arabic kings.

**Genesis 17:5** - “No longer will your name be Abram [ **exalted father** ]. Instead your name will be Abraham [ אַבְרָהָם ], because I will make you the father of a multitude of nations.”

32. Abraham is a variant of Abram but the wordplay enlarges the impact of the covenant; now the patriarch is the father of a multitude of nations.

**Genesis 17:6** - “I will make you extremely fruitful. I will make nations of you, and kings will descend from you.

**v. 7** - “I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an eternal [ עוֹלָם **’olam: everlasting, perpetual** ] covenant [ **a decree** ]. I will be your God and the God of your descendants after you.”

**Genesis 17:8** - “I will give the whole land of Canaan where you reside as a permanent possession to you and your descendants after you. I will be their God.”

33. This confirms the Lord’s complete revelation of the Abrahamic and Palestinian Covenants. These two decrees have two major elements: (1) a people populated by those who not only have the genes of Abraham but also the God of Abraham, and (2) a land that will be their possession in time and in eternity.
34. The temporal possession of the land will be periodically interrupted by the fifth cycle of discipline, the last culminating in A.D. 70 when the Romans completed their siege of Jerusalem.
35. The Diaspora included both believers and unbelievers. Their dispersion is to continue until the Lord personally leads them into the land following His Second Advent. Until then, Jews may return to the land but they do so at their own risk and to maintain their residence in the land they must successfully defend themselves against all predator nations or organizations.
36. Only believers will enter the land at the beginning of the Millennium. The eternal, or perpetual, possession of the land will occur in the new heavens and the new earth.
35. There is a false theology and a false doctrine concerning the Abrahamic and Palestinian Covenants. The false theology that is currently gaining adherents is called preterism:

The belief that all Bible prophecies, including those concerned with the return of Christ, resurrection of the dead, rapture, judgment and arrival of the kingdom of God, came to complete fulfillment in A.D. 70 upon the destruction of Herod's temple in Jerusalem.<sup>1</sup>

36. The false doctrine that becomes identified with this belief is replacement theology, which generally states that all the covenants given to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were transferred to the church in A.D. 70. From the preterist Web site we read:
- Preterists believe that all Bible prophecy has been fulfilled. This position implies no special purpose for Jews in the future. The preterist believes that Old Covenant promises are ultimately fulfilled in Christ and his church, and all are now eligible to be God's chosen people. Those who think God still considers Jews his chosen people cannot stand this view and routinely accuse preterists of teaching "replacement theology." They also find it convenient to charge us with anti-Semitism, which is an inaccurate interpretation of our position.<sup>2</sup>**
37. The conclusion that both Israel and the Church are each recipients of the Abrahamic, Palestinian, Davidic, and New Covenants must occur outside the scope of dispensational theology. It also must ignore the *eternal* factor in God's decree to Abraham and his descendants in Genesis 17:7-8.
38. It is true that the promises apply only to those who have the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but the temporal aspect of the covenants allowed unbelieving Jews and even aliens to live in the land under blessing by association. Some were saved as a result and some were not.
39. A key polemic against preterist doctrine is the word עולם 'olam in:
- Genesis 17:7 - "I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an eternal [ עולם 'olam: everlasting, perpetual ] covenant [ a decree ]. I will be your God and the God of your descendants after you."**
40. The covenant is a divine decree, it is said to be eternal, and it is granted to Abraham and his descendants. Those descendants are the line of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as well as the line of Christ and Christ does not presently sit on David's throne.

<sup>1</sup> See <http://www.preterism.info/preterism.htm> at [www.preterism.info](http://www.preterism.info).

<sup>2</sup> See [www.preterist.info](http://www.preterist.info).