

Article of the Month
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The Sand of the Seashore

The Bible uses many comparisons and expressions to make its points. One of those expressions is “The Sand of the Seashore.” This term is used in Scripture in a generic sort of way simply to mean “many,” or “multitudes,” or something virtually “innumerable.” However, it is also used specifically as part of the promise to Abraham (which Paul calls the “Gospel” in Galatians 3:8).

THE GOSPEL TO ABRAHAM

Abraham’s life is used in Scripture as a kind of living prophecy — an “allegory,” according to the Apostle in Galatians 4:22-24. In Genesis 17:4, 5, God changes Abram’s name to Abraham as a part of this allegorical use of Abraham’s life. His newly-given name means “Father of a Multitude.” God tells us that this would be Abraham’s new name because he would become “the father of a multitude of nations.” We might mistakenly conclude that this means that all Jews and Arabs would be Abraham’s descendants, but the promise is far larger and grander than that. God specifies later (Genesis 22:17, 18) that “all the nations of the earth” will be included and blessed in Abraham’s “seed.” Thus, figuratively, Abraham is not the father of just two nations (Jews and Arabs), but of a multitude of them — the whole human race!

Included in this blessed promise is that Abraham’s “seed” would be “as the stars of the heavens, and as the sand which is on the seashore.” Again, it is possible that we might mistakenly conclude that these two expressions simply mean that there would be MANY who would constitute Abraham’s seed. But Scripture does not waste words. The two expressions are used, as we shall see, to prophesy that a part of Abraham’s “descendants” would have a heavenly resurrection (the stars of heaven), and part of his descendants would have an earthly resurrection (the sand of the seashore). This “two-salvation” doctrine becomes a staple of good Bible interpretation.

This DIVISION of Abraham’s seed is uniquely worked into the histories and prophetic meanings of the lives of his son (Isaac) and his grandson (Jacob — whose name was changed to “Israel”). In Genesis 26:4, when the promise is repeated to Isaac, it specifies ONLY “the stars of heaven.” When it is repeated again to Jacob in Genesis 32:12, it specifies ONLY “the sand of the sea.”

Why is this? Paul explains (Galatians 3:29 and 4:31) that Isaac represents those who become a part of the promised seed which would do the blessing — The Christ — the heavenly resurrection class. But Israel is also mentioned in this context, and in verse 30

Return to Article-of-the-Month Index

Paul explains that Israel would not be “heir” of the promise as would be the spiritual class (the “Jerusalem which is ABOVE” — verse 26.) In other words, Israel, while blessings will come through it, is not to be the promised seed which would DO the blessing. And yet, it is with this very class (Israel as the “sand of the seashore” part of the seed) that God promises to make the “New Covenant.” See Jeremiah 31:23-34.

In SUMMARY of this vital and precious doctrine before we go further:

God spoke the GOSPEL to Abraham promising that all the families of the earth would eventually be blessed because of his “seed.” Paul assures us that the blessing seed will be Christ with his disciples once the Millennial Kingdom comes. But Israel will ALSO be a seed used for the benefit of “all the families of the earth” in that the New Covenant of blessing will come through the nation of Israel. Thus BOTH a heavenly (“stars”) seed and an earthly (“sand”) seed coming out of Abraham will change the history of mankind.

ISRAEL AS THE “SAND” SEED

We have seen that Jacob’s name was changed to Israel and that his part in the Abrahamic promise was to have a seed like “the sand of the seashore.” Hosea 1:10 confirms that the nation of Israel is that “sand” class (as do other texts such as Isaiah 10:22 and Romans 9:27). We have also seen that the New Covenant is to be made with that nation of Israel. HOW, then, does the rest of mankind become a part of Abraham’s seed? How does Abraham become the “father of many nations?”

The fact is, ALL THE WORLD will eventually become a part of Israel because they will want to partake of the blessings of the New Covenant. (We will shortly demonstrate that Scripture eventually calls ALL OF THE WORLD “the sand of the seashore”). This CONVERSION of all to Israel and its New Covenant is shown in a number of texts. But it is imperative that we realize that the New Covenant is Scripturally made ONLY with Israel; therefore, to partake of its blessings, all must BECOME part of Israel.

Zechariah 8:20-23 shows that the nations will take hold of the Jew imploring him to take them to the Lord for blessings. The same prophet in 14:16 and 17 shows that no blessings will come to those who do not find those blessings *through Jerusalem*. Isaiah 60:1-5 and 10-12 are explicit in showing that “the abundance of the sea [the restless world of mankind] will be turned [converted] to” Israel. Verse 12 specifies that NO BLESSING — indeed, OBLITERATION — will come to the nation that doesn’t serve Israel at that time.

Return to Article-of-the-Month Index

“BLESS THEMSELVES”

There is a valid translation of the Abrahamic promise which reads: “In thy seed shall all the families of the earth **bless themselves.**” At first reading, this translation seems strange. But in the light of the other Scriptures, this is a very good translation. It is **BY BECOMING A PART OF ABRAHAM’S SEED** (by becoming a part of Israel in order to get the blessings of the New Covenant), the nations **WILL** bless themselves. It should be noted that the promise does not say “**BY**” Abraham’s seed all the families of the earth will get their blessings. It says **IN** Abraham’s seed all would be blessed (or bless themselves). This is significant. It is by **ENTERING IN** — by **BECOMING** a part of Abraham’s seed — that the blessings are secured. It is an **ACTIVE** action on the part of humanity that will bless them. It will not be **PASSIVE**. The seed won’t just “bless” mankind. Mankind will purposefully **ENTER INTO** the seed of Abraham and thus be blessed. This same meaning is shown by the Apostle Paul in I Corinthians 15:22. Paul stipulates that “as all **IN** Adam die, so also all **IN** Christ shall be made alive.” In the Kingdom, all (who are willing) will be **IN** Christ and **IN** Abraham’s seed (as the “sand upon the seashore”).

THE WORLD OF MANKIND AS “THE SAND”

The world of mankind is, in the end, stipulated to be “the sand on the seashore” class. This is shown particularly in Revelation 20:8. In this passage, the world has come through the Millennial Age and reached perfection. Satan is loosed for a final test on humanity. All of this restored world of mankind is here called “the sand of the seashore.” This text is the culminating text for all of the above considerations. By the end of the Millennial Kingdom, all of humanity will have come into the Jacob (Israel) part of the Abrahamic promise. They will all be “Abraham’s Seed.” They will all be “the sand of the sea,” and they all will have “blessed themselves” by so doing. Abraham will have become the “father of many nations.” Once they pass the test here described, they will live forever in perfection on a perfected earth with not so much as a wisp of a worry.
