

The Permanent Land Inheritance in the Prophets

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The fulfillment of the **permanent** Land inheritance promised to Abraham and to His 'Seed' was not realized by Israel under Joshua. They inherited the Land under a temporary provisional covenant – the Law of Moses.

Leviticus 25:23 NIV

23 "The land must not be sold permanently, **because the land is mine and you are but aliens and my tenants.**

Being an "alien" and a "tenant" in a Land that belongs to God is not the same thing as having the Land as a permanent inheritance, as was promised Abraham and his 'Seed' (who is Christ).¹

Amillennialists point to statements in Joshua as proof that the entire Abrahamic Promise was fulfilled in Joshua's day, and that nothing remains.

Joshua 21:43-45 NKJV

43 **So the LORD gave to Israel all the land of which He had sworn to give to their fathers,** and they took possession of it and dwelt in it.

44 **The LORD gave them rest all around, according to all that He had sworn to their fathers.** And not a man of all their enemies stood against them; the LORD delivered all their enemies into their hand.

45 **Not a word failed of any good thing which the LORD had spoken to the house of Israel.** All came to pass.

The two statements, "the Lord gave to Israel all the land of which He had sworn to their fathers," and, "the LORD gave them rest all around, according to all that He had sworn to their fathers," do not refer to the Abrahamic Covenant, but **to the covenant God made with Israel at Mount Sinai – the Mosaic Covenant.** Notice the last verse limits the promises to those "which the LORD had spoken to the house of Israel." This, of course, does not include what He spoke to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob before the "house of Israel" existed. God promised Abraham an unconditional and permanent inheritance of the Land. But, when He brought Israel out of Egypt 430 years later,² He made a temporary and conditional "lease" of the Land if they obeyed His Law. The "fathers" that are

¹ Gal. 3:16

² Gal. 3:17

referenced in these passages in Joshua were the generation that came out of Egypt, those who died in the wilderness because of their rebellion against God. Joshua led the children of these “fathers” into the Promised Land. These passages in Joshua refer to the children of those who came out of Egypt, who received the Covenant at Mt. Sinai along with the promised temporary and conditional lease of the Land as long as they obeyed the Law. Joshua was referring to what God had promised their “fathers” at Mt. Sinai. That was a promise of the Land flowing with milk and honey.

Exodus 3:15-17 NKJV

15 Moreover God said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: 'The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is My name forever, and this is My memorial to all generations.'

16 Go and gather the elders of Israel together, and say to them, 'The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, appeared to me, saying, "I have surely visited you and seen what is done to you in Egypt;

17 and I have said I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt to the land of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, to a land flowing with milk and honey."'

Lev 20:22-24 NKJV

22 'You shall therefore keep all My statutes and all My judgments, and perform them, that the land where I am bringing you to dwell may not vomit you out.

23 And you shall not walk in the statutes of the nation which I am casting out before you; for they commit all these things, and therefore I abhor them.

24 But I have said **to you**, "You shall inherit their land, and I will give it to you to possess, a land flowing with milk and honey." I am the LORD your God, who has separated you from the peoples.

Nowhere in the Mosaic Covenant was the Land promised as a permanent inheritance. It was always conditional on Israel keeping the Law of Moses. Thus, Joshua spoke of this temporary and conditional inheritance of the Land which God had promised to the “fathers” of those whom he led into the Land. These “fathers” all died in the wilderness because they went back on the covenant they had agreed to forty years earlier at the foot of Mt. Sinai.³

Solomon referenced the above passage in Joshua in his dedication of the Temple, but added one crucial detail.

³ Ex. 19:1-8; Ex. 24:3,7; Deut. 28:15-21,36,63-68; Deut. 29:27; Deut. 30:1-6

1 Kings 8:56 NKJV

56 "Blessed be the LORD, who has given rest to His people Israel, according to all that He promised. ***There has not failed one word of all His good promise, which He promised through His servant Moses.***

All of the similar statements in Joshua refer to the provisional covenant – the Law – through which Abraham’s descendants were permitted to temporarily live in the land that God promised to Abraham and his ‘Seed’ as a permanent inheritance.

The Second, Permanent Inheritance of the Promised Land

That the possession of the Land under Joshua was not the ultimate fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant is proven by the fact that the prophets spoke of a future, second inheritance of the Promised Land under the Messiah – Jesus – who shared the same Hebrew name (Yeshua) with Joshua who brought Israel into the land under the Law of Moses. The second inheritance of the Promised Land would indeed be permanent, as God promised to Abraham.

David:

In the second Psalm, God promised His “Son” the Land inheritance:

Psalm 2:6-9 LXX⁴

6 *But I have been made King by Him, on Sion His holy mountain, 7 declaring the ordinance of the Lord. The Lord said to Me: “You are My Son, today I have begotten You. 8 Ask of me, and I will give You **the nations for Your inheritance, and the ends of the Land for Your possession.** 9 You shall shepherd them with a rod of iron; You shall shatter them like a potter’s vessel.”*

David prophesied again of Christ’s future Land inheritance.

Psalm 16:5-11 LXX

5 *“The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup: **thou art he that restores my inheritance to me.** 6 **The lines⁵ have fallen to me in the best places, yea, I have a most excellent heritage.***

7 *I will bless the Lord who has instructed me; my reins too have chastened me even till night. 8 I foresaw the Lord always before my face; for he is on my right hand, that I*

⁴ My translation of the Septuagint

⁵ The Greek word "schoinion" refers to measured out boundaries of the Land inheritance. The same word appears in the LXX in 1 Chron. 16:17. *“He confirmed it to Jacob for an ordinance, to Israel as an everlasting covenant, saying, ‘To you will I give the land of Canaan, **the measured border** of your inheritance,’ when they were few in number, when they were but little, and dwelt as strangers in it.”*

should not be moved. 9 Therefore my heart rejoiced and my tongue exulted; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: 10 because thou wilt not leave my soul in hades, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. 11 Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou wilt fill me with joy with thy countenance: at thy right hand there are delights forever."

Peter quoted this Psalm in his Pentecost sermon, stating plainly that it refers to Christ.⁶

David wrote the following Psalm while Israel was living in the Land temporarily as sojourners under the Mosaic Covenant. He looked forward to **the permanent possession of the Land inheritance** promised in the Abrahamic and Davidic Covenants.

Psalm 37:9-11, 18-20, 28-29, 34 NKJV

*9 For evildoers shall be cut off; But those who wait on the LORD, **They shall inherit the earth.***

10 For yet a little while and the wicked shall be no more; Indeed, you will look carefully for his place, But it shall be no more.

*11 **But the meek shall inherit the earth,** And shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace. ...*

*18 The LORD knows the days of the upright, And **their inheritance shall be forever.***

19 They shall not be ashamed in the evil time, And in the days of famine they shall be satisfied.

20 But the wicked shall perish; And the enemies of the LORD, Like the splendor of the meadows, shall vanish. Into smoke they shall vanish away. ...

28 For the LORD loves justice, And does not forsake His saints; They are preserved forever, But the descendants of the wicked shall be cut off.

*29 **The righteous shall inherit the land, And dwell in it forever.**...*

*34 Wait on the LORD, And keep His way, And **He shall exalt you to inherit the land; When the wicked are cut off, you shall see it.***

According to David, the future inheritance of the Land is permanent, and it will come when "the wicked are cut off."⁷ Jesus quoted Psalm 37:11, "the meek shall inherit the Land,"

⁶ Acts 2:25-33

⁷ It is unfortunate that most translations inconsistently translate the Hebrew and Greek words for "land." As in the NKJV above, sometimes the English translations use "earth" and other times they use "land." In both Hebrew and Greek the word is the same. And it ought to always be rendered "land," because "earth" carries a misleading meaning in modern English, referring to the whole planet. Earth was not the name of the planet when the Bible was written. Earth was defined by God in Genesis 1. "And God called the firmament Heaven ... And God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters He called Seas." Both the Hebrew and Greek word for "earth" refer to the dry land, never to the whole planet which has only been named "Earth" in fairly recent times. Therefore, in Psalm 2,

and applied it to His disciples, using the future tense.⁸ This is also illustrated in Jesus' parable of the wheat and tares. The wicked (tares) are cut off and the righteous (wheat) inherit the Kingdom forever.⁹

Isaiah:

The usual challenge by amillennialists to all of the prophecies that speak of a second Land inheritance is that they refer to the return from the Babylonian captivity under Cyrus. Yet, Isaiah makes it quite clear that such prophecies refer to the return to the land **after a second exile**. The first exile was the Babylonian exile. The second exile began when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem in AD70. It is from this second exile that Isaiah prophesied that Israel would return a second time under the Messiah.

Isaiah 11:1-6, 9-16

1 There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, And a Branch shall grow out of his roots.

2 The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, The Spirit of counsel and might, The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD.

3 His delight is in the fear of the LORD, And He shall not judge by the sight of His eyes, Nor decide by the hearing of His ears;

*4 But with righteousness He shall judge the poor, And decide with equity for the meek of the earth; **He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth** [a clear reference to Psalm 2], And with the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked.*

5 Righteousness shall be the belt of His loins, And faithfulness the belt of His waist.

6 "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, The leopard shall lie down with the young goat, The calf and the young lion and the fatling together; And a little child shall lead them. ...

*9 They shall not hurt nor destroy in all **My holy mountain**, For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD As the waters cover the sea.*

10 "And in that day there shall be a Root of Jesse, Who shall stand as a banner to the people; For the Gentiles shall seek Him, And His resting place shall be glorious."

*11 It shall come to pass in that day **That the Lord shall set His hand again the second time To recover the remnant of His people who are left, From Assyria and Egypt, From Pathros and Cush, From Elam and Shinar, From Hamath and the islands of the sea.***

37, and in every other similar passage, we should render the word "earth" as "land." Context determines whether it refers to the whole inhabited dry land (all nations) or specifically to the Land God promised to Abraham as a permanent inheritance.

⁸ Matt. 5:5

⁹ Matt. 13:37-43

12 He will set up a banner for the nations, And will assemble the outcasts of Israel, And gather together the dispersed of Judah From the four corners of the earth.

13 Also the envy of Ephraim shall depart, And the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off; Ephraim shall not envy Judah, And Judah shall not harass Ephraim.

14 But they shall fly down upon the shoulder of the Philistines toward the west; Together they shall plunder the people of the East; They shall lay their hand on Edom and Moab; And the people of Ammon shall obey them.

15 The LORD will utterly destroy the tongue of the Sea of Egypt; With His mighty wind He will shake His fist over the River, And strike it in the seven streams, And make men cross over dryshod.

16 There will be a highway for the remnant of His people Who will be left from Assyria, As it was for Israel In the day that he came up from the land of Egypt.

The second regathering of Israel will be accompanied by a second (permanent) inheritance of the Land, through Jesus Christ the Messiah.

Isaiah 61:1-7 LXX

1 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me; he has sent me to preach glad tidings to the poor, to heal the broken in heart, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind;

2 to declare the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of recompense; to comfort all that mourn;

3 that there should be given to them that mourn in Sion glory instead of ashes, the oil of joy to the mourners, the garment of glory for the spirit of heaviness: and they shall be called generations of righteousness, the planting of the Lord for glory.

4 And they shall build the old waste places, they shall raise up those that were before made desolate, and shall renew the desert cities, even those that had been desolate for many generations.

5 And strangers shall come and feed thy flocks, and aliens shall be thy ploughmen and vine-dressers.

6 But **ye shall be called priests of the Lord**,¹⁰ the ministers of God: ye shall eat the strength of nations, and shall be admired because of their wealth.

7 **Thus shall they inherit the land a second time**, and everlasting joy shall be upon their head.

¹⁰ Rev 20:6 "Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, **but they shall be priests of God and of Christ**, and shall reign with Him a thousand years."

Isa 60:19-21 NKJV

19 *The sun shall no longer be your light by day, Nor for brightness shall the moon give light to you; But the LORD will be to you an everlasting light, And your God your glory.*

20 *Your sun shall no longer go down, Nor shall your moon withdraw itself; For the LORD will be your everlasting light, And the days of your mourning shall be ended. 21 Also your people shall all be righteous; They shall inherit the land forever, The branch of My planting, The work of My hands, That I may be glorified.*

Isaiah 65:9,17 LXX¹¹

9 *And I will lead forth the Seed from Jacob and Judah, and He shall inherit My holy mountain, and My chosen ones and My servants shall inherit it, and they shall dwell there. ...*

17 *For **there shall be the new heavens and new land**, and they shall not remember the former, neither shall they come to mind at all.*

18 *But they shall find in it joy and exultation, because look; I make Jerusalem joyful, and my people rejoicing.*

19 *And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and will be glad in my people: and there shall no more be heard in her the voice of weeping or the voice of crying.*

This is the passage from which Peter draws the term, "new heavens and new earth," which He says that we are looking for "according to His promise"¹² which is directly from Isaiah 65-66. Notice also that "Seed" and the personal pronoun "He" are singular, referring to one individual. Notice also that this "Seed" comes out of both Jacob and Judah. This is not the nation of Israel, which comes from all twelve tribes. This "Seed" comes from one tribe, the tribe of Judah. Paul said plainly that the singular "Seed" of the Abrahamic Covenant is Christ.¹³ Who then are His "chosen ones" and His "servants?" Paul answers this as well just a few verses later: "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."¹⁴

Ezekiel:

In the famous "Valley of Dry Bones" prophecy, Ezekiel prophesied of the second, eternal inheritance of the Land. Yet, this could not refer to the return from the

¹¹ My translation

¹² 2 Peter 3:10-12

¹³ Gal. 3:16

¹⁴ Gal. 3:27-29

Babylonian exile, because it would be accompanied by the resurrection of the saints from their graves.

Ezek. 37:11-14 NKJV

11 Then He said to me, "Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They indeed say, 'Our bones are dry, our hope is lost, and we ourselves are cut off!' 12 Therefore prophesy and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Behold, O My people, **I will open your graves and cause you to come up from your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel.** 13 Then you shall know that I am the LORD, **when I have opened your graves, O My people, and brought you up from your graves.** 14 I will put My Spirit [lit. "My breath"] in you, and you shall live, **and I will place you in your own land.** Then you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken it and performed it," says the LORD'."

Why do you suppose that Joseph gave instructions that his remains be exhumed and reburied in the Promised Land? "By faith Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the departure of the children of Israel, and gave instructions concerning his bones."¹⁵ Joseph's bones were reburied in the Promised Land "by faith" because he looked for the fulfillment of the promise by means of resurrection. Joseph's bones, along with those of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, are "dry bones" still buried in Hebron.

Ezek. 39:27-29 NKJV

27 When I have brought them back from the peoples and gathered them out of their enemies' lands, and I am hallowed in them in the sight of many nations, 28 then they shall know that I am the LORD their God, who sent them into captivity among the nations, **but also brought them back to their land,** and left none of them captive any longer. 29 **And I will not hide My face from them anymore;** for I shall have poured out My Spirit on the house of Israel,' says the Lord GOD."

Notice that when God brings Israel back to inherit the Land a second time, He will have poured out His Spirit on the house of Israel. He promised not to hide His face from Israel ever again. This statement would not be true if Ezekiel was speaking of the first return from the Babylonian exile. God turned His face from Israel again, when they rejected Jesus Christ, leading to the second exile in AD70.

After describing the New Jerusalem in graphic detail in chapters 40-48, Ezekiel then gave the new borders for all twelve tribes of redeemed Israel in the second permanent return to the Land.

¹⁵ Heb. 11:22

Daniel:

Daniel provides graphic descriptions of the end time drama, the persecution under Antichrist, and the resurrection of the saints to their Land inheritance. Our first look at the inheritance of the righteous comes from Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream.

Dan 2:42-45 NKJV

42 And as the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly fragile.

43 As you saw iron mixed with ceramic clay, they will mingle with the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay.

*44 And in the days of these kings **the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.***

45 Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold — the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure."

This is of course what Revelation 11 refers to when it says, "The kingdoms of this world have become the Kingdom of **our Lord and of His Christ.**" And this statement is a reference to Psalm 2.

Psalm 2:2,6-9 LXX

*2 The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers gathered themselves together, **against the Lord, and against his Christ;** ...*

6 But I have been made king by him on Sion his holy mountain, 7 declaring the ordinance of the Lord: the Lord said to me, "You are my Son, today have I begotten You. 8 Ask of me, and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance, and the ends of the Land for Your possession. You shall shepherd them with a rod of iron; You shall shatter them like a potter's vessel.

That the Kingdoms of the earth will be given to Christ and to those joined to Him is also stated in Daniel 7.

Dan 7:13-14,27 NKJV

*13 "I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like **the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven!** He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him. 14 Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. **His dominion is an everlasting***

dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed. ...

27 Then the kingdom and dominion, And the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, Shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, And all dominions shall serve and obey Him.'

Finally, in the 12th chapter, Daniel was told that all this will occur at the resurrection of the just.

Dan 12:1-3 NKJV

1 "At that time Michael shall stand up, The great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people; And there shall be a time of trouble, Such as never was since there was a nation, Even to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, Every one who is found written in the book.

2 And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, Some to everlasting life, Some to shame and everlasting contempt.

3 Those who are wise shall shine Like the brightness of the firmament, And those who turn many to righteousness Like the stars forever and ever. ...

13 "But you, go your way till the end; for you shall rest, and will arise to your inheritance at the end of the days."

As with Ezekiel's prophecy, the inheritance of the Land by believers occurs after the resurrection of the just. And this occurs when the "Son of Man" comes in the clouds of heaven to overthrow the kingdoms of the world, and establish His Kingdom over all the earth. It is when the kingdoms of the world become Christ's Kingdom that the saints receive their allotted Land inheritance. All of this is based on the Abrahamic promise of a permanent inheritance and possession of the Land God promised to Abraham and to his 'Seed,' who is Christ.

Amillennialists have twisted the Abrahamic promise of the permanent Land inheritance, claiming it was completely fulfilled under Joshua. Yet, Hebrews states plainly that Joshua did not provide the fulfillment of this hope. "For if Joshua had given them rest, then He would not afterward have spoken of another day. There remains therefore a rest for the people of God."¹⁶

The promises to the "fathers" that were completely fulfilled through Joshua were those given through Moses to the previous generation who died in the wilderness, the "fathers" of the generation that Joshua led into the Land. "Blessed be the LORD, who has

¹⁶ Hebrews 4:8-9

given rest to His people Israel, according to all that He promised. There has not failed one word of all His good promise, which He promised **through His servant Moses.**"¹⁷ Joshua did not bring Israel to the full realization of the permanent Land inheritance promised to Abraham, but to the temporary and conditional possession promised through Moses. If, as amillennialists claim, the statement in Joshua that "not one word failed of all that God promised" means that the Abrahamic Covenant was fully fulfilled in Joshua's day, then Paul becomes a liar.

Gal 3:16-18 NKJV

16 Now to Abraham and **his Seed** were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "**And to your Seed,**" **who is Christ.**

17 And this I say, that **the law**, which was four hundred and thirty years later, **cannot annul the covenant that was confirmed before by God in Christ, that it should make the promise of no effect.**

18 For if **the inheritance** is of the law, it is no longer of promise; **but God gave it to Abraham by promise.**

Paul's point was that God's promise was to Abraham "**and to your Seed**", whom Paul said was Christ. The "inheritance" is what was promised. And that "inheritance" is the permanent possession of the Land. According to Paul, the Law, which provided a temporary and conditional possession of the land, cannot overturn the unconditional promise of the inheritance given to Abraham. Since Christ is the 'Seed' to whom the inheritance was promised, and since Christ had not yet come when Joshua led the Israelites into the Land under the Mosaic Covenant, it is obvious that the Abrahamic Covenant was NOT fulfilled in Joshua's day. It could not be fulfilled without Christ.

Dispensationalists have divorced the "Church" from Abraham's seed. As Paul so strenuously proved in Galatians 3, Christ is Abraham's 'Seed,' the Heir of the Land inheritance. And we who have been baptized into Christ are "Abraham's seed" because we have been joined to Him, making us "*co-heirs with Christ.*"¹⁸ The inheritance is not heaven, but the Land that God promised to Abraham and to his 'Seed.'

¹⁷ 1 Kings 8:56-57

¹⁸ Rom. 8:16-17