

Yahweh, the Almighty God of Israel, is with us
"Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet,
and shew my people their transgression,
and the house of Jacob their sins." Isaiah 58:1

Famous Believers

Abraham: Yahweh's Friend

Reading:
Hebrews Chapter 8

1. Introduction

A covenant is an agreement between two or more parties. **The Everlasting Covenant** is an agreement or contract between Yahweh the Creator of the mighty universe and His People. As its name implies it is **everlasting**. This contract will last for all time, age after age. It was introduced long before Israel became a nation. In common with many business contracts, the **Everlasting Covenant** has the following properties:

1. **Parties to the Covenant:** The LORD God of Israel and His people.
2. **A Specified Territory** and area of interest.
3. **Objectives.** In other words it has a reason for its existence, an aim.
4. **Regulations and Conditions.**
5. **Benefits and Penalties:** ... Blessings and Curses.
6. **Levels of Authority:** each level having its own specified power.
7. **Signs:** symbols, emblems and tokens, spiritual icons which remind the parties of certain elements of the contract.
8. **The everlasting covenant is also signed, sealed, recorded and ratified.**

The **everlasting covenant** has all these properties. This Sabbath I will discuss only a small part of the Everlasting Covenant, the part played by the patriarch Abraham.

Abraham lived about 4000 years ago, yet his name is on the lips of millions of Israelites and Arabs the world over. Unlike Moses and other prophets, Abraham didn't write any books of the Bible, but his name is mentioned 230 times in the Scriptures. The city of Hebron, where Abraham was buried, ranks second in Israel to Jerusalem in importance. Why is Abraham so famous? What did he do that ranks him with the greatest people that ever lived? This Sabbath we will find some of the answers to those questions. In his early life Abraham lived in the town of Ur of the Chaldees: that is in ancient Babylonia or **modern Iraq**. The name Abraham means '**the Father is high.**' He is also called the '**father of the faithful**' and the '**friend of God.**'

2. Father of Many Nations

When Abraham was 100 years of age Yahweh promised that he would be the father of many nations. The old patriarch, as we would say in modern terms, '**fell about laughing.**' So did his wife Sarah; she also thought the

idea was quite funny. Here is the record of God's promise.

Genesis 17: 4: *“As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations.*

5: Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee.”

Verse 9: *“And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations.”*

Verse 17: *“Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?”*

Genesis 18: 12: *“Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?”*

3. The Promised Land

Yahweh not only promised Abraham that he would be the father of many nations, though the promised seed (Messiah) would come through one nation, but He also promised Abraham the land of Israel, and ultimately the whole earth - for an everlasting possession!

Genesis 15: 18: *“In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates.”*

Genesis 17: 7: *“And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an **everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.**”*

Genesis 26: 3: *“Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee (Isaac), and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I swore unto Abraham thy father.”*

Genesis 50: 24: *“And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die: and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.”*

Deuteronomy 34: 4: *“And the LORD said unto him, This is the land which I swore unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed: I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither.”*

An Eternal Gift

This was no temporary gift. It was to be Abraham's everlasting possession.

Genesis 48: 3: *“And Jacob said unto Joseph, God Almighty appeared unto me at Luz in the land of Canaan, and blessed me,*

*4: And said unto me, Behold, I will make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, and I will make of thee a multitude of people; and **will give this land to thy seed after thee for an everlasting possession.**”*

2 Chronicles 20: 5: *“And Jehoshaphat stood in the congregation of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the LORD, before the new court,*

6: And said, O LORD God of our fathers, art not thou God in heaven? and rulest not thou over all the kingdoms of the heathen? and in thine hand is there not power and might, so that none is able to withstand thee?

*7: Art not thou our God, who didst drive out the inhabitants of this land before thy people Israel, **and gavest it to the seed of Abraham thy friend for ever?**”*

The Promised Land will revert to Abraham and his progeny when Jesus Christ (the Seed of Abraham) returns to earth. **It will not be won by the bullet or the bomb:** but will be won by the Messiah when he returns as predicted in (Zechariah chapter 14).

4. Yahweh Writes the Everlasting Covenant

It was not till Israel arrived at Mount Sinai that the Most High actually recorded the everlasting covenant. It had

been in existence before that time; but at Mount Sinai it was recorded for posterity. The heart of the everlasting covenant is the **Ten Commandments**. These commandments define **obedience** and **disobedience**, **righteousness** and **sin**. The Almighty wrote these commandments with His own hand. Many people suppose that Yahweh's law was first introduced to mankind in the days of Moses. This is an error; for we are plainly told that hundreds of years before Israel came to mount Sinai, Abraham was keeping God's commandments.

Genesis 26: 5: ***“Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.”***

Exodus 31: 18: ***“And he (Yahweh) gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God.”***

Deuteronomy 9: 10: ***“And the LORD delivered unto me two tables of stone written with the finger of God; and on them was written according to all the words, which the LORD spake with you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly.”***

The Covenant Includes All True Believers

The everlasting covenant includes all believers in the Most High, even those living in this 21st century: not just the Israelites who came out of Egypt with Moses.

Deuteronomy 29: 13: ***“That he may establish thee to day for a people unto himself, and that he may be unto thee a God, as he hath said unto thee, and as he hath sworn unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.***
14: ***Neither with you only do I make this covenant and this oath;***
15: ***But with him that standeth here with us this day before the LORD our God, and also with him that is not here with us this day.”***

5. Abraham: Friend of God

Few people, only two to my knowledge, have the privilege of being called the **Friend of God**. Abraham was one of them. Moses was the other. Yahweh shared His plans with Abraham just as you and I would tell our friends our plans.

Isaiah 41: 8: ***“But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend.”***

Genesis 18: 17: ***“And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?”***

Amos 3: 7: ***“Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.”***

6. Abraham: Father of the Faithful

Abraham's finest qualification was that he **believed God**, even when told seemingly impossible things. This faith, this action of the mind, is called the **‘righteousness of faith.’** It is an invaluable credential. Abraham, the Father of the Faithful, had an abundance of faith.

Romans 4: 1: ***“What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?***
2: ***For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God.***
3: ***For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.***
4: ***Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.***
5: ***But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.***
6: ***Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works,”***

James 2: 23: ***“And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.”***

Romans 4: 13: ***“For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed,***

through the law, **but through the righteousness of faith.**”

7. Abraham's Altars

An altar is the focus point in a place of worship. In olden days altars were made of unhewn rocks placed in a pile. Those rough altar stones symbolised **true believers**, most of whom are as unpolished in the ways of mankind as the rocks used in Abraham's altars. The sacrifices, fragrant incense etc. that rose to the Almighty symbolised the believer's faith prayers, praise and thanksgiving for the Lamb of God who was to die for our sins. Wherever Abraham and his progeny travelled they raised up unhewn rock altars at which they worshipped the Almighty. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Joshua, David and Elijah all built rock altars.

Genesis 12: 7: *“And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him.
8: And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, having Bethel on the west, and Hai on the east: and there he builded an altar unto the LORD, and called upon the name of the LORD.”*

Genesis 13: 18: *“Then Abram removed his tent, and came and dwelt in the plain of Mamre, which is in Hebron, and built there an altar unto the LORD.”*

Abraham's Wells

Wherever Abraham went he also dug wells to water his flocks and family. The Canaanites allowed him to dig, but usually contested the well once it had been dug. Few could duplicate Abraham's knowledge and perseverance in digging wells.

Genesis 21: 25: *“And Abraham reproveth Abimelech because of a well of water, which Abimelech's servants had violently taken away.
26: And Abimelech said, I wot not who hath done this thing: neither didst thou tell me, neither yet heard I of it, but to day.
27: And Abraham took sheep and oxen, and gave them unto Abimelech; and both of them made a covenant.
28: And Abraham set seven ewe lambs of the flock by themselves.
29: And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What mean these seven ewe lambs which thou hast set by themselves?
30: And he said, For these seven ewe lambs shalt thou take of my hand, that they may be a witness unto me, that I have digged this well.
31: Wherefore he called that place Beer-sheba; because there they swore both of them.
32: Thus they made a covenant at Beer-sheba: then Abimelech rose up, and Phichol the chief captain of his host, and they returned into the land of the Philistines.”*

Beer-shebah: Well of Seven or Well of Oath.

“Seven wells are at this place. The largest of the wells described by Robinson was found to be 12.5 feet in diameter and 44.5 feet deep, to the surface of the water, 16 feet at the lower part being cut through solid rock.”
(Westminster Dictionary of the Bible, article Beersheba)

Genesis 26: 17: *“And Isaac departed thence, and pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there.
18: And Isaac digged again the wells of water, which they had digged in the days of Abraham his father; for the philistines had stopped them after the death of Abraham: and he called their names after the names by which his father had called them.
19: And Isaac's servants digged in the valley, and found there a well of springing water.
20: And the herdmen of Gerar did strive with Isaac's herdmen, saying, The water is ours: and he called the name of the well Esek; because they strove with him.
21: And they digged another well, and strove for that also: and he called the name of it Sitnah.
22: And he removed from thence, and digged another well; and for that they strove not: and he called the name of it Rehoboth; and he said, For now the LORD hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land.”*

8. Abraham was not perfect

We must not imagine that Abraham was absolutely perfect: he wasn't. He lied twice to save his life: but God forgave and delivered him on both occasions.

Sin in Egypt

Genesis 12: 9: *“And Abram journeyed, going on still toward the south.*

10: And there was a famine in the land: and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine was grievous in the land.

11: And it came to pass, when he was come near to enter into Egypt, that he said unto Sarai his wife, Behold now, I know that thou art a fair woman to look upon:

12: Therefore it shall come to pass, when the Egyptians shall see thee, that they shall say, This is his wife: and they will kill me, but they will save thee alive.

13: Say, I pray thee, thou art my sister: that it may be well with me for thy sake; and my soul shall live because of thee.

14: And it came to pass, that, when Abram was come into Egypt, the Egyptians beheld the woman that she was very fair.

15: The princes also of Pharaoh saw her, and commended her before Pharaoh: and the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house.

16: And he entreated Abram well for her sake: and he had sheep, and oxen, and he asses, and menservants, and maidservants, and she asses, and camels.

17: And the LORD plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai Abram's wife.”

Sin in Canaan

Genesis 20: 1: *“And Abraham journeyed from thence toward the south country, and dwelled between Kadesh and Shur, and sojourned in Gerar.*

2: And Abraham said of Sarah his wife, She is my sister: and Abimelech king of Gerar sent, and took Sarah.

3: But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, Behold, thou art but a dead man, for the woman which thou hast taken; for she is a man's wife.”

Verses: 17: *“So Abraham prayed unto God: and God healed Abimelech, and his wife, and his maidservants; and they bare children.*

18: For the LORD had fast closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech, because of Sarah Abraham's wife.”

Strange as it may seem, barrenness is sometimes brought about by the Almighty. (Genesis 25: 21, Genesis 29: 31, Exodus 23: 26, Deuteronomy 7: 14, Judges 13: 3) He is also well able to open the womb of a barren woman.

9. Abraham the Intercessor

It is possible that had Abraham not pleaded with Yahweh to be merciful, Lot and his family may well have been slain with the inhabitants of Sodom.

Genesis 18: 22: *“And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom: but Abraham stood yet before the LORD.*

23: And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?

24: Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein?

25: That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?

26: And the LORD said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes.

27: And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes:

28: Peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous: wilt thou destroy all the city for lack of

five? And he said, If I find there forty and five, I will not destroy it.

29: And he spake unto him yet again, and said, Peradventure there shall be forty found there. And he said, I will not do it for forty's sake.

30: And he said unto him, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Peradventure there shall thirty be found there. And he said, I will not do it, if I find thirty there.

31: And he said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord: Peradventure there shall be twenty found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for twenty's sake.

32: And he said, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once: Peradventure ten shall be found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for ten's sake.

33: And the LORD went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned unto his place.”

Sodom’s Destruction

According to the Scriptures, **homosexuality (sodomy)** is sin.

Genesis 19: 14: “And Lot went out, and spake unto his sons in law, which married his daughters, and said, Up, get you out of this place; **for the LORD will destroy this city.** But he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons in law.”

Verses: 27: “And Abraham gat up early in the morning to the place where he stood before the LORD:

28: **And he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain, and beheld, and, lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace.**

29: And it came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the plain, that God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when he overthrew the cities in the which Lot dwelt.”

10. Abraham’s Finest Hour

Abraham's finest hour came when he was prepared to sacrifice his son Isaac in obedience to the Almighty's command. **Living faith is at its best when it exhibits itself in obedience.** In that amazing drama Abraham experienced much of the anguish our heavenly Father felt when He allowed **His only begotten son Jesus to die on mount Calvary** for the sins of the world. Few of us are called to make such sacrifices: but Abraham's reward will undoubtedly be very, very special.

Genesis 22: 1: “And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt **Abraham**, and said unto him, **Abraham:** and he said, Behold, here I am.

2: And he said, Take now thy son, **thine only son Isaac**, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.”

Verse: 12: “And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.”

11. Ruled His Household Well

Abraham not only believed and obeyed God, he also exercised enormous control over his family and household. Isaac's willingness to die in obedience to God's command is proof of Abraham's training.

Genesis 18: 19: “**For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.**”

12. God was with Abraham

The greatest blessing a person can receive is to have the Almighty with him/her. God was with Abraham. That fact made Abraham's life a success. Indeed God is with every son and daughter of Abraham even in this generation. Who are the children of Abraham? The answer is found in the next section.

Genesis 21: 22: *“And it came to pass at that time, that Abimelech and Phichol the chief captain of his host spake unto Abraham, saying, **God is with thee in all that thou doest.**”*

13. Abraham's Seed

On the purely physical level the seed (progeny) of Abraham are the Israelites, the Ishmaelites and the other peoples who were born to Keturah, Abraham's second wife. (Genesis 25: 1-6) On the spiritual level Abraham's seed is the **Yeshua the Messiah** the Promised One, the One who was miraculously born of the virgin Mary.

Galatians 3: 26: *“For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.*

27: For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

28: There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

*29: **And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.**”*

Romans 2: 28: *“For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh:*

29: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.”

In other words, **all true believers in the God of Israel are the descendants of Abraham.** That is what the scriptures teach.

Israel still Yahweh's People

Being a spiritual Israelite doesn't mean that Yahweh has cast off the Jews. The scriptures make it perfectly clear that the Most High has not cast off His people Israel. To be sure He has blinded them; and some branches from the Olive of Israel have been pruned away. But the Almighty has not cast away His people Israel. **They will continue to be the chosen race as long as there is the sun and moon in the sky.** That is what the scriptures teach. See **Israel... Chosen of God!**

Jeremiah 33: 23: *“Moreover the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, saying,*

24: Considerest thou not what this people have spoken, saying, The two families which the LORD hath chosen, he hath even cast them off? thus they have despised my people, that they should be no more a nation before them.

*25: Thus saith the LORD; **If my covenant be not with day and night, and if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth;***

*26: **Then will I cast away the seed of Jacob,** and David my servant, so that I will not take any of his seed to be rulers over the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: for I will cause their captivity to return, and have mercy on them.”*

2 Kings 13: 23: *“And the LORD was gracious unto them, and had compassion on them, and had respect unto them, **because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and would not destroy them, neither cast he them from his presence as yet.**”*

14. Abraham's Death

Abraham lived to the ripe old age of 175 years. His bones lie in the town of Hebron in Israel awaiting the resurrection of the just.

Genesis 25: 7: *“And these are the days of the years of Abraham's life which he lived, an hundred threescore and fifteen years.*

8: Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people.

9: And his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, which is before Mamre;

*10: The field which Abraham purchased of the sons of Heth: **there was Abraham buried, and Sarah his wife.**”*

15. The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob

It is a characteristic of the Almighty that He often called Himself the **God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob**. Gentile Christians should do the same.

Exodus 3: 6: *“Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the **God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob**. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.”*

Exodus 3: 15: *“And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The LORD God of your fathers, the **God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob**, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations.”*

Exodus 3: 16: *“Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, and say unto them, The LORD God of your fathers, the **God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob**, appeared unto me, saying, I have surely visited you, and seen that which is done to you in Egypt:”*

1 Kings 18: 36: *“And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, **LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel**, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word.”*

16. Invaluable Advice

Many Christians dislike the Jews, ignorantly supposing that they are the enemies of God. **The very opposite is true**. The Jew is the **apple of God's eye**: His special nation. (Deuteronomy 32: 10, Zechariah 2: 8) The Almighty refers to Himself as the **God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel**: and His Son was correctly called the **King of Israel**.

John 1: 49: *“Nathanael answered and saith unto him, **Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.**”*

In view of these facts let all who follow after righteousness **beware of anti-Semitism**. Instead we should follow this advice.

Isaiah 51: 1: *“Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the LORD: **look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged.***

2: Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you: for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him.

3: For the LORD shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody.

*4: **Hearken unto me, my people; and give ear unto me, O my nation: for a law shall proceed from me, and I will make my judgment to rest for a light of the people.**”*

AMEN!

In the Son's Name - For the Father's glory.

Elder: Max W. Mader

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