

GRACE BIBLE CHURCH
Robert R. McLaughlin Bible Ministries

The Tree of Life is a weekly teaching summary.
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The Mysteries behind the Similarities between Israel and the Church

Genesis 17:3-4 *And Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying, "As for Me [My part in the covenant], behold, My covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations."*

We have been studying God's promise to Abram, especially the phrase "*You shall become a father of many nations.*" This is actually a reference to the Gentile nations; the Jews will be a new race in Abram's time, but will not be not a new nation for nearly 500 years. We see the fatherhood of Abraham under three separate conditions in the Bible.

Abraham is called "*the father of us all,*" whether Jew or Gentile, **Rom 4:1,16**. In **Gal 3:6**, Paul writes, "*Even so Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.*" The key premise to keep in mind is that Abraham's justification came when there were no Law and circumcision in effect. The law came 430 years after Abraham's justification, **Gal 3:17**, "*What I am saying is this: the Law, which came four hundred and thirty years later, does not invalidate a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to nullify the promise.*"

Gal 3:7-9 *Therefore, be sure that it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "All the nations shall be blessed in you." So then those who are of faith are blessed with Abraham, the believer.*

Those who are of faith are those who place their faith in Christ. Therefore, they are called "sons of Abraham." Part of the Abrahamic Covenant included both the Gentiles as well as the Jews. The Lord Jesus Christ completely fulfilled all the demands of the Law and therefore secured the blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant, for both Jew and Gentile alike. The only means of securing this blessing is faith in Jesus Christ!

Abram is the pattern of eternal salvation, or the adjustment to the justice of God at salvation. Abram saw himself as a sinner, he saw the cross in the future, and he saw his own sins being judged in Christ. Abram saw the Lord Jesus Christ dying for those sins and God the Father judging them, and he believed in "Jehovah Elohim," God the Son. Notice that Abram did not invite Christ into his heart, get baptized, raise his hand, walk any aisles, or feel sorry for his sins; he simply believed.

Abraham is called "*the Father of circumcision.*"

Rom 4:10-12 *"How then was it reckoned? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised; and he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while uncircumcised,*

that he might be the father of all who believe without being circumcised, that righteousness might be reckoned to them, and the father of circumcision to those who not only are of the circumcision, but who also follow in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham which he had while uncircumcised.

Abram is the source, the originator of the new race of Jews, and this is his title for the beginning of a new race, the new racial species that began at the moment he received circumcision.

The third fatherhood of Abram is found in **Gen 17:4-5**, our main passage, and in Rom 4:17 where he is called the “father of many nations”: *“(as it is written, a father of many nations have I made you) in the sight of Him whom he believed, even God, who gives life to the dead and calls into being that which does not exist.”* This is a reference to the pattern of *supergrace* and *ultra-supergrace* prosperity, in this case, Abram’s sexual prosperity through which he became the father of many Gentile nations, including the nations that would come from the six sons of his future mistress Keturah.

Gen 17:4 *“As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of many [Gentile] nations.”*

This verse also emphasizes that when God blesses the mature believer who adjusts to the justice of God, there is blessing for others associated with him and even great historical impact. This is why Sarai became “Sarah” in **Gen 17:15** and the second member of the new race. Sarah becomes the mother of the new race, but neither Hagar nor Ishmael ever became a new race. This will result in a division in the camp that will eventually call for separation.

Abram becomes the first Jew; Sarah becomes the second through blessing by association. The new racial species was a blessing from the grace of God, just as the new *spiritual* species in the Church-age, **2Co 5:17**, *“Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.”* In the history of the human race only two new species have been added:

- **Israel** was added as the new racial species; the Jew is racially different from all the descendants of Shem, Ham, and Japheth.
- The **Church** is the new spiritual species.

There are some interesting correlations between the two new species. **Israel** came from procreation, originating with the first Adam. The **Church** came from the last Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ, as He perpetuated the great power experiment of the Hypostatic Union into the Church-age, His Bride demanding a new spiritual species for the utilization of divine power.

1Co 15:22 *For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive.*

The new **spiritual** species originates from regeneration and the mechanics of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The new **racial** species of Israel had to be perpetuated through procreation, while in the Church-age the new spiritual species of the Royal Family of God is perpetuated through the baptism of the Spirit at the point of salvation. In both

cases, *birth* is involved, the birth of Isaac to Abraham and Sarah, and being born again through regeneration and the baptism of the Spirit.

Abram and Sarai are a new race, and Hagar and Ishmael belong to the old Semitic race, being related to the Arabs, and here is the beginning of the Mid-East Crisis. The Apostle Paul taught that this represented the works of the flesh (Ishmael, the human solution) versus the works of the Spirit (Isaac, the divine promise).

Gal 4:29-31 *But as at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, so it is now also. But what does the Scripture say? "Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be an heir with the son of the free woman. So then, brethren, we are not children of a bondwoman, but of the free woman."*

Israel has both a racial and a spiritual election. The racial election of Israel is Abraham's physical seed based on procreation and genetics. The Jew as the newest race in history has the genes of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. However, the election of Abraham's *spiritual* seed is based on regeneration. Born-again Jews have both a racial and spiritual election. The spiritual election of Abraham's seed is related to Abraham's salvation, the pattern for salvation in the Old Testament.

Gen 15:6 *Abraham believed in the Lord and it was credited to his account for righteousness.*

No one was ever saved by keeping the Law, even in the Old Testament. People were saved in the Old Testament as they are now, although they knew the object of their faith by a different name; they were looking forward to the Cross, whereas we look back on the Cross. The object of faith in the New Testament is Jesus Christ; the object of faith in the Old Testament was the Lord, Jehovah. Both refer to the same Person, God the Son, but in different languages.

The election of the Church, the Royal Family of God, is strictly spiritual and invisible, a part of every Church-age believer's *portfolio of invisible assets*. It removes all environmental, genetic, and volitional handicaps; we are all equal "in Christ." God created each of these new species for a historical impact—Israel for a **visible** historical impact in the Old Testament (the Age of Israel) and in the Millennium as a client nation, and the Church for an **invisible** historical impact during the times of the Gentiles.

Each new species is a witness for the prosecution in Satan's **appeal trial**, which is coterminous with human history. God uses Israel in the *trial* phase of Old Testament history; He uses the Church in the *rebuttal* phase of New Testament history.

In the trial phase all admissible evidence is presented before the judge, or in some cases the jury. In our doctrine, the trial phase begins with the fall of man in the Garden and continues until the beginning of the dispensation of the Hypostatic Union. Human history was begun and mankind created in order to duplicate the conditions of the prehistoric angelic conflict. This provided the evidence and precedence for Satan's appeal trial during human history. The fall of man in the Garden of Eden even duplicates the fall of Satan in the Garden of God, both occurring in perfect environment.

The trial phase in the court of appeals is essentially Old Testament history. Man was given the opportunity to choose for or against God, with one command from God; only one thing was forbidden. With the fall of Adam, Satan became the ruler of planet earth and from this position presents the defense in the historical appeal trial of all fallen angels, **2Co 4:4**; he is the god of this world. The courtroom is planet earth because it was on planet earth that the angelic conflict originally took place. According to **Eze 28**, at one time Satan led all the angels on planet earth in worshipping God.

The human race provides evidence, arguments, and precedents in the appeal trial whether winners or losers. God entered His evidence by creating man just as the angels were created—innocent (or perfect) with the potential to love and worship God through **right decisions**, as well as the potential to become imperfect through **wrong decisions**. Human history provides circumstances and options similar to those of angelic history before man's creation. For example, Satan had been created in perfect innocence; Adam was created in perfect innocence. The angels have free will; man has free will. Adam freely and deliberately chose to follow the pattern of arrogance that characterized Satan's original revolution. Therefore, the fall of Adam duplicates the fall of Satan.

The rebellion of Satan in the Garden of God resulted in the fall of angelic creatures, **Rev 12:4a**. The rebellion of Adam in the Garden of Eden resulted in the fall of mankind, **Rom 5:12**. In angelic history, God provided a decision-making process by which angels could express non-meritorious positive volition. Through the exercise of their free will,

angelic creatures are divided into two categories—elect and fallen angels, **Rev 12:7**, **1Ti 5:21**, **Mat 25:41**, **Mar 8:38**. The Bible does reveal a form of reconciliation for angels, **Col 1:20**, **Phi 2:10**, **Heb 2:2**.

Likewise, God provided salvation for all mankind so that man can express non-meritorious positive volition through faith in Christ, **Joh 3:16**. Through the exercise of free will mankind is divided into two categories, believers and unbelievers, **Joh 3:36**.

The formal presentation of the case begins with the prosecution presenting its case, followed by the defense presenting its case in the **trial phase** (Old Testament history and the new **racial** species, the Jew), and then the **rebuttal phase** (New Testament history and the new **spiritual** species, the Church). Human history is basically a courtroom trial, where we are witnesses before the angels, testifying to God's justice. This is brought out by many passages and principles from the Word of God.

Job 2:3 *And the Lord said to Satan, “**Have you considered My servant Job?** For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man fearing God and turning away from evil. And he still holds fast his integrity, although you incited Me against him, to ruin him without cause.”*

1 Cor 4:9 *For, I think, God has exhibited us apostles last of all, as men condemned to death; because we have become a spectacle to the world, both to **angels** and to men.*

1Pe 1:12 *It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things into which **angels long to look**.*

The chief antagonist in the angelic conflict is called “Satan” or the “devil.” In fact, his title of “*ha Satan*” in Hebrew means an **attorney** who slanders and gets away with it because of some legal loophole; it also means an **adversary**. He possesses this title because in human history he functions as an attorney in a courtroom presenting his case and making accusations against others. In the Greek, his name is “*diabolos*” (devil), which has the same meaning—an adversary, an attorney in opposition in law, or a **slanderer**. This is why we see Satan constantly bringing accusations against believers into the Supreme Court of Heaven.

Rev 12:10b *For the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, who accuses them before our God day and night.*