

Leadership And The Covenants (Part Twenty)

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Genesis is foundational to the rest of the Bible, thus it is apply named as the beginning. Foundations are part of a structure that is sometimes not visible at all and might barely be seen at the structure's completion. In Genesis' case it probably contains more first mentions that pertain directly to salvation than all of the other books in the Bible combined. That is just my estimation, but it is that important. Genesis begins very many of the Bibles themes.

It is a well-known construction principle that, if a contractor does not get a foundation correct, he is going to spend much of his time making the corrections to the superstructure, in order to compensate for problems he created by not getting the foundation correct in the first place.

It is that major principle that we are dealing with in this series on the covenants and leadership. Today we will get to a foundation for a couple of factors pertinent to our salvation, so that we can more clearly grasp that it is indeed He who has made us and, not we ourselves. We are truly God's creation. If we try to do it we will really foul things up.

To be reminded of these tremendous promises that God gave to Abram, turn to Genesis 12.

Genesis 12:1-3 Now the Lord had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, from your kindred and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you. I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

I originally titled this sermon, Leadership and Covenants, Part 21. However, as I began organizing it I thought of a subtitle that I think is appropriate. This subtitle adds a bit of a mystery right from the outset. It is: Who are we? We

have been looking at Abram, we looked at Noah, they really made a name for themselves. What about us who come on the scene right toward the end, toward Jesus' return. The "we" is the church. Who are we? Is it possible that the church fits into this prophecy more than we ever thought in the past?

We know that the church consists of those called, chosen, and separated—or sanctified if we want to use a more spiritual word—into a spiritual organization by Jesus Christ, as it was begun by Him near the time of His death and resurrection.

I taught on what will become the main theme of this sermon several months ago, as a portion of another sermon. However, I keep finding elements of truths I believe are needful for a fuller understanding and appreciation of what it is that we have been called into. Do not misunderstand, we will not leave teaching the "I will's," that God gave to Abram. In a number of ways, they frame the major theme of the Bible. These seven promises frame the major theme of the Bible.

The "I will" that we are on today is the same as what we covered in my last sermon, though some of the "I will" promises are physical blessings, this particular one we are going into today is clearly totally spiritual in its intent. It states, "And in you, all the families of the earth shall be blessed." This was said to one man who did not even have any children at the time. This promise is huge in its scope, because the terms God gave embrace everyone born from the very beginning, even Adam and Eve, to right now, and it includes those who will be resurrected in the Great White Throne period.

We will recall, from the last sermon that Abram was no dull-witted idiot. That perception demeans God, to think that God would choose a person to be in Abram's position, incapable of carrying out what was assigned to him. Was Noah able to accomplish what God assigned him? It took him one hundred and twenty years but he did it. Abram, in one sense, had an even bigger challenge because he was dealing with something that is spiritual, and therefore, invisible and immaterial in this promise.

Abram very likely did not grasp all the nuances of this promise made to him. I am sure that Abram understood the essence of this promise as it applied to him personally. He was a highly intelligent man, with an expansive grasp of

what was being promised him. In order to better catch the flow of the substance of what was promised Abram, I will repeat from that last sermon what I believe could have been his thoughts as the Lord spoke, and as Abram heard, listened, and understood.

As we begin, let us grasp that Abram could clearly understand, that as far as God stated each “I will,” the promises involved a great deal of time far, far beyond his lifetime. Add to this that we know that in the many episodes of history recorded of him in Scripture, he was a man both thoughtful and at the same time, a possessor of deep humility.

Considering these characteristics, he would have had to conclude that all the families of the earth are to be blessed through him. His conclusion would have to be: he would not live to see this accomplished. In other words, the promise was being made to him but on the other hand, its fulfillment was going to bypass him. He would be long dead before this was ever fulfilled.

In addition, because he was a humble man, he would surely conclude by evaluating himself that he needed those unspecified, but very real blessings applied to him. That is two points.

1) He would not live to see this fulfilled.

2) He needed the things that God was implying in this promise himself. How could he give them out to somebody else if he needed them? He was no dumbbell, this guy. He would say to himself, “I cannot literally be the source of a blessing of the quality and magnitude of what the Lord is speaking of here.”

3) Abram’s logical and truthful conclusion would have to be: this promise must refer to someone born from among his descendants. The original was given to Abram, but a descendant of his was going to fulfill it.

4) He would also have to conclude that the one born would be far greater than himself, since this descendant will be the source of the blessings.

5) This one promising the blessings that is speaking to Abram, identified himself as the Lord. He was face-to-face with God Himself. He knew it was

the Creator God Himself speaking. That is later proved in another chapter, where he saw the Lord walking toward him, he knew who it was right away.

6) This one who will be born as one of my descendants, must not be a mere human being, because no mere human can be a blessing to all the families of the earth.

7) His conclusion is that one born as one of his descendants will have to be my very Creator who is standing right before me, and He will have to take on a human body, and nature, in order that He will truly be my descendant.

Boy, if that does not knock your socks off to have God Himself declare that to you!

Perhaps Abram could not express himself as well as the verbally gifted David, so we are going to read what David said as he reacted to when he was put into a similar position as Abram was, but it was centuries later.

II Samuel 6:20-23 Then David returned to bless his household. And Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, “How glorious was the king of Israel today, uncovering himself today in the eyes of the maids of his servants, as one of the base fellows shamelessly uncovers himself!” So David said to Michal, “It was before the Lord, who chose me instead of your father and all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the Lord, over Israel. Therefore I will play music before the Lord. And I will be even more undignified than this, and will be humble in my own sight. But as for the maidservants of whom you have spoken, by them I will be held in honor.” Therefore Michal the daughter of Saul had no children to the day of her death.

Here is the setting as this regards David. This took place following the bringing of the Ark of the Covenant into Jerusalem, following its long absence from there, because it had been stolen by enemies of Judah. David was very happy as he celebrated this momentous occasion, because he truly loved God, and he grasped—he understood, he got it—what this gala historical occasion meant for Israel as a nation. His wife Michal was not in the same joyous frame of mind as David. Her mind was clearly not on

anything connected to God, her mind was on David's conduct as he celebrated. She thought his manner of celebrating was socially degrading. Thus, she expressed her displeasure to David. However, God agreed with David's expressions of joy. God judged and reacted by closing Michal's womb.

This had an eternal result. This had long-reaching ramifications because by doing so, He thus absolutely guaranteed that no descendant of Saul, Michal's father, would ever again sit on any throne of Israel or Judah with God's permission. It was the end of the line for Saul, the book of Saul was closed forever.

To say that God was displeased with Saul and Michal is putting pretty mildly. I want you to understand that when David danced he was not naked. He simply danced in a priest's robe. Michal considered that demeaning of his office as king, as though he was naked. God was favorably impressed with what was in David's heart, as he was joyfully dancing. He did not think it was demeaning at all to be a priest of God!

That sets the stage for what is recorded in II Samuel 7. This followed immediately after, perhaps the same day or a few days later.

II Samuel 7:1-3 Now it came to pass when the king was dwelling in his house, and the Lord had given him rest from all his enemies all around, that the king said to Nathan the prophet, "See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells inside tent curtains." Then Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that is in your heart, for the Lord is with you."

David had a sincere desire to build a temple for God, He expressed this then to the prophet Nathan, Nathan in turn took David's desire to God in prayer.

II Samuel 7:4-7 But it happened that night that the word of the Lord came to Nathan, saying, "Go and tell My servant David, 'Thus says the Lord: "Would you build a house for Me to dwell in? For I have not dwelt in a house since the time that I brought the children of Israel up from Egypt, even to this day, but have moved about in a tent and in a tabernacle. Wherever I have moved about

with all the children of Israel, have I ever spoken a word to anyone from tribes of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd My people Israel, saying, ‘Why have you not built Me a house of cedar?’”

There was a flaw in this proposal that David had in mind, that Nathan carried to God. Please turn to I Chronicles 28. We will see the flaw exposed here.

I Chronicles 28:1-3 Now David assembled at Jerusalem all the leaders of Israel; the officers of the tribes and captains of the divisions who served the king, the captains over thousands and captains over hundreds, and the stewards over all the substance and possessions of the king and of his sons, with the officials, the valiant men, and all the mighty men of valor. Then King David rose to his feet and said, “Hear me, my brethren and my people: I had it in my heart to build a house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and for the footstool of our God, and had made preparations to build it. But God said to me, ‘You shall not build a house for My name, because you have been a man of war and have shed blood.’”

David’s reputation was anchored in making war, he was a man of blood, and nobody with that kind of a reputation was going to build God’s house for Him. Even though God loved David as a man after His own heart, He rejected David’s desire because of David’s background in making warfare.

That is, David’s name, his reputation as a warrior, and God’s house—His temple—was not going to be built by a person with a warrior’s reputation. However, God still established him as king over Israel at that time, and *forever*. Like the promises to Abram, God would not go back on His word. Forever. He knew David’s character well enough to know that this man will never turn on Me. He might sin, but he will never turn from Me.

God still established as king over Israel at that time, and forever. God’s Temple would be built by a descendant of David’s associated with peace. That was Solomon, and Solomon means “peace.” Following this, God made a covenant with David, even as God made one with Abram. This is what God said that He would do.

II Samuel 7:12-17 [God is speaking] “When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his Father, and he shall be My son. If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men. But My mercy shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I removed from before you. And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever.” According to all these words and according to all this vision so Nathan spoke to David.

Those are the key verses of what God did for David. God’s covenant with David is not as magnificent as that with Abram, but God did not record Abram’s reaction to the “I will” covenant he made with him. Thus we are going to read David’s reaction to God’s covenant with him.

This covenant with David is a specific branch of God’s “I will” covenant with Abram, David was indeed a descendant of Abram. I am certain that Abram understood even as David did. David was clearly overwhelmed with gratitude toward God.

Before we move on, we will consider a number of similarities that these men, David and Abram, shared.

- 1) Neither of these men were beginners in their relationship with God. Both were very familiar with God’s purpose.
- 2) Both men were inspired to perceive the same basic conclusion from what God promised.
- 3) Both men perceived its fulfillment far into the future and they would not live to see its literal fulfillment.
- 4) Both men grasped that what God was promising is that the promised Seed, the Savior, the Redeemer, the Deliverer, the very Creator of mankind who would provide forgiveness for mankind’s sins, would be born into their

family line of descendants. Is there any gift that could possibly be given to a human greater than that?

5) Both perceived that the only person who could possibly meet these requirements would have to be the eternal creator God Himself, born as a man.

We will read II Samuel 7. This is what came to David's mind as this was unfolding.

II Samuel 7:18 (AMP) Then King David went in and sat in prayer before the Lord, and said, "Who am I, O Lord God? And what is my house (family) that you have brought me this far? Yet this was very insignificant in Your eyes, O Lord God, for You have spoken also of Your servant's house (royal dynasty) in the distant future. And this is the law and custom of man, O Lord God. What more can David say to You? For You know (acknowledge, choose) Your servant, O Lord God. Because of Your word (promise) and in accordance with Your own heart, You have done all of these great and astounding things to let Your servant know (understand). Therefore You are great, O Lord God; for there is none like You, and there is no God besides You, according to all that we have heard with our ears. What one nation on earth is like Your people Israel, whom God went to redeem for Himself as a people and to make a name for Himself, and to do great and awesome things for Yourself and for Your land, before Your people whom You have redeemed for Yourself from Egypt, from nations and their gods. You established for Yourself Your people Israel as Your people forever, You, O Lord, have become their God. Now, O Lord God, confirm forever the word [of the covenant] that You have spoken in regard to Your servant and his house (royal dynasty) [Jesus Christ]; and do just as You have spoken, so that Your Name may be magnified forever, saying, 'The Lord of hosts (armies) is God over Israel;' and may the house (royal dynasty) of Your servant David be established before You. For You, O Lord God of hosts, God of Israel, have revealed this to Your servant, saying, 'I will build you a house (royal dynasty).'" For that reason Your servant has found courage to pray this prayer to You. And now, O Lord God, You are

God, and Your words are truth, and You have promised this good thing to Your servant. Therefore now, may it please You to bless the house (royal dynasty) of Your servant, so that it may continue forever before You; for You, O Lord God, have spoken it, and with Your blessing may the house of Your servant be blessed forever.”

David clearly understood, as did Abram hundreds of years before, what was being promised him by the same Lord God, to receive a huge measure of essentially the same awesome, spiritual gift He was now promising David.

Colossians 1:9-23 For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding. That you may have a walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and long suffering with joy; giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us [we did not qualify ourselves, He qualified us] to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins. He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. [This is what David was having added to his family, and this is what Abram had already had added to his family descendants.] For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross. And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight—if

indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister.

What we just read of there is He who would be born as a human being into the families of both Abram and David. This was also the event that the humble priest Zacharias was acknowledging in Luke 1 shortly after his son was born, and his child grew and became John the Baptist. Zacharias also grasped that what he was witnessing was that the Savior, Jesus, would be born about six months after his own son John. This was a momentous revelation to these faithful, humble people. It is here that we will return closer to Abram's time to continue this storyline because, there are important elements we need to understand of God's direct involvement to bring history to this point of which we have just read.

Turn to Genesis. I want us to have in our minds inscribed there forever, that God has been deeply involved in everything that is going on, tweaking things as history moves, so that His purpose will be worked out and not man's.

Genesis 11:10-13 This is the genealogy of Shem: Shem was one hundred years old, and begot Arphaxad two years after the flood. After he begot Arphaxad, Shem lived five hundred years, and begot sons and daughters. Arphaxad lived thirty-five years, and begot Salah. After he begot Salah, Arphaxad lived four hundred and three years, and begot sons and daughters.

These verses are the beginning of a new section that advances timewise away from the period immediately following the Flood. It provides a connecting bridge to the momentous "I will's" that follow in chapter 12, which Abram received.

I have mentioned in the past sermons the term holy seed, or holy line. This title is no little thing. This genealogy listing before us, here in Genesis 11, plays a connecting role in that major, major subject as to whom we are. As I said at the beginning, are we aware that this prophesy may have means to us that is direct.

The opening phrase, “This is the genealogy” is commonly used throughout the Bible in order to introduce those personalities we are to be taught about in the following section. This specific one takes us all the way from Shem to Abram. In one major sense, the entire Bible traces the onward development of the family line, the holy line, that carried God’s promise of redemption and deliverance from the time of the judgment given in Genesis 3:15. It is one story from the time Adam and Eve sinned, right on through, but you have to begin right after the sin, with the judgments that were made against them by God, because it contains a very important point within it.

That verse states, “I will put enmity between you and the woman [God is speaking to the serpent], and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.” This is the first promise of the Messiah in the Bible—the first indication that one is coming. The holy line carries the Seed of the family that God is going to establish on earth as His. So, do not overlook the phrase “your seed and her Seed.” Not forgetting that Eve is a mere woman in this huge drama to be played out in the long histories before mankind. He is talking about their descendants.

Carrying that thought with you can become an exciting literary adventure. The “I will’s” given in Genesis 12:1-3, are a fairly detailed expansion of the Genesis 3:15 promise that is contained within the judgment against the serpent. There is a connection there.

Turn to Genesis 4. I want you to see God’s involvement from beginning to end, we are not to the end yet, but we need to understand who it is who is running the show.

Genesis 4:25 And Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and named him Seth, “For God has appointed another seed for me instead of Abel, whom Cain killed.”

It is right here that God makes a significant appointment as the holy line is begun within the family of Adam and Eve through Seth. Adam and Eve had other children, other sons. Believe it or not, one Jewish source claims that they had fifty-six children They lived over nine hundred years. I do not know if that is true or not but that is what they claim. Even if they had fifty-six children, the one that really matters to us is Seth.

Creating the holy line with a child directly from Adam and Eve was God's intent from the beginning. Not a mere descendant of Adam and Eve, but directly from them *right at the beginning*, from the one He created with His own hands, not that a human would create through a sexual act.

God is in charge of everything that goes on. He is manipulating things as He wills. He gives us clues to these manipulations in His word so that we can follow His line of thought from beginning to end. God is creating the holy line with a child directly from Adam and Eve. It was God's intent to do that from the beginning.

I have no verse to prove this but, I strongly believe that this shows the pattern of thoughtful wisdom and control over His creation, I believe this is why the verse is worded in a somewhat awkward way there is verse 25 of Genesis 4. As others were born into the various families with a holy line connection God did not always choose the firstborn son to work in and through to continue the line of descendants to His goal.

For example, Abram was not a first born, yet he was definitely sanctified, set apart. We just saw one right here. Seth was not a firstborn. What does that tell you about God? He is picking and choosing, creating, changing people as He goes along, but He always, from beginning to end, sticks with one family, the entire six thousand years, and He made the choice.

I want us to understand that God is the Creator. He is working things out according to His will, the clues are in this Book. God does not provide us with His reasoning as to why He skipped over many firstborns, neither does He tell us why He called us and not our next door neighbor, or why He did not call other family members of the same family into which we were born. That is His business, it is His creation.

He does not reveal every intimate detail of Himself or His purposes in this important holy line matter. He does directly reveal though His general involvement, sometimes quite specifically. As we just saw with Abram and David, He did that personally. He chose those leaders, and He will tell them face to face, as it were.

Even though He does not tell us some of these details, He is absolutely consistent in that all those named in the genealogies were Israelitish, beginning with Abram. He began with the two that He created, Adam and Eve, and then He begins to create the family from one man, Abram, and Sarah.

He was absolutely consistent in that all those named in the genealogies were Israelitish. Once the “I will’s” were given to Abram, all the holy line came exclusively from Abram, Isaac, and Jacob.

I will give an overview showing in which way God maneuvered events in order to keep humanity on track within His purposes. God does this because as Creator, He knows clearly where He is headed, but mankind has a way of doing its own thing and wandering off purpose. This should also help you to grasp how far ahead God is planning.

Deuteronomy 32:7-9 [Moses, in the last month before he died, wrote this.] “Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations. Ask your father, and he will show you; your elders, and they will tell you; when the Most High divided their inheritance to the nations, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the boundaries of the peoples according to the number of the children of Israel.”

This is God’s creation; this is God’s earth. He made it and people are going to live where He says they are going to live if He is dealing with them directly. He did that with Israel. I begin this with Moses because he is looking all the way back to the beginning. God was already planning where the Israelite's were going to live on this earth.

God separated the sons of Adam and set the boundaries of the people. That refers us to,

Genesis 11:7-8 “Come let Us go down and there confuse their language, that they may not understand one another’s speech.” So the Lord scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth, and they ceased building the city.

We can learn something here. The scattering of a nations when God confused the languages there in Babylon, was not near as chaotic as we might think. What was happening was that the invisible hand of God was telling them to separate. He was arranging the people on earth where He wanted them.

Moses was specifically paying attention to the children of Israel because that was to whom He was speaking. We can understand, from what he said there in Genesis 32, and compare it to Genesis 11, that God set all the other peoples on earth in the general area that they were to be inhabiting.

What we are interested in here is the holy line. God was setting aside land specifically given for Jacob and his descendants, and they were not even born yet. God is providing us with these genealogies. This assures us that He was noting carefully what was going on in His creation, anticipating needs, making judgments, and assisting by moving things in the direction that He desired. God did not go away off somewhere, like people think.

Never forget this. What we are looking at here is the history of the godly line, the line the Savior would be born into. Therefore, this is a major concern of God the Father. This family line was the recipient of more of God's grace than any other family on earth.

Grace was not given because the family line was better than others. The Israelitish people did not earn that grace. It was given them because of their responsibilities and uses to which God was making of them. That indeed was a major blessing for them because this assures us that He knew those people inside and out, and from time to time He made an important separation of certain ones to carry things forward.

What can we say just to this point? It was God who provided the child from Adam and Eve. It was God who chose Abram to be the one descendant of Shem who may have had hundreds of descendants by the time five hundred years had gone by. But He chose one, that was Abram.

We can keep on expanding this out, but the point I am making is I want you to understand as we are in this time now just before the return of Jesus Christ, it was God who placed Israel where it is in the end time. It is situated

primarily in Northwest Europe, the United States, Australia, New Zealand, and in a way basically the English speaking peoples of the world.

Understand, Israelites are no better than anybody else, but they are more gifted by God's grace, and therefore more accountable to Him for all that has been given.

I want to impress on our minds during the end of this sermon is the idea of separation. The ones that God chooses, He separates for His purposes. That is what we are seeing here. He separated Seth from Adam and Eve's children. He separated Noah from other people. Shem from Noah's children, Abram from Shem's descendants. He even separated Israel away from the other nations on earth. He put them in one place where they could develop on their own, away from those others. Even when we come down to Abram, it was God who separated Abram. He picked Abram out of that family and said, I want you to go somewhere and live."

Separation for a godly purpose is something that God is working through from the very beginning. That is what has happened to you and to me. We were separated from our families in order to be a part of the church of God at the time of the end.

Another significant separation:

Genesis 10:25 To Eber [a descendant of Shem] were born two sons: the name of one was Peleg, for in his days on earth was divided; and his brother's name was Joktan.

Eber is mentioned here. The term *Hebrew* is derived from Eber. Even the great Abram is called a Hebrew. Notice the birth order: Shem, Arphaxad, Salah, Eber. In Genesis 10:25, Peleg was Eber's son. Peleg means division, to divide is to separate into parts. The verse says, "in his days the earth was divided." I believe that "earth" would be translated "land." Researchers are saying that God is inferring the separation of people, not land. Therefore, this division is indicating yet another separation of the Hebrew people from others, thus continuing the further separation of the Semitic peoples from the rest of the ethnic divisions of mankind.

In a way there is no wonder as to why Semitic people are so persecuted. They have gotten all of the gifts, if I can put it that way. It makes human nature jealous. It is something that has to be dealt with in our life.

Romans 9:6-8 But it is not that the word of God has taken no effect. For they are not all Israel who are of Israel, nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham; but, “In Isaac your seed shall be called.” [Why is Isaac mentioned here apart from Abraham? Because Isaac was the son of promise.] That is, those who are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted as the seed. [Is that directly tied to the holy seed?] For this is the word of promise: “At this time I will come and Sarah shall have a son.” [That son was Isaac.]

They can be Israelite but not set apart spiritually where God wants them to be. Just because somebody is an Israelite, it does not mean that that person is part of God’s plan of salvation at this time. In other words, we are not born into this, we are separated away from the crowd in order to be part of the church.

Is there a direct connection between the church and the holy line since Gentiles are now part of the church? This caused massive problems in the first century church, because Gentiles were invited to be part of the Israelitish group, family. That was a hard thing for those Israelitish people to accept, because from Abraham, those who held that position, were all Israelitish.