

Genesis: ‘I Give You The Land As An Everlasting Possession’



Foundations (Day 290)
by Derek Prince

The two Old Testament passages which we have sofar examined, Psalm 16 and Psalm 71, refer primarily to the resurrection of Christ Himself as the Messiah. Let us now examine other passages of the Old Testament which foretell the resurrection of others besides Christ Himself.

Let us begin by considering one of God’s promises made to Abraham.

> “Also I give to you and your descendants after you the land in which you are a stranger, all the land of Canaan, as an everlasting possession.” (Gen. 17:8)

There are two important points to notice in this promise. First of all, the order of possession is important. God says, “...to you and your descendants after you.” That is to say, Abraham himself is to possess the land first, and then his descendants after him.

Second, the extent and duration of possession are important. God says, “...all the land of Canaan, as an everlasting possession.” This promise cannot be fulfilled by any occupation of the land that is partial or temporary. Its fulfilment demands a complete and permanent possession of the whole land.

It is plain therefore that up to now this promise of God to Abraham has never been fulfilled. The only part of the land that Abraham himself has hitherto received for a permanent possession is just space enough in which to be buried – that is, the burial place in the cave of Machpelah in the field of Ephron the Hittite, near Hebron.

As for Abraham’s seed, the nation of Israel, until now they have enjoyed temporary or partial occupation of the land, but they have never known the complete and permanent possession promised by God. At present the state of Israel clings tenaciously, in the face of every kind of opposition, to an area that is a small fraction of the total possession

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promised by God.

Even if in the years that lie ahead Israel should continue to extend its area of occupation until it gains control of the whole land promised by God, this still would not constitute a complete fulfilment of God's original promise to Abraham, which was "to you and your descendants after you." That is to say, Abraham himself must first enjoy possession of the whole land, and then his descendants after him.

Thus, this promise of God cannot be fulfilled apart from the resurrection. The cave of Machpelah must first give up its dead. Abraham himself must be resurrected. Only in this way can he ever enter into the full possession of the land in which he now lies buried. If there is no resurrection, then God's promise to Abraham can never be fulfilled. The promise of God here made to Abraham assumes, and depends upon, the resurrection.

We find therefore that this promise to Abraham concerning the everlasting possession of the land of Canaan includes within it the promise of Abraham's own resurrection from the dead. In this way the truth of the resurrection is already revealed in Genesis, the first book of the Old Testament.

Devotional

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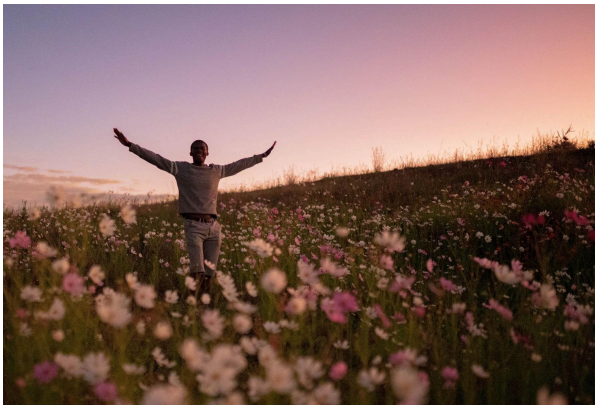

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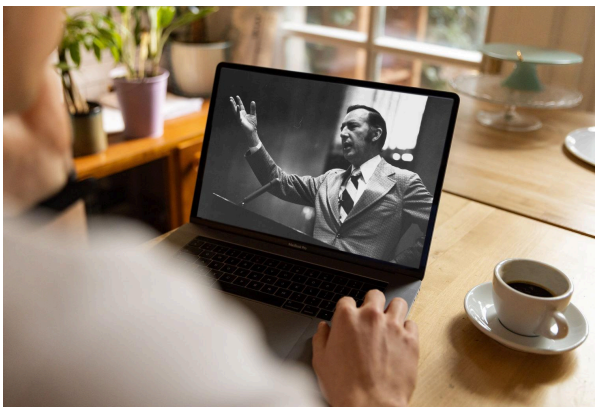

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