

## Thursday Evening Bible Study

**Series: the End Times – Bible prophecy about future events and periods**

### Teaching Summary for Week 12

#### The Kingdom and the Covenants

##### **Part 3. The Palestinian Covenant**

**The Palestinian Covenant** is an unconditional, eternal, literal covenant whereby the Lord **re-affirms the land promises** of the Abrahamic Covenant to the **nation of Israel**.

The nation of Israel had received **the Mosaic covenant** at Mount Sinai, but broke that conditional covenant again and again during their forty years in the wilderness.

The Palestinian covenant demonstrates that national failure does not nullify the agreement the Lord previously made in the Abrahamic Covenant. It is **unconditional** – though the time of fulfillment can be postponed as a result of disobedience.

The Palestinian covenant is established with the nation of Israel in the book of **Deuteronomy chapter 30 verses 1-10**.

The Palestinian covenant answers the question of **Israel's relation** to the **land promises** of the Abrahamic covenant in the face of **national failure** under the Mosaic Covenant.

In the final chapters of the book of Deuteronomy, the nation of Israel faces a grave crisis. Their leader Moses will soon die, and his successor, Joshua, is an unproven leader. Moreover, they are poised to enter the promised land, but that land is teeming with enemies.

Their future appears very uncertain.

Is the land of Palestine still their possession?

Did the establishment of the Mosaic Covenant, a conditional covenant, set aside the unconditional Abrahamic Covenant?

Would Israel ever be able to live in this new land in peace and possess it permanently, given the presence of so many enemies there?

The Lord answered these questions for Israel by declaring the Palestinian covenant. It assured Israel that they would inherit and possess the land promised Abraham forever.

### **The importance of the Palestinian Covenant**

The Palestinian covenant is important for what it promises directly to Israel:

1. It reaffirms to Israel that their title deed to the land of promise is rock solid.
2. It establishes the principle that unfaithfulness and even unbelief (things Israel fell into many times in their history from Abraham forward) cannot cancel the promises of the Abrahamic covenant.
3. The introduction of a conditional covenant under which Israel was then living could not set aside the original gracious promise that God had previously ordained. Paul makes this same argument **in Galatians 3:17**.
4. This covenant confirms and enlarges the land features of the Abrahamic covenant. Despite failure on Israel's part, the original promises will be fulfilled at a future time.

### **The provisions of the Palestinian Covenant**

*Let's read Deut 30:1-10 again.*

The Palestinian covenant has seven major features:

1. The nation will be taken out of the land for its unfaithfulness (Deu 28:63-68; 30:1-3).
2. In the future, Israel will repent (Deu 28:63-68; 30:1-3).
3. Their Messiah will return (Deu 30:3-6).
4. Israel will be restored to the land (Deu 30:5).
5. Israel will be converted as a nation (Deu 30:4-8; Rom 11:26-27).
6. Israel's enemies will be judged (Deu 30:7).
7. The nation will then receive her full blessing (Deu 30:9).

### **Confirmation of the Palestinian Covenant**

The Palestinian covenant is confirmed later on in Israel's history, when the nation was perhaps at her worst condition since the time of the Judges. We find this confirmation in the book of **Ezekiel, chapter 16**. Here are the highlights:

The Lord God reminded Israel that at her birth He watched over her and protected her (Eze 16:1-7).

He asked the nation to recall how He had made a covenant with her and made her into a beautiful bride (Eze 16:8-14).

Nevertheless, she played the harlot, embracing idolatry and giving her gifts to foreigners (Eze 16:15-34).

Therefore, the Lord gathered Israel's traditional enemies and handed her over to them for the slaughter. And he removed Israel from the land (Eze 16:35-52).

Yet, He did not abandon Israel forever. He will remember His covenant with her and forgive her for all of her sins. And He will make a new, everlasting covenant with Israel, and restore her to the land forever. (Eze 16:53-63).

*Ezek 16:60-63*

*60 "Nevertheless, I will remember My covenant with you in the days of your youth, and I will establish an everlasting covenant with you. 61 "Then you will remember your ways and be ashamed when you receive your sisters, both your older and your younger; and I will give them to you as daughters, but not because of your covenant. 62 "Thus I will establish My covenant with you, and you shall know that I am the Lord, 63 so that you may remember and be ashamed and never open your mouth anymore because of your humiliation, when I have forgiven you for all that you have done," the Lord God declares.*

### **The character of the Palestinian covenant**

There are at least four reasons why the Palestinian must be understood to be unconditional.

First, the Lord calls it an eternal covenant in Eze 16:60.

Second, it is an amplification of the Abrahamic covenant, which is itself unconditional.

Third, the Lord promises that He will Himself perform the entire conversion of the nation of Israel which must occur before the covenant is fulfilled (Deu 30:6; Eze 11:16-21; Hos 2:14-23; Rom 11:26-27 all state this).

Fourth, portions of this covenant have already been fulfilled literally. Israel has been sent into exile for her apostasy several times in her history. She has also been restored to her land afterwards, except for the most recent time in 70 AD. Now she awaits her final restoration to the entire promised land, where she will dwell in peace and prosperity forever.

In addition, the Lord has judged her enemies several times in her history also.

These partial, literal fulfillments of the Palestinian covenant foreshadow the future literal fulfillment of the entire covenant.

It could perhaps be argued that statements in Deu 30:1-3 make this a conditional covenant.

*Deut 30:1-3*

*1 "So it shall be **when** all of these things have come upon you, the blessing and the curse which I have set before you, and you call them to mind in all nations where the Lord your God has banished you, 2 and you return to the Lord your God and obey Him with all your heart and soul according to all that I command you today, you and your sons, 3 **then** the Lord your God will restore you from captivity, and have compassion on you, and will gather you again from all the peoples where the Lord your God has scattered you. 4*

However, the only thing that hangs in the balance here is the timing of its fulfillment. The covenant will be fulfilled when the nation is finally converted. And it's "when" and "will", not if. And the Lord is the one who promises to bring about this conversion:

Deut 30:6

Moreover **the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants**, to love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, so that you may live.

*Deut 30:8*

*8 "And **you shall** again obey the Lord, and observe all His commandments which I command you today.*

### **The significance of the Palestinian covenant for Eschatology (end times)**

In order for the Palestinian covenant to be fulfilled literally, Israel must be converted as a nation, must be completely regathered from all the nations of the earth, installed permanently in her land as her perpetual possession, witness the judgment of all her enemies, and receive all of the material and spiritual blessings promised to her.

Since these things have never been fulfilled, and an unconditional covenant means they MUST be fulfilled, they WILL be fulfilled in future events.

And this is what the prophets of Israel predicted would happen.

We will end our study of the Palestinian Covenant with the prophets. Let's read the following passages together:

**Isa 14:1-3; Jer 16:14-16; Eze 11:16-21; 34:11-16; 39:25-29; Hos 2:14-23; Amo 9:11-15.**