

THE PROMISED LAND

One of the pillars upon which every variety of premillennialism rests involves the “land promise.” God first promised the land of Canaan to Abram and his descendants and then repeated it to Isaac and Jacob (Gen. 13:14–15; 15:18; 26:3; 28:4, 13–14; et al.). The Jewish people are the descendants of Abraham (originally named “Abram”) through Jacob (Israel). Premillennial adherents allege that God has not fulfilled this promise. They argue that, when Christ comes to establish His 1,000-year (millennial) earthly kingdom, all of the Jews will migrate to the old land of Canaan, and God will at that time fulfill His land promise to Abraham’s descendants through Isaac and Jacob. Has God not yet fulfilled His promise? Does He “owe” the Jews some land? What does the Bible say?

God defined the boundaries of the land as “from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates” (Gen. 15:18). (*The river of Egypt* is not a reference to the Nile, but to a smaller stream that flows westward from the desert south of the modern “Gaza Strip” into the Mediterranean Sea.)

The Bible unmistakably states that God gave the Israelites this land **hundreds of years** before Jesus Christ was born.

- Joshua, God’s chosen leader of Israel to succeed Moses, led Israel in the conquest of Canaan. Shortly before his death (cir. 1400 B.C.), Joshua wrote: “So Jehovah gave unto Israel all the land which he sware to give unto their fathers; and they possessed it, and dwelt therein.... There **failed not aught** of any good thing which Jehovah had spoken unto the house of Israel; **all came to pass**” (Jos. 21:43, 45; cf. 23:14; emph. DM).

- Solomon declared (cir. 1000 B.C.): “Blessed be Jehovah, that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised: **there hath not failed one word of all his good promise**, which he promised by Moses his servant” (1 Kin. 8:56; emph. DM).
- Nehemiah prayed upon his return from captivity (cir. 450 B.C.): “Thou art Jehovah...who didst choose...Abraham ...and madest a covenant with him to give the land of the Canaanite...unto his seed, and **has performed thy words**; for thou are righteous” (Neh. 9:7–8; emph. DM).

Those who insist that God has not given the Jews the land He promised to their fathers are either ignorant of these statements or they have chosen to ignore and/or deny them. The future “land promise” claim is one of the great myths of premillennial dogma.

—Dub McClish