

Summary of Issues for the Kingdom of God and End Times (Week 1)

ISSUE	QUESTIONS / ISSUES	OPTIONS TO EMBRACE OR REJECT
<p>The Kingdom of God on earth (= national Israel under the returned Jesus or the Church under Jesus?)</p>	<p>MAIN ISSUE: God promised Abraham a land in his covenant with Abraham (Gen 12:1-3; 15:1-6). He promised to live among Abraham's offspring. Those offspring were the Israelites, and the land was Israel. <i>Therefore:</i></p> <p>1. Did the Israelites ever fully inherit the land and establish the kingdom of God on earth?</p>	<p>YES, the boundaries of the promised land (Gen 15:18; Exod 23:31) were fulfilled in the days of Solomon (1 Kgs 4:21). However, they sinned it away through their apostasy, and were exiled as God warned (Lev 26). The church <i>*is*</i> the kingdom since Christians (Jew or Gentile) inherited the Abrahamic Covenant (Gal 3:7-9, 23-29). (amill)</p> <p>NO – I don't believe 1 Kgs 4:21 fulfills the land promise. (pre-mill)</p> <p>YES and NO – Yes, Israel received the land and sinned it away, BUT the fact that God brought Israel back from exile shows that God still wanted to establish the kingdom in the land of Israel. He "remembered" his covenant (Lev 26) when Israel was repentant in exile. The successive failures to hold the land and the modern scattering of Israel shows that the messiah is needed to re-establish the kingdom. (pre-mill)</p> <p>COUNTER: The messiah came and did establish his kingdom (= the Church / Christians = amill). God's plan did not fail; the kingdom is now global through the Church, not just national Israel.</p> <p>COUNTER TO THE COUNTER: It still seems that Paul saw a future for national Israel (Rom 11) ** but note that this depends entirely on this question: When Paul thought of the "grafting Israel back into the people of God" was he thinking of the gospel (if so, then he was not looking for a re-established kingdom on earth; the answer is the Church = amill) or was he thinking that Jesus would return to re-establish an earthly kingdom in Israel? (pre-mill)</p>

SUB – ISSUES:

1. “It isn’t possible that Israel could have sinned away the Abrahamic covenant since that covenant was unconditional – no strings attached to its fulfillment.” (This is commonly assumed by many dispensational pre-millers).

- This is demonstrably untrue. All the covenants have some conditional elements, even the Abrahamic. Abraham could not simply choose to disobey God (e.g., not circumcise himself and his family, not sacrifice Isaac) and expect God to honor the covenant. The Abrahamic covenant was married to the Sinai covenant as well when that came along. See Gen 17:1-10; 22:15-18; Deut 11:18-24; *Leviticus 26).
- The issue is whether Israel’s failure completely set aside the covenant for national Israel (in favor of the Church under messiah) or not (see the “MAIN ISSUE”).

2. “The Church did not inherit the Abrahamic covenant.”

- Paul says it did in Galatians 3.
- The issue here is rather why Paul did not mention the land in Galatians 3. The **pre-miller** can take that to indicate that, while the Church does inherit the Abrahamic covenant, the land element is not so inherited – it still awaits the Jew / national Israel. The **amiller** would simply say that the reason Paul didn’t mention the land is that it’s irrelevant – the church is global, and Paul knew that, so he didn’t care about mentioning the land.

