

The first—"I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee and make thy name great, and thou shalt be a blessing. I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curses thee."

The second—"In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." \*

These promises when fully developed contained numerous blessings. They are, however, in all their details separate and distinct from each other. Abraham's family alone are personally concerned in the first—all families of the earth in the second. Temporal and earthly are the blessings of the former—spiritual and eternal are the blessings of the latter. Paul calls the second, "The gospel preached to Abraham," and "The Covenant confirmed by God in reference to the Messiah, four hundred and thirty years before the giving of the law." The Jewish kingdom in all its glory was but the development of the first—the Christian kingdom in its present and future blessings is the consummation of the second.

#### Covenant of Circumcision.

In pursuance of the first promise, and in order to its exact and literal accomplishment, about twenty-four years after its promulgation, the "Covenant of Circumcision" was established. This "covenant in the flesh," marked out and defined the natural descendants of Abraham, and gave to the world a full proof of the faithfulness of God, putting it in the power of every one to ascertain how God keeps his covenants of promise with all people. This gave to the descendants of Abraham the title of "The Circumcision," and beautifully represented the separation of God's people from the children of this world.

The land of Canaan, as the inheritance of this nation, is repeatedly promised to Abraham; and as soon as Isaac, the child of promise, is born and circumcised, the promise of the "SEED," in which all nations were to be blessed, is confined to him.—Not in Ishmael, but "in Isaac shall thy seed be called."—Genesis xxi. 12.

After the death of Abraham, and towards the close of the life of Isaac, his father's God gave him a second edition of these two promises. The first is considerably amplified in its details, while the second is repeated almost in the same words. That which was first to be accomplished is first developed, and its provisions pointed out. "I will be with thee and will bless thee; for unto thee and to thy seed I will give all these countries, and I will perform all the oath which I sware to Abraham thy father; and I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give to thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed: because Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws."—Genesis xxvi. 3, 5.