

Why Does God Refer to Himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob?

When God appeared to Moses through the burning bush, he called himself "the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." Why would God use this name? In fact, this name tells us something vital about God's nature.

[CLARENCE L. HAYNES JR.](#)

Throughout Scripture, God is identified by different names. Each name reflects a distinct aspect of his character. One of the names God uses to describe himself is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. As you consider this name, it is quite natural to connect it to the people of Israel (after all, these men were the patriarchs of Israel). However, a thread runs through this name that not only ties God to the nation of Israel but to every believer. In fact, it further connects God to the church today.

Where Does God Call Himself the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob?

There are various places in the Bible where God uses this title. We find him using the title explicitly in the Old Testament, and writers referred to the title in the New Testament. Here are some examples.

“Then he said, ‘I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.’ At this, [Moses](#) hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God.” ([Exodus 3:6](#))

“This, said the Lord, ‘is so that they may believe that the Lord, the God of their fathers—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob—has appeared to you.’” ([Exodus 4:5](#))

“Now about the dead rising—have you not read in the Book of Moses, in the account of the burning bush, how God said to him, ‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’?” ([Mark 12:26](#))

What Is Abraham's Place in God's [Covenant](#)?

In the Bible's narrative of God's covenant with humanity (first to the children of Israel, now to all who believe in Jesus), Abraham represents the birth of the promise.

The promise of God was [established through Abraham](#). It was Abraham who dared to believe in God. By Abraham's actions, he set the covenant of God in motion. There is a tendency to think of Abraham in a strictly Jewish light. It is easy to forget Abraham was not a Jew (as we think of the term) when God established this covenant with him. There was no nation of Israel or defined Jewish people when God asked him to leave his family and go to a place he would eventually show him. Abraham was from the line of Shem (hence the term Semite), but there were various descendants of Shem. Abraham was from Ur of the Chaldeans, in the southern part of modern-day Iraq. Eventually, that area would become part of Babylon.

When God called Abraham, he was a Chaldean. Yet God called Abraham out of what he was and established a covenant with him to birth a new nation of people that did not exist before. The work and promise God made to Abraham is the work that God has promised to all who believe. He takes those who were not a people and makes them his own.

“But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.”
([1 Peter 2:9-10](#))

What Is Isaac's Place in God's Covenant?

Isaac was the son of the covenant and, therefore, the bridge to the promise. The promise was not initially given to him. He was the seed that represented the promise's continuation. He

connected the promise God made to Abraham and the birth of the nation of Israel. He [came through miraculous birth](#) and carried on the covenant God had made with Abraham. Isaac was necessary because, without him, the promise would have died with Abraham. In this sense, Isaac can be seen as a type of Christ. Christ became the bridge of salvation and redemption that set the stage for the church's birth in the New Testament.

What Is Jacob's Place in God's Covenant?

Jacob represents the building of God's promise. Through the [life of Jacob](#), we begin to see the fulfillment of the covenant. The covenant was promised to Abraham, carried in Isaac, and fulfilled in Jacob. Jacob gave birth to his sons, which led to the building and establishing of the nation of Israel. It was through Jacob's sons the tribes of Israel were formed and through which the identity and growth of the nation of Israel happened. This is similar to the way the New Testament church was built. Christ is the bridge that brings salvation and redemption, and the Holy Spirit builds and establishes the church.

What Can We Learn about God from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob?

We learn several vital things from God's work through these three men.

1. God is the God of living promises

"But in the account of the burning bush, even Moses showed that the dead rise, for he calls the Lord 'the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' He is not the God of the dead, but of the living, for to him all are alive." ([Luke 20:37](#))

When God refers to himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, he does not speak of them as dead but alive. This is a reminder that all of God's promises are living promises. In God's kingdom and in God's economy, there is no such thing as a dead promise. Regardless of how long ago he said it, his promises remain alive and well.

2. God is the God of enduring promises

The Bible is clear that God's love and mercy endure forever. What we also know is that his promises endure forever as well. This is the reason God is so trustworthy because his promises don't change; they endure. We know from the scriptures Abraham was declared righteous by faith. The same way God responded to Abraham's faith is the same way he still responds to anyone who puts their faith in him. This has not changed and will not change through all generations. The promise that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved (Rom.10:13) was true then and will be true forever because the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob only makes enduring promises.

3. God is a God of fulfilled promises

The truth about a promise is that it is only as good as the person making it. If they have no intention or ability to fulfill the promise, it is meaningless. That is not who God is. He has a track record of making promises and fulfilling them. You can be certain of one thing. Everything God has said he will do... he will do. You won't always know when he will do what he promised. You can't always know how he will do what he promised. You can be sure that he will do what he promised.

For thousands of years, people have been putting their faith and hope in God's promises. Whether it is for salvation, provision, protection, or any of the other promises God has made, God has fulfilled them. When you think of God as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, let it be a reminder. You serve a God who sees

his word through to the end and will always do what he has said he will do.¹

¹ https://www.christianity.com/wiki/god/why-does-god-refer-to-himself-as-the-god-of-abraham-isaac-and-jacob.html#google_vignette