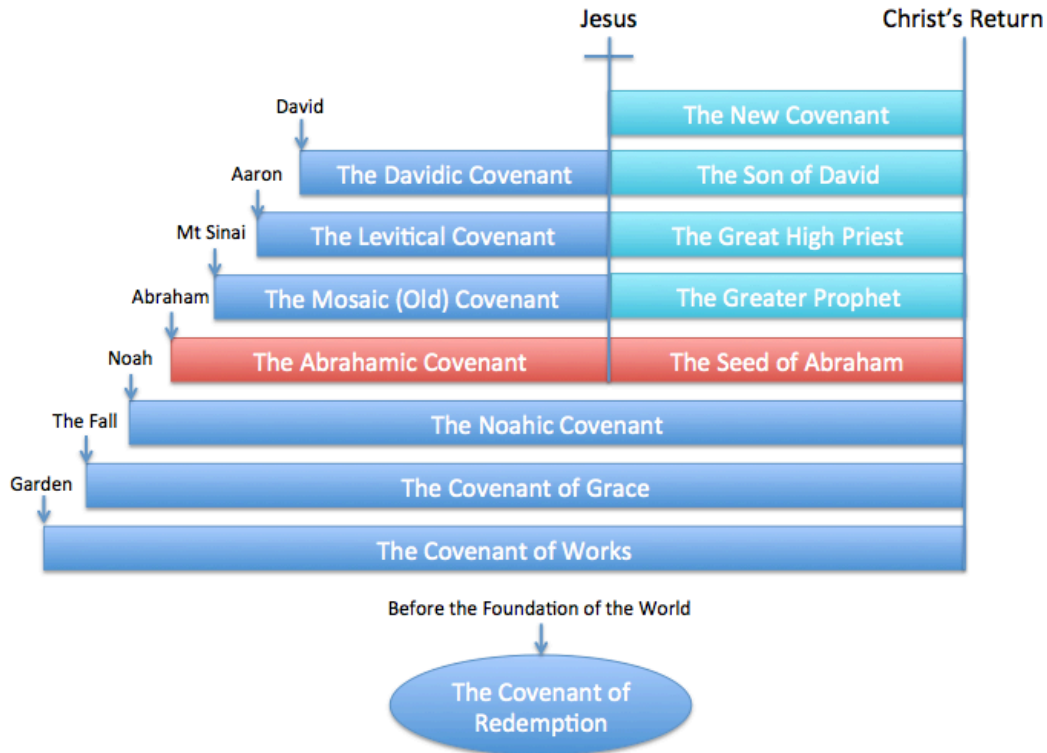




Introduction

The Abrahamic Covenant is the first covenant in which we see a change based on the death and resurrection of Christ. The covenant is not changed but Jesus is the fulfillment of the covenant.



The Focus Narrows

- At the beginning of Genesis we start with one man Adam and his wife Eve.
- After Cain kills Abel, the story, for the large part, deals with groups of people.
- When we come to Genesis chapter 12 we are back to a single person, Abraham.

The Covenant Defined

God promises to Abraham to make his descendants into a nation that will be a blessing to all nations. In the Old Testament this nation is Israel, and in the New Testament this nation is the church.

Covenant Partakers

- In Genesis 12:1 God calls Abraham (at this point Abram) to leave his country and go to a new land.
- In Genesis 15 God formally initiates the covenant with Abraham.



- In chapter 17 God reaffirms the covenant and changes Abraham's name from Abram to Abraham. Genesis 12:2, Genesis 12:7a
- God speaks of a "great nation" and of Abraham's offspring. Genesis 15:18, Genesis 17:1-8
- The covenant is with Abraham and his offspring, but the covenant is with certain of Abraham's descendants. Genesis 17:19, Genesis 28:3-4, Genesis 28:12-15, Genesis 35:9-12

Covenant Promises

Genesis 12:1-3

- I will make of you a great nation.
- I will bless you.
- I will make your name great.

The purpose of these promises is at the end of verse 2, "so that you will be a blessing." Verse three has two promises followed by a purpose.

- I will bless those who bless you.
- I will curse him who dishonors you.

The purpose is "in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

The promises in the first part of chapter 12, in particular the promises to make Abraham into a great nation and to make him a blessing to the nations, are implemented through other promises that God makes.

- The promise of a seed or offspring. Genesis 15:1-6
- The promise of a land. Genesis 12:6-7
- The promise of blessing. Genesis 12:1-3

Covenant Ratification

Genesis 15:7-21

- God passing between cut animals means that he pledges to keep this covenant unto death. Since God cannot lie and God cannot die this covenant is certain to be fulfilled.
- Only God passes between the animals. Only God pledges to fulfill this covenant.

Covenant Sign

Genesis 17:9-14

- Circumcision is symbolic. Luke 22:20
- Circumcision is required. Genesis 17:9,
- Circumcision is personal. Genesis 17:11

Meaning of circumcision

- God mandated circumcision because it applies to the male reproductive organ and the promises to Abraham focus on his posterity.¹

¹ Greg Nichols, *Covenant Theology* (Vestavia Hill, AL: Solid Ground Christian Books, 2011), 170.



- The bloody ritual of cutting the flesh in the male reproductive organ signified God's covenant with Abraham when he walked between the bloody animal halves.²
- Circumcision indicates a need for cleansing and represents the removal of defilement. The cutting off of the foreskin suggests judgment brings purification.³

The Covenant Fulfilled

The Promised Seed

Galatians 3:16, Galatians 3:29, Galatians 4:28, Romans 9:6-13

The Promised Land

Joshua 21:43-45, 2 Corinthians 1:20, Hebrews 11:8-10, Hebrews 8:13-16

The Promised Blessing

Galatians 3:7-9, John 3:16 ESV

The True Circumcision

Deuteronomy 10:16, Deuteronomy 30:6, Colossians 2:11, 1 Corinthians 7:19, Galatians 5:6, Galatians 6:15, Romans 2:25-29, Acts 7:51, Philippians 3:3,

- Just like physical circumcision heart circumcision is required, is personal, and is hidden.
- Unlike physical circumcision, which is performed by man, heart circumcision is only performed by the Holy Spirit when he regenerates.
- This hidden sign given by God is revealed through our lives of joyful obedience to our Savior.

All of the promises given to Abraham are fulfilled in Jesus, the true seed of Abraham, the one seed of the woman.

² Michael G. Brown and Zach Keele, *Sacred Bond* (Grandville, MI: Reformed Fellowship, Inc., 2012), 96.

³ O. Palmer Robertson, *The Christ of the Covenants* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1980), 150-151.