

# Covenant Theology: from a Reformed Baptist Perspective

## Lesson 5: The Abrahamic Covenant (an introduction)

### Background to the Abrahamic Covenant

1. **Human \_\_\_\_\_**-As people increased in number so did lawlessness on the earth (Genesis 6:1-5). This lawlessness was dealt with by God by the sending of a worldwide flood. After the flood, we find the same thing happening again. Noah is shown to be a sinner. Noah's one son (Ham) is shown to be a hard-hearted rebel. This should draw our minds back to the first family. As men increase again upon the earth so too grows lawlessness on the earth. This increase in lawlessness is led by a son of the cursed line (Genesis 10:6-8). This wicked, antichrist figure, leads the people of earth in \_\_\_\_\_ against the commands of God and all men submit to his tyrannical wickedness.

*“Within a short time after the Deluge, human depravity resumed its old course and manifested itself in open defiance of heaven...The character of man in unchanged, the same in principle and practice as it had been before the Flood. It might perhaps have been expected that so terrible a judgment would have left upon the survivors and their descendants for many generations a deep and salutary impression, which would have acted as a powerful restraint upon their evil propensities. Alas, what is man!...The sad failure of Noah himself, and the wicked behavior of his son on beholding the fall of his father, afforded awful proof that the evil which is in the heart of fallen man is so deeply rooted and so powerful that nothing external, no matter how frightful, can subdue it.”*”-Pink

2. \_\_\_\_\_ **& Judgment** -In the days of the flood we see both God's judgment and His salvation. God judged the wicked but saved His \_\_\_\_\_. Once again, we see this same pattern in Genesis 11-12. In fact, this pattern of judgement and salvation being tied together is a consistent theme throughout Scripture (think of the cross and the end of days).
3. \_\_\_\_\_ **revelation**-The first promise of the gospel is found in Genesis 3:15. No other revelation of the gospel is recorded for us until we get to after the flood. So, for thousands of years the people of the earth only had this simple promise in which to hope. However, God began after the flood to progressively reveal more and more about this promise. Thus, helping men know in more \_\_\_\_\_ where to look for this offering of the woman.

Noah, by the Spirit of God, is given insight into the \_\_\_\_\_ plan of God's redemption and this is evidenced by the blessings and curses given out by Noah to his sons. (Genesis 9:25-27)

**Shem**-This is the first time in Scripture that the blessing of God specifically is “tied” to a single person. Shem is shown to be the godly line from which the original promise would come from. The promise narrowed in terms of how it would be fulfilled. The \_\_\_\_\_ would come from the descendants of Shem. As we will see this is a reference to the nation of Israel as Israel came from the line of Shem. Salvation came from the Jews (John 4:22). The wicked and cursed line is said to be servant of this blessed line. Spiritually we see this fulfilled in the fact that the wicked only continue in their existence for the sake of the Christ and His church.

**Japheth**-Japheth will be greater in number than Shem. However, it is in the tents of Shem that Japheth will find rest and salvation. Again, the wicked line is said to be the servants of Japheth. While the Messiah will not come from Japheth's descendants, they will share in the blessing of \_\_\_\_\_ with God. Spiritually the saved gentiles are here pictured, not natural heirs of the line of promise but engrafted in and sharers of the blessed gift of communion with God by way of promise.

**Ham**-A curse is pronounced upon the descendants of Ham. The descendants of Ham will be those outside of the promise of blessing (spiritually all \_\_\_\_\_ who die in their unbelief are descendants of Ham).

The promise of grace continues to become more clearly seen as the promise is now given to a specific offspring from the godly line of Shem. \_\_\_\_\_ **is a descendant of Shem** (Genesis 11:10-26). Do you see the importance of this genealogy? It is showing the practical outworking of God's fulfillment of His promise.

4. **The rise of Abram as heir to the promise must be attributed completely to God's \_\_\_\_\_**

**-Abram, and his family, was a worshipper of \_\_\_\_\_**

**Joshua 24:2** *“And Joshua said to all the people, ‘Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, ‘Long ago, your fathers lived beyond the Euphrates, Terah, the father of Abraham and of Nahor; and they served other gods.’”*

**-The Scriptures seem to indicate that Abraham’s obedience to God’s command \_\_\_\_\_ and delayed.**

God told Abraham to leave all of his family and set out to go to the land of Canaan (Genesis 12:1). But when we find Abram leaving we find him going with his family and we find him going half-way then settling for a while before finally continuing on to the land of Canaan (Genesis 11:31-32).

*“Abraham’s obedience to the divine command was both partial and tardy...And why did the Lord suffer the ‘flesh’ in Abraham to mar his obedience? To indicate to his spiritual children that absolute perfection of character and conduct is not attainable in this life.”-Pink*

**5. While this covenant comes into existence because of God’s grace, the Abrahamic covenant is \_\_\_\_\_ properly to be called, “the Covenant of Grace”.**

Understanding this is really the “key” for reformed Baptists. How a person understands the Abrahamic Covenant will impact their view of the \_\_\_\_\_ and who makes up the church.

*“While gracious, Abraham’s covenant was never the Covenant of Grace.”-Van Dorn*

*“The Covenant of Grace was revealed to Abraham, but the formal covenant that God concluded with him was not the Covenant of Grace.”-Denault*