

The Covenant of Grace: Promised

I. A new, gracious beginning promised to Adam

- God promises a redeemer, an offspring of the woman who will crush the serpent, while himself being struck (Gen 3:15).
- Adam embraces this promise by faith, calling his wife the mother of the *living* (3:20)
- God replaces their worthless fig leaf coverings with garments from animal skins, a sign that he will cover their sin (3:21).
 - Tipton: “[D]eath did, in fact, occur on the very day that Adam and Eve sinned. It was, however, not Adam and Eve’s death but the death of those slain animals, whose blood represented their life being poured out on behalf of those who had deserved the death-curse of God.”
 - The animals slain in Adam and Eve’s place anticipate the sacrificial system.
- This covenant is the first promise of Jesus Christ. It is the first preaching of the gospel of God’s grace.

II. The promise continues through Noah

- Genesis traces the seed of the woman. The genealogy of righteous Seth in Gen 5 contrasts with the genealogy of wicked Cain (Gen 4:17–24).
 - Noah is a special entry: 5:29: “this one one shall bring us *relief* [this word sounds like ‘Noah’ in Hebrew] from our work and from the painful toil of our hands.” Noah will be an agent for reversing the curse of sin (cf. 3:17).
- God then confirms this redemptive promise to Noah: the rest of the earth will perish, but I am establishing my covenant with you (Gen 6:17–18)
 - The covenant of grace which God confirms to Noah is different from the general covenant God makes with the whole old creation after the flood (I am indebted to Van Pelt for this table):

1st Covenant with Noah in Gen 6	2nd Covenant with Noah in Gen 9
Established with Noah (singular “you” in Gen 6:18)	Established with all humanity through Noah (plural “you” in 9:9)
Covenant of salvation from judgment (i.e., from the flood)	Covenant of preservation until the final judgment
Because of Noah’s righteousness through faith (Gen 6:9; Heb 11:7)	In spite of humanity’s wickedness (Gen 8:21)
Noah’s obedience was required to enjoy the blessings of the covenant (building the ark)	No obedience required to enjoy common grace.

- Conclusion: the 1st covenant with Noah is a continuation of the covenant of grace; the 2nd covenant is a continuation of the covenant of works.
- In Gen 9:25–27, one son of Noah is identified as the heir of the covenant: the redeemer/ruler will come through *Shem*.
 - Before the tower of Babel, we have a tree-like genealogy (Gen 10). After, we have a straight one through Shem (Gen 11:10–26). This straight one continues where Gen 5 left off, tracing the redemptive line.

III. Abraham receives an expanded promise

- God's promises to Abraham:
 - Special covenant relationship with God: God will establish an everlasting covenant with Abraham's descendants and be God to them (17:2, 7-8).
 - Abundant offspring: He will become a great, exceedingly numerous nation (12:2; 13:16; 15:5; 17:2; 18:18). He will even be "the father of a multitude of nations" (17:4-6).
 - God will protect him (12:3; 15:1). Though his seed will be slaves in another land, God will bring them out with many possessions (15:14)
 - Greatness: God will make his name great (12:2); Kings will come from Abraham (17:6).
 - Land: His seed will possess the land of promise (12:7; 13:14-15; 15:7, 18-21; 17:8)
 - Redemption for the whole world: He and his seed will be a blessing to all the families of the earth (12:2-3; 18:18). The redeemer will come through him (cf. Gal 3:16).
- Tracing the seed of the woman through renewals of the covenant of grace:
 - Abraham's son Isaac will inherit this covenant (17:19, 21; 21:12).
 - Isaac's son Jacob will inherit: the younger son will be heir (25:23)
 - Jacob's descendants will inherit (28:13-15; 48:4)
 - A company of nations will come from him, including kings (35:11).
 - He will receive the land (35:12; 48:4).
 - He will become a great nation in Egypt (46:3)
 - Jacob's son Judah will rule (49:8-12)

IV. The seed of the woman in the NT

- Jesus is the serpent-crushing seed of the woman (Matt 1:1-17; Col 2:15).
- Everyone who is in Christ is a child of Abraham (Gal 3:29; Rom 4:11), even a child of David (2 Cor 6:18; Rev 3:21; 21:7).
- Christ's victory makes us all serpent-crushers (Rom 16:20), with the power to overcome Satan.