

IV. THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT or THE COVENANT OF CIRCUMCISION: Genesis 12, 15, & 17

INTRODUCTION/CONTEXT. After the fall of Adam and Eve into sin, and thereby breaking the Covenant of Works, God promised He would send a Savior in Genesis 3:16, therein promising the New Covenant of Grace. According to this first gospel promise, this seed of the woman, Christ, would crush the head of the serpent to His own hurt—the seed shall bruise the serpents head and the serpent shall bruise the seed’s heel. That is essentially all we know about the Savior thus far in Scripture, until God begins to reveal more about Christ in the Abrahamic Covenant, which is successively revealed in Genesis 12, 15, and 17.

DOCTRINE. The Lord established the Abrahamic Covenant to give the land of Canaan and further reveal aspects of the New Covenant in Christ.

- **1689 Ch. 7, Pr. 3.** “[The New Covenant of Grace] is revealed in the gospel; first of all to Adam in the promise of salvation by the seed of the woman,⁵ and afterwards by farther steps, until the full discovery thereof was completed in the New Testament.”

OUTLINE. Four main points to consider in Genesis 12, 15, and 17, with many particulars to note under each. Then four Uses for Instruction and a Conclusion.

I. THE LORD *PROMISED* THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT IN GENESIS 12 (Genesis 12:1-3).

Genesis 12:1-3 “1 Now the LORD said to Abram, ‘Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. 2 And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.’”

Notice the grace of God in all of His covenant dealings! Abram was a pagan, yet God came to Him in order to enter into a covenant with Him. The same is true for you, Christian!

BOYS AND GIRLS...

I) THE LORD *CHOSE* ABRAM AS COVENANT HEAD (Gen. 12:1a).

Genesis 12:1a “Now the LORD said to Abram,”

- *Just as Adam was head in the Covenant of Works, so Abram will be head in the Abrahamic Covenant.*

II) THE LORD MADE PROMISES TO ABRAM, THE COVENANT HEAD

(Gen. 12:2-3).

Four particular promises:

(i) The Lord promised to make Abram a great nation (Gen. 12:2a).

Genesis 12:2a "And I will make of you a great nation,"

(ii) The Lord promised to bless Abram and make him a blessing (Gen 12:2b).

Genesis 12:2b "and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing."

(iii) The Lord promised to bless those who bless and curse those who dishonor Abram (Gen. 12:3a).

Genesis 12:3a "I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse,"

Note, this has nothing to do with the modern nation state of Israel!

- **Dispensationalists, Zionists, and just many average ole evangelical Christians in America have been lied to about this** (or perhaps some of them have been doing the lying, intentionally or unintentionally). The modern nation state of Israel, established in 1948, does not represent Abraham and has nothing to with the blessing and curse promise of Genesis 12:3.
- **(John the Baptist) Matthew 3:9** "And do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father,' for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham."
- **(Jesus) John 8:39-45** "39 They answered him, 'Abraham is our father.' Jesus said to them, 'If you were Abraham's children, you would be doing the works Abraham did, 40 but now you seek to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. This is not what Abraham did. 41 You are doing the works your father did.' They said to him, 'We were not born of sexual immorality. We have one Father—even God.'" 42 Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and I am here. I came not of my own accord, but he sent me. 43 Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot bear to hear my word. 44 You are of your father the devil,

and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies. 45 But because I tell the truth, you do not believe me."

The true children of Abraham are those who have faith in Christ, not merely those who claim to have descended from Abraham according to the flesh.

The true children of Abraham are Christians, not those who call themselves such but are simply doing it try to take advantage of you by twisting Genesis 12:3 to their own end.

- **Galatians 3:7-9** "7 Know then that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham. 8 And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "In you shall all the nations be blessed." 9 So then, those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith."

This brings up an important question:

QUESTION. Who is the offspring of Abraham?

ANSWER 1. Christ is the offspring of Abraham (Gal. 3:16).

- **Galatians 3:16** "Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, 'And to offsprings,' referring to many, but referring to one, 'And to your offspring,' who is Christ."

ANSWER 2. All who believe on Christ for salvation are the offspring of Abraham, only by virtue of being united to Christ, the true offspring (Gal. 3:29).

- **Galatians 3:29** "If you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise."

(iv) The Lord promised to bless all the families of the earth through Abram (Gen. 12:3b).

Genesis 12:3b "and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

II. THE LORD CUT THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT IN GENESIS 15 (Gen. 15).

Now, there are at least 6 things to take note of in Genesis 15 as to the understanding of it:

I) The LORD reiterated His initial promise to Abram in order to calm

his fears (Gen. 15:1).

Genesis 15:1 "After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision: 'Fear not, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great.'"

BOYS AND GIRLS, it is a good thing to encourage one another and help calm the fears of someone who is afraid.

II) The LORD clarified His former promise by assuring Abram of his very own son and heir (Gen. 15:2-6).

Q. Which previous promise did this one clarify?

A. Genesis 12:2a "And I will make of you a great nation,"

Genesis 15:2-6 "2 But Abram said, 'O LORD God, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?' 3 And Abram said, 'Behold, you have given me no offspring, and a member of my household will be my heir.'" "4 And behold, the word of the LORD came to him: 'This man shall not be your heir; your very own son shall be your heir.' 5 And he brought him outside and said, 'Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them.' Then he said to him, 'So shall your offspring be.' 6 And he believed the LORD, and he counted it to him as righteousness."

Note, God has only ever justified sinners in one way—through faith in God's promised Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ!

III) The LORD repeats where He would send Abram, ultimately to inherit the land of Canaan (Gen. 15:7).

Genesis 15:7 "And he said to him, 'I am the LORD who brought you out from Ur of the Chaldeans to give you *this land to possess*.'"

C.F. Genesis 12:7 "Then the Lord appeared to Abram and said, 'To your offspring I will give this land.'" So he built there an altar to the Lord, who had appeared to him."

IV) The LORD prepared to have Abram cut a covenant with Him in order to give assurance to the promises (Gen. 15:8-11).

Genesis 15:8-11 "8 But he said, 'O LORD God, how am I to know that I shall possess it?' 9 He said to him, 'Bring me a heifer three years old, a female goat three years old, a ram three years old, a turtledove, and a young pigeon.' 10 And he brought him all these, cut them in half, and laid each half over against the other. But he did not cut the birds in half. 11 And when birds of prey came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away."

V) The LORD promised Abram that His promise would be fulfilled but according to His own timing (Gen. 15:12-16).

Genesis 15:12-16 "12 As the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell on Abram. And behold, dreadful and great darkness fell upon him. 13 Then the LORD said to

Abram, 'Know for certain that your offspring will be sojourners in a land that is not theirs and will be servants there, and they will be afflicted for four hundred years. 14 But I will bring judgment on the nation that they serve, and afterward they shall come out with great possessions. 15 As for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried in a good old age. 16 And they shall come back here in the fourth generation, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.'"

God's timing is perfect for His glory and His peoples' eternal good. Learn from this, suffering saint.

VI) The LORD cut a covenant with Abram (Gen. 15:17-21).

Genesis 15:17-21 "17 When the sun had gone down and it was dark, behold, a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch passed between these pieces. 18 On that day the LORD made (lit. "Cut") a covenant with Abram, saying, 'To your offspring I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates, 19 the land of the Kenites, the Kenizzites, the Kadmonites, 20 the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, 21 the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites and the Jebusites.'"

The chief promise of the Abrahamic Covenant, concerning Abraham's descendants according to the flesh, was the land of Canaan as their inheritance.

Note, that this is a picture of the chief promise we receive in the New Covenant of Grace in Christ: Hebrews 11:8-10, 16 "8 By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. 9 By faith he went to live in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. 10 For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God. . . 16 But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city."

BOYS AND GIRLS, God promised Abraham and his descendants the land of Canaan, and He gave it to them! In the same way God has promised all of us who believe on Christ a New Heavens and a New Earth, and He will give it to us!

Our triune God has promised you an eternal inheritance in the New Heavens and the New Earth, believer! Just as God gave Canaan those connected to Abraham, so He will give heaven to we who are connected to Christ!

III. THE LORD EXPANDED THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT IN GENESIS 17 (Gen. 17:1-8).

Genesis 17:1-14 "1 When Abram was ninety-nine years old the LORD appeared to

Abram and said to him, 'I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless, 2 that I may make my covenant between me and you, and may multiply you greatly.' 3 Then Abram fell on his face. And God said to him, 4 'Behold, my covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations. 5 No longer shall your name be called Abram (*exalted father*), but your name shall be Abraham (*father of a multitude*), for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations. 6 I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make you into nations, and kings shall come from you. 7 And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you. 8 And I will give to you and to your offspring after you the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God.'"

Everything in these verses has already been promised to Abram in one way or another, except one:

I) The LORD expanded the Abrahamic Covenant to have to it attached the promise of kings (Gen. 17:6).

Genesis 17:6 "I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make you into nations, and kings shall come from you."

This is initially a promise of the Davidic Covenant, and ultimately a promise of the New Covenant of Grace wherein Christ is King!

IV. THE LORD STIPULATED THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT IN GENESIS 17 (Gen. 17:9-14).

I) The LORD demanded loyalty from Abraham as the stipulation of the Abrahamic Covenant (Ge, 17:9).

Genesis 17:9-14 "9 And God said to Abraham, 'As for you, you shall keep my covenant, you and your offspring after you throughout their generations.'"

II) The external sign of Abraham's and his descendants' loyalty was circumcision (Gen. 17:10-13).

Genesis 17:10-13 "10 This is my covenant, which you shall keep, between me and you and your offspring after you: Every male among you shall be circumcised. 11 You shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and you. 12 He who is eight days old among you shall be circumcised. Every male throughout your generations, whether born in your house or bought with your money from any foreigner who is not of your offspring, 13 both he who is born in your house and he who is bought with your money, shall surely be circumcised. So shall my covenant be in your flesh an everlasting covenant."

III) Disloyalty to God (i.e. breaking His covenant) would cut off any Israelite from the Abrahamic Covenant and they would be disinherited from the land (Gen. 17:14).

Genesis 17:14 "Any uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin shall be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant."

CONCLUSION OF EXEGESIS.

- **SAMUEL RENIHAN:** "In successive stages, God made a covenant with Abraham, promising him that his multiplied offspring would inherit Canaan and live there under their own rulers after a period of several hundred years of sojourning and slavery. God will assuredly make this happen. As for Abraham and his descendants, they must keep the covenant by circumcising their males on the eighth day. If they do not keep the covenant, they will be disinherited not as a nation, but as individuals. From among the children of Abraham, one of them will bring a blessing for all the families of the earth, for all the nations." — **Renihan, Samuel. The Mystery of Christ, His Covenant, and His Kingdom (p. 101). Founders Press. Kindle Edition.**

FOUR USES FOR INSTRUCTION

I) God fulfilled all His promises to Abraham (Joshua 21:45).

Joshua 21:45 "Not one word of all the good promises that the Lord had made to the house of Israel had failed; all came to pass."

. . . Including disinheriting covenant breakers from the land as well as sending Christ to be Savior and King of all nations!

God will keep all His happy promises and all His terrible threatenings.

- Use this truth for *comfort* as well as for *warning*.

GOSPEL!

BOYS AND GIRLS, God keeps all his happy promises and all his terrifying threatenings. You need to turn from your sin and tTrust in Christ alone for salvation; you need to then, be baptized, join the church, and walk with God's people all the days of your life!

II) Circumcision of the foreskin pointed to the need for circumcision of the heart, i.e. the New Birth (Deuteronomy 30:6).

Deuteronomy 30:6 "And the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live."

Abraham's descendants did not simply need to be circumcised; they needed

to be born again!

Just so, your children do not simply need to be baptized, they need to be born again! So do all your family members, so do your neighbors, so do all who have not yet bent the knee to Christ.

Go and tell them the gospel, and exhort them to turn *from* sin to Christ Jesus in faith and obedience. That is how God regenerates—through our proclamation of the gospel and exhorted all to respond in repentance and faith!

Your labor is not in vain. Press on with the Law and the Gospel on your lips, in your heart, and as the path for your feet.

BOYS AND GIRLS, you and I needed God to do something that we could never do. Did you cause yourself to be born? Just so, you could not cause yourself to be born again. That is something God the Holy Spirit does. *May He do it to every one of you! And may you all give glory to God alone for your New Birth!*
Could

III) You were only in the Abrahamic Covenant by virtue of being connected to the Covenant Head, Abraham (not by virtue of being connected to your parents).

- **Under the Abrahamic Covenant this could happen naturally, according to ordinary generation.**

If you were born a descendant of Abraham you have a right to the Abrahamic covenant and must be given the covenant sign of circumcision. *It was not by the child's being connected to their parents that put them into the Abrahamic Covenant, but their being connected to Abraham.*

- **Under the New Covenant, however, this cannot happen naturally. No one can be born connected to Christ by ordinary generation.**

You must be *born again* to be connected to Christ in the New Covenant of Grace (John 3), therefore we do not give the covenant sign to someone until they have made a profession of faith, which indicates that they are now connected to Christ, the covenant head.

So, in conclusion of this point:

You were only in the Abrahamic Covenant by virtue of being connected to its Covenant Head, Abraham.

Just so, you are only in the New Covenant by virtue of being connected to its Covenant Head, Christ.

You could get into the Abrahamic Covenant through ordinary generation, but you get into the New Covenant through faith alone in Christ alone.

NOTE, This is the fatal flaw of Paedo Baptism: It is not a difference in modes or timing of baptism or anything like that. The fatal flaw of Paedo Baptism is that

those who hold to it misunderstand the Covenants of God. They try to make the New Covenant just like the Abrahamic, when they are in fact substantially and essentially different concerning who is in, who is out, and how you get in. The Abrahamic is part of the Old Covenant, which is called a *shadow* of the things to come (Hebrews 10:1; Colossians 2:17); Jesus, in the New Covenant, is called the *body* (Colossians 2:17). As you know, we should not use the shadow to interpret the body when the body is perfectly visible. do. Christ is standing before us. We do not need to look to the Shadow of the Old Covenant in order to under how to behave in the New. the Bible is clear concerning who is in the New Covenant and who is not, and those who have still not

IV) The Abrahamic Covenant had two chief purposes:

Purpose 1. To give the land of Canaan to Abraham's descendants so that they would be preserved until Christ came into the world through them (Selected Scriptures).

- **Isaac said to Jacob in Genesis 28:4**, "May he give the blessing of Abraham to you and to your offspring with you, that you may take possession of the land of your sojournings that God gave to Abraham!"
- **God said to Jacob in Genesis 35:12**, "The land that I gave to Abraham and Isaac I will give to you, and I will give the land to your offspring after you." God said to Moses in Exodus 6:2-4, "2 I am the LORD. 3 I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as God Almighty, but by my name the LORD I did not make myself known to them. 4 I also established my covenant with them to give them the land of Canaan, the land in which they lived as sojourners."
- **Moses said to the Lord in Exodus 32:13**, "Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, your servants, to whom you swore by your own self, and said to them, 'I will multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have promised I will give to your offspring, and they shall inherit it forever.'"
- **Moses said to the people of Israel in Deuteronomy 1:8**, "See, I have set the land before you. Go in and take possession of the land that the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give to them and to their offspring after them."
- **Joshua 1:6** "Be strong and courageous, for you shall cause this people to inherit the land that I swore to their fathers to give them."
- **Psalms 105:6-11** "6 O offspring of Abraham, his servant, children of Jacob, his chosen ones! 7 He is the LORD our God; his judgments are in all the earth. 8 He remembers his covenant forever, the word that he commanded, for a thousand generations, 9 the covenant that he made

with Abraham, his sworn promise to Isaac, 10 which he confirmed to Jacob as a statute, to Israel as an everlasting covenant, 11 saying, "To you I will give the land of Canaan as your portion for an inheritance."

- **Jeremiah 11:2–5** "2 Hear the words of this covenant, and speak to the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. 3 You shall say to them, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Cursed be the man who does not hear the words of this covenant 4 that I commanded your fathers when I brought them out of the land of Egypt, from the iron furnace, saying, Listen to my voice, and do all that I command you. So shall you be my people, and I will be your God, 5 that I may confirm the oath that I swore to your fathers, to give them a land flowing with milk and honey, as at this day."

Purpose 2. To further reveal the New Covenant of Grace which would be established in Christ Jesus.

- **1689 Ch. 7, Pr. 3.** "[The New Covenant of Grace] is revealed in the gospel; first of all to Adam in the promise of salvation by the seed of the woman,⁵ and afterwards by farther steps, until the full discovery thereof was completed in the New Testament."
 - **In the protoeuangelion contained in Gen. 3:16**, God reveals that the seed of the woman will crush the head of the serpent at great cost to Himself.
 - **In the Abrahamic Covenant God reveals that the seed will be**
 - I) A descendant of Abraham according to the flesh, and that
 - II) All the nations of the earth will be blessed in Him (c.f. Genesis 22).

CONCLUSION OF USES.

Rejoice in hope, brothers and sisters.

Like Abram, our only hope is that God would initiate and cut a covenant with us! And that is exactly what He has done in Jesus Christ.

In Christ, God has not simply passed through half-cut animals to show His love and commitment.

He entered the world as the God-man in Jesus Christ and was cut in two on the cross for our sins. He was split for our iniquities. So that the blessing would come to us!

All who believe in Him will never be put to shame.

HELPS FOR FURTHER STUDY

- The Mystery of Christ (book) by Dr. Sam Renihan - <https://a.co/d/7vBXZmd>
 - The Abrahamic Covenant (pt.1 - audio) by Dr. Sam Renihan - <https://www.sermonaudio.com/sermons/126161413163>
 - The Abrahamic Covenant (pt.2 - audio) by Dr. Sam Renihan - <https://www.sermonaudio.com/sermons/126161414381>
-

STUDY AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Study Questions

1. According to the sermon introduction, how does the Abrahamic Covenant build upon the promise in Genesis 3:15 (The Protoeangelion)? What aspect of the Savior is further revealed in Genesis 12, 15, and 17? (Reference: Genesis 3:15; LBCF 7.3)
2. In Genesis 12:1-3, identify the four specific promises God makes to Abram. How does the sermon emphasize God's grace in initiating the covenant with a pagan like Abram?
3. Who is the true "offspring" of Abraham according to Galatians 3:16 and 3:29? Explain why the sermon rejects the idea that Genesis 12:3 applies to the modern nation-state of Israel established in 1948, citing supporting Scriptures like Matthew 3:9 and John 8:39-45.
4. In Genesis 15, describe the six key elements noted in the sermon (e.g., calming fears, clarifying the promise of a son, the covenant-cutting ceremony). What does the unilateral passing of the smoking fire pot and flaming torch symbolize about God's role in fulfilling the covenant?
5. What new element is added to the Abrahamic Covenant in Genesis 17:1-8 that was not explicitly promised earlier? How does this point forward to the Davidic Covenant and ultimately to Christ as King in the New Covenant?
6. Explain the stipulation of the Abrahamic Covenant in Genesis 17:9-14. What was the sign (circumcision), who received it, and what was the consequence for failing to keep it? How does this differ from entry into the New Covenant?

7. According to the sermon and Joshua 21:45, how was the Abrahamic Covenant fulfilled? Include both the land promise to Abraham's physical descendants and the ultimate blessing through Christ.
8. What does Deuteronomy 30:6 teach about the need for "circumcision of the heart"? How does the sermon apply this to the New Birth, and why is this necessary even for those who received the external sign under the Abrahamic Covenant?
9. Contrast membership in the Abrahamic Covenant with membership in the New Covenant. Why does the sermon argue that paedobaptism misunderstands the covenants, citing Hebrews 10:1 and Colossians 2:17?
10. List the two chief purposes of the Abrahamic Covenant as outlined in the sermon. Provide at least two supporting Scriptures for each purpose.
11. How does the sermon connect the land of Canaan as an inheritance under the Abrahamic Covenant to the believer's inheritance in the New Covenant (citing Hebrews 11:8-10, 16)?
12. Quoting Samuel Renihan, summarize the Abrahamic Covenant's promises, stipulations, and the role of the one offspring who brings blessing to all nations.
13. In the conclusion, how does the sermon portray Christ's work on the cross as fulfilling and surpassing the covenant-cutting ceremony in Genesis 15?

Discussion Questions

1. The sermon highlights God's sovereign grace in choosing Abram, a pagan, as covenant head (Genesis 12:1). Discuss how this mirrors God's election in the New Covenant (Ephesians 1:4-5). Why is this encouraging for believers who feel unworthy?
2. Galatians 3:7-9 states that "those of faith are blessed along with Abraham." In light of the sermon's rejection of applying Genesis 12:3 to modern Israel, discuss common evangelical misconceptions about "blessing Israel" today. How should Christians respond to political Zionism biblically?
3. Abram's faith in Genesis 15:6 was "counted to him as righteousness." Discuss how this demonstrates that justification has always been by faith alone in the promised Savior, not by works or ethnicity (Romans 4:1-5; LBCF 11).
4. The sermon notes God's perfect timing in Genesis 15:12-16, including 400 years of affliction. For suffering saints today, how does this truth provide comfort? Share personal examples of waiting on God's promises.
5. Circumcision was an "everlasting covenant" sign under the Abrahamic Covenant but is not required in the New Covenant. Discuss why baptism

replaces circumcision as the sign, but only for professed believers (Acts 2:38-41; LBCF 29). Why is infant baptism a "fatal flaw" in covenant understanding?

6. The sermon argues that entry into the Abrahamic Covenant could occur by "ordinary generation" (physical descent from Abraham), but the New Covenant requires regeneration and faith. Debate: How does this uphold the substantial difference between the Old and New Covenants (Jeremiah 31:31-34; Hebrews 8:6-13)?
7. Purpose 1 of the Abrahamic Covenant was preserving a people until Christ came. Discuss how God's faithfulness in giving Canaan (Joshua 21:45) assures us of His preservation of the church until Christ's return (Matthew 16:18).
8. The sermon exhorts proclaiming the gospel for regeneration (Deuteronomy 30:6). Discuss practical ways to share Law and Gospel with family, neighbors, and children, emphasizing that regeneration is God's work through the means of preaching (Romans 10:14-17).
9. Christ is the true Seed who blesses all nations (Genesis 12:3; Galatians 3:16). Discuss how the Abrahamic Covenant progressively reveals the New Covenant of Grace (LBCF 7.3). Why must we interpret the Old by the New, not vice versa?
10. In the gospel application, the sermon warns of God's fulfillment of both promises and threatenings. For unbelievers: Why must they repent and trust Christ? For believers: How does union with Christ as Covenant Head assure eternal inheritance (Hebrews 11:16)?

SERMON TRANSCRIPT

Well, friends and visitors, brothers and sisters in Christ, after the fall of Adam and Eve into sin and thereby breaking the covenant of works that God had established with our first parents, namely Adam. God almost immediately promises he would send a savior in Genesis 3:15. And in that promise of Genesis 3:15, God is promising what is called the new covenant or what you can call the new covenant of grace. So according to this first gospel promise in Genesis 3:15, this seed of the woman, Christ will crush the head of the serpent to his own hurt. He will bruise your heel, you will bruise his head or vice versa. So Christ, though it will hurt him, he's crushing the head of the serpent. That's what's promised in Genesis 3:15. That is essentially all we know about the Savior thus far in scripture when we get to Genesis 12. What else do we know? That's all that has been revealed. This was

the object of the church's faith from Adam to Abraham. They didn't have any other promises. The promise was a descendant would come the seed would come crush that of the serpent even at great cost to himself. And so the church in those ages believed the promise of God that was about Christ and God saved them through their faith in his promise. But that is essentially all we know when we get to Genesis 12 and we're introduced to Abraham. So God in Genesis 12:15 and 17 enters into a covenant with Abraham. And that's what we're looking at today. We're going to have to look at chapter 12, 15, and 17 in order to get a proper understanding of the Abrahamic covenant. So what we're doing in this short series is looking at the covenants that God made in the scriptures. The first being the covenant of works with Adam that was broken. Then we have the covenant that's not just made with one person or a particular person and their offspring, but the Noahic Covenant like the covenant of works is made with all of creation. Now we get to the next covenant God reveals in scripture and it's the Abrahamic Covenant. And believers, you need to know that the Abrahamic covenant and properly understanding it will help you understand the differences between Baptists and Presbyterians, for example. It's really the Abrahamic Covenant and the not just Presbyterians, but paedobaptists, meaning they baptize their infants. The disagreement is not really in the New Testament. Baptists frequently go to like we don't have any example given in scripture of an infant being baptized and the paedobaptists those who do believe we should baptize infants would say yeah we don't have any explicit example but we have things like households and acts and all of that but what they would really say is but what we have is the necessary consequence of that in the old testament we have the old testament you circumcised your infant And so in the New Testament, you baptize your infants. The necessary consequence, they would say, is you circumcise your infants in the old, so we baptize our infants in the new. That's a overly simplistic way to put it. But the difference in credo baptism, baptizing believers, and paedo-baptism, baptizing infants, it's not as much about proof texting the New Testament. It's more about a different understanding of the covenants and I believe paedobaptists not properly understanding the old and the new covenant specifically even the Abrahamic covenant. But let's continue on. You need to know why it's important to understand this. This is a covenant God entered in with Abraham. If you don't understand properly the Abrahamic covenant, you're not only going to misunderstand the new covenant, but you're also going to misunderstand like your own country's foreign relations. You're not going to understand the nation state of Israel as it is today. And you're going to say things like Ted Cruz did on Tucker Carlson saying the current nation state of Israel that BB Netanyahu is a prime minister of is the same exact thing as Israel in the Old Testament. And then Cruz like many like many said, "Well, I was taught from the Bible that those who bless Israel will be blessed and those who curse Israel will be cursed." And then Tucker even asked him in that interview. He's like, "Where is that?" He said, "Well, I don't know the chapter and verse. And Tucker kind of snarkily says, 'It's in Genesis. It's Genesis 12. And that's actually the first passage that we're looking at today. So

that whole trope of like if you bless Israel, you'll be blessed. If you curse Israel, you'll be cursed. And then people take that and try to apply it to the modern nation state of Israel. That happens because they don't understand the Abrahamic covenant and don't understand the new covenant. So these things I'm trying to show you why why it matters that we properly understand the covenants of God because if you don't, you're not going to properly understand the new covenant and you're not going to properly understand the world that you actually live in today and how we should think, how we should act. So that's why you and I need to understand it. Those are the very practical reasons. More more than anything, you need to understand it so that you properly appreciate and love the Lord Jesus Christ who is further revealed in the Abrahamic covenant because there are promises made in the Abrahamic covenant that are fulfilled ultimately in Christ. And you can look back and say, "Man, that is awesome. Christ was promised in that particular way right there and he has fulfilled it for his people and for his glory. So in Genesis 12:15 and 17 here's the doctrine that you and I should understand. Here's the big summary of the whole thing. The Lord established the Abrahamic covenant to give the land of Canaan. There's two primary things to give the land of Canaan and to further reveal aspects of the new covenant that will be established in Christ. So the Lord established the Abrahamic covenant to give the land of Canaan and further reveal aspects of the new covenant that will be in Christ. So there are promises communicated that are not fulfilled in the Abrahamic covenant but are fulfilled in the new covenant because Christ is the one who fulfills them. So this is how all the covenants go. You have the covenant of works that's broken. And then once you get to the Abrahamic and the Mosaic and the Davidic covenants, the three major covenants, then God is further revealing aspects of the new covenant in all of those. So you've got the new covenant with Christ as its mediator. And the Abrahamic reveals a little bit more about the new covenant. Then the Mosaic shines a little bit more light on what Christ will establish in the new covenant. And then the Davidic covenant made with David and his offspring that will shine even more light. So each covenant gives us a bigger picture of what we should expect in the new covenant that Christ has established but in their time will establish. This is what our confession of faith even clearly states. The new covenant is revealed in the gospel first of all to Adam in the promise of salvation by the seed of the woman. That's Genesis 3:15. And afterwards by farther steps until the full discovery thereof was completed in the New Testament. So all the covenants reveal further aspects of the new covenant of grace in Christ. So let's start with Genesis 12 1-3 and see what we should learn about the Abrahamic covenant. First, the Lord promised the Abrahamic covenant in Genesis 12. The Lord promised the Abrahamic covenant in Genesis 12. Look first at verses 1 through 3. Now the Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you, and I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you, I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed. The Lord is here promising

the Abrahamic covenant to him. He doesn't establish it until later. He doesn't cut the covenant until later, but he's promising it right there. Now, I just want you to pause and notice the grace of God in all of his covenantal dealings with man. Abraham is a pagan. Abraham is an idolator. Abraham worships demons. And God in his kindness comes and initiates a covenant with him. Had Abraham done anything but sin? No. But Genesis 12, now the Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country. I'm going to bless you." This is how God deals in his covenants. His covenants are all of grace. They're all of grace. God doesn't owe any of us anything. Abraham was a pagan. Yet God still stooped down, condescended to him, made promises to him, and enters into a covenant with him. And the same is true for you if you're in Christ. The same way that God stoops down and graciously enters into a covenant with Abraham. That's what he's done for you if you're a Christian. He has stooped low to your state and not only made you promises but the Lord Jesus Christ came from heaven to earth. Became a human being. Lived as you have not lived. Suffered in your place for your sins stooping down low to you not because you deserve it but because of his mercy and grace and brings you to himself. The same way the Lord initiates this covenant with Abraham is the same way the Lord does it with Christians, too. It's all It's all of grace. Boys and girls, look up here at me. Abraham worshiped false gods, lived amongst people who hated the true God. Though they knew he existed, they knew they should worship him. They knew they should give thanks to him. But Abraham didn't want to. And God didn't just pluck him up and cast him into hell. God stooped down low to him and said, "Abraham, I'm going to bless you." It was mercy. It was grace. Abraham didn't earn it, but God just bestowed it. And that's what God does for you and me who believe on Christ. Not if you will be good enough will God save you and forgive you of your sins, but simply for Christ's sake. When you and I trust in Christ alone, rest in him alone for salvation as he's offered to us in the gospel, God enters into a covenant with us and makes us great promises that we don't deserve, that we could never earn. The same way God establishes a gracious covenant with Abraham is the same way he does it with us. But our covenant is even better because Christ represents us. So the Lord promised the Abrahamic covenant here. Notice the particulars adults. Look at the first part of Genesis 12:1. Now the Lord said to Abram, the Lord chose Abram as the covenant head. He's the covenant head. He's the representative of this covenant. Just as Adam was head in the covenant of works and Christ is head in the new covenant and the husband is head in the covenant of marriage. So Abraham is the head, the representative in the Abrahamic covenant. That's why we call it the Abrahamic covenant because he was the head. So the Lord chose him as covenant head. Then next, the Lord made promises to Abraham, the covenant head. Look at the next part of or look at uh the beginning of verse two. I will make you a great nation. So the Lord promised to make Abram a great nation. Then look at the next part of verse two. And I will bless you and make your name great so that you will be a blessing. The Lord promised to bless Abram and make him a blessing to others as we'll see to the whole world. Next, look at the first part of verse three. I will bless those who bless you and him

who dishonors you I will curse. The Lord promised to bless those who bless and curse those who dishonor Abram.

I'm emphasizing that because of how far people deviate from that. That's the verse Tucker Carlson had quoted to him by Ted Cruz, our one of our senators, not Oklahoma senator, Texas senator. That's a verse. You bless Israel, you be blessed. Curse Israel, you be cursed. You're like, where is that? I don't really know. Does it say Israel? I don't really know. No, it doesn't even say Israel. It's Abram. I will bless those who bless you and him who dishonors you I will curse. I want you to properly understand the world you live in. I want you to see errors and that these aren't heresies. That's not a damnable heresy. It's like if you believe that you're going to hell. It's not like denying that Christ is God or something like that. But it is an error and it leads to bad thinking and bad living and even for some nations like ours bad foreign policy. It leads to confusion theologically. Note this part of the verse has nothing to do with the modern nation state called Israel. Nothing. dispensationalists, Zionists, and just many average old evangelical Christians in America have been lied to about this. Or perhaps some of them have been doing the lying. Maybe not intentionally, maybe unintentionally, but it is an error. The modern nation state of Israel established in 1948 does not represent Abraham and has nothing to do with the blessing and curse promise of Genesis 12:3. The true children of Abraham are those who have faith in Christ. The true children of Abraham are those who have faith in Christ, not merely those who claim to have descended from Abraham according to the flesh. The true children of Abraham are Christians, not those who call themselves such, but are simply trying to do it to take advantage of you by twisting Genesis 12:3 to their own end. Galatians 3:7-9. Listen to what God says through Paul. Know then that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham. It is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham. meaning faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Verse 8 in Galatians 3 and the scripture foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham saying in you shall all the nations be blessed. So then those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith. The true children of Abraham are not those who profess to be descended from Abraham according to their physical flesh, but those who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. But this brings up a important question that we need to answer quickly. Who exactly is the offspring of Abraham? Who is the offspring of Abraham? Well, the first answer you need to understand is Christ is the offspring of Abraham. This is what God says through Paul in Galatians 3:16. The promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say and to offsprings referring to many but referring to one and to your offspring who is Christ. That's what Paul clarifies. The promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It doesn't say to offsprings. Paul says referring to many but referring to one to your offspring. And Paul says who is Christ. So ultimately Christ is the offspring of Abraham that will bless the whole world. And if you curse him, you will be cursed. And if you bless him, you honor him, you will be blessed. Christ is the offspring of Abraham that fulfills these

promises. But additionally, you need to understand what it means to be united to Christ as a Christian. To be united to Christ, this is why Paul can say Christ is the offspring. Those promises were made to them; they're fulfilled in him. And then he can turn around and say, "And you Christians are the offspring of Abraham." It's like, "Wait, you just said the offspring was Christ." That's the mysterious union of Christians with their savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. We are united to him through faith. Galatians 3:29, "If you are Christ's, if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, according to promise." So, it's not just that if you bless Christ, you will be blessed. And if you curse Christ, you'll be cursed, and bless Christ, you'll be blessed. It's also if you bless Christ's people, you will be blessed. If you harm, dishonor, curse Christ's people, you'll be cursed. It is not about Abraham's descendants according to the flesh. Ultimately, it's about Christ, that promise in Genesis 12. And it's also fulfilled through the church, through those who are united to the Lord Jesus Christ. How does it seem that our nation has been treating the true offspring of Abraham, Christians? How's that seem in the past, I don't know, 50 or 60 years?

How do you think things have been going in our nation the past 50 or 60 years?

Think, think about it and you'll see. So then the Lord at the last part of verse three, sorry for that that excuses, but I think we need that in our modern day to properly understand Genesis 12:3 is not talking about descendants according to the flesh. It's not talking about the nation state of Israel. Now back on track. The Lord promised to bless all the families of the earth through Abram. Look at the last part of verse three. And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed. So there's the promise of the Abrahamic covenant in Genesis 12. Now turn in your Bibles to Genesis 15.

In Genesis 15, the Lord cut the Abrahamic covenant. He promises it in 12. He cuts it. That means establishes it. Whenever almost universally when you read in your English translation, the Lord made a covenant with Abraham, it's almost always the Hebrew word for cut. The Lord cut a covenant because that's a way you would establish a covenant. Like you're going to see, you take an animal and cut it in half or multiple animals and cut them in half and put each half of the animal on a side and you would walk through the middle and say, "If I don't uphold my end of the covenant, may this happen to me. I'll be cut in half." That's why it's called cutting a covenant. So the Lord cuts off officially establishes the Abrahamic covenant in Genesis 15. There are six things to make note of right here. Just look, let's quickly move through these. The Lord first reiterated his initial promise to Abram in order to calm his fears. Look at verse one. He's reiterating his initial promise. He's already made the promise in chapter 12. He's just reiterating it. He doesn't add anything. It's just, hey, fear not. After these things, the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision. Fear not, Abram. I am your shield. Your reward shall be very great. Boys and girls, it is a good thing to try to calm the fears of someone who is

terrified, of someone who is afraid. That's a good thing. If your younger brother or sister is afraid, have compassion on them. Go to them. Try to comfort them. Do whatever you can to comfort them. Hold them. Hold their head close to you. Remind them of the truth. Adults, the same is true for you. Look at the Lord. Abram's fearful. And the Lord doesn't just say, "Hey, dummy. I already made awesome promises to you. What is your problem?" He comes to him and says, "Abram, fear not. I am your shield. Your reward shall be very great." This is the kindness and compassion of the Lord, and you believers should imitate that. When people are fearful, when they're worrisome, when they're ridden or riddled with anxiety, go to them and labor to calm their fears with the promises of the gospel. Labor to calm their fears with simple promises like, "The Lord is your shield. You're in Christ. He fully satisfied the Father's wrath for all of your sins. You are totally forgiven. Your reward is very great. There is an inheritance laid up for you in glory. Let's imitate the Lord in that. I think you should learn at least that from this first part. The Lord reiterated the promise. Nothing new, but just to calm Abram's fears. Boys and girls, you should do that for other people, too. If people are fearful, do what you can to quiet their fears and comfort them with the truth. Look next at verses 2-6. The Lord clarified his former promise by assuring Abram of his very own son and heir. He clarified his former promise. He made the promise, you'll be a great nation and make your people great. Like, how can I be a great nation if I don't have any children? I will make you a great nation. But now he's clarifying, how's that going to happen? Not through Abram, not through Sarai taking things into their own hands, but the Lord blessing them. Verses 2-6 in Genesis 15. But Abram said, "Oh Lord God, what will you give me? For I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eleazar of Damascus." And Abram said, "Behold, you have given me no offspring, and a member of my household will be my heir." And behold, the word of the Lord came to him, "This man shall not be your heir. Your very own son shall be your heir." And he brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven and number the stars if you are able to number them." Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring be." And he believed the Lord. And he counted it to him as righteousness. Notice that God has only ever justified sinners in one way. He's never forgiven anyone, never counted them righteous through animal sacrifices, through their sincerity, through anything like that. This is Paul's example that he uses in Romans 4. The promise is given and God justifies Abraham through his faith. He believed the Lord. He trusted the Lord's promise and the Lord counted him righteous. God only ever justifies sinners in one way. Faith and God's promised savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. So the Lord clarified his former promise. Abram, you will have your very own son and heir. But look next in verse 7, the Lord repeats where he would send Abram ultimately to inherit the land of Canaan. He had told him in Genesis 12, "Get out. you're going to go. But now he's repeating that same thing, but he's showing him where he would send him ultimately to inherit the land of Canaan. Verse 7. And he said to him, I am the Lord who brought you out from of the Chaldeans to give you this land to possess. This land is the land you shall possess. This is what he had already said in Genesis 12:7.

The Lord appeared to Abram and said, "To your offspring, I will give this land." So, Abram built there an altar to the Lord who had appeared to him. He reiterates the promise. He repeats where he would send Abram ultimately to inherit the land of Canaan. Now, look fourthly at verses 8- 11. The Lord prepared to have Abram cut a covenant with him in order to give assurance to the promises. A promise is just a promise until it's enacted by a covenant. Covenantal promises are different when it's enacted by a covenant. It brings weight. So the Lord prepared to have Abram cut a covenant with him in order to give assurance of the promises. 8:es 8-11 in Genesis 15. But he said, "Oh Lord God, how am I to know that I shall possess it?" He said to him, "Bring me a heifer 3 years old, a female goat 3 years old, a ram 3 years old, a turtle dove, and a young pigeon." And he brought him all these, cut them in half, and laid each half over against the other, but he did not cut the birds in half. And when the birds of prey came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away. So the Lord prepared to have Abram cut a covenant. Abraham cuts all these animals in half, puts them in a line on each side, and Abram's surely thinking, "I'm about to walk through it and make my promises to be faithful to this covenant the Lord wants to cut with me." But then look what happens next in verses 12-6. The Lord promised Abram that his promise would be fulfilled, but according to his own timing. He promised that it will be fulfilled, but according to my own timing, the Lord's saying verses 12-6. As the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell on Abram, and behold, dreadful and great darkness fell upon him. Then the Lord said to Abram, "Know for certain that your offspring will be sojourners in a land that is not theirs, and will be servants there, and they will be afflicted for 400 years. But I will bring judgment on the nation that they serve, and afterward they shall come out with great possessions. As for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace. You shall be buried in a good old age, and they shall come back here in the fourth generation. For the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete. He promised that I will do this, but it will be according to my own timing. 400 years your descendants according to the flesh are going to be enslaved and sojourners in a land that is not theirs. But I will bless you. You will die in peace. You'll be buried in a good old age. And they will come back in the fourth generation. God's timing is perfect for his glory and his people's eternal good. You should at least learn that from that part. Believers, Abram, I'm giving these promises. You're not going to see them. Actually, your people are going to be enslaved for 400 years. That's according to God's perfect timing.

If you are suffering or when you suffer next, maybe remember that the Lord makes great promises, but he fulfills them according to his own timing and not according to mine. that the Lord still fulfills his promises. And though we don't understand always why he's doing what he's doing, we know proof at the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. He loves us. He loves his people. And we need to learn to trust his timing. That his providence is wise. His timing is perfect. Even though many times to you and I because of our limited understanding and be probably because of our indwelling sin we think his timing is imperfect. It never is. The Lord promised his

promise would be fulfilled but according to his own time. Then look sixthly at verses 17- 21. The Lord has Abram prepare the animals, but then the Lord is the one who cuts the covenant. The Lord is the one who walks through the middle. 17-21 When the sun had gone down and it was dark, behold, a smoking firepot and a flaming torch passed between these pieces, the pieces of the animals. On that day, the Lord cut a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your offspring, I give this land from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates, the land of the Kenizzites, the Kenizzites, the Kadmonites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Gergashites, and the Jebusites. The Lord presents himself, manifests his presence in these right here, a smoking firepot and a flaming torch. The Lord manifests his presence and he goes through the animals cut in half. The Lord is saying, "I am the one cutting this covenant." It's not as much about Abraham's promise to the Lord, but the Lord's promise to Abraham. And the chief promise of the Abrahamic covenant concerning Abraham's physical descendants was the land of Canaan as their inheritance. That's the chief promise. That's the whole purpose right here of the Abrahamic covenant. You got to stop and like log that in to your mind. The purpose, the chief purpose of the Abrahamic covenant was to give the land of Canaan to his descendants according to the flesh until Christ would come through their lineage. That's the point. Canaan is their inheritance. Now, this is a picture of a shadow of the new heavens and the new earth that believers are given and their inheritance is promised. But the Abrahamic covenant according to his descendants according to the flesh was just the land of Canaan as their inheritance. And this is a foreshadowing. It's a blip pointing ultimately to God promising you an eternal inheritance. Christian and the new heavens and the new earth that the Lord cuts this covenant with Abraham. Now go to Genesis 17 and look at the next part. Genesis 17. In 17 verses 1-8, all the Lord does is expand the covenant. He expands the Abrahamic covenant.

Look first at verses 1-8. When Abraham was 99 years old, the Lord appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am God Almighty. Walk before me and be blameless that I may make my covenant between me and you and may multiply you greatly." Then Abram fell on his face. And God said to him, "Behold, my covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations. No longer shall your name be called Abram, which means exalted father by the way, but your name shall be called Abraham, which means father of a multitude.

For I have made you the father of a multitude of nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful and I will make you into nations and kings shall come from you. And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant to be God to you and to your offspring after you. and I will give to you and to your offspring after you the land of your sojournings all the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession and I will be their God. This is nothing new. It's the same thing that he's already promised in Genesis 12 and 15 except for one little part at the end of verse six.

Kings shall come from you. kings shall come from you. The Lord expanded the Abrahamic covenant to have to it attached the promise of kings. This is initially a promise of the Davidic covenant where David would be a king and ultimately pointing to Christ in the new covenant who is the king of kings and the lord of lords. So the Lord expanded the Abrahamic covenant in Genesis 17 1-8. And then what we have in verses 9-14 is the Lord stipulated. He gave the rules for the covenant. Every covenant has rules, has stipulations. And that's what he does in verses 9-14. Look, Genesis 17 9-14.

And God said to Abram, "As for you, you shall keep my covenant, you and your offspring after you throughout their generations." The Lord is demanding loyalty from Abraham as the stipulation of the Abrahamic covenant. That's the stipulation. Loyalty to the Lord. As for you, you shall keep my covenant, you and your offspring after you throughout their generations. That's the demand of loyalty from Abraham. That's the stipulation. Now, the external sign of Abraham and his descendants loyalty was what? Circumcision. circumcision according to the flesh was the external sign of the loyalty that the Lord demanded of them. Look at verses 10 through 13. This is my covenant which you shall keep between me and you and your offspring after you. Every male among you shall be circumcised. You shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins. And it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and you. He who is 8 days old among you shall be circumcised. Every male throughout your generations, whether born in your house or bought with your money, from any foreigner who is not of your offspring. Both he who is born in your house and he who is bought with your money shall surely be circumcised. So shall my covenant be in your flesh an everlasting covenant.

The covenant sign of their loyalty was circumcision even specifically to be done on the eighth day. So we've got the demand is loyalty to the Lord. The external sign of that loyalty is circumcision. And then thirdly, look at verse 14. disloyalty to God, breaking his covenant would cut off any Israelite from the Abrahamic covenant and they would be disinherited from the land. The promise is the land. And if you are covenant breaker in the Abrahamic covenant, you are cut off and disinherited from the land. Verse 14. Any uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin shall be cut off from his people. He has broken my covenant. The sign is about far more than the sign itself. The circumcision when he says if anyone's not circumcised like that's the sign of the loyalty. It signifies the loyalty to the Lord that he demands of them. So it's not as simple as like, hey, you get circumcised and that's fine. The sign points to something greater. And the sign of circumcision points to the loyalty to the Lord. But disloyalty, he's saying he'll be cut off from among his people, disinherited from what the Lord had promised to give them through the Abrahamic covenant. So there we have the stipulations of the covenant, the expansion of it to include kings. We've also seen that the Lord cut the covenant, established it with Abraham, and that in chapter 12, he had promised it. Now, what do we do with this? Let's finish by just trying to make some

application for our everyday lives. First, God fulfilled all his promises to Abraham. God fulfilled all his promises to Abraham. And believers, he will fulfill all of his promises to you. Joshua 21:45, "Not one word of all the good promises that the Lord God had made to the house of Israel had failed. all came to pass. Not one word, believers, not one word of all the good promises that God has made to you in Christ Jesus will fail to come to pass. He will fulfill his promises. Look, look at these promises being made to Abraham and look how they are fulfilled. And that should strengthen your faith to keep going. God will keep all of his happy promises and God will keep all of his terrible threatenings too because he said if you don't keep my covenant I'm going to cut you off from this land I'm giving and he has because they did not keep the covenant and they rejected the one that the covenant pointed to Christ Jesus and so they have been cut off. The Lord keeps all of his happy promises and he keeps all of his terrible threatenings. The good news is that God has promised to receive you through faith in Jesus Christ. God has promised to forgive you every one of your sins if you come and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. God has promised to give you a new resurrected body one day. If you come and rest in the Lord Jesus Christ, God has promised that he is working all things together for good for those who love him and are called according to his purpose. Rest in the happy promises, boys and girls. If God makes a promise, it will come true. And God promises you eternal life if you receive and rest in Christ alone for your salvation.

We need to not only learn that God fulfilled all his promises to Abraham, but we also need to understand that circumcision of the foreskin, physical circumcision ultimately points to the need for circumcision of the heart. It's what God calls it, circumcision of the heart, which means the new birth. To be born again, to be changed, not just externally, but for God to change our inward being. Deuteronomy 30:6, the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live. Adam's descendants or Abraham's descendants rather did not simply need to be circumcised. They needed to be born again. And so it is for all of you. All of you, parents: you don't just need to get your kids baptized. You need to labor and pray so that your kids would be born again. They need to be born again. Everyone needs to be born again. You and I need something to happen to us that we can't control. Just like we couldn't control our first birth, you can't control your second. Being born of the spirit. But the way God ordinarily causes the new birth is the simple proclamation of the gospel and telling people to turn from their sin and believe on Christ. So you want people to be born again. You want your children, parents to be born again. Keep proclaiming the law and the gospel to them. law, gospel, law, gospel and tell them to repent of their sin and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Third, in application, and this is one crucial to thread the needle on, you were only in the Abrahamic covenant by virtue of being connected to the covenant head,

which is Abraham. You were in the Abrahamic covenant by virtue of being connected to the covenant head, the representative Abraham. Everybody follow me on that so far? So under the Abrahamic covenant, this could happen naturally according to what we call ordinary generation birth. You could be connected to Abraham through your physical birth. Right? So you could be in the Abrahamic covenant simply through parents having children. And it's not through the child being connected to their parents that put them in the Abrahamic covenant. It's the child being connected to Abraham and his descendants according to the flesh. You have to be, this is crucial to understand covenant theology. In order to be in a covenant, you have to be connected to the covenant head. So that's why all of us before God saves us are in the Adamic covenant, the covenant of works, and it's broken. Why? Because you are all connected to Adam physically. We all proceeded from Adam the same way that the Noahic covenant applies to everyone. Why? Cuz you all, me included, everyone is physically connected to Noah. Noah and his family were the only ones that were spared, right? So to be in the covenant of works, the Adamic covenant, well, we're all in that because we're connected to Adam through ordinary generation. The Noahic covenant, same way. Through ordinary generation. The Abrahamic covenant, not everyone is in that. How are you? How do you have a right to be in the Abrahamic covenant given what God says? It's by being connected to Abraham who is the covenant head. And that wasn't everyone. There were a lot more people than Abraham at that point. But you need to understand that you have to be connected to the covenant head to be in the covenant. And that's why it could happen through natural childbirth. Not because they were connected to their parents but because they were connected to Abraham. So on the other hand the new covenant this cannot happen naturally because to be in the new covenant of grace you have to be connected to who? The answer is Christ. To be in the new covenant you have to be connected to who? to Christ. Can you be connected to Christ? Through ordinary generation through childbirth? No. How do you and I become united to Christ? Through faith. This is why we reject paedobaptism. Because paedobaptism not only misunderstands the way we should do baptism, but the actual thing they don't understand is the covenants and how just because the children were in the Abrahamic covenant by ordinary generation, that does not necessitate, it's not a necessary consequence that the children of Christians are in the new covenant. That's not how it works. You could be connected to the covenant head and the Abrahamic by ordinary child birth. You cannot be connected to Christ by ordinary child birth. The only way anyone is united to the Lord Jesus Christ is through faith. This is why Credobaptists and the 1689ers of the 17th century taught this because they're saying, "Look, it's not about the parents. It's about that child was connected to Abraham who was the covenant head. On the other hand, you cannot be connected to Christ by ordinary generation. That's the whole point. You must be born again to be connected to Christ. So you must be born again to be connected to Christ in the new covenant of grace. That's what Christ teaches in John 3. Therefore, we do not give the new covenant sign of baptism to the children of

believers because you cannot get connected to Christ through ordinary childbirth. Everybody knows it. You know it. Even if you disagree with me and you believe in paedobaptism, you know that you don't get connected to Christ through ordinary generation. Everyone agrees. But that's why we don't give the sign until the person is connected to Christ. You can't be in the new covenant without being in Christ. That's also a fatal flaw of those who believe in paedobaptism is they believe the children of believers are in the new covenant, but they're not yet in Christ because they agree the only way you can be in Christ is through faith. It's like you're making a distinction without a difference. the new covenant and being in Christ. That's the same thing. You can't be in the new covenant without being in Christ. Just like you couldn't be in the Abrahamic covenant in this sense, without being connected to Abraham according to the flesh. So, you were only in the Abrahamic covenant by virtue of being connected to its covenant head. And that could happen through childbirth because they're connected to Abraham. And you can only be in the new covenant by virtue of being connected to its covenant head, Christ. This is the fatal flaw of paedobaptism. It's not a difference primarily in modes of baptism or timing of baptism or anything like that. The fatal flaw is that those who hold to it misunderstand the covenants of God. They try to make the new covenant just like the Abrahamic covenant when there are in fact substantially and essentially different things about it concerning who is in the covenant, who is out, and how you get into the covenant. The h the Abrahamic is part of the old covenant which is called a shadow of the things to come in Hebrews 10 and Colossians 2. But Jesus in the new covenant is called the body. The body in the old covenant was casting a shadow and that's all we could see was the shadow. But then the body walked out and we can see the body. Now if you can see somebody physically, do you look to their shadow to try to figure out what they look like? No, you don't look to the shadow. The body the man has come around. The man has come around the corner and we can see him clearly. So we don't look to the shadow of the old covenant to try to figure out what we should do in the new or who is in the new. We look to the substance. We look to the body which is the Lord Jesus Christ standing before us. You were only in the Abrahamic covenant by virtue of being connected to the covenant head Abraham, not by virtue of being connected to your parents. And so it is in the new. You're only in the new by virtue of being connected to the covenant head, Christ, which happens through re regeneration and faith. That's why we wait until there is a credible profession of faith that we can so far as we are able person understands the gospel and we see signs that I think they've been born again. So now you should receive the new covenant sign because we believe you are in the new covenant now that you're in Christ. And that's why Kieran and Elliott will be baptized today because they make a credible profession of their faith and we say we believe you are in the new covenant being in Christ now and you should receive the sign. Lastly, we need to just clarify that the Abrahamic covenant had two chief purpose purposes. To give the land of Canaan to Abraham's descendants so that they would be preserved until Christ came into the world through them. That's the

purpose. That's the chief. That's the main purpose. That's purpose number one. to give the land of Canaan to Abraham's descendants according to the flesh so that they would be preserved until Christ came into the world through them. But the second purpose is to further reveal the new covenant of grace which would be established in Christ Jesus. That is a secondary purpose of it that the Lord reveals the new covenant, foreshadows it in different steps pointing to it and things that are only fulfilled in Christ. In the Protoeangelion in Genesis 3:15, the first gospel proclamation, God reveals the seed of the woman will crush the head of the serpent at great cost to himself. And that's all we got. But now in the Abrahamic covenant, we learn more. We learn that he will be a descendant of Abraham according to the flesh. And we learn that all the nations of the earth will be blessed in him. Not only will he crush that of the serpent, but okay, he's going to come through this man's lineage and he's going to bless the entire world. We get to the Mosaic covenant, you're going to see more about Christ. Then you get to the Davidic covenant and you're going to see more about Christ. And then you get to the new covenant and you see everything that the old covenant and all those little covenants within it were just foreshadowing. This is how God has chosen to redeem his people. You and I need to properly understand the covenants. And in conclusion, I encourage you to rejoice in hope. If you belong to Christ Jesus, rejoice. If you don't belong to Christ, turn from your sins now. Trust in him alone. He will receive you. But you who are in Christ, like Abram, our only hope is that God would initiate and cut a covenant with us. And that is exactly what he's done in Jesus. In Christ, God has not simply passed through half-cut animals to show his love and commitment to us. But in Christ, God became a man and was, as it were, cut in half on the cross for us. He underwent the thing that you cut the animals in half to say, "If this covenant gets broken, let that happen to me." And because we have broken the covenant of works, Christ said, "Let that happen to me, not to them. That's what he did on the cross for us. He entered the world as the God man and was cut in two for our sins. He was split for our iniquities, paying our covenant breaking price so that we could be restored, that we could be redeemed, so that the blessing would come to us. Hallelujah. All who believe in him will never be put to shame. Pray with me. Our father, help us to understand your covenants. Help us to appreciate Christ. Help us to understand the world that we live in and to glorify you and enjoy you in light of the truth. We ask that you save those who are still outside of Christ. We ask that you sanctify those who are united to Jesus already. Glorify yourself now as we sing your praises. As we give, as we take of the Lord's supper, as we observe baptism, as we fellowship, as we pray, receive everything that we do as sacrifices of praise for Christ's sake. We ask that you continue to purify this local church, purify other local churches as well.

For those who are sick, we ask that you heal them. The suffering, comfort them. The straying, correct them, and the striving, strengthen them for your glory and our good. We pray it all in Christ's name. Amen.

