

Covenant: How the Bible Hangs Together
Resurrection OPC | Spring 2020
April 29, 2020

Week 7: The Covenant of Grace—Abraham, Part 2

- The Abrahamic Covenant
 - A Sovereignly Administered Bond: Genesis 12:1-8
 - A Bond in Blood: Genesis 15
 - God's Promise: Offspring, Land (vv. 1-7)
 - God's Guarantee: Passing between the pieces of the divided animals (vv. 9-20; cf. Jeremiah 34:18-20)
 - Abraham's Response: Faith (v. 6)
 - The Covenant Sign: Genesis 17
 - The Institution of the Sign of Circumcision
 - The covenant reaffirmed (vv. 1-8)
 - The covenant symbolized (vv. 9-14)
 - Circumcision a way of *keeping* the covenant (v. 9)
 - Circumcision *identified with* the covenant (v. 10)
 - Circumcision as *a sign of* the covenant (v. 11)
 - Subjects of circumcision (vv. 12-13)
 - Failure to circumcise as *covenant breaking* (v. 14)
 - The symbolism of circumcision¹
 - "Inclusion in the covenant community"
 - "Need for cleansing" by "removal of defilement"
 - "Cutting away" symbolizes "the execution of judgment as an act essential for purification. By circumcision the sinner undergoes a judgment that purifies."
 - Keyed to offspring: Keeps in view the promise of descendants and God's intention "to deal with families."
 - Circumcision as a sacrament: an outward sign of an inward reality
 - Heart circumcision (Deuteronomy 10:16, 30:6; Jeremiah 4:4; 9:26; Acts 7:51; Romans 2:28-29)
 - Faith and circumcision (Romans 4:3-12; Philippians 3:3)
 - Circumcision and Baptism: Signs and Seals (Colossians 2:11-14)
 - The Abrahamic Covenant and the New Covenant (Galatians 3:15-18; 1 Corinthians 11:25; Acts 2:39; 1 Corinthians 7:14)

¹ O. Palmer Robertson, *The Christ of the Covenants*, 150-152. I largely follow Robertson's structure throughout this section on Genesis 17 and circumcision.