

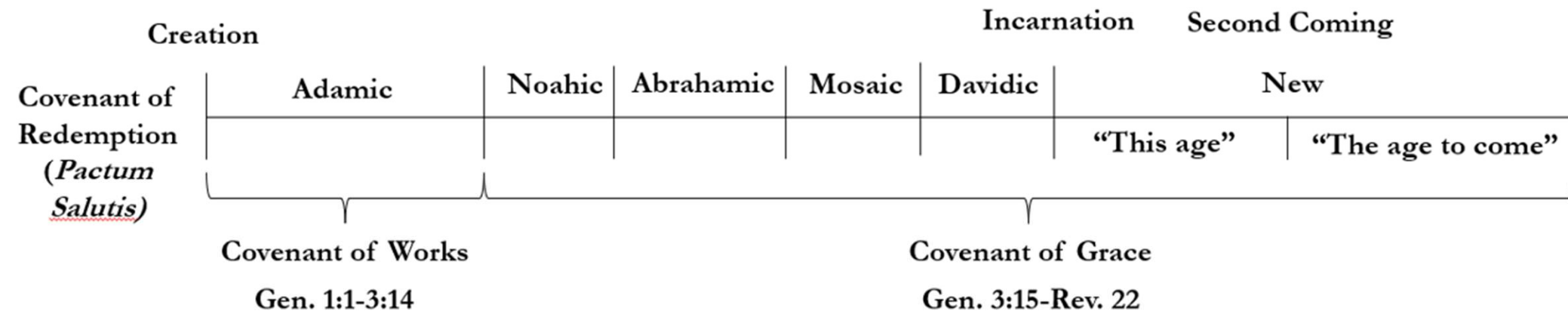


# Baptism

*Who Should Receive It?*

# Reformed Paedobaptism: Analysis, Critique and Alternative

- “Covenant” Theology—the framework



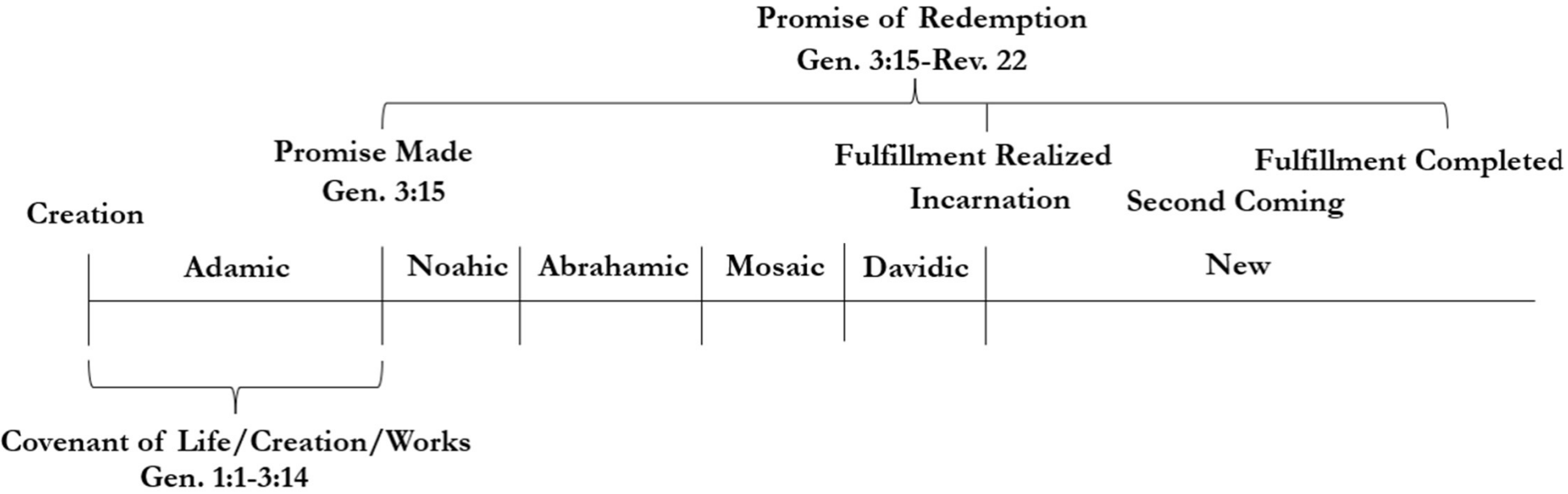
- Infant Baptism—an argument from covenantal continuity
  - Because the New Covenant is the same in substance and different only in administration from previous covenants in virtue of being a part of the covenant of grace, the NC contains both covenant-keepers and covenant-breakers, “believers” and “unbelievers” (Heb. 6:4-6; 10:29).

# RPB Arguments Cont.

- Abrahamic genealogical principle (Gen. 17:9-14)
  - “for you and for your children” – Acts 2:38-39
  - Holy spouse, holy children – 1 Cor. 7:12-14
- Infant Baptism—a (secondary) argument from household baptisms
  - Acts 10:46-48; 16:15; 16:33; 1 Cor. 1:16
    - ❖ In these cases, entire households are baptized (presumably containing children—the Jewish norm for a household) and yet there is no evidence of faith in anyone except the head of house.
- Baptism/Circumcision—baptism replaces circumcision as the external sign of the covenant (part of what is different about the “administration” of the NC)

Summary: God entered into a covenant of grace with mankind which has developed throughout redemptive history under different sub-covenants and administrations that for all their differences, are the same in substance and rooted in grace. In accordance with the covenant made with Abraham, children of those born to covenant-members are the proper recipients of the covenant sign. The NC is no different—children born to parents who are new covenant members (i.e., at least one is a Christian) are the proper recipients of the covenant sign—baptism. Not only is such a mixed and genealogical understanding of the covenant(s) nowhere rejected in the New Testament like we would expect of such a dramatic move, but we see exactly what we would expect given a continuity everyone would have already assumed—entire households receiving the covenant sign on the basis of the head of house repenting and believing, true covenant members who nevertheless fall out of and profane the covenant (Heb. 6:4-6; 10:29) and children who are holy because at least one of their believing parents sets them apart covenantally (1 Cor. 7:12-14). Baptism, then—which replaces circumcision—functions as a gracious blessing by confirming covenant membership on account of the promises while pointing recipients toward the need to repent toward, and be faithful to, Christ, their covenant mediator.

# Reformed, Baptist Alternative



- Believers-only baptism—an argument from *fulfillment* leading to *discontinuity*
  - Jer. 31:31-34; 32:37-41, Jn. 1:11-13, Rom. 9:2-4/8:15-17 and Gal. 3:29