

Dumbrell, "The Covenant with Noah," Reformed Theological Review 38, no. 1 (January-April, 1979): 1-9

- * "new creation": built in biblical eschatology upon the creation and fall--so also...
- * "new covenant" (to which Israel's fortunes are bound) is built upon Old Testament Covenants.
- * "*berit*" ("covenant") occurs some 280 times in the OT--Gen. 6:18 is the first use of "covenant"
- * Key Questions:
 1. What is the meaning of the word "establish" (*heqim*) (and why is it in the future tense?)
 2. What is the meaning of "covenant"?
 3. Why is it used without introduction?
 4. Why is it "my" covenant?
 5. Is the covenant established with Noah (1) personally or (2) representatively?

I. Meaning of "establish" (*heqim*)

- a. Elsewhere in Genesis: establish means: giving a pre-existing relationship a quasi-legal backing. (for Dumbrell: Noah's covenant is similar to these)
 1. Genesis 21:22-23: Abraham and Abimilech
 2. Genesis 26:26-33: Isaac and Abimilech
 3. Genesis 31:43-54: Jacob and Laban (Leah and Rachel's dad)
- b. Other accounts of "establish": always indicates the *continuation* of a relationship, not the *beginning/initiation* of a relationship.
 1. Genesis 17:7, 9, 21
 2. Exodus 6:4
 3. Leviticus 26:9
 4. Deuteronomy 8:18
 5. 2 Kings 23:3
 6. Jeremiah 34:18

II. The Noahic Covenant refers to something previous: creation

- a. 8:21-22: promise to maintain the created order
- b. 9:1, 7: reiteration of Gen. 1:28 ("Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it")
- c. Differences:
 1. 9:2: now there is "fear"

III. Noah: Representative of Humanity

- a. Gen. 9:9: Noah "and with your descendants after you."
- b. Gen. 9:10: Noah represents animal species
- c. Gen. 9:11: Noah represents the earth

IV. Noahic Covenant: Looks Backward *and* Forward

a. Backward: an affirmation of God's purposes in creation

1. Dumbrell, "Noah," 7: "The refusal of man in Eden to submit to divine purposes will mean a disordered world, while the decision of the Deity to adhere to divine purposes and maintain relationships originally set in train by creation, will have redemptive consequences not only for man but finally for his world as well."

b. Forward:

1. Isaiah 54:7-10: God's faithfulness to Israel is tied to, and similar to, his promises to Noah.
 - * Isaiah (740-701 B.C.)--written mainly against Judah
 - * v. 7: the "brief moment" is most likely the Babylonian exile.Dumbrell, "Noah," 7-8: "God announces his everlasting fidelity to the generation of the exile. While they may have been inundated by overflowing wrath (v. 8) he will gather them with everlasting compassion so that the old alliance will be re-established after the exile, which like the flood, will then be seen to have been but a brief interlude within the everlasting covenantal framework."
2. Isaiah 40:55 (?)
3. 1 Peter 3:19-21 (cf. 2 Pet. 2:5; Heb. 11:7)