

Protestantism

- Mankind was fallen - ever since Adam and Eve's expulsion from the Garden of Eden, humanity could not be guaranteed God's grace.
- Only the 'elect' - those especially earmarked for salvation were guaranteed a place in heaven. It was impossible to know if you were of the elect, but leading a God-fearing upright life was a necessity.
- They, the Afrikaners, were a covenanted people – joined in mutual support and faith and especially beloved of God. This special covenant was established the day before The Battle of Blood River (1836). The trekkers made a vow that if they were victorious against the powerful Zulu army of Dingane they would forever mark the day and build a church in thanks as soon as they could. The battle resulted in the destruction of the Zulu, whose bravery was no match to the Afrikaners firing modern weapons from their 'laager' - defensive position.
- The self-reliance, toughness and stubbornness that characterized the early rekkers were an ideal that all Afrikaner people should aspire to.
- Like the Jews who were promised Canaan (now Palestine) by God, so the Afrikaners believed that it was their responsibility to hold the land of South Africa, even if this meant taking it from the indigenous people who also happened to be there. Alienated by British rule, in the 1830s, many Afrikaners or Boers (farmers) decided to up-sticks and head off into parts of Southern Africa that were not under British control. These journeys or treks were fraught with danger and hardship, but the suffering made the Afrikaners even more independent-minded; convinced about their God-given right to the land they found and occupied.
- A belief that the Bible justified the ownership of slaves and that black people were the descendents of Ham – one of Noah's sons and the one that he cursed for 'seeing him in his nakedness'. (This may seem a harsh punishment – but some commentators suggest that the phrase may mean that Ham took advantage of his father's being incapacitated by wine and had sex with him.
- The idea that all nations have been created by God to pursue a special destiny. Nations must be allowed to develop separately rather than mix, so they could contribute to God's plan for the world.
- The fact that they had been especially mistreated. During the South African War (1899-1902), for example, the British had had to resort to burning farms and imprisoning Boer families in concentration camps – a policy that cost 25,000 women and children their lives due to disease.