



One Holy Couple

God's Covenant With Creation

The Story begins....

We see the first covenant of salvation history in the Book of Genesis. It starts with a grand adventure of the Creation of the world and the human race.

It is important to remember that Genesis was written to tell us WHY the world was created, not specifically how. It uses figurative language to describe real events.

In Genesis 1:26 we read "Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness..'" This passage tells us several things. First it shows the sacredness of human life, which was created to share in the divine life of God. We also see Biblical evidence for the Trinity in the language used, when God uses the plural word "our" to refer to Himself.

The Covenant at Creation

The very act of God creating human beings is an implicit covenant, a family relationship. This covenant is sealed on the 7th day of creation, which God blesses and sanctifies as a day of rest not because He needs it, but as a gift to man. There are two accounts of creation in Genesis—they do not conflict with each other, but are complementary. The first account focuses on God as the Almighty and sovereign Creator, while the second account turns its attention to God as Father.

> Note: We also see that God makes a covenant within the Covenant of Creation that we still have today—the covenant of marriage, when He joins Adam and Eve as man and wife.

Moving on through Genesis we see God alert Adam and Eve to a possible danger, instructing Adam to "guard the garden." This implies that there was a threat to guard against, and that Adam was aware of it. They are also given a restriction and warning not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, or they shall die. This tells us they also must have understood something about death and that it was not desirable.

It is important to note that Genesis tells us that God breathed His life into man, something He did not do to plants or animals. They are created in a state of grace – they have divine sonship. They are neither simple minded nor inclined to sin, but are morally upright, intelligent, and in harmony with God and the Creation around them. They do, however, have free will to make their own choices just like we do.

Next we see that the serpent has found his way into the garden. The serpent places doubt in the minds of Adam and Eve about God. When Eve says that God told them they would die if they ate of the tree his immediate response is to sow seeds of distrust, telling her "you shall not die." He encourages her to eat the fruit, and she does, also offering some to her husband. Adam has already failed in his duties – he did not protect the garden from the serpent, and here he fails again by following his wife into sin, instead of leading the way to righteousness.



Where are you?

God comes looking for Adam and Eve, calling out "Where are you?" God knows all and He knew where they were. This was an invitation to repentance, which they did not take. Instead they play the blame game with Adam blaming Eve, and Eve blaming the serpent.

When what has happened is brought to light, God curses the serpent, and then promises a conqueror who will defeat evil and will come from the seed of the woman. This is called the *protoevangelium*, or 'First Gospel' since it prophesies Jesus Christ.

After dealing with the serpent, God turns to the man and woman. They are told the consequences for their actions and spiritual death enters the realm. As a matter of fact it happens in that moment – they drove the divine life of God from their souls by their sin. Still the Lord is merciful and makes them clothing from animal skins to cover themselves.

Jesus, the New Adam

Jesus is also referred to as "the New Adam" and here in this account we see Jesus prophesied in several ways.

*Jesus will be tested in a garden (Mt. 26:36-46) just as Adam was.

*Jesus sweats blood in the garden, reminding us of Adam's burden of toil after the fall.

*The thorns that the ground sprouted for Adam are signified in the crown of thorns placed on Christ's head before the crucifixion (Mt. 27:29).

*Jesus died on the cross, which is also called the Tree of Life. However, unlike the old Adam, the new Adam (Jesus) yields to and trusts His Father's will completely.

"Christ is the center of the universe and of human history."

–Pope Saint John Paul II

The Battle Begins...

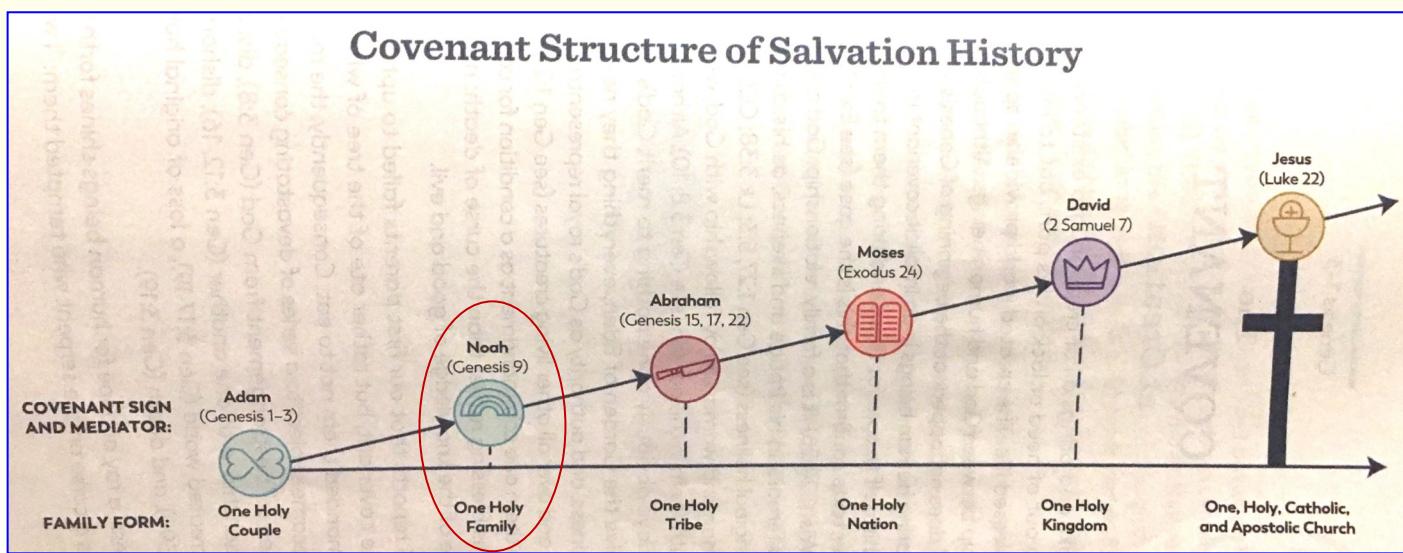
We know from Genesis 3:15 that human history will be marked by a battle between evil and righteousness. We see it begin in the story of Adam and Eve's children, Cain and Abel, the first to be born with the effects of original sin.

The two brothers each offer a sacrifice to the Lord. Abel's is pleasing to the Lord, whereas Cain's is not. The reason Cain's sacrifice isn't pleasing to God is because of the state of his heart, which God explains to Him, offering him guidance. Cain ignores God's correction and reacts by murdering his brother. Again God gives an opportunity for repentance and Cain doesn't take it. Ever merciful, God protects Cain from vengeance, and Cain leaves to live as a wanderer, eventually fathering a family line overcome with unrighteousness.

The Spread of Corruption...

Adam and Eve have another child, Seth, who will become the father of a righteous family line, in opposition to the wickedness of Cain's lineage.

Eventually the families intermarry, and as the righteous line of Seth mixes with the godless line of Cain, wickedness spreads over the earth. A man named Noah, however, still walked with the Lord, and God intervened to save him from the judgement that was to come upon those guilty of the unrighteousness that had spread across the earth. We will pick up next time with the next step in salvation History: One Holy Family.



Let us pray.....

Glory Be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end.

Amen.

