

The background is black with four thick, yellow, hand-drawn style swirls. One swirl starts at the top left, loops around, and goes down. Another starts at the top right, loops around, and goes down. A third starts at the bottom left, loops around, and goes up. A fourth starts at the bottom right, loops around, and goes up. The text is centered between these swirls.

G O L

A STUDY OF

D E N

S A L V A T I O N

T H R

H I S T O R Y

E A D



WELCOME TO YOUR JOURNAL!

**THIS JOURNAL IS DESIGNED TO HELP YOU TO ENCOUNTER
THE BEAUTY OF OUR STORY FOUND IN SCRIPTURE.**

**WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO WRITE AND DRAW,
ESPECIALLY DRAWING WHICH CAN HELP US REMEMBER
THINGS AND MAKE IT EASIER TO EXPLAIN TO OTHERS.**

THIS JOURNAL BELONGS TO:



HISTORY'S GOLDEN THREAD

Just as a golden thread holds together the pearls of a necklace, 'History's Golden Thread' refers to how the events of salvation history are unified in purpose with God's divine plan to save humanity.

Covenants are like the **backbone of the Bible** because they act as the skeletons upon which the entire story of salvation is built.

From Genesis to the Gospels, God enters into one formal relationship (i.e. covenant) after another with various humans in order to rescue His world. At Mass we hear the priest pray: "Time and again you offered them covenants" which could be understood as "God has repeatedly tried to make us His family."

These divine-human relationships push the narrative of salvation forward until it reaches its climax in Jesus.

Why does God deal with us through covenants?

DID YOU KNOW?

A golden thread can be seen connecting the images in the stained glass windows of St. Charles.



KEY TERMS

COVENANT

- A chosen, formal relationship between 2 parties who agree to a set of promises, including defined obligations and commitments, so they can work toward a common goal.
- A legal way to make someone unrelated to you part of your family.

EXAMPLES: ADOPTION + MARRIAGE

In ancient times, a child or someone unrelated to you was adopted and became a legal part of your family after going before an official and swearing solemn oaths that the child was now yours.

In the case of marriage, two individuals stand before a priest or judge and swear solemn oaths to each other thereby becoming a family (symbolized by them sharing a last name).

In this way, two 'strangers' or 'unrelated' people become family by making a covenant.

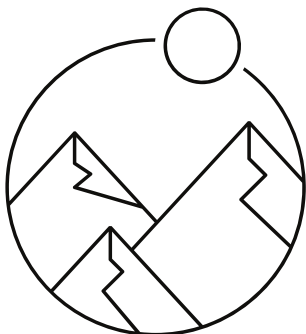
MEDIATOR

A person who stepped forward to represent the group with whom the covenant was made.

In the Bible, covenant mediators entered into a covenant with God and represented a group of people who entered into God's covenant through them.

In the Bible, the covenant mediators include:

- | | |
|------------|----------|
| 1. Adam | 4. Moses |
| 2. Noah | 5. David |
| 3. Abraham | 6. Jesus |



MOUNTAIN

In the Bible, the ritual or ceremony for each of the 6 covenants took place on top of a mountain.

Many describe feeling closer to God on top of a mountain because

- a.) you are more or less alone with God and
- b.) you can get a 'God's eye' view of things.

THE BIBLE IN AN HOUR

The 7 Covenants of the Bible



THE COVENANTS OF CREATION

WATCH

Before diving into the sessions, watch the Bible Project video on Genesis 1-11 for an overview and breakdown of the story of Adam through Noah.

The covenants God makes with Adam and Noah are "covenants of creation" because in them God creates then re-creates the earth.



PRAYER: PSALM 81

O LORD, our Lord, your greatness is seen in all the world!
Your praise reaches up to the heavens;
it is sung by children and babies.
You are safe and secure from all your enemies;
you stop anyone who opposes you.

When I look at the sky, which you have made,
at the moon and the stars, which you set in their places
-what are human beings, that you think of them;
mere mortals, that you care for them?

Yet you made them inferior only to yourself;
you crowned them with glory and honor.
You appointed them rulers over everything you made;
you placed them over all creation: sheep and cattle,
and the wild animals too;
the birds and the fish, and all the creatures in the seas.

O LORD, our Lord, your greatness is seen in all the world!





SESSION ONE

THE CREATION COVENANT:
GOD MADE US FOR RELATIONSHIP

THE CREATION COVENANT WITH ADAM: GOD MADE US FOR RELATIONSHIP

READ: GENESIS 1-2

WHAT'S THE MEANING OF LIFE?

Today many people use internet sites and do DNA testing to trace their ancestry. Why? Why do people even care who their forefathers and foremothers were? Somehow, knowing where we came from helps us figure out where we ought to go. Knowing one's ancestors gives meaning to one's life here and now. The Bible devotes a fair amount to our first father, Adam, and our first mother, Eve, giving specific reasons Adam was made and what his role in the universe was to. Adam was and is a model for all of us. The purpose of his life is the purpose of our lives.

A PORTRAIT OF ADAM

What better way to get a picture of who Adam was than to create it ourselves! Start by drawing Adam (a stick figure is still art!) in the frame, then follow the steps below to add symbols to represent each of the roles of Adam.

1. A SON OF GOD

The first thing the Bible tells us about Adam is that he was made "*in the image and likeness of God*." In Genesis 5:3, we learn that Adam "*became the father of a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth*." So being made "in the image and likeness" means to be a son thereby making Adam a child of God.

DRAW:

To indicate he is the son of God, make his face shining with God's glory by drawing beams from his face.

2. A KING

In Genesis 1:26 and 28, Adam is given "dominion" over all other creatures on earth. The word "dominion" refers to sovereignty or ruling effectively making Adam king of all living things on earth.

DRAW:

Crown Adam as king by drawing a crown on him.

3. A PRIEST

Genesis 2 tells us that God planted a garden in Eden, and Adam was placed there "to till it and keep it" or in the original Hebrew means 'to serve it and guard it.' In Numbers 3:7-8, these two verbs are found together again describing what the priest do in the place of worship. So Adam had a priestly role in Eden, which the ancient Israelites understood to be the original temple. (P.S. later temples were decorated to look like Eden)

DRAW:

To indicate he had a priestly role in Eden, draw a stole on Adam. A stole is the vestment priests wear around their neck (it looks like a scarf).

4. A PROPHET

In Genesis 2:18-20, God gives Adam the job of naming the animals. In ancient times, giving a name was a very important privilege as only the creator of something could name it. Since God created the animals, by naming the animals Adam is really speaking on behalf of God. What do we call a person who speaks on behalf of God? A prophet.

DRAW:

Since the role of a prophet is to speak, give Adam a big mouth.

5. A (BRIDE)GROOM

The Bible tells how there was no "helper fit for him" among the animals, so God put him into a deep sleep and made the woman for him out of his rib. Upon waking Adam says:

*"Bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh,
she shall be called woman,
because she was taken out of man."*

This poetic exclamation is covenant-making language where he is declaring Eve to be his kin which is what you do in a covenant: make someone part of your family.

This is the first 'wedding' with God officiating, BUT Adam is not any groom he's the universal bridegroom as he's married to all humanity (even if it consists of just one other person).

DRAW:

Since he is a groom, give Adam a ring on his ring finger to symbolize his marriage to Eve.



**A PORTRAIT OF ADAM
BY ME**

ADAM: THE MODEL HUMAN BEING

All of us through our baptism are called to be a child of God,
a king / queen, priest, prophet, and bride / groom.

WHAT DO THESE ROLES LOOK LIKE?

KING / QUEEN

Being a king or queen doesn't mean having political power or ruling over others since Jesus did not care about political power nor was he impressed by it. Instead, Jesus wants to give us kingship over ourselves, over sin, and over Satan. Anyone who doesn't master self, sin, and Satan is a slave, no matter how much political power they have.

PRIEST

A natural priesthood also flows from our status as children of God (through baptism). In the Old Testament, there were priests who served as mediators between God and the Israelites who offered sacrifices to God and fostered holiness. Through our baptism, we share in the priesthood of Christ and the sacrifice each of us offer is our own life. At every Mass this priestly self-sacrifice is acted out when some laypeople bring forth the gifts of bread and wine to be blessed by the priest and become the Body and Blood of Jesus thereby uniting our many small sacrifices to his Sacrifice.

PROPHET

God calls us (through baptism) to be prophets and to speak God's word to the world. Every time we share some of God's truth with our family, friends, co-workers, or strangers we are fulfilling our prophetic calling. We proclaim God's message not just through words but also through deeds and how we live our lives.

BRIDEGROOM

Just as Adam is the universal groom, we are social beings intended for relationship with another person or rather for another Person. It's not that each of us is called to marriage in this life, much less that each of us is intended to be married to everyone else! Only Jesus can fill Adam's shoes as Bridegroom for humanity. But we are called to have a nuptiality or relationship so intimate that the Bible frequently describes it with the language of marriage. That relationship is with Jesus!

These are the roles Adam enjoyed in his covenant with God at the beginning of human history (before sin messed everything up). We are also called to these roles and they are the meaning of life.

THE CREATION COVENANT WITH ADAM: GOD MADE US FOR RELATIONSHIP

While the word covenant isn't used in Genesis 1-3, the relationship God initiates with humanity in the Garden of Eden is very similar to a covenant. The breath of life (Holy Spirit) given to Adam is a covenant bestowed on him and through which he and his wife Eve is adopted into God's family.

Since a covenant is a formal relationship between 2 parties who agree to a set of promises, including obligations and commitments, we can describe the Bible covenants in terms of **God's part** and **humanity's part**.

In addition, we can classify them based on:
the mediator, mountain, organization, and Scripture.

GOD'S PART	HUMANITY'S PART
God provides the Garden of Eden as a gift to humanity and provides for all their needs. He appoints them as divine-image bearers who will oversee Eden.	Humans are tasked with caring for and cultivating the Garden of Eden and to trust God's knowledge of good and evil over their own attempts to define right and wrong.
Mediator: Adam Mountain: Eden Organization: Married Couple Scripture: Genesis 1-2	

REFLECT

What is something new you learned about the 'meaning of life'?

How can a deeper understanding about who you are called to be impact your daily life?

*As a bridegroom, we are called to be in relationship with others and Jesus.
Do have a direct, personal relationship with Jesus?*

DISCUSS

What do you think is most important to building strong, healthy, intimate relationships?

How do you feel God is calling you to improve your relationships with your family members like your parents and siblings?

CHALLENGE

RELATIONSHIP:

We were made for relationship with God, but you can't have a relationship without spending time with someone. Find a way to spend time with Jesus in prayer or in the sacrament of the Eucharist.





SESSION TWO

THE FALL:
MAN BREAKS THAT RELATIONSHIP



THE ACT OF CONTRITION

My God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart.
In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good,
I have sinned against You,
whom I should love above all things.
I firmly intend, with Your help,
to do penance, to sin no more,
and to avoid whatever leads me to sin.
Our Savior Jesus Christ suffered and died for us.
In His name, my God, have mercy.
Amen.

THE FALL: MAN BREAKS THAT RELATIONSHIP

READ: GENESIS 3

At the end of Genesis 2, we left the newly married Mr. and Mrs. Adam living in their garden paradise and enjoying a close relationship with their Father-God.

They only had to listen to God and not eat from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, which God said would lead to their death.

BUT.... we all know the good times didn't last long.

In Genesis 3, a snake shows up. Never a good sign in the Old Testament.

The snake begins to cast doubt on the trustworthiness of God and His word.

He pressed Eve asking "Did God *really* say...?" and even contradicting Him saying:

"*You will not die... For God knows when you eat of it... you will be like God.*" (Gn 3:1-4)

The snake is implying 'You can't trust God as your loving Father. His rules aren't for your good.

He just doesn't want you to experience the kind of life He enjoys.'

And... Eve buys it, eats the fruit, and gives some to Adam which he eats.

Adam is strangely passive and it makes you wonder: Why doesn't he say anything?

In this way, the snake challenges Adam's commission to guard the Garden.



The snake promised them godlike knowledge, but the only knowledge they gain is...

THEY'RE NAKED!

They also begin to experience new feelings of shame and fear, which lead them to hide from God.

After God tracked them down, Adam 'accepts responsibility' for eating the fruit saying:

"The Woman whom you gave to me, she gave me the fruit, and I ate" (Gn 3:12).

It's not much of an apology, and is a clever ploy used by managers and bureaucrats: pass the buck up and down the chain of command.

"The Woman" = it's her fault AND "whom you gave to me" = it's your fault for giving her to me

Similarly, Eve's response is "The snake tricked me, and I ate" (Gn 3:13)

THE ORIGINAL SIN: PRIDE

In his book *The Problem of Pain*, C.S. Lewis explained the Fall was a result of "*turning from God to self*" and so sin was a rejection of and separation from God. This is reflected in the punishment God gives to Adam and Eve: they are physically separated from God, who used to walk with them in the Garden, and exiled into a world where work and family are as much of a burden as a blessing.

For the ancient Jews, pride was the gravest sin because all sins come from love of the self with your own will and desire to fulfill your own needs. Adam and Eve succumbed to pride in doubting God and thinking they knew better, not to mention their lack of apology and willingness to blame others.



THE PUNISHMENT: DEATH

The trouble is that Adam and Eve didn't die right after eating the fruit. Adam went on to live to the age of 930 (Gn 5:5) and to have 3 sons (Cain, Abel, and Seth). So was the snake right?

But what if we interpreted the Bible's words "you shall die" not as "you shall immediately cease to exist" but rather as "you shall become a person who dies."

In other words, **you shall become mortal.**

So even though they lived a long time after their disobedience, they eventually did die which was then the punishment God had intended by His words. God doesn't want them to eat the fruit of the tree of life not out of a desire to punish them further but because he doesn't want Adam and Eve to be immortal and forever stuck in their disobedient, rebellious condition.

READ: GENESIS 4, 6

A MESSY WORLD

Things don't get better outside of the Garden especially when Adam and Eve's oldest son, Cain, murders the younger Abel.

Although they have another son named Seth, Cain populates the earth with his descendants who are wicked and begin to do wrong things like polygamy (i.e. taking multiple wives). The situation gets worse when the descendants of Seth ("Sons of God") begin to take as many wives as they want from the descendants of Cain ("Daughters of Men").

Since "they took for their wives whomever they pleased" (Gn 1:2), humanity's sin is again pride since they are following their own will. In addition, the children of these polygamous relationships seem to offend God, which probably can be attributed to how polygamous fathers had too many sons to properly parent so wild, fatherless sons became a terror to others plunging society into total chaos:

*"The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth,
and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."* (Gn 6:5)

If you watch the news, you could also say that the world today is also a chaotic mess.

Why is the world so chaotic and messy? Sin.

Suffering and death, poverty and economic turmoil, environmental breakdown, etc. ... are all just symptoms of the disease of sin. God never intended for us to suffer and die, but as the descendants of Adam and Eve we are mortal meaning that we must be like them and have a defective heart, a predisposition to sin (i.e. Original Sin).

In his letter to the Romans, St. Paul wrote:

*"Therefore as sin came into the world through one man and death through sin,
and so death spread to all men in that all men sinned."* (Rom. 5:12)

After the Fall, mortality became necessary so sin is not immortal and the reality of sin means that the rest of the story of the Bible is one long road back to the Tree of Life, to Eden, and to divine childhood.

REFLECT

Just as Adam and Eve used to walk with God in the Garden, Micah 6:8 says:

*"What does the Lord require of you? But to live justly, love tenderly and walk humbly with your God."
How can you walk humbly with God this week?*

*When in the Garden with Adam and Eve, the snake cast a doubt on the trustworthiness of God.
Can you think of any doubts or lies the enemy is presenting to you casting doubt on your faith?*

*In many ways the world is an incredible place, but in lots of other ways it is a mess.
In what ways is the world a mess? How are some people tempted to or trying "to be like God" (Gn 3:4)?
What's one thing you can do today to make the world a better place?*

DISCUSS

If you could ask Adam or Eve one question, what would you ask?

What is something you thought would make you happy, but in fact left you feeling empty, unhappy, miserable, deceived, or worse?

Do you struggle to forgive others who have wronged you? How might you be more forgiving?

CHALLENGE

DO:

Do one thing this week to make the world a better place.

ASK:

Write a letter to God prayerfully expressing your sorrow and asking Him to forgive your sins.





SESSION THREE

**THE FLOOD:
WASHING UP AND STARTING OVER**

NOAH'S PRAYER

God of Heaven,
we ask for your mercy through this terrible storm.
You called me to build a ship to preserve my family
and the animals that you brought to me,
and I have sought to be faithful to honor
you in all that I have done.
Preserve us now through your judgment
on this world as you have promised
and we will be faithful to serve you in all our days.



READ: GENESIS 8-9:17

GOD'S RESPONSE

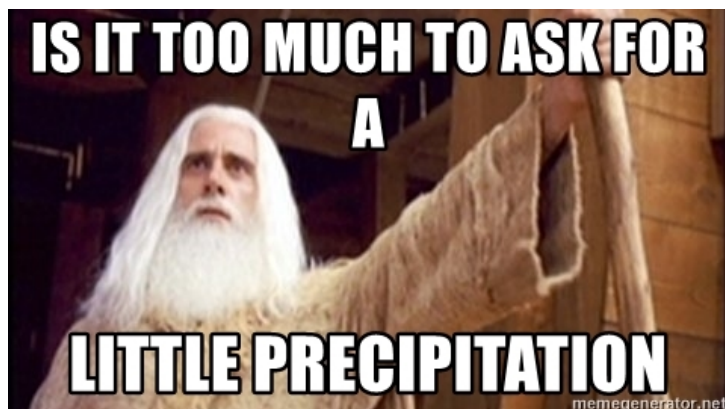
God's response to the chaos and wickedness of the world is to clean the earth with a flood and begin again, pulling the dry land out of the water in an act of re-creation.

WHY JUST NOAH?

Why didn't God save the rest of humanity?

The New Testament reveals that Noah was the only one interested in being saved (Heb 11:7). Noah was a "preacher of righteousness" who rebuked his peers for what they were doing while he was building the ark (2 Pt 2:5).

But no one paid attention to the crazy man building the big boat.



DID YOU KNOW?

The movie *Evan Almighty* (2007) chronicles the escapades of a modern guy named Evan who instructed by God builds an ark even though he faces ridicule only to be proven right in the end.



THE RISING OF A NEW SON



When the rain stopped, Noah sent out a dove who returned with an olive branch indicating the return of dry land.

Noah and his ark landed on the top of Mount Ararat, a new mountain of God.

When he emerges from the ark, Noah performs a priestly act: he builds an altar and offers a sacrifice to God.

After "smelling the aroma" of the sacrifice and moved with compassion for humanity, God makes a covenant with Noah, his descendants, and all the living creatures. He promised to never flood and wipe out the earth again. Then he set a (rain)bow in the clouds as a sign of the covenant between God and "*all flesh that is upon the earth*" (Gn 9:8-13).



Earlier in Genesis 9, God spoke to Noah using similar words as he spoke to Adam: "Be fruitful and multiply" (Gn 9:1-7). This recalls God's original covenant relationship with Adam, and so in a sense the covenant with Noah is a renewal of the covenant with Adam.

Despite imperfections, the covenant with Noah brings hope as humanity (Noah and his family) are back in relationship with God. The flood is a re-creation and Noah becomes a new son, the new Adam.

**THIS PAGE IS A SIGN,
DRAW A RAINBOW.
WHAT IS GOD TELLING YOU?**

THE COVENANT WITH NOAH

GOD'S PART

God promises that despite humanity's sinfulness, he will not destroy them or his world like this again. Rather, the earth will become a reliable place where God will work out his purposes to rescue everyone and everything.

HUMANITY'S PART

Nothing.
God doesn't require anything,
he states his promise
and signs it with a rainbow!

Mediator: Noah

Mountain: Ararat

Organization: (extended) family

Scripture: Genesis 9

READ: GENESIS 9:18-29

THE FALL OF THE NEW ADAM

Just as Adam fell, so did Noah.

Noah's fall resembles the Fall of Adam and Eve: fruit, nakedness, shame, and curse.

Noah drinks wine (fruit of his vineyard), gets drunk and naked in his tent.

Then his son Ham enters the tent, "sees his father's nakedness," and makes fun of him to his brothers.

Two of the brothers walk in backward and cover their father's nakedness.

When Noah awakes and realizes he's been violated, he curses Ham's son Canaan.

Even though all the 'bad people' were washed away and the 'good people' were saved, sin has infected every human being even Noah who gives into foolish indulgence.

According to St. Paul, "*All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God*" (Rom 3:23).

READ: GENESIS 11:1-9

THE TOWER OF BABEL

Like before the flood, there is once again a widespread rebellion of humanity against God followed by God's response. The goal of building the tower of Babel was to reach the heavens, which was essentially an effort to invade heaven and a declaration of war.

But why build the tower and invade the heavens?

They wanted to "make a name for ourselves" (Gn 11:4),

and as such fell victim to their pride thinking they didn't need God and could do whatever they put their minds to.

God's response was to "confuse their language" and scatter them all over the earth so it would be harder for all of humanity to work together in rebellion against God.

Once again the family relationship with God has been broken.



REFLECT

What did you learn in this session that really made you stop and think?

In the movie Evan Almighty, God tells Evan:

*"You want to know how to change the world? One **A**ct of **R**andom **K**indness at a time."*

What's one act of random kindness (ARK) that you can do this week?

How might the world be different if all of humanity still spoke the same language and were one nation?

DISCUSS

Like in the movie Evan Almighty, would you pay attention to Noah if he warned you today?

Why or why not?

CHALLENGE

DO:

ARK (Act of Random Kindness)

PRAY:

Like St. John Vianney, take time this week to exercise your priestly role and offer up your smaller pains and sufferings for the sake of those who could use some extra grace.

When you face a difficult situation at home, school, or work

or perhaps suffer a small cut or sore throat, bear it willingly and pray:

"Lord, I offer this sacrifice to you for the sake of [insert name]."

