

GOD'S COVENANTS

ADAMIC COVENANT

Glenn Roberts got his nickname “Fireball” from his pitching prowess in American Legion Baseball.

But “Fireball” Roberts sadly lived up to his name in 1964 at the Charlotte Motor Speedway. It was one of NASCAR’s worst crashes. The race had just begun.

It was in the 7th lap... there were 393 more to go.

The drivers were settling in, finding their rhythm. *Roberts was a popular driver, in the prime of his career.* He was running in the middle of the pack.

But as the stock cars moved through Turn Two a collision occurred between Ned Jarrett and Junior Johnson. Glenn Roberts tried to avoid a pile up.

His car spun out of control and slammed against the retaining wall. The impact punctured a hole in Glenn’s gas tank. When the car rolled over it burst into flames.

It was the worst inferno NASCAR has ever seen.

By the time Glenn Roberts was pulled from his car burns covered 80% of his body. Six weeks later a 35 year-old Roberts died from complications. Today, Glenn “Fireball” Roberts rests in peace outside the Daytona International Speedway behind Turn Three.

Major changes in the sport resulted from Glenn Roberts’ death. Fire-retardant safety-suits became standard. Onboard extinguishing systems were upgraded. Rubber fuel cells replaced metal gas tanks...

Following the crash NASCAR implemented a whole new set of terms and regulations. *Post-crash* NASCAR looked a lot different than *pre-crash* NASCAR. The sad demise of “Fireball” Roberts altered racing forever.

Tonight, I want talk about *another crash* in *another race*. **Fireball Adam** spun out of control and went up in flames. And his crash permanently altered the **human race**. Adam and Eve sinned against God and their rebellion subjected all creation to death and decay.

God created the first man from the dust, and it’s to the dust we return. Now when anybody anywhere is buried it’s a reminder of *Fireball Adam’s crash*.

As I said last week, a NASCAR race intensifies in the turns of the track. Cars bunch up. Drivers jockey for position. A NASCAR race is won or lost in the turns.

Last week we compared the Bible to a stock car race... *The starting line* is the genesis of the heavens and the earth. And *the first big turn* is the creation of the man and woman. God made them in His image, *male and female*, and plopped them down in a Garden called Eden. God gave Adam dominion over all He’d created. His first job was CEO! He co-ruled with God.

Adam and Eve were the *perfect couple*, living in a *perfect world*, eating *perfect fruit*, and enjoying a *perfect relationship*. This was the *perfect gig*...

It's been said, "Adam never had to hear about how much money Eve's daddy made, and Eve never had to hear about how good Adam's mom could cook."

Both Adam and Eve lived together naked and unashamed. The first couple had nothing to hide - no hang-ups. They were so *un-selfish* they were oblivious to *themselves*. They were naked and didn't realize they're nakedness. Adam and Eve had it made!

And here's the kicker... *Adam walked with God in the cool of the day!* God and Adam had this cool relationship. They took long walks together. Hung out together. This was the reason mankind was created...

The Bible tells us, "God is love."

But love always needs an object to love. Thus, God created the man and woman for fellowship. God wanted to *love and be loved - know and be known - serve and be served*. He wanted a real relationship.

But here's what we learned last week, God doesn't just desire any ole relationship with us - He always has a specific type of relationship in mind. He thinks through the arrangement He wants with His people.

This includes terms, and conditions, and promises. It sets out expectations and boundaries. God provides roles for all those involved in the agreement.

God desires a relationship with mankind, but it's always a certain kind of relationship. And the arrangement God orders is called **a covenant**.

Last week we talked about God's initial *covenant* with mankind - **The Edenic Covenant**. It was named after the garden that Adam and Eve called home.

It was a basic, simple agreement... *God created paradise... God gave paradise to Adam and Eve... God allowed them to enjoy and rule over paradise...* All God asked in return was for man and woman to love Him.

That's a reasonable request... And for love to be meaningful it has to be voluntary. A love that's imposed or assumed is no love at all. Love has to choose.

So God told Adam and Eve they could eat of every tree in the garden, except one. The lone tree with the forbidden fruit was "**the tree of the knowledge of good and evil**" - the only tree God made off-limits to man.

And man's *restraint in the face of temptation - his obedience to God's prohibition - his faith in God's request* - was his way of telling God that he loved Him.

But guess what can happen in the turns? *Cars and people go crash!* **Fireball Adam crashed**. He and his wife chose *not to trust God*. They bit the forbidden fruit and rolled the car. And all of life went up in flames.

Another tragedy occurred on April 26, 1986. The worst nuclear accident the world has ever seen took place in the Chernobyl region of the old Soviet Union.

A fire in Reactor #4 released 190 tons of highly radioactive debris into the atmosphere. Today, 35 years later the effects of the tragedy are still evident.

Particularly among the children who were born in the contamination zone. [The Children of Chernobyl](#) have been a worldwide humanitarian concern for years.

Pictures of these children are heart-wrenching...
*Empty eye-sockets, bloated legs, club feet, misshaped heads - [all sorts of painful, physical deformities](#). Look at the aftermath of Chernobyl and you realize something went horribly wrong. *This was not by design... This could not have been the plan...**

Radiation poisoning was the chief explanation.
It's the only thing that would make sense of the human wreckage - the warped and twisted bodies.

And when you look at the world today... the pain, the heartache, the distortion, the perversion - you get the same impression. *This was not the plan!* Something terribly twisted has happened in our collective past.

Without Genesis 3 there would be no adequate explanation. Sin poisoned God's creation. Everyone afterwards now lives in the contamination zone.

I've heard it put, "[Adam bombed. It was the first Adam bomb and its fallout contaminated everything God created.](#)" And it's true! Our world is no longer what God meant for it to be. Life went haywire. We crashed.

A wrench was thrown into the gears. And it's the Bible that provides the victims with an explanation.

Genesis 3 is the biblical account of the fall of man, *Adam's crash*. And how that one *crash and burn* changed the entire human race, and life on earth since.

After Glenn Robert's disaster, NASCAR re-organized their sport. And likewise after Adam's crash, God drew up a new covenant. Remember **God never gives up on a relationship with man**, but *His answer to our sin is always a covenant*. What comes to our rescue is *a loving, and grace-filled, and faith-based covenant*.

And Adam is no exception.

Let's turn to **Genesis 3** and look at **The Adamic Covenant**. We'll recap the initial sin, and then spend some time probing its far-reaching ramifications.

Remember Chapter 3 records *the origin of human sin*, but sin existed beforehand. We know from other Scriptures an angelic revolt erupted in heaven. Lucifer or Satan let pride fill his heart. He tried to steal glory from God. A third of the angels joined in his rebellion.

Legend has it, Lucifer caught wind of God's plan to create humans from the dust, and assign the angels our valet service. This was an assault on Satan's pride.

He would never cater to the whims of dust mites. So to avoid the humiliation, Satan tried to stop God's plan. Last week we read about **the war over creation**.

But the battle continues. The devil couldn't stop God's creation, so he now tries to spoil it. This cosmic revolt spills out of the halls of heaven onto the earth. *Satan appears in the garden to tempt Adam and Eve...*

And Satan's strategy is along two lines... He tempts Eve to doubt **God's Word** - then to doubt **God's love**...

Twice the NT states, "**Eve was deceived.**"

Women are more verbal than men. They like conversation. But Eve spoke to the wrong person. She went toe to toe with a skilled manipulator, and once you start negotiating with Satan, you're as good as trapped. *Eve bites - Adam follows - the rest is history.*

Suffice it to say, the original sin wasn't sex, drugs, and rock-n-roll. Eve wanted to be "**like God,**" but **like God** *apart from God*, not *under God*. She lusted for wisdom, but not God's wisdom - autonomous wisdom.

The end of verse 6 says, "**(Eve) also gave to her husband with her, and he ate...**" **Eve was deceived, but Adam sinned willfully.** The instant his teeth pierced the skin of that fruit the universe was never the same. In Genesis 2:17, God had warned Adam if he ate the forbidden fruit he would "**surely die.**" And die he did. In that moment Death entered the human sphere.

Spiritually, the man and woman died instantly. Sin caused a breach between them and God. Something died inside Adam. The warmth of God's Spirit was suddenly replaced *by a coldness, an alienation, an emptiness, a selfishness.* They died spiritually that day.

But **physically** they also began to die. It culminates under a tombstone, but it began when Adam sinned. At that moment his body started a slow deterioration. "**Entropy**" or aging or decay now takes its toll on us all.

Not only did entropy invade humanity, it impacted the whole universe. Romans 8:20 reads, “the creation was subjected to futility.” Randomness invaded an orderly creation. Sin marred God’s perfect world. Malfunctions became commonplace. Nature spun out of control.

The Hebrews have a word that describes the perfect state of God’s original creation, “Shalom” or “peace.” When Jesus returns He’ll restore this Shalom. This is why He’s called the “Prince of Shalom” - or “Prince of peace.” **But the fall of man shattered Shalom.**

Before the fall, all of nature was in sync up with God.

Sin is now the bug in the program - the computer virus on the hard drive that keeps us out-of-sync.

In essence, *Mother Nature* no longer cooperates with *God the Father...* The gentle rain that waters your yard can also flood a city. The light breeze that raises a kite into the air, can rip the roof and siding off your house.

Mother Nature has developed a severe case of PMS.

Sin has defiled God’s perfect world. The world we live in is no longer as God intended. When a tornado rips apart a street - or cells mutate into a cancer - or a car slides over a guardrail - *don’t blame it on God!*

It was man who rejected God’s warning, and struck out on his own. We wanted autonomy from God. Man thought he could shape a better world. The havoc we deal with today is the result of living out that insanity.

The immediate effect of sin showed up first in the man and woman. As soon as they bit the fruit, **“The eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked...”**
Sin brought self-awareness!

Prior to sin, *Adam and Eve were God-centered and others-centered. Now they’ve become self-centered.*

Sin makes life all about me! Eve gained her enlightenment alright - *her eyes were opened.* But the knowledge she gained shattered her innocence.

Now independent from God she felt *inadequate, ashamed and alone.* This once graceful, beautiful lady is now *a bag of insecurities.* **Wiser was God’s wisdom.**

In verse 7 Adam and Eve try to remedy their situation. **“They sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings...”** Instead of admitting their sin, and running to God, and throwing themselves on His mercies - *they try to hide.* Adam and Eve launch the first **“cover up.”** They sew fig leaves and made green, leafy Speedos. *It was the original fruit of the looms.*

I’ve heard the clever saying, **“After she sinned Eve became the only woman in history to say, “I haven’t got a thing to wear” - and it actually be true.”**

Adam and Eve tried to cover their selfishness, and rid themselves of their insecurities - but the plan backfired. I’ve heard fig leaves are itchy - which means their effort made them more self-obsessed, not less.

In fact, you could say the rest of human history is all about **fig leaves.** Everything man does from this point forward is a

way for us to absolve our guilt - shore up our self-doubts - feel good about ourselves again.

From here on man will *polish his vanity*, and *stroke his ego*, and *pursue his ambitions*, and *show-off his accomplishments* as a form of glorified fig leaves.

Even religion is a form of fig leaves. *Good works, charitable deeds, sacred rituals, self-righteousness* is man's attempts to cover his inadequacy. *Religion is our invention. We'll discover God's solution is a covenant.*

Verse 8 is so sad, “**And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.**” This would be funny if it weren't so tragic...

The President and First Lady of Creation are hiding in the bushes - scratching like crazy.

I like a cartoon... It's autumn. Leaves are falling. And Eve is scolding Adam, “**Will you please pick up your clothes?**” Wow how life has changed for Adam! The ole boy goes from hanging with a naked babe to getting nagged by the same woman to pick up his clothes.

“**Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, "Where are you?"** Please understand this isn't the voice of an angry mobster banging on your door, seeking revenge, “**Where are ya! I'm going getcha...**”

This isn't the **Godfather**. This is **God the Father**.

To read God's question accurately you have to read it like a heartbroken dad seeking his wayward child... *"Where are you? I love you! Please come home!"*

God calls lovingly... But men, notice who God calls out! Though Eve sinned first, God wants to talk to the man, **"Adam... where are you?"** God will hold the man, Adam, responsible. **The buck stops with the buck.**

Every man wants to be the head of his house - be crowned the king of his castle - *but men, a serious responsibility comes with that authority and honor.*

Too many men are like Adam. Notice, *where is Adam when Eve bites the fruit?* Verse 6 tells us, **"Her husband with her..."** Eve is under attack. The satanic deception is on, and Adam is an apathetic bystander.

He does nada! Adam fails to lead and protect his wife. He never intervenes in the conversation between Eve and Satan - *and we're still paying for it today.*

And this is the sin of scores of "so-called men" - even Christian men. Here is today's greatest social problem: **spiritually uninvolved men are failing their families.**

These men pay a mortgage and buy groceries, but they leave spiritual leadership to their wives. *This was Adam's error...* and guys, if it brought down the entire human family, it'll have a negative affect on yours!

Here's what happened to the first marriage.

The man failed to lead. The woman usurped his authority. And Satan stepped in to wreak havoc. And the same scenario has been repeated countless times.

Some Christian men think just because they're moral guys - *they don't get drunk, or use drugs, or cheat on their wives* - they must be pleasing to God - not hardly.

A husband and father needs to be aware of what's going on spiritually in his family. **Men, rise up and be your family's spiritual leader, not an apathetic Adam.**

And notice Adam's excuses...

Verse 10, "So he said, "I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself." And (God) said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?" Adam's first response to the sin in his life was to **hide**.

Then he **hurls**. He plays *the blame game*.

Adam says to God, "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate." Adam is so arrogant he not only blames his sin on Eve, but he also blames God for Eve. He says to God, "the woman whom You gave me..." In other words, "My sin is your fault God for giving me this unruly woman."

I'm ashamed to say it, but there've been times when I've done the same. I try to **hide** my sin - cover it up. And when that doesn't work I cast blame. I **hurl**.

I've lost my cool with Kathy and blamed her for my sin, "Oh, you make me so mad!" Hey, what a wife does is never an

excuse for a husband's temper! God holds the man responsible. A leader doesn't make excuses.

“And the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.” Eve blames the snake.

Eve uses the old Flip Wilson line that use to get so many laughs. The comedian would say, “The devil made me do it...” *But God doesn't laugh at Eve, or us.*

We've all sinned, and the first step to overcoming sin is to stop blaming it on our spouse, or kids, or boss, or church, or economy, or devil... God in His grace wants to forgive us, but we have to come out of the bushes - *stop hiding and stop hurling* - and own what we do.

Notice what happens next... “The man blames the woman, the woman blames the snake, **and the snake doesn't have a leg to stand on.**” Verse 14, “So the LORD God said to the serpent: “Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field; on your belly you shall go, and you shall eat dust all the days of your life.” First, God curses the snake. From now on he's destined for belly-flops. The snake will now slither...

Here's the origin of the expression, “*bite the dust.*”

God says, “**And I will put enmity between you and the woman...**” This is the part of verse 15 that's easiest to interpret... *Most women are afraid of most snakes.* There is a real hostility between snakes and women.

But God will also put enmity, or hostility, “**between your** (the serpent’s) **seed and her** (the woman’s) **Seed.**”

The “*seed (or sperm) of the woman*” is a bizarre term. Nowhere does the seed belong to the woman.

I believe this verse speaks of a unique, supernatural birth. It ultimately points to Jesus’ virgin birth.

Notice the next line, 3:15, “**He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.**” Here God makes **another covenant**. The heavenly Father initiates a means of restoring order to a fallen world, and of redeeming sinful man back to a relationship with Him.

Genesis 3:15 is one of the most strategic verses in the Bible. It’s known as the **proto-evangelicum** or **initial Gospel**. It’s the first mention of the Christian Gospel.

When Adam sinned, he effectively gave Satan sway over creation. But *the woman’s seed* will strip Satan of the authority he stole from Adam, and end the war with Satan. A promised Champion will deliver the knock-out.

This phrase “*the seed of the woman*” ultimately points to Jesus - the virgin born Son of God. On the cross Satan bruised Jesus’ heel. It was serious, but it was *a non-fatal blow*. Yet at the same time on the cross Jesus crushed Satan’s head - *or stripped him of his authority*. The devil now has no power over the believer in Jesus. Like the serpent, the devil has *bit the dust*.

It’s intriguing why Jesus had to be born of “**the seed of the woman.**” Romans 5:12 tells us, “**Through one man sin**

entered the world...” The Bible teaches us that **everyone born of Adam inherits Adam’s sin.**

In Psalm 51:5 David says it best, “I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me.”

We’re all born with a sinful, “*Adamic*” nature. Our innate tendency is to rebel against God, and go our own way. Our internal compass points to “I” not “God.”

There’s an old rock and roll song sung by George Thorogood and the Destroyers, “On the day I was born, the nurses all gathered 'round - and they gazed in wide wonder, at the joy they had found. The head nurse spoke up, and she said leave this one alone. She could tell right away, that I was bad to the bone.”

And every human born to Adam is *bad to the bone*.

Here’s the point, through Adam, sin gets passed down. Sin is a trait inherited from the dad not the mom.

This is why Jesus is called “**the seed of the woman.**” Since He was virgin born Jesus was born sinless. **Thus, Jesus could die in our place for our sin.** You could say, **Jesus was good to the bone.**

Romans 5:19 reads, “As by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man’s obedience many will be made righteous.” We inherit our sin from Adam, so we can inherit a right standing with God in Christ. In Adam we’re *born* into sin. In Jesus we’re *born again* unto righteousness.

I’ve talked to people who resent this idea of mankind’s original sin. I’ve heard, “*Why should I suffer for Adam’s sin? Why can’t I decide my own fate?*”

Be careful what you wish for... I doubt if any of us could do better than Adam and Eve. They were perfect. We would've sinned quicker than they did. And here's the catch - if your own sin condemns you, your own righteousness has to save you. And since none of us can save ourselves, God in His infinite wisdom *condemned us in Adam*, so He could *save us in Christ*.

In verse 16 the consequences of Adam's sin reach deep into *our* lives... God judges the woman and her roll in mankind's revolt. He assigns a punishment to Eve... "I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; in pain you shall bring forth children..."

Mom, imagine what could've been! God's original design called for "*pain-free contractions*." "No pain, all gain." Sadly, that ended with the first delivery.

Eve's sin brought labor pains. A wrench was thrown in the gears of family and human reproduction. Here is the source of *infertility, miscarriages, and C-sections*.

But the woman's sentence was two-fold...

God also tells Eve, "*Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you.*" Eve is sentenced to *labor pains*, and also to *laboring with a pain*.

Realize, God's order for the home pre-dated the Fall.

The *Edenic Covenant* made the husband leader in his home. The wife was to follow. Now Eve's husband is a sinner. She's suddenly saddled with the tough task of submitting to an imperfect authority. She has to submit the course of her life to a mistake-prone leader.

And from here on family life will get much more complicated. A power struggle ensues. The woman desires the intimacy of marriage, *but since he's a sinner she no longer trusts her husband*. Rather than follow him, she employs ways to control him.

And this discourages the man from stepping up to lead... This all causes a vicious, heart-breaking cycle.

Realize the issues plaguing your marriage - *as do the solutions* - trace back all the way to Eden.

In verse 17 God judges the man. He says to Adam, "Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it': "Cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, and you shall eat the herb of the field."

Adam's work changes... Before the fall, whenever Adam got hungry all he had to do was pick a delicious globe of fruit off the nearest tree. But after mankind's fall, Adam had to plant and grow food in the fields.

Prior to the curse, **food and work were unrelated**.

Food had nothing to do with a paycheck. God provided all the food the man and woman needed.

Adam worked for fun. *This changed at the fall...*

Since Adam chose independence from God, he could start by growing his own food... And while he was tilling the ground he was going to encounter serious obstacles - "thorns and

thistles.” Suddenly, work becomes *work*. It goes from a *breeze* to a *burden*.

Verse 19 tells us, **“In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for dust you are, and to dust you shall return.”** Before man’s sin, work was *no sweat* - but *no more*. From now on man will never get out of his job a reward equal to what he puts into it. Man is taken from the dirt and he works himself back into the ground.

Every time a man *clocks-in* he leaves a little something of himself on the job, until he’s literally worked to death. *And this is the plight of every man...*

In his book, **“Working,”** author Studs Terkel writes of **“*the thorns and thistles...*”** **“Work is about violence - to the spirit as well as to the body. It’s about ulcers as well as accidents... shouting matches as well as fistfights...”**

Above all it’s about daily humiliations. To just survive the day is triumph enough for the walking wounded...

It is about a search for daily meaning as well as daily bread, for recognition as well as cash, for wonder rather than apathy, for *a sort of life* rather than *a Monday through Friday sort of dying.*”

Wow, it’s true! Terkel’s description of work as **“a Monday through Friday sort of dying”** is right out of Genesis. You never get out of it all that you put into it.

Some men I know bounce from job to job their whole adult life. They never settle down vocationally. They're always looking for that elusive perfect job...

They've yet to realize, **that job doesn't exist!**

We've had people join the church staff, and expect a bed of roses. They don't realize every *occupation* - every *corporation* - has its thorns and thistles. All careers have obstacles that irritate and aggravate.

The curse of the Adamic Covenant sees to it that *women have pain in labor and that men labor in pain.*

It's interesting, when a mom chooses to work outside the home - *and I understand that often it's not a choice, she has to help provide* - but when she does, she gets double the trouble... *She bears the family curse intended for her and the work curse meant for the man.*

Ironically, modern society has revamped family life to liberate women, but from a biblical perspective all its done is burden them down further. Some mothers are convinced her kids are not enough, and needs a career to be fulfilled. In reality, all she's gets is a double curse.

It is amazing though, how the ancient covenant God made with Adam so thoroughly shapes our lives today... *from nature, to home, to work.* The curse God put on man's original sin shows up every day in a million ways... *When the car breaks down - or your child throws up - or you fight with your spouse* - when thorns and thistles, and labor pains make life harder, let it remind you, **this world is not as God intended.**

This was one of the two purposes of the covenant God made with Adam. It was a perpetual reminder of *the fall of man - of sin and its curse*. But it also had a positive component. It provided hope for our salvation, and a picture of how that salvation would be accomplished.

I like verse 20, “And Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living.”

The name “Eve” means “life-giver.” Adam took very seriously God’s promise to Eve that through “her seed” salvation would come... *that “the seed of the woman” would crush the serpent’s head...* Sin came by Eve. But Adam believes that life will come by Eve as well.

Finally verse 21, “Also for Adam and his wife the LORD God made tunics of skin, and clothed them.”

God didn’t like their fig leaves so He dressed them in his and hers leather jackets. Of course, animal skins necessitated the death of an animal - *a sacrifice...*

Remember God told Adam, “You shall surely die.”

The wages of sin is death. For sin to be forgiven a price has to be paid. Blood has to be sacrificed.

Here’s how God intends to *remove our guilt, alleviate our fears, resolve our insecurities, and restore our willingness to trust Him...* it’s through the sacrifice of His Son. Jesus will cover us with His righteousness.

On the cross He takes away our nakedness, our insecurities, our shame. In Christ we are accepted. But it all happens through **covenants** that are yet to come.

There’s more to the story... so stay tuned.