

## Leadership And The Covenants (Part Nine)

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Sometimes these sermons on the covenants may seem to run together but there is a step by step process that I am following. You may have to concentrate a bit in order to keep track, but please try to do so that you do not lose track of the continuity. I want you to turn to the New Testament to pick up a principle here in Romans 5.

**Romans 5:12-14** Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—for until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come.

It is the word ‘type’ that I am concerned with as we begin this. We may use a different synonym for the word ‘type.’ It might be a copy, pattern, example, or representative. I just give you these so that you will understand that as we go through these things regarding the covenants that we are using this process constantly. We not only use it in these lessons about the covenants, we use it all over the Bible. We always use examples from out of the Old Testament to something that is in the New Testament. We are using types and patterns in order to teach and that is what we are doing with what might be considered to be technical and difficult things regarding the covenants.

One of the major points that helps us keep track is that the major players in this drama that we are going through here in Genesis 3 are, outside of God, the snake, the devious serpent Satan, and Adam and Eve. I am going to use one of these synonyms as representative of a group that is here on earth. The snake, of nature; Satan, of demonic realm; and Adam and Eve, of mankind. We are going to use those beings as types and copies as examples to us.

There are overall reasons why the world is the way it is and the judgments made against these three groupings—the snake, Satan, and Adam and Eve. These three groupings represent major building blocks of the world that we live in today. It had its beginning back then. If you want to find out why things are the way they are you go back to the beginning and begin tracing them up to our time. Those three representatives are groupings, building blocks of the world that we live in. Much of the conditions that exists today had their beginnings in the events of Genesis 3. There are three areas that I want you to consider, the first one is in the book of Romans.

**Romans 8:18-20** For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope;

It was not nature’s fault that this all went sour, so it was not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope. The hope is that the best will be made out of the purpose that He is working out. Under the circumstances following the sin, God thought it best in His judgment that He subject the earth to the way it is today.

What this reveals is that nature had a judgment imposed on it and we must deal with its effects, and we do. The effects are a reality that cannot be avoided. The beautiful patterns of nature were upset and nature became a slave to death and decay. It was not that way before. God made it subject to death and decay, and it had an immediate effect on Adam and Eve and all of mankind. Life became more difficult to deal with because of the change in nature.

**Revelation 12:7-9** And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in the heaven any longer. So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

This particular event does not tie directly into what happened in the Garden of Eden but I used it so that I could show something to you that you are well aware of. I will use this earlier judgment because through Satan the demonic realm was also represented in the Garden of Eden. Though invisible, God's Word informs us of the reality that they share this earth with us. The reality for you and me is we have to be aware that they are going to be doing things as Satan did in the Garden of Eden. They are a reality we have to deal with in life, they are around and we know it.

**Ezekiel 18:19-20** “Yet you say, ‘Why should the son not bear the guilt of the father?’ Because the son has done what is lawful and right, and has kept all My statutes and observed them, he shall surely live. The soul who sins shall die. [A third reality that grew out of the events of Genesis 3, thrust upon us by Adam and Eve.] The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself.”

This is the judgment that has the greatest impact on everyone's life. God clearly warns mankind, represented by Adam and Eve, that the wages of sin is death. They sinned and they died spiritually immediately, they died physically just short of 1,000 years.

All three of these things are there, a part of our life. Nature is disturbed; we share the earth with the demons; and the wages of sin is death. Of the three major effects, sin was the greatest generating influence toward creating the world that we live in. The demons do not make us sin, we *choose* to sin. They did not make Eve do what she did, but she *convinced* Adam to do what he did. They were choices so they died as a result and we die too as a result of our sins.

Do not forget the three realities that come out of the judgment that God made on the activities of Adam and Eve, and Satan and the snake. How long that took I do not know, but in a blink of an eye it was lost. Not totally but the beauty and purity of it was lost.

Here are four brief conclusions that we should carry with us, 1) In Ecclesiastes 7:29 it says we were created upright. That is our background, we brought judgment on ourselves, we cannot blame it on Satan, or nature. We did it through our parents Adam and Eve.

2) The judgment that God put on Adam and Eve revealed that we are accountable, 6,000 years later we are still accountable. This is a reality, the soul that sins shall die.

3) In a way this is a good one, but it is also something that we cannot dodge. The same Creator God who placed the judgment on Adam and Eve is still on His throne and that is good because He is so merciful, so patient. It is amazing that He has not given up on us yet. He has not given up because He knows that He has the power to save us.

4) This is why we have hope in the midst of all of this: Jesus Christ brought the good news. He shows us there is relief.

The conclusion from these four points is we must move on. Nothing ended except the innocence there in the Garden of Eden. God moved forward with His purpose, we are a part of it now. We realize these things have occurred and we must move on.

The judgments on Adam and Eve passed on to their descendants and that includes us. The most obvious of all the judgments, to me, was the marriage as well as childbirth that had some of the joy of the experience removed, and the relationship between husband and wife now has a competitive and confrontational element within it, because of the influence of Satan. That is the way he is, he is competitive and we picked that up. Before he was there, there was no problem with competitive. So marriage was not intended by God to be confrontational at all.

Overall there is a very clear message that continues unfolding to this day. There is no such thing as the prevalent idea that as long as sin does not hurt anybody else there is no problem. Look back at Adam and Eve. There was nobody else around and look at the way it is effecting us. That is the lesson.

There is no such thing as a sin that does not effect somebody else. Adam and Eve's sins are still reaping their harvest of pain as the sovereign God is always around. He is Omnipotent and He is judging. He is Omniscient and He is operating His creation and to take Him out of the picture is utter foolishness. He is a constant as well and we can be very thankful of that.

One of those curses actually becomes a wonderful blessing for us, and that has to do with the sanctification that God makes holy people as a result of. I am putting together two sermons for the Days of Unleavened Bread on this subject, overall it is on sanctification. I am going to feed it into this one particular curse, the enmity that God placed on Satan, which He did as a blessing for Eve and her children. We are going to chase this out all the way from the beginning. It is going to be fairly detailed but it is a wonderful blessing that God gave right in the midst of all those curses. He placed it on Satan but He gave us the benefit of it.

We will move onto the judgment that God placed on Adam.

**Genesis 3:17-19** Then to Adam He said, "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. 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 dust you shall return."

We will reflect back to pick up a thought about some of the things that God blessed Adam with. As he came out of the ground, God began to describe to him what He had given to him. God gave those

gifts to Adam so that he would be enabled to have everything he needed to work with and live. That is form of God's grace.

It is a spiritual principle that we can count on. Anytime God gives us something to do He gives us the tools to enable us to do it, just like He did with Adam and Eve. He gave them the earth to carry out their life. Spiritually God does the same thing. He gives us the gifts that we need to carry out the responsibilities that He gives for us to do.

What we have here is reflecting back to the beauty and usefulness of everything that God made available to Adam so that he would be able to function as a husband and father. What he mentions here is sweat. This indicates that labor itself will be much more difficult and added to that is an indication that a person will work all of their life until death stops them.

The back side of that is that there is an indication that God did not intend that we would have to work to the degree that Adam worked himself into by sinning. He would still have to work but it was not going to have the sense of discouragement and hopelessness that it had after the judgment was put on him. He would not have had to work as hard as he had. Adam was expected to work but before the sins Adam was free to eat; after the sin, work contained a measure of enslavement so that an increase to the degree of work is a requirement until death occurs and then man is buried in the very soil from which he was made.

Maybe if there was no sin there may have not been any death and Adam would have never been taken back to the soil. Maybe God would have made him spirit. But we work all the time now and when we are all done we will be buried in the very thing that we are working with. This is what the book of Ecclesiastes is somewhat about. It is like Adam lived all his life in vain, he was on a treadmill for 939 years.

We are to learn from this. This is what we have earned through our ancestors, Adam and Eve. It is a common way in which God judges. Somebody (a baby) who is inside the body of another gets passed on to them what the person is carrying. This is what the egg and the sperm do. That is why Paul said in Romans 5, that we all sin in Adam. I will give you another example so that you can see that God is not being unfair, this is one of the ways that He judges.

In Hebrews 7, it says that Levi paid tithes in Abraham. Levi was not born yet, but Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek. Paul uses that as a proof that Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek. In regard to Adam and Eve God judged absolutely correctly, as Adam and Eve did all of their progeny would do the same thing. God's judgment was right on the ball, because that is what we have all done. We did not sin in exactly the same way as Adam and Eve but we all sinned.

One of the things I think is interesting that comes out of this is that this judgment on Adam involved his work and there is no doubt that he was a worker of the soil. He was a farmer, he was producing food and animals that were domesticated and he was using them as well.

Just so we do not lose track of the facts that the original sin involved food, every festival that we keep involves food. They are all scheduled within harvest season. What is on our minds? The harvest of food. We go to the Feast and we eat. We even call it a Feast, not just a happy time, but a happy time eating. The one day that we do not eat our mind is on food because we are not eating.

There are things that we can learn from this. It might help us feel close to God because we are able to see these things and understand. The curse that went on Adam and of course on the land as well, includes not only added decay but a sense of hopelessness. Because after spending a lifetime working as a sinner, first Adam and then all of us (because we were in him), you end where you began—in the soil. Hope and joy are greatly deflated. The only thing that can save us is to have a better attitude and especially to have the information, knowledge, and understanding that comes with God's Spirit as well.

There is an interesting play on the senses involved in eating, when comparing what God says, especially in chapter 2 as compared to chapter 3. In Genesis 2, God shows the earth and what it produces as a wonderful gift—whether in a sense of the whole earth or most especially regarding Eden—they could freely eat. The word 'freely' adds a dimension to it that if it were not there it would just say they could not eat. But the word freely shows that there is a tremendous abundance, and not only that, there is nobody begrudging them having the opportunity to eat as they will—except the one that was designated, the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

This was the very activity the serpent chose to be the issue when he tempted them on into sin. When Satan raised doubts about God's ultimate goodness and His care for them it draws attention to the statement in verse 6.

**Genesis 3:6** So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.

Here is some thoughtful consideration. God's gifts including the ground itself, and what it produces and is used becomes the focus of the judgments regarding the lives of all mankind. Added to this is that the food laws follow these events as well as the Festivals.

Here is a summary of the things that we have covered here, please turn to Proverbs 14. This verse also appears in Proverbs 16:25.

**Proverbs 14:12** There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.

They chose death! They turned from the way they were given and instead they chose death. You may not think of this covenant even as being a covenant because it does not have the look of covenant to it, because you do not see in your mind's eye two parties discussing things thoroughly to conclusions acceptable to both.

The way men make a covenant you have to agree to the terms that are on it. In this case God just imposed it on them and yet we call it a covenant. It is a covenant because both parties have things that they are required to carry out. Adam and Eve did not carry them out, so in this case God gave them no opportunity to do such a thing.

When one compare the differences between Genesis 2 and Genesis 3, I believe the reason He executed things this way becomes clear. He imposed this covenant on them which ends the judgment. This time He was speaking directly to them. So when He began speaking the judgments He could not help but bring up the responsibilities that they failed.

I think that we should also consider this: when Adam and Eve were given the responsibilities that they were, God also took care. He did not send them before Satan without instruction. He made it very clear the wages of sin is death, He made it very clear what sin is.

Why is this important to us? God never gives us anything that is too big for us, He never sends us into battle uninstructed. He is always fair, He does not cheat, steal, back away from things that are iffy. God spells things out because He is not in the business of creating losers. He wants us to win so He prepares us to win. That is what a good coach does.

God is the greatest teacher there is! He is so patient, we finally look like we are ready to pass. He gives us more grace so we are able to pass with flying colors, and not by the skin of our teeth. That is not the way our God operates. That is why I am going through these covenants. I want us to understand that He is the ultimate in a fair being that there is. He is not only fair, He is mercifully fair over and above what we might think.

The key word here is 'imposed.' He imposed it. Now as we understand, He imposed it on the basis of what He is, it was not an imposition to do a deal with God. With all of its gifts the Edenic Covenant, Part One is the radiant picture of joy and hope. By way of contrast Edenic Covenant, Part Two has all the judgments in it. It is a depressing picture that will never be recovered in this life, it is going to keep right on going.

What we have between the two of them is a picture of paradise received and then lost, and it was our fault that it got lost. It is a picture of having a valuable pearl of great price in one's hand, and then allowing it to carelessly slip from one's grasp and go down into the gutter. It is a picture of still having many gifts but a life with much of the exhilarating exuberance of joy no longer a part of it. What could have been has been lost. You have probably heard of the book *Paradise Lost* by Milton.

To any honestly thinking person, the comparison between two covenants really reveals the lesson. This is what God is dramatically showing us: the irresponsible disloyalty of sin destroys the joy of life God intended for us when He created us. What we do from that point is to understand that sin still destroys, that has never changed. God is using this so that we will buck up and not sin.

Understand this, it does not matter whether any other human sees us sin, we did not see Adam and Eve but we see the effects of it. It does not matter what we think about the sin, what matters is what the Creator says. That is the bottom line.

Nothing can change what happened at the Garden of Eden, because what God says is reality. It may sound bold, it may sound harsh, but it is not. It is just a truth that we have to deal with. We are dealing with a merciful God. He does not want to impose pain and penalties on us. That is why He gives us the truth so that we can be guided, not by hearsay, but by the very One who set the rules in the first place. There is nobody that knows like Him.

Do you think that God was disappointed with what Adam and Eve did? Where do we get our disappointment? He created the ability within us. He is the author of what disappointment is and He was disappointed. He wanted us to go right from the beginning. That is why He empowered them the way He did. They had the gifts.

We have the gifts too, spiritual gifts. They got all of the physical things at the beginning, now we deal with the shambles of what is leftover from their sins, but nonetheless the gifts are given to us too. God wants us to make the most of the opportunities that have been opened up to us.

Why is life such a struggle? Why does life on many occasions seem so hopeless? There is no other covenant that should impress on our minds that God means exactly as He says regarding our responsibilities and our accountability. Our responsibility is to obey. If we do not obey, then we are accountable. That is what Genesis 1, 2, and 3, in summation, teaches us. There are a lot of details but when you get right down to the nitty-gritty we are responsible for what God gives us and we are accountable.

The stark contrast between the idyllic beauty—the soaring potential for happiness in life—is shown immediately following the creation as compared to the shocking judgment given in the second, reveals clearly that sin destroys regardless of what it looks like before, during, and immediately after they are committed. Nothing changes what sin is.

That is a conclusion that we can reach from covenant number one (A and B). The only way that life will work out positively is through grace and our very best cooperation that we must give to His requirements as stated in His covenants.

About halfway through Ecclesiastes series I started beating on this drum where I said everything matters. That is the conclusion of the book of Ecclesiastes. Solomon is telling us *everything* matters! That is what happened in the Garden of Eden.

Everything matters. We have got to be serious about life. We can be happy, we can be joyous, we can love music and love singing, playing jokes on one another, there is nothing wrong with those things within the framework of the kind of life that God wants us to live. But we always have to understand that in an overall sense Solomon is teaching that everything in life matters.

Ecclesiastes 11 has a fairly long section in it in which Solomon talks about different parts of the body, using figurative language about the head, knees, eyes, ears, and basically what he is saying is that everything matters in life, but if you are wise person you will take care of these things when you are young.

I am 83 years old now and do not have the energy that I used to have. I still have a fair amount of energy in me but I do not have what I used to have and now I am finding it is harder for me to do things that I used to be able to do much more quickly. I am not talking necessarily about physical things. When I used to prepare my sermons out in California (30 years or so ago), I spent about 2 hours in the afternoons to prepare a one and a quarter hour sermon. Now it takes me a week! I just do not have the thinking processes anymore. It takes me a long time to remember where scriptures are. If you would look at my notes it is like I am writing a book. I have to do that because I cannot remember like I used to.

Solomon's words are coming home to me in a real way. I can feel it, so I have to rely more and more on Richard and Martin and others because the energy and mind just is not there like it used to be. I eventually remember two days later.

I look out and see a lot of gray hair. You know what I am talking about. You still have the mind to be able to do it, you just cannot do it anymore. You want to do it, you do not want to be lazy, you want to accomplish. This is the way God made us, He wants us to wear out. When you are a toddler you have no idea how many times you tripped and fell, hit your head, rolled over on a bicycle, or rolled down the hill and took a rock in the head. You get up and cry for a couple minutes and then you go. You cannot remember the pain that took place when you went through those things. It was agonizing when you did it but you do not remember it.

When you are 85 years old you remember every bump, every knock, everything that happens in your life as it deteriorates and you experience the pain. I think God wants us to experience the pain of decline. It is a reality that we have to deal with, not get down in the dumps about. He made us that way, that is what is going to happen, and He wants us to deal with it as well as we can, and not blame it on Him, and ask Him for the strength we need.

**Romans 8:18** For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

That really fits in with what I was talking about. Paul is looking forward to getting rid of this body but he is dealing with what he has right now. From what we see in the book Paul was not a really healthy person to begin with. He may have had vision problems as well, and there were sicknesses. That is what we do, we look forward, and deal with what we are going through and do the best we can with it.

**Romans 8:19-23** For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. [What God is telling us through the apostle Paul is, “nature has been cursed by Me, you are caught within it, now turn your attention to the future.] Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.

**Isaiah 11:6-10** The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play by the cobra's hole, and the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. And in that day there shall be a Root of Jesse, who shall stand as a banner to the people; for the Gentiles shall seek Him, and His resting place shall be glorious.

He left the curse in Genesis 3, when there was no rest. Adam was commanded to work with a sense of hopelessness as a part of the overall part of what was going on. The time is coming—the rest of God—and His resting place shall be glorious.



The judgment is going to be lifted and joy of life will return to what God intended at the very beginning. As things are now we must live with what God has decreed. If a person ever needs a reminder that everything in life matters it is the result of Adam and Eve's sin. What if they had never done that? God is God and He will succeed at what He is doing. We have to deal with it in a way that others do not have to deal with it, we have to deal with it as a reality that God is working things out in our life and what He has imposed upon us is for our good for what He is preparing us for. Just as He has prepared Adam and Eve, He is preparing us for the world tomorrow. The road is tough, it is rough, it is difficult because we have demons that are tagging along with us as well.

Understand this: God is showing us in a broad sense that there is no such thing as committing a sin that is done in a corner, which effects nobody else, because everybody is part of the entire operation that God has created and is sovereign ruler over all. We have to look at ourselves as citizens of all of nature. We are in a different category, we are the Israel of God. That is important! We are being prepared so that we will be able to rule under Jesus Christ over those who come up in a resurrection or come back from captivity.

We must not think of creation as being merely a mechanical machine. It has amazing resilience and recuperative powers. It also has living, thinking, choice-making beings within it impacting on it to either maintain it, properly build it, or destroy it. Not just humans but demons are in there too, and they have powers that are much greater than ours. God gives them the opportunity, they will destroy.

Those sins are that committed by insignificant people in seemingly insignificant circumstances, always have effects beyond the time, place, and people by whom they are committed. One of the major lessons here is that we do not live in a vacuum. Our Creator is always overseeing it and judging it.

Let us transition here to the next covenant that follows. The title for this next covenant is the Noahic Covenant made with Noah that resulted in the Flood.

In order to achieve a broader understanding of this covenant we must study it within the context of the times that it was given in. This is especially important to us at this time because Jesus forecast that the times we are living in now would be somewhat similar to the times that produced this Noahic Covenant.

This is important to understand because what man does undoubtedly impacts upon what God does. This is because He responds in order to support His purposes and He responds for the good of mankind at the time as well as providing important lessons for those humans who will follow Him, and that includes us.

Never forget this: everybody who is a leader is also a follower, and we may be followers of many people who taught us, formed us, and shaped us into what we are now. Never forget that who one chooses to follow is extremely critical to developing right leadership traits. It makes all the difference in the world in many cases. So make sure that who you are following is worthy of following.

Next time I speak we will talk about the time between Adam and Eve and the time of the Flood. That is approximately 1,650 years. That is a longer time than Israel existed as a nation from Moses to Jesus Christ and on to the destruction of the Temple, and the scattering of the Jews over the world. Longer than the time between Jesus Christ and Columbus landing in the West Indies, and longer than

the time it took the scattered Israelites and Jews to settle into general European areas and formed into nations without really knowing who they are. They just immigrated there and they forgot who their ancestors were.

In Amos 9 God says, 'not one kernel will be lost of all the Israelites who have lived.' Not one will be lost. He is keeping so close attention, He has a special angel assigned writing them all down, every Israelite that ever lived will be resurrected. 1650 years is a long period of time in which very much history was being made but which we have little or no truthful knowledge, because even if anything was written down God made sure that the history perished in the destruction He caused by the Flood.

What did those people in those 1650 years produce? They were every bit as smart as you and me, and in addition to that they lived 700, 800, 900 years! What could you learn in all of that time? Are you aware that there is an indication in the book of Deuteronomy about people lost up in space? What it means I do not know, but it can be interpreted that way. It says, 'even if you have to gather them from out in space.'

1650 years of history lived from the time of the judgment until after that period of time when Jesus Christ was murdered and resurrected. God made sure that the only source of true knowledge that mankind has available regarding that period of time (the knowledge we have), is right in this Book. He saved this because it is for us.

What they were doing in that 1650 years does not amount to a hill of beans. What is important is what God saved. This is what we are going to go into when we begin this next covenant, the Noahic Covenant. It has one doctrine in it that is really sensational.