

Salvation History

Session Overview

Part I: Creation and the Fall

Creation

- Before creation, God exists in eternity in perfection. He gains nothing from creation, but “in a plan of sheer goodness freely created man to make him share in his own blessed life” (CCC 1).
- Unique to the Christian creation narrative, God creates *ex nihilo*, from nothing. Gen 1 shows God creating a world and filling it.
- What is a day for God? Does he define time like we do? Does each day of Genesis mean one day as we know it now?

Harmony in Creation

- Adam and Eve are the pinnacle of creation, the only thing made in God’s image and likeness. After each day God sees that his work was good. But after creating man, he sees “it was very good”.
 - Notice that God says, “Let us make humankind in **our** image, according to **our** likeness” (Gen 1:26, emphasis added).
- Adam and Eve experience friendship with God. They talk to him in the garden. But they are *not* adopted as His children like we adopted in Christ.
- Adam and Eve experience Harmony:
 - Between their body and soul: they do not suffer, decay, or die.
 - Between their intellect and their will: They have self-mastery
 - With each other: They are naked without shame. They see each other as persons to be loved, not things to be used.
 - In the world: Disease and disaster do not exist in the garden.

The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil

- The tree represents something very simple: God is author of what is true, good, and beautiful. Even if we do not always understand, we must accept that he is author of right and wrong!
- By eating of the forbidden fruit, Adam and Eve reject God as the author of goodness, and instead place themselves as the deciders of right and wrong. They make themselves like God in this regard.
- Who is responsible? The serpent? Eve? Adam?

Effects of the Fall

- Disharmony enters in the four categories above.
- Man is now ruled by concupiscence- the inclination to sin.
- There is a promise of a defeat of the serpent.

Part II: Fallen Mankind

Noah

- The world is full of evil men, but Noah stands out as one who is righteous.
- God asked Noah to build an Ark to preserve life through a great flood. Noah is obedient to what God asks.

- God creates a covenant, a sacred promise, to not flood the earth again.
- But is a fresh start enough? Why not? What is still lacking?

Age of Patriarchs & Abraham

- This era is marked by the father as leader. The extended family is chosen people, led by the patriarch or matriarch of the family.
- Abraham is marked by his faith and trust in God. For his faith, three promises are made to Abraham:

Promise	Scripture	Fulfillment
A Great Land	Gen 15	Mosaic Covenant
A Great Kingdom	Gen 17	Davidic Covenant
Universal Blessing	Gen 22	The Temple

- Abraham believes that his wife is too old to have children, but Isaac is eventually born of Sarah.
- Abraham's faith is tested as he is called to sacrifice Isaac in Gen 22. But God stops him and provides a sacrifice.

Egypt, Exile, and Moses

- The chosen people fall into slavery in Egypt. Moses is raised as a deliverer. He meets God in a burning bush, who calls Himself "I AM WHO I AM". Moses is told to return to Pharaoh and demand the people be let free.
- Ten plagues are sent to Egypt. The last is the death of the firstborns in Egypt. The first Passover is celebrated.
- The people flee through the Red Sea.
- Moses receives the Ten Commandments and leads the people for many years in the desert before coming to the promised land. Moses, however, is not allowed to enter and dies before he can.

The Davidic Kingdom

- The promised land is eventually claimed and the people call for a King, even though God tells them that he is their king and a human king will have negative side effects. The people pick Saul, but David is anointed.
- David vs. Saul:

David	Saul
He was God's King (2 Sam 7:8-16)	He was the people's king (1 Sam 10:30)
He was a man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22)	He was a man seeking the people's praise (1 Sam 15:30)
His reign is eternal (2 Sam 7:12-13)	His reign was brief (1 Sam 15:28)
He was kind and giving (2 Sam 9)	He was harsh (1 Sam 22:16-19)
He was forgiving (1 Sam 26)	He was unforgiving (1 Sam 14:24-44)
He was repentant (2 Sam 17)	He was unrepentant (1 Sam 15:10-31)
He was brave (1 Sam 17)	He was fearful (1 Sam 17:11)
He possessed God's Spirit (1 Sam 16:13)	He was separated from God (1 Sam 16:14)

- David, and the Davidic Kingdom, is the high point of the Old Testament. God's promises to Abraham are being fulfilled. The Temple, a permanent house for God, is constructed.
- David, however, is not without sin (2 Sam 11).

- Solomon, David's son, is the next King in the Davidic line. God offers him a gift, and he chooses *Wisdom*. This helps him be a great ruler and grow the kingdom. However, he uses marriages to grow the kingdom, which introduces idolatry.

Division, Exile, Return

- The kingdom eventually splits into two parts. The tribes go into exile and again become enslaved people.
- The people eventually return from exile and attempt to rebuild.
- Throughout this time, there are great prophets who are calling for something, someone, great to come save the people.
- The last of these great prophets is John the Baptist, who calls for repentance to prepare the way for the one coming.

Part III: Redeemed Mankind

The Kingdom

- Much of Jesus' teaching focuses on "The Kingdom":
 - "This is the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel" (1 Mat 1:15).
 - "But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you" (Mat 12:28).
 - "Heal the sick in it and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you'" (Luke 10:19).

- What is the Kingdom? Not a place, but a person:
He came to Nazareth, where he had grown up, and went according to his custom into the synagogue on the sabbath day. He stood up to read and was handed a scroll of the prophet Isaiah. He unrolled the scroll and found the passage where it was written:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to bring glad tidings to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to let the oppressed go free,
and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord."

Rolling up the scroll, he handed it back to the attendant and sat down, and the eyes of all in the synagogue looked intently at him. He said to them, "Today this scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing" (Luke 4:16-21)

- We see this in the words and deeds of Christ:
 - "Jesus said to him, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me'" (Jn 14:6).
 - Luke 5: 17-26:
One day as Jesus was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and Jerusalem, and the power of the

Lord was with him for healing. And some men brought on a stretcher a man who was paralyzed; they were trying to bring him in and set [him] in his presence. But not finding a way to bring him in because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and lowered him on the stretcher through the tiles into the middle in front of Jesus. When he saw their faith, he said, "As for you, your sins are forgiven." Then the scribes and Pharisees began to ask themselves, "Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who but God alone can forgive sins?" Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them in reply, "What are you thinking in your hearts? Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—he said to the man who was paralyzed, "I say to you, rise, pick up your stretcher, and go home." He stood up immediately before them, picked up what he had been lying on, and went home, glorifying God. Then astonishment seized them all and they glorified God, and, struck with awe, they said, "We have seen incredible things today."

- "Remain in me, as I remain in you. Just as a branch cannot bear fruit on its own unless it remains on the vine, so neither can you unless you remain in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit, because without me you can do nothing" (John 15:4-5).

The Cross

- "This is why the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down on my own. I have power to lay it down, and power to take it up again. This command I have received from my Father" (Jn 10:17-18).
- "Just so, the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Matt 20:28).
- "He began to teach them that the Son of Man[g] must suffer greatly and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and rise after three days" (Mark 8:31).

The Church and the Spirit

- The story does not end! After the resurrection, Christ calls for us to believe in him and follow him:

"When Jesus went into the region of Caesarea Philippi he asked his disciples, 'Who do people say that the Son of Man is?' They replied, 'Some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.' He said to them, 'But who do you say that I am?' Simon Peter said in reply, 'You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.' Jesus said to him in reply, 'Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my heavenly Father'" (Matt 16:13-17).
- He promises a final gift to fulfill his final command:
"And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— the Spirit of truth" (John 14:15-17).

"Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age" (Matt 28:19-20).