

COVENANTS SERIES | HOPE CHAPEL

THE ADAMIC COVENANT

Week 1 | God's Redemptive Heart from the Very Beginning
Pastor Andrew Cole | Sunday 1 March 2026 | 9AM Gawler

Big Idea: *The Old Testament is not a collection of disjointed stories — it is a unified narrative of God's redemptive grace, always reaching, always pursuing, always loving.*

About This Series

The Covenants series explores the heart of God towards us through five key covenantal interactions in the Bible. The goal is simple: to help us understand how much God loves us, and to show that the God of the Old Testament is the same God of the New Testament — always reaching, always pursuing, always loving.

This series draws on Sandra Richter's book *The Epic of Eden*, which frames the Old Testament not as disconnected stories but as a single, unified drama of God's redemptive plan. A rescue story from Eden to the New Jerusalem.

Three Locations of the Biblical Story

- Mesopotamia — the land between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers; where the story begins with Adam and Noah
- Egypt — representing major power, slavery, or refuge
- Canaan / Israel / Palestine — the land bridge where Abraham settles; the Promised Land

The Five Covenants — One Unfolding Story

Each covenant adds layers to the same story: promise where there was loss, structure where there was chaos, identity where there was alienation, hope where there was despair.

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| 1 Adamic <i>Adam</i> Identity & partnership | 2 Noahic <i>Noah</i> Cosmic stability | 3 Abrahamic <i>Abraham</i> Land, descendants & blessing | 4 Mosaic <i>Moses</i> God's treasured people | 5 Davidic / New <i>David → Jesus</i> Eternal kingdom & grace |
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All five covenants lead to the climactic fulfilment in the New Covenant through Jesus — which is not an add-on or afterthought, but the goal that God has been building towards since creation itself.

What Is a Covenant?

A covenant is a binding relational vow that creates identity, establishes obligations, and shapes destiny.

Unlike a legal contract (which trades goods or services for payment), a covenant binds two parties into an ongoing relationship — with promises, signs, and often public witness. God uses covenant to reveal who he is, to set the terms of fellowship with his people, and to advance his plan of restoration for a broken world.

What Does 'Redemption' Mean?

Redemption is actually a secular word — it was everyday language in the ancient world. It simply means to buy back or to restore. God deliberately used ordinary, relatable language because he wanted people to understand him. The same is true of the parables of Jesus and the stories throughout the New Testament.

The Adamic Covenant — Genesis 1–3

The first covenant is found in the first three chapters of Genesis. This covenant was not just about rules or condemnation. It was the starting point of God's profound redemptive story for mankind. Even in our brokenness, God's heart beat passionately to restore what was lost.

Genesis 2:15–17 *The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. And the Lord God commanded the man, 'You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die.'*

POINT 1 | The Gift of Identity and Purpose — Made in His Image

Genesis 1:26–27 *Then God said, 'Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness.' So God created mankind in his own image; in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.*

From the very first chapter of the Bible, our identity is planted in being created in the image of God. This is no trivial matter.

Being made in His likeness means we have an inherent dignity and value — a divine purpose that connects us directly to our Creator. We are not accidents. Ephesians calls us a masterpiece. God shaped each of us uniquely and intentionally.

When Sin Entered

Adam and Eve's disobedience brought a rupture in this relationship. The blessing of identity became overshadowed by shame. But even in that moment of failure, God's redemptive plan emerged immediately. He didn't give up on his creation — he actively pursued humanity, desiring to restore the broken image within them.

This is still God's work today. People come to God carrying a broken image of themselves — and God's response is always the same: pursuit, restoration, and love.

Reflect: *How often do we forget our identity in God? How easily do we let shame distort our understanding of who we are? God's redemptive promise is that despite our failures, he still sees us as his children and longs to restore our identity and purpose — even today.*

POINT 2 | The Reality of Consequence — But the Assurance of Compassion

Genesis 3:14–15 *So the Lord God said to the serpent, 'Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock... And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.'*

In the heart of judgment is a profound expression of compassion. God pronounced consequences for sin — but intertwined with that declaration was the very first promise of redemption.

The Proto-Evangelium — The First Good News

The word proto-evangelium means 'the first good news.' This verse in Genesis 3:15 is the first good news ever spoken. At this moment of profound loss, God spoke hope into existence. The 'seed of the woman' foreshadows the coming of Christ, who would ultimately crush the serpent and defeat sin and death.

This reveals that God's heart is not vengeful — it is that of a loving father who desires restoration. He understands that we will face consequences for our choices. But his desire is to redeem those consequences, turning them into opportunities for growth and transformation.

Key truth: *Our struggles and sins do not define our story. Don't run away from God when something goes wrong — run to him. He patiently waits to gather us back into his loving embrace.*

POINT 3 | The Promise of Redemption — A Path Toward Restoration

Genesis 3:21 *The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them.*

Following the fall, God didn't leave Adam and Eve in their shame. He provided clothing — symbolising not only physical covering but spiritual restoration. The garments made from skin implied a sacrifice: a foreshadowing of the ultimate sacrifice that would come in Christ.

God was teaching humanity that he would take their shame upon himself. This act of covering brought relief, protection, and a deep expression of love.

Redemption Is an Ongoing Journey

The Adamic covenant shows us that redemption is not just about a single moment of forgiveness — it is a continuous unfolding of God’s grace in our lives. Grace upon grace upon grace.

God invites us — he doesn’t force us — into a relationship where we are continually transformed into his likeness and restored to our intended purpose. It’s always an invitation.

Conclusion

God’s heart has always been a redemptive one.

A heart that seeks to draw us close, heal our wounds, and ultimately restore us back to our identity.

From the very first pages of the Bible, God was already reaching. He gave us identity in creation, promised redemption in judgment, and covered us in our shame. All of this points forward to Christ, who is the ultimate fulfilment of every covenant.

The story doesn’t end with the Adamic covenant. The Noah Covenant is next — shifting from individual humanity to a universal promise of restoration as God acts to preserve life and establish a new beginning for a world spiralling into chaos.

If this series does anything, let it do this: allow it to grow your love for God. The more we understand his pursuit of us — from the very beginning of time — the more our hearts can’t help but respond.

Going Deeper

Recommended: *The Epic of Eden* by Dr Sandra Richter. A richly readable study of the Old Testament as a unified story of God’s redemptive plan. Also available as a video series. Excellent for personal study, LifeGroup, or alongside this sermon series.

You can also pick up the series summary cards from the display at the back of church — all five covenants are available to take home and study.

Reflection & Discussion Questions

Use these questions personally during the week, or with your LifeGroup.

1. Pastor Andrew said the Old Testament is ‘a unified narrative of God’s redemptive grace’ — not disconnected stories. Does that change how you read the Old Testament? What does it mean for you personally?

2. You were made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26–27). Pastor Andrew said this gives you ‘inherent dignity and value.’ Do you actually feel that about yourself? What gets in the way?

3. Where in your life right now are you carrying shame or a sense of broken identity? How does it change things to know God’s response to brokenness is always pursuit and restoration?

4. The Proto-Evangelium (Genesis 3:15) was the first good news ever spoken — hope spoken directly into the worst moment. Can you think of a time God spoke hope into one of your worst moments?

5. Pastor Andrew said: ‘Don’t run away — run to him.’ Is there an area of your life right now where your instinct is to hide or run? What would it look like to run toward God instead?

6. Redemption is described as an ongoing journey — ‘grace upon grace upon grace.’ How does that land for you? Does it feel like relief, or is it hard to accept?

Key Scriptures This Week

- Genesis 1:26–27 — Made in the image of God
- Genesis 2:15–17 — The original covenant command
- Genesis 3:14–15 — The Proto-Evangelium: the first good news
- Genesis 3:21 — God covers Adam and Eve
- Ephesians 2:10 — You are God’s masterpiece

Coming Up in the Series

- Week 2 — The Noahic Covenant: God’s universal promise of stability
- Week 3 — The Abrahamic Covenant: land, descendants and blessing to all nations
- Week 4 — The Mosaic Covenant: God’s treasured people at Sinai
- Week 5 — The Davidic Covenant: an enduring throne pointing to the Messiah
- Easter — The New Covenant: the climactic fulfilment in Jesus