

# 2021 Spring Summer RCIA #2

4/19/21

# Part I: The Creed (Chapter 1)

## The Purpose of Man's Existence

- Why Am I Here?
- What Must I Do?
- Who Will Tell Me?

# The Nicene Creed

- The first section of the Nicene Creed deals with God the Father:

**I believe in one God,  
the Father almighty**  
maker of heaven and earth  
of all things visible and invisible.

# How in antiquity did man understand God?

- What was among the most important things to primitive man?
  - **Fertility**
- What form of worship did primitive man employ
  - **Polytheism**
- How did primitive man attempt to satisfy his gods?
  - Through **animal** and sometimes human **sacrifices**

# The gods of Egypt

- The Ancient Egyptians had around 8700 gods in total
  - Approximately 64 Egyptian gods played a vital role in Ancient Egyptian life
  - By the mid 400's there was record of over 2000 deities worshipped in Ancient Egypt
  - Almost every village in Egypt had it's own gods
  - Every time a new Pharaoh came into power the whole culture recognized his gods as the best so they were always changing

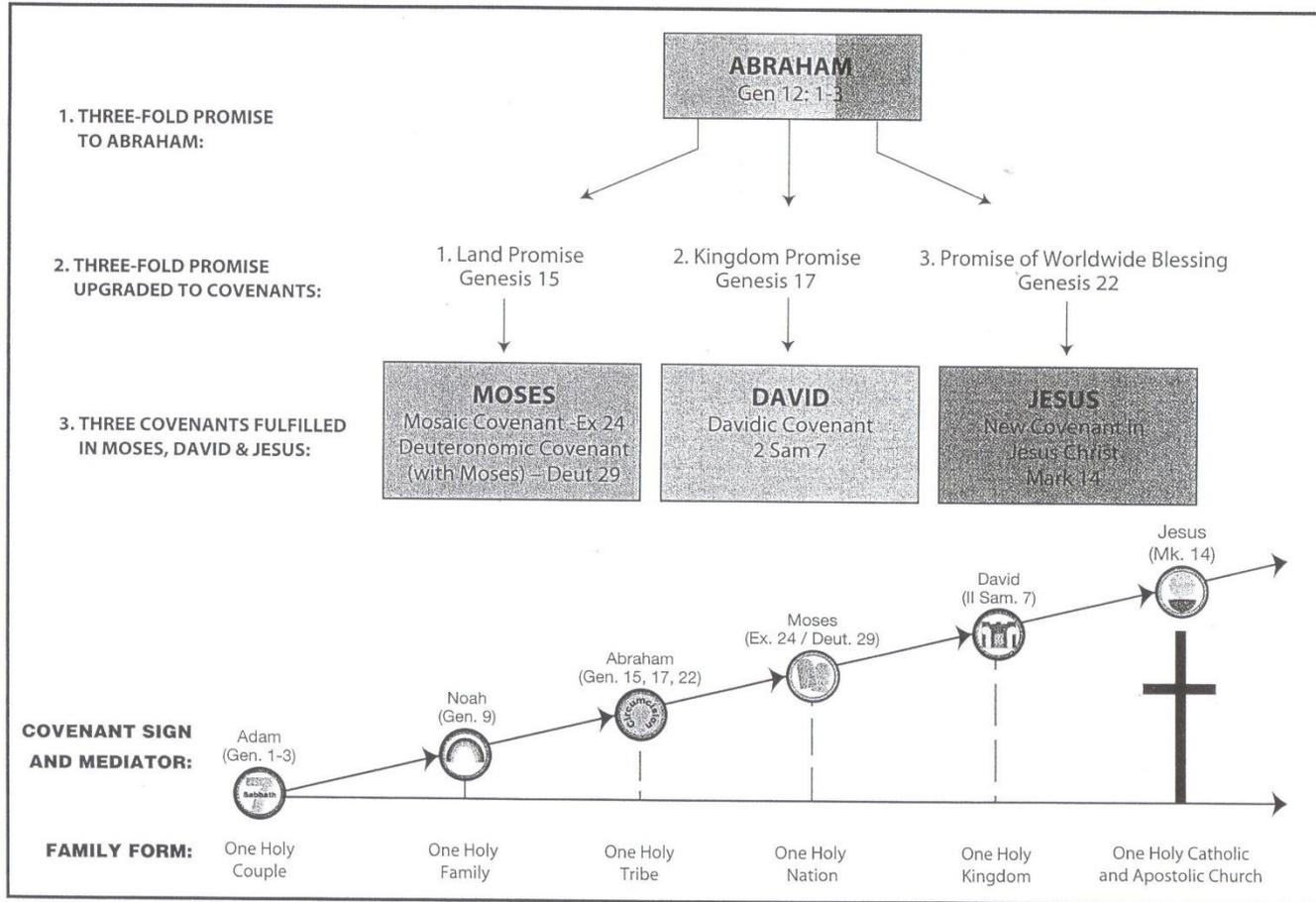
# The God of Israel

- How did the form of worship change with the call of Abraham?
  - **Monotheism**
- How did the people of Israel come to know how to worship God?
  - **The Promises to Abraham**
    - Land
    - Descendants
    - Blessing and Redemption
  - **The Law given to Moses**
  - **The Covenants between the God of Israel and His people**

# 1<sup>st</sup> Century Worldview (Cont)

- Covenants
  - **Abraham** - Circumcision
  - **Moses** - The LAW
  - **David** - The Kingdom
  - **Jesus** – The Kingdom of God
    - One Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church

# Covenantal Structure of Salvation History



# What was the Law?

- The first five books of the Bible (Torah, Pentateuch, the Law )
- It contained:
  - The 10 Commandments
  - 613 Commandments (Laws) in the Old Testament
    - 248 Positive Commandments
    - 365 Negative Commandments
    - 30 Dietary laws

# The 10 Commandments

- I. I am the Lord thy God. Thou shalt not have strange gods before Me**
- II. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain**
- III. Remember to keep holy the Lord's day**
- IV. Honor thy father and thy mother
- V. Thou shalt not kill
- VI. Thou shalt not commit adultery
- VII. Thou shalt not steal
- VIII. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor
- IX. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife
- X. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods

# The Purpose of Man's Existence

- What is the definition of a person?
  - A being with an intellect and will
- How many kinds of persons exist?
  - God (Trinity) – pure spirit except for the human Jesus
  - Angels – pure spirit
  - Humans – body and spirit

# The Purpose of Man's Existence (Cont)

- **Why Am I Here?**
  - **From God's point of view**
    - To give glory to God and show His goodness
    - To reflect His gift to us of an immortal and spiritual soul
    - To accept His willingness to share His happiness with us

# The Purpose of Man's Existence (Cont)

- **Why am I here?**

- **From our point of view**

- To accept His love even though it is not fully understandable in this life
    - To grow in happiness despite the fact that it cannot be fulfilled in this life
    - To achieve the ultimate end of man – the beatific vision (heaven)

# The Purpose of Man's Existence (Cont)

- **What must I do to attain heaven?**

- Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul and mind; and to love your neighbor as yourself
- Love is:
  - Based on knowledge
  - Decision of the will
  - Self-gift
  - Permanent
  - Open to life
- We are obliged to learn to love God
- We are called to do things for God
- We need to be open to His Supernatural gifts of grace

# The Purpose of Man's Existence (Cont)

- **Who will tell me how to do this?**
  - Jesus who:
    - Calls us to know, love and serve God in this life
    - Was sent to show us the way:
      - Redemption
      - Establish the Church

# The Purpose of Man's Existence (Cont)

- Left the Church under the Holy Spirit to give us the Divine Revelation (the Deposit of Faith)
  - Public Revelation – ended with death of last Apostle
    - Sacred Scriptures
    - Sacred Tradition
  - Private Revelation – we are not bound to accept
- We can also use the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* as source for the Deposit of Faith

# Introduction and Overview (Cont)

- Three parts of Father Trese's book
  - Part I – The Creed
  - Part II – The Commandments
  - Part III – The Sacraments and Prayer

# Part I: The Creed (Chapter 2)

## God and His Perfections

- Who Is God?

# Questions

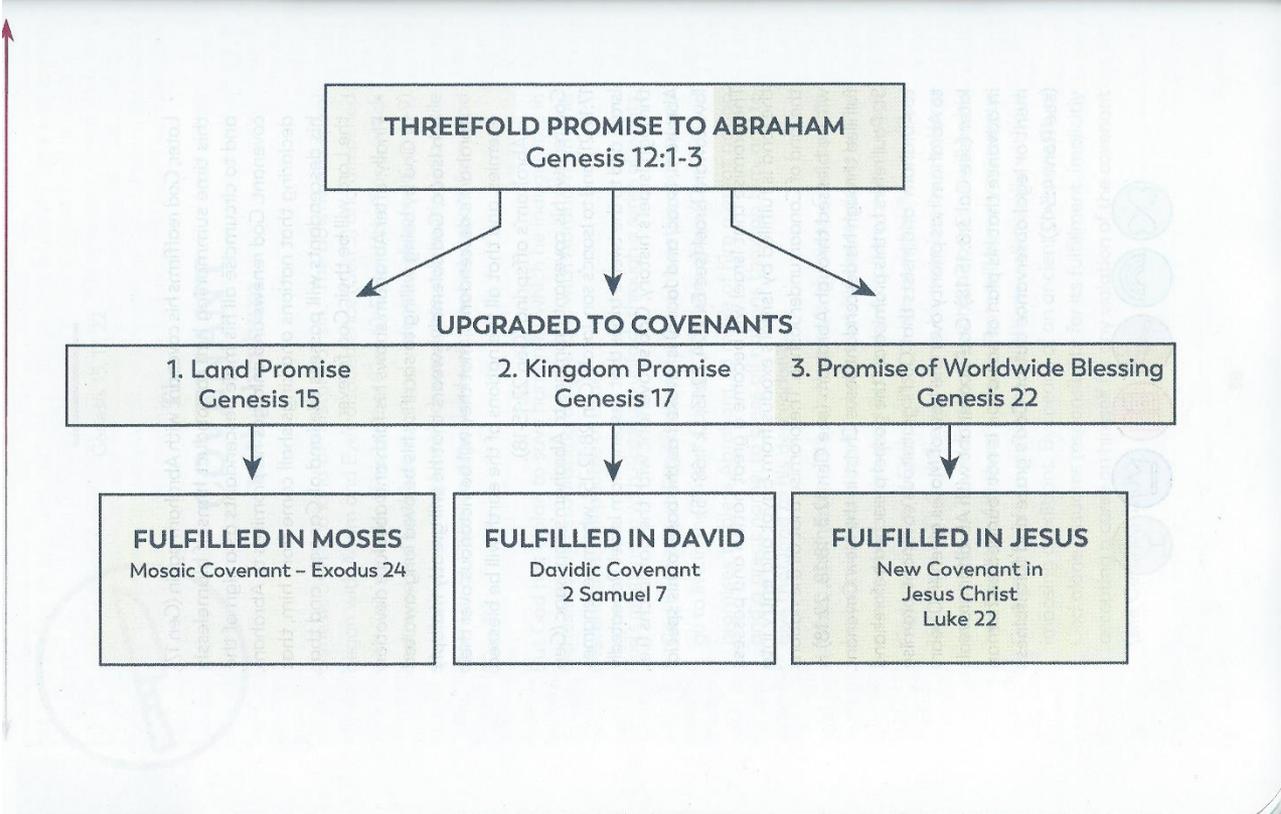
- Is there a God?
  - The fundamental option
    - No
    - Yes
- How would you describe God?
- Can I know God?
  - One way to know God is to look at His creation
  - Another way to know about God is to study His Word (the Revelation)
    - Sacred Scripture
    - Sacred Tradition
- Who can tell me about him?
  - Jesus and His Church

# God and His Perfections (Cont)

- A brief overview of the God of the Old Testament

# What a 1<sup>st</sup> Century Jew would know and believe

- Abraham and the Patriarchs – 2000 – 1700 B.C.
  - Circumcision
  - Three Promises
    - Land
    - Kingdom
    - Worldwide Blessing
- Moses the Law and the Exodus - 1700 – 1280 B.C.
  - Calling of Moses
  - **Yahweh - Name of God**
  - 10 Plagues



# What a 1<sup>st</sup> Century Jew would know and believe (Cont)

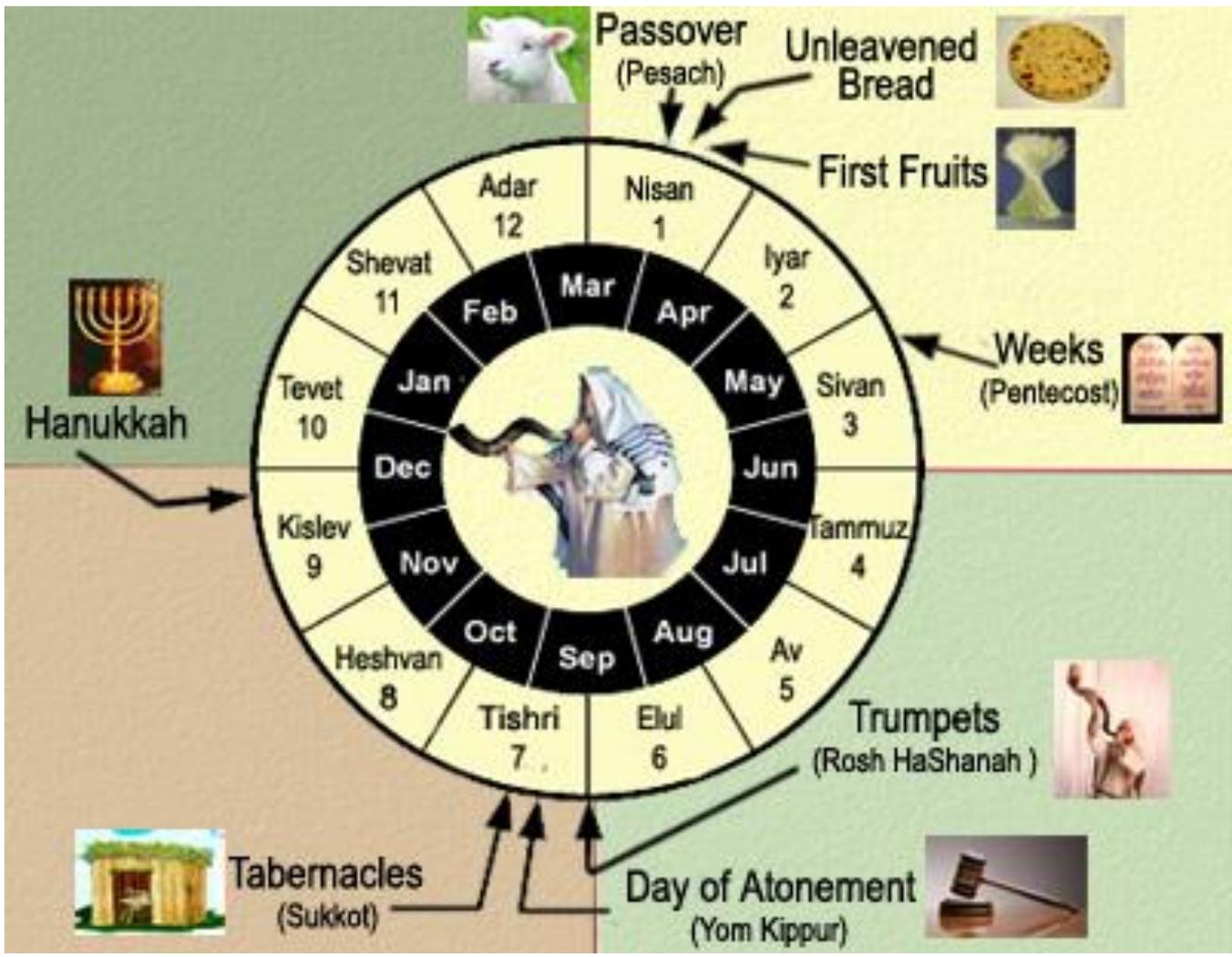
- Exodus to Mt Sinai
  - Water from the Rock
  - **Manna**
  - Quail
- Catechesis given on Mt. Sinai
  - Creation
  - Adam and Eve
  - The Fall
  - Tower of Babel
  - Noah and the Flood

# What a 1<sup>st</sup> Century Jew would know and believe (Cont)

- The Torah – (The Law)
  - **10 Commandments (613 rules)**
  - **Three annual feasts**
    - Passover
    - Pentecost
    - Booths
  - Two other feasts
    - Hanukkah
    - Yom Kippur

# What a 1<sup>st</sup> Century Jew would know and believe (Cont)

- Six day work week - Sunday until sunset on Friday
- **Sabbath** – sunset on Friday until sunset on Saturday
  - **Sacrifices**
  - **The Tabernacle**
- Golden Calf Incident
- Reconnoitering of Promised Land



# What a 1<sup>st</sup> Century Jew would know and believe (Cont)

- Desert Wandering – 1280 – 1240 B.C.
- Conquest and Judges – 1240 – 1050 B.C.
- Royal Kingdom – 1050 – 930 B.C.
  - Saul/David/Solomon
  - **Psalms (150)**
- Divided Kingdom – 930 – 722 B.C.
  - 20 Kings of Israel
  - 20 Kings of Judah
    - **Prophets**
    - Assyrian assimilation – 722 B.C.
- Exile – 587 – 538 B.C.
  - Babylon captivity - 587
    - Nebuchadnezzar's dream - statue
    - Daniel's dream – 4 beasts
- Return – 538 – 167 B.C.

# What a 1<sup>st</sup> Century Jew would know and believe (Cont)

- Dynasties
  - Babylonian - 586-338 B.C.
  - Medo-Persian – 338-322 B.C.
  - Greek – 322-63 B.C.
    - Maccabean Revolt – 167 – 0 B.C.
  - Roman – 63 B.C.-330 A.D.

# What a 1<sup>st</sup> Century Jew would know and believe (Cont)

- Jewish Covenants with Yahweh
  - Adam – 7<sup>th</sup> day
  - Noah - rainbow
  - Abraham – circumcision
  - Moses – the Law
  - David - throne
- Final and New Covenant
  - Jesus - Eucharist

# Covenantal Structure of Salvation History

1. THREE-FOLD PROMISE TO ABRAHAM:

2. THREE-FOLD PROMISE UPGRADED TO COVENANTS:

3. THREE COVENANTS FULFILLED IN MOSES, DAVID & JESUS:

**ABRAHAM**  
Gen 12: 1-3

1. Land Promise  
Genesis 15

2. Kingdom Promise  
Genesis 17

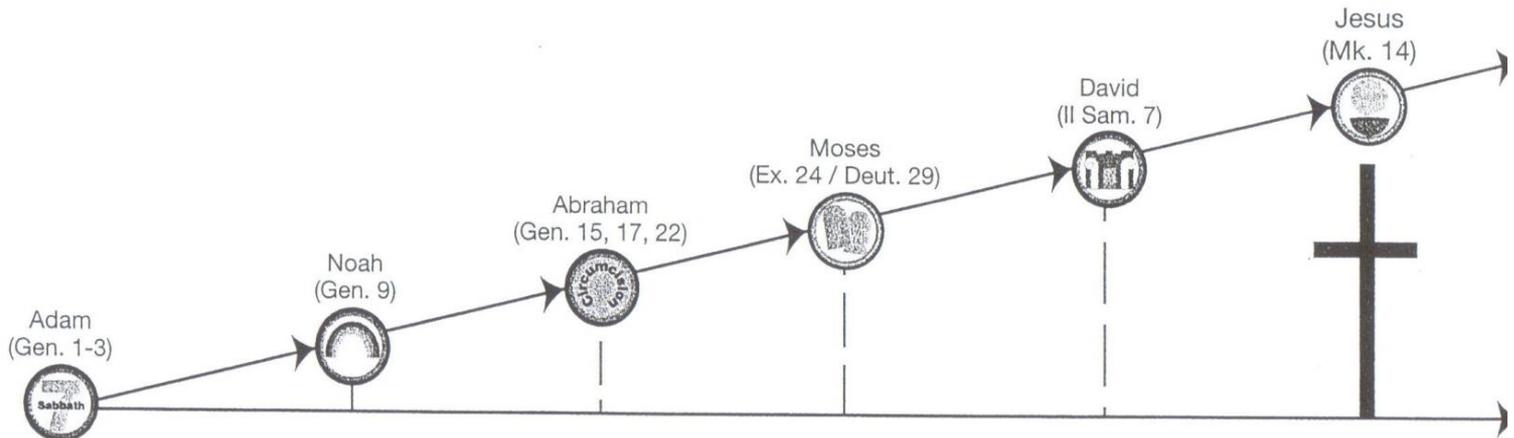
3. Promise of Worldwide Blessing  
Genesis 22

**MOSES**  
Mosaic Covenant - Ex 24  
Deuteronomic Covenant  
(with Moses) - Deut 29

**DAVID**  
Davidic Covenant  
2 Sam 7

**JESUS**  
New Covenant in  
Jesus Christ  
Mark 14

COVENANT SIGN  
AND MEDIATOR:



FAMILY FORM:

One Holy  
Couple

One Holy  
Family

One Holy  
Tribe

One Holy  
Nation

One Holy  
Kingdom

One Holy Catholic  
and Apostolic Church

# What was the 1<sup>st</sup> Century Jew waiting for?

- The arrival of the Messiah
- The return of the Ark of the Covenant
- The return of the Glory Cloud to the Temple?

# God and His Perfections

- What is unique to the God of Israel
  - Monotheism – “one God” as affirmed by Jesus
  - He has reveals His name to Moses
    - The burning bush
    - YAHWEH – “I am who am” (Ex 3:13-15) a perpetual mystery beyond words
    - He who is - is truth and love and always faithful to His people
    - This leads us to turn to him as our first origin and ultimate goal

# God and His Perfections

- **Who is God?**

- A being whom we can reason to by looking at His creation
  - St. Thomas Aquinas – 1225-1274 AD
  - 5 proofs for the existence of God
    - **Change or Motion** - Everything in the process of change is being changed by something else
    - **Cause and effect** – There must be an efficient cause to begin the process
    - **Necessary Being** – Since beings cannot exist alone there must be at least one necessary being
    - **Goodness, truth, nobility** – The degrees of these must come from one perfect likeness
    - **Goal directed (Final causality)** – Everything in nature is directed toward its goal

# God and His Perfections (Cont)

- The *Catechism* (CCC 214-221) says that God, “He Who Is,” is:
  - Truth
  - Love
- What are some of the attributes of God, and how do we come to understand these attributes?
  - We determine what He would **Not** be like

# God and His Perfections (Cont)

- God's Divine Attributes include:
  - **Oneness** – He exists and there is only one God
  - **Truth** – His words cannot deceive or be deceived
  - **Life** – He is alive, a pure being, a living God
  - **Omnipotence** – He is almighty (in creed)
  - **Eternal** – Divine being without beginning or end

# God and His Perfections (Cont)

- **Immensity** – He is beyond all special dimensions
- **Incomprehensibility** – His presence cannot be limited
- **Infinity** – He is without limitations of any kind
- **Simplicity** – He has no parts or components
- **Immutability** – He cannot change

# Transition

- For next week's discussion please read: **Chapter 3: The Unity and Trinity of God, and Chapter 4 - Creation and the Angels**