**Master plan #2**

**Paradise Lost**

Quick recap of last time

Gen 3 explains why the world is as it is today, explain what went wrong and the effects of it. Then Chaps 4-11, which we’ll look at next, show how the effects began to work their way out in the infant world.

Remember last time everything was good and rosy –

Just one prohibition, and the consequences were pretty clearly laid out – ‘the day you eat you will die’ Well Gen 3 records for us that Adam and Eve just couldn’t resist.

They fell for the Serpent’s weasel words with the result that paradise was lost.

1. **What was Satan method?** Double pronged – He created doubt and appealed to her pride

3.1 – ‘Did God really say …?’

* Note i) the question – ‘did he?’. Just enough to make her question. Seems like a pretty innocent question, but it got her thinking and wondering
* Note ii) the overstatement ‘Any tree?’ Of course he hadn’t, but Satan is sowing the seeds of doubt and rebellion.
* Eve’s response is good to start with; she didn’t really need to think about it, and she corrects him - there was no doubt that God hadn’t forbidden any tree, just the one. But in even responding to him she made a critical mistake – she started to discuss with him.

It’s a dangerous thing to start a discussion with the devil! He’s the arch deceiver and liar. Don’t entertain him, just walk away, do something different, distract yourself. You say *‘But how can I talk to Satan?’* When you even start to think about temptation, when you start to wonder whether to …. or not you have started a thought process which will only go one way.

Instead Be like Jesus who when tempted just said ‘Get behind me Satan’. Nip it in the bud. Give him even one second and he’ll start to play on your desires and it will end badly! James 1 says that *‘Temptation comes from our own desires, which entice us and drag us away. These desires give birth to sinful actions. And when sin is allowed to grow, it gives birth to death*.’

For Eve her conversation with Satan was only ever going to end badly. Without realising it, in all innocence probably she adds something to God’s original command - he’d said ‘*Don’t eat’* She said *‘Don’t touch or eat’.* Without realising it she’s made the command more restrictive than it was!

This is exactly what Satan wants - *He always makes God seem harsher than he is.* He always encourages and fosters thoughts that God is a killjoy, that he wants to stop fun and enjoyment, and never contradicts people when they start to misrepresent God and has him saying things he’s never said. For it serves his intention of *appealing to her pride:* ‘*He’s keeping you from real enjoyment, real fun. He wants to keep you blind, trapped, restricted’*. He’s appealing to her pride, her self-interest. It’s still his way – self first, self-interest, self-fulfilment.

Seeing the doubt and uncertainty is there he rams home his advantage and directly contradicts God - ‘*You will not die’*, v4-5.

So this simple, seemingly innocent conversation was all it took! Suddenly the fruit, which before she’d not given a second thought to, took on a certain attraction, starts to look very appetising – **v6**. Now she started to think about the advantages to her, all she would get and enjoy by eating it. Her thought now was not for God but herself and that was all it took! She reached out and touched and took – *the very first person to feel the rush and thrill of taking and tasting forbidden fruit!*

1. **The result was catastrophic.**

Firstly – like Satan had said (v5) their eyes were indeed opened, but what they saw and felt was not what they hoped! Having thrown off the Creator and been introduced to the delights of sin all kinds of things change – for the worse! New dynamics immediately come into play -

1. Their relationship with each other changed for the worse – they become self-conscious, embarrassed - v7 (saw they were naked so fashioned some clothes). The openness they had with each other is gone; the trust they had is broken – they make these clothes to hide behind; they feel the need for privacy - something had changed in their minds! This wasn’t what they’d bargained for!
2. Their relationship with God changed for the worse – v8. Not only do they hide from each other but they hid from God. Not just out of embarrassment but for the first time they experienced this new and uncomfortable feeling of fear (v10). This too was far from the wonderful eye opening Satan had promised
3. The Blame Game started – v12. ‘It was the *woman* you gave me’ – ouch! Not only does he blame the woman, but he blames God for giving her to him! She then blames the serpent – **v13**. Funny how when things go wrong it’s always someone else’s fault – another person or God! Here we see the origins of the classic human response to sin, and the cause of so much trouble – excuses. Everything that’s wrong is always someone else’s fault – it’s the government, it’s the school, it’s my parents, it’s my genes, it’s my wife/husband, it’s Satan! It’s our natural default position – blame someone or something else. We just rationalise sin so as to remove ourselves from responsibility or guilt!

But the Bible doesn’t allow us to do that! Sure, Eve was Tempted – but she didn’t have to do it! Sure, Adam was tempted – but he didn’t have to do it, it was their choice! Sure we get tempted, but we don’t have to do it! The buck stops with us, with me. I can’t blame Adam, Eve or Satan – my sin is my choice. This is a really important thing in the Bible – personal responsibility.

1. **The Judgement from God was pronounced – v14-24:** We’ve seen some of the consequences, but there were other more specific ones that were specifically part of God’s judgement
   1. Relationships were changed *forever* **– v16.** He confirmed what had already happened and said it would always be that way!Without going into the specifics of that it’s clear that the relationship between men and women, husband and wife was never going to be as good again! Rivalry would be part and parcel of everyday life – not to say it would always be the case, but it would be typical.
   2. Creation was changed – **v17.** The land would now have weeds as well as plants; control of creation would become difficult; ecologically things got out of kilter.
   3. Suffering became part of life **– v16, and 17.** Childbirth would be tough and dangerous and daily living, putting bread on the table would take great effort. The irony is that these two things which we to have been the greatest pleasure and delight now become the source of greatest pain and sorrow.
   4. Death became the only certainty in Life **– v19.** Trouble, effort, work, would mark life until they died! And has it ever really changed! The original intent from God was for mankind to be immortal on earth, but sin brought – as he promised, decline and death.
   5. Separation from God was confirmed – **v22-24.** This was the worse death, death of the special relationship with God, death of the original plan. Being sent from the garden was being sent from God’s presence – separated from him.

Adam had forfeited all he had been promised by God; the partnership, the friendship, the relationship, the privilege of living close to God – all left behind the day he walked out of the garden and went west, out of Eden. And sadly, the decisions and actions of Adam affected not only he and Eve, but everyone of their posterity. The selfish gene, the sin gene was passed on to their children and children’s children – all have been affected by it.

Here is the cause of the problems in the world today. Thankfully though, though this is the end of the beginning it’s not the end of the story. Even in these chapters there are little glimpses of hope. 1) the descendant that would crush Satan’s head, and 2) the barring of access to the tree of life so we are not forever condemned to the consequences of sin. There is hope – as we will see.

We all know what it is to be tempted like A & E! What’s the best answer? it’s to keep focused on Jesus. ‘The Old Rugged Cross’ – ‘A wondrous attraction to me’. That’s the thing! ‘Turn your eyes upon Jesus ….’