

# The Story of the Bible

**ACT 1** – Creation & the Human Calling (Genesis 1-2; Ps. 8:3-8)

**ACT 2** – Human Rebellion & the Fall out (Genesis 3-11)

**ACT 3** – Israel & the Great Commission (Genesis 12 – Malachi 4)

**ACT 4** – Jesus as the Coming King (Matthew, Mark, Luke & John)

**ACT 5** – The Church & the New Humanity (Acts 1 – Rev. 20)

**ACTS 6** – The Coming King & the New Creation (Rev. 21-22, Rom. 8, Eph. 1:10)

## RECAP – ACT 1 – Creation and the Human Calling.

Genesis 1 – God creates and orders a wonderful world out of chaos.

- And sets in it a beautiful garden filled with ...
- Mind-blowing trees, plants all kinds of vegetation and wild life.

What is the purpose of this garden?

- This garden was created as a sacred space, a cosmic temple you could say.
- A place where heaven and earth <sup>[God's space & our Space]</sup> would come together.
- A place FOR God's own dwelling.
- A place where he could take up his rest.
- Meaning a place from where he could rule and reign the universe. <sup>[Psalm 132:14]</sup>

And although the creation was very good (as we see throughout Genesis 1) ...

- It wasn't perfect <sup>[tā-mīm – complete]</sup> as it seems to be **IN-complete**.

In other words, Genesis 1 & 2 doesn't appear to be a Static Work of Art ...

- Like a "picture" on a "canvas" that is just meant to be ...
- Looked at, appreciated and enjoyed ...
- But rather a Project that is Going Somewhere.

So ...

1. What is the project?

2. Where is it supposed to be going?

3. And how will God take it there?

God creates man in his image ...

- And sets him in the garden to image him into the world ...
- And expand the garden ...

So that ...

Habakkuk 2:14<sup>14</sup> ... the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

This was (and is) a priestly task.

In Genesis 2 God then said ...

Genesis 2:16–17<sup>16</sup> “You are **FREE** to eat from **ANY** tree in the garden; <sup>17</sup> 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.”

God says, listen ...

- I have invited you into my loving and generous family.
- In order that you can rule and reign with us ...
- As we embark on this epic adventure ...
- Of expanding the garden with my life-giving splendour all over the world.

But in order for this to work...

- It us going to require for you to trust me.
- In language (that I will unpack later when we get to Acts 4 & 5) ...
- To give me your **believing allegiance**.

Now we come to ...

## **ACT 2: Human Rebellion and the Fall Out**

Genesis 3:1–7<sup>1</sup> Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden?’”

<sup>2</sup> The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, <sup>3</sup> but God did say, ‘You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.’ ”

<sup>4</sup> “You will not certainly die,” the serpent said to the woman. <sup>5</sup> “For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

<sup>6</sup> When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.

<sup>7</sup> Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

<sup>8</sup> Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. <sup>9</sup> But the Lord God called to the man, “Where are you?” <sup>10</sup> He answered, “I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid.”

<sup>11</sup> And he said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?” <sup>12</sup> The man said, “The woman you put here with me— she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.” <sup>13</sup> Then the Lord God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

Traditionally this is called the fall (although the term does not appear in either OT or NT).

- But, for the sake of the unpacking and understanding of our story ...
- I have called it **Human Rebellion and the Fall out**.

This act of disobedience is known as the first sin.

But what is the **Biblical Definition of Sin?**

- The word **Sin = hamartia = Missing the mark**.

So, they missed the mark?

- But what was the mark that was missed?

If you look at the traditional view of the story ...

And you see **Eden/** creation as **perfect** ...

- And you see **God's primary purpose as having a relationship with you.**
- And you see the **Final Destination as Heaven.**

Then what was missed here ...

- Is a "moral standard" that humanity was not able to keep?

Now, what if this "not keeping the moral standard" ...

- Is only "part of the biblical narrative", but not the ULTIMATE NARRATIVE.

What if this "not keeping the moral standard" ...

- Only a part of the truth, but not the Ultimate Truth?

Could the "missing" of the mark ...

- Be something inclusive of "missing God's standard?"
- But, much more important and significant than that ...
- If you look at the Grand Narrative of the Bible?

What if "The mark" that was missed ...

- Was not as much a command that was disobeyed ...
- But rather a **Failure of Believing Allegiance** ...
- That lead to a **Failure of Vocation** ...
- That all **Sprung from Idolatry** ...
- The worship of created things, rather than the creator?

**Let me say it again ...**

What if they mark that was missed was not as much ...

- A command that was not obeyed ...
- But rather a Failure of Believing Allegiance ...
- That lead to a Failure of Vocation ...
- That all Sprung from Idolatry ...
- The worship of created things, rather than the creator?

What was the **Rebellion** and then, the Fall Out?

- Humanity saying, we will NOT trust you or your purpose for our existence ...
- Of imagining you into the world as we partner with you ...
- In your creation project of expanding your garden ...
- With your glory, throughout the world.

We will not give you our Believing Allegiance.

- For we want to live for ourselves and our purposes.
- We want to serve created things rather than the creator.

REBELLION against calling and Rebellion against purpose!

- Have you ever rebelled against God's calling or purpose?

### What is the **Fall Out?**

Genesis 3:15 <sup>15</sup> 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."

Although the "offspring" of the woman will eventually crush the head of the serpent.

- The victory will not be easy.
- And there will be intense conflict between the offspring of the woman ...
- And the offspring of the serpent.

Genesis 3:23–24 <sup>23</sup> So the Lord God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. <sup>24</sup> After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.

Possible cosmic temple and similarities between temple and Eden?

Ejected from the garden and from God's presence ...

- The battle between the children of the serpent ...
- And the children of the woman had begun.

### What was lost due to their rebellion?

1. They lost (or at least distort) their humanity and human calling.
2. They fell under the power of the dark forces evil (Satan) ...
3. They started worshipping created things rather than the creator.
4. They hurt their relationship with God and lost His Presence ...
5. They corrupted their relationship with one another.

But all these things were just part of something greater.

- What was lost was **God's Intent for Creation**.
- Remember, mankind was created for a purpose.
- They were supposed to take God's good creation and complete it.

- By expanding the garden and imaging him into the world.

That is the PRIMARY thing that was not lost.

From there, things start to spiral out of control ...

- We go from rebelling against God's purposes in Genesis 3 ...

Genesis 4:8–9<sup>8</sup> Now Cain said to his brother Abel, "Let's go out to the field." While they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him ...

<sup>9</sup> the LORD said to Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?" "I don't know," he replied. "Am I my brother's keeper?"

So, from rebellion to murder, but hiding it ...

- To one of his descendants (Lamech) saying to his wives Adah and Zillah ...

Genesis 4:23–24<sup>23</sup> "... listen to me; wives of Lamech, [that already sounds concerning] hear my words.

I have killed a man for wounding me, a young man for injuring me.<sup>24</sup> If Cain is avenged seven times, then Lamech seventy-seven times."

So, we go from rebelling against God's purposes ...

- To murder (but hiding it) ...
- To murder and boasting about it.

Then we go into this long list of genealogies in chapter 5, that shows us two things ...

1. The original blessing of being fruitful and multiplying, was indeed being carried out.
2. It shows us that death reigns.

Genesis 5:5–13<sup>5</sup> Altogether, Adam lived a total of 930 years, AND then he died.

After him, his son ... Seth lived a total of 912 years, AND then he died.

After him, his son ... Enosh lived a total of 905 years, AND then he died.

After him, his son Kenan lived a total of 910 years, AND then he died ...

... and then he died ...

... and then he died ...

... and then he died ...

Genesis 6 we have the sons of God marrying the daughters of mankind.

- What exactly went down there, we don't know, but it wasn't good.

Instead of mankind ...

- Bearing God's image, his life, his fruitfulness and beauty into the world.
- They bring death, darkness, destruction and distortion.

Genesis 6:11–12 <sup>11</sup> Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight and was full of violence. <sup>12</sup> God saw how corrupt the earth had become, for all the people on earth had corrupted their ways

...

Genesis 6:5 <sup>5</sup> The Lord saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time.

<sup>6</sup> The Lord regretted that he had made human beings on the earth, and his heart was deeply troubled.

<sup>7</sup> So the Lord said, "I will wipe from the face of the earth the human race I have created — and with them the animals, the birds and the creatures that move along the ground—for I regret that I have made them."

Why does he regret that he has made them ...?

- Because instead of partnering with him ...
- By imagining him into the world, expanding the garden ...
- And bringing life and beauty into it.

They followed their own desires and spread death, violence and corruption.

So, with one act God brings about both judgment and salvation.

- Judgment on all that is evil, corrupt and against his purposes.
- And salvation or rescue for those who are faithful to his purposes.

The author of Genesis consciously draws parallels ...

- Between the new start with Noah and the initial creation of Adam and Eve ...
- Indicating that a fresh era has commenced ...
- That we have something like a new creation after the flood.

We find the following parallels ...

1. Creation out of water and chaos (1:2; 7:11–12, 17–24).
2. Birds, animals, and creeping things are brought in to swarm upon the earth (1:20–21, 24–25; 8:17–19).
3. God establishes days and seasons (1:14–18; 8:22).
4. Animals are commanded to be fruitful and multiply (1:22; 8:17).
5. Repetition of the mandate to be fruitful and multiply (1:28; 9:1, 7).
6. Dominion over the world is reestablished (1:28; 9:2).
7. God provides food for humans (1:29–30; 9:3).
8. Human beings are still in the image of God (1:26–27; 9:6).

All of these features signal that the plan to rescue the human race ...

- From sin and the serpent has not ended.

All of that being said, the salvation of Noah and the new start with his family ...

- Is not a return to paradise?

Sin is still pervasive (6:5; 8:21).

- Noah, like Adam in the garden, also sinned in a garden ...
- By getting drunk from the fruit of the vine (9:21).
- And just as Adam and Eve were ashamed of their nakedness after their sin (3:7),
- So, Noah was shamed by his nakedness (9:21–23).

Ham's dishonouring of his father (9:22–25) demonstrates that ...

- The children of the serpent were not extinguished by the flood ...
- But rather were alive and well.

Things start to spiral out of control once again leading up to Genesis 11

- Where mankind tries to build a tower into the heaven.

What was the deal with the tower?

- In Genesis 3 they not only lost their humanity.
- But they also lost access to sacred space and to God.

It seems like Genesis 11 can be an attempt to recover the presence of God.

Traditionally most people have viewed the building of the stairway ...

- As a way to get up to heaven.

But, that is most likely not the case, as this kind of tower ...

- Is well recognized in the ancient world.

The Babylonians called them **Siggurats ...**

- **These ziggurats were built next to the temple and part of sacred space ...**

They weren't built for the people to go up and have a picnic or look out over the land.

- These towers were designed for God to come down to enter into His temple ...
- Which was right next door, and to receive worship?

So, in their case it seems like the tower could have been built ...

- To facilitate the restoration of the presence of God ...
- The establishment of sacred space on earth.
- It seems like they are trying to get back what was lost in Gen 3.

**Genesis 1-3 and 11 seems to serve as book-ends** for this **section of Genesis**.

- The loss of sacred space and now the attempted recovery of sacred space.

So, what is wrong with that?

- The people's motives.
- They are doing it so that they can make a name for themselves.
- Again, where is the focus?
- Everything is about them, not about God and his purposes.
- Sacred space is supposed to be a place where God's name is glorified ...
- Not theirs.

It is the human pride that says ...

- I don't want to run God's world and the gift of life he has given me, God's way ...
- I want to run God's world and the life he has given me, MY way.

And all of that just escalated to human arrogance and self-idolatry.

Back to our farming analogy

- The owner of the farm invites this couple into his family.
- To share his beautiful and fruitful garden with him.
- And to help him spread it throughout the world.

But they decide to rebel and live for themselves.

- They are not interested in the owner and his plans for the farm.
- They want to live for themselves, make their own rules ...
- And take advantage of the farm in whatever way they can.

Needless to say, the farmer expels them from the land and into the desert.

- Once out in the desert, they continue to spread their corruption and violence.

That is Human Rebellion and the Fall Out