

This is unit 1 of a ten part series 'God's one big plan'. We have looked at God's creation and 'it was very good'. Then, mankind chose to rebel and chose independence, chose to be 'god', and the intimate relationship God with humanity and humanity with God was severed.

- ◆ How important do you think an understanding of the 'Creation and Fall' are to an understanding of how the world is now?
- ◆ Having just experienced mankind's rebellion and thrown Adam and Eve out of the Garden of Eden, if you were God and wanted to put that relationship back together, what would you do next?

### Prayer

For the beauty of the earth, for the beauty of the skies, for the love which from our birth over and around us lies: Christ, our God, to thee we raise this our sacrifice of praise.

Thought to take into the week ahead:-

*Just try to imagine for a moment that you believe that there is no God and that you are just a product of matter plus time plus chance, the spontaneous result of random variation in organisms over millions of years. How would you feel differently about yourself? About other people? About right and wrong? About the future? (Wayne Grudem)*



God Almighty is the Creator of all things. Are there particular things that bring God and the beauty of creation to mind for you personally? Perhaps landscapes, places, pieces of music, the complexity of design of the human body and mind.

Read Genesis 1: 1 to 2: 3

- ◆ Is this passage a story or a factual account, or perhaps both?
- ◆ Why was and why is this account important?
- ◆ Does the Bible account convey any truth?
- ◆ What does it tell us about God and creation?

Most religions have their own creation story, some similar to ours and some not, but we are most often confronted by the secular view which is basically that of a mythical story produced to satisfy the primitive audience of the time. This view is then sometimes reinforced by reference to the “the Big Bang Theory” and the “Theory of Evolution”.

- ◆ Is there some benefit in knowing the general outline of these theories?

These theories are today mainly taught in our schools as if there were established fact with no reference to God. We do need to keep in mind that (at present) the act or process of creation, nor how humans evolved, cannot be scientifically proven. It would require a complete set of Bible studies to compare the various Christian understandings of creation with various current secular theories, so meanwhile we should perhaps, whilst fully respecting the views of others, be content that God may not allow us (or anyone) to find a clear answer before Christ returns.

*The little scientific knowledge that man has achieved through scratching the surface of the problem of how God has carried out his purposes, important though it is, must shrink into infinitesimal proportions when compared with the majesty of what has been revealed in the early chapters of Genesis. (quote Malcolm Jeeves)*

Read Genesis 2: 25 to 3: 24

Like the account of creation, the secular world has no time for this account of the ‘fall of mankind’.

- ◆ Can the account be both a story and yet convey theological truth?

The Hebrew word “adam” normally means “mankind” and in the Old Testament outside of Genesis 3 – 5 is used in this sense and not as “a specific man”. Try reading the above Bible passage substituting “the man” for any occurrences of Adam. Does this alter your perception of the passage?

- ◆ What are the effects of this rebellion upon the relationship between Adam and Eve?
- ◆ What effect on the relationship with God?
- ◆ What were the consequences of Adam and Eve’s action?
- ◆ Are there consequences of Adam and Eve’s action (original sin) today?
- ◆ What has God done to resolve the consequences of original sin?

*We are born homesick – longing for a land and a way of life we have never experienced, but which we know is somewhere, or at least ought to exist. We live in a lifelong culture shock. God designed us to live in a perfect environment – free from disease, with affirming, open, and caring relationships, meaningful work, and a perfect face-to-face relationship with God. But as a result of sin, we live in a far less than ideal world, and we find ourselves aliens here, never entirely at home. As Paul describes (Romans 8:22) ‘groaning in labour pains’. (James C Wilhoit)*