

BEYOND THE BASICS

CHAPTER 1 - GOD'S ORIGINAL PLAN

In the Beginning

Science is about time and space, matter and energy. However, prior to God's creation, neither time, nor space, nor energy existed. It all came into being only when God created it (Genesis 1:1, Psalm 115:15). Our Creator had a reason and a strategy that motivated creation. He desired a family of beings that were like Him so He could live among them and have fellowship with them. Expectant parents awaiting their first child carefully prepare the entire home to sustain, nurture, and care for a new life soon to arrive. God created a nursery for humanity. He brought forth light (Genesis 1:3), and provided day for activity and night for rest (Genesis 1:5). He created the sun and the moon (Genesis 1:14-18), and filled the universe with stars (Psalm 8:3). There are billions of galaxies filled with billions of stars for no other reason than a mobile over a crib (Psalm 19:1). God separated the dry land and the water (Genesis 1:9&10) and covered the land with plant life (Genesis 1:11&12, Genesis 2:9). He caused a mist to rise up from the ground to water the plants. He filled the seas with fish and the sky with birds (Genesis 1:20&21, Genesis 5:19), and then filled the land with all sorts of creatures (Genesis 1:22&24). The Lord planted a garden and made a river to run through it and water the garden. He provided food for His family to eat (Genesis 1:29). Finally, when the nursery was prepared, God created humanity and made them in His own image and likeness (Genesis 1:26) and placed them in the garden. He simply spoke the universe into existence. Though we were created from the dust of the earth like the animals, unlike the animals He formed us with His hands and then breathed His life into us, and made us living souls (Genesis 2:7).

The Planned Relationship

God did not create humanity on a impulse, or for His own entertainment. He had a particular purpose in mind: He wanted a family, children who resembled Himself. That is why we were all made in His image and likeness. He made us triune beings consisting of body, mind, and spirit, capable of free will and of choosing to love. God is love (1 John 4:8). Love is not something God does or God has, it is what He is, His very nature and substance. We are the work of His hands (Isaiah 64:8). Genesis repeatedly tells us that, "God said...", and "It was so." He simply spoke everything into existence. However, He didn't simply speak people into existence. God took the time to form each of us individually with his own hands. When He formed Adam from the dust it wasn't simply piling up some dirt. He took the time to intricately form Him, physically and mentally. Though Adam was created from the earth; our heavenly Father created us within our mother's womb (Jeremiah 1:5). Each and every one of us was specifically custom designed. His desire is to be our protector and provider. We are all God's children (2 Corinthians 6:18). God is a Father who loves and protects his family (Matthew 6:8), and He desires a very large family (Romans 8:29). God does not long for worship from afar; He wants an up close, personal and intimate relationship with us. He desires us to know Him personally, not just know things about Him. God desires that we love Him (Deuteronomy 6:4&5), trust Him (Hebrews 11:6), and come to Him, not only with our needs (Matthew 7:7&8), but also in fellowship (Hebrews 4:16, Psalm 37:4&5). He wants us to know Him both as a loving parent we trust, and also as our all-powerful all-knowing creator (Psalm 46:10). His intent is that we should continue to grow and develop in His image and His likeness so that there is an unmistakable family resemblance.

Our Assigned Tasks

Our Creator is an immortal Spirit Being, and no one can force God to do anything. When He created us in His own image and likeness He gave us free will, a creative capability, and intended that

BEYOND THE BASICS

CHAPTER 1 - GOD'S ORIGINAL PLAN

we should live forever with Him. His desire was that His children should participate in His activities. He told them to tend the garden (Genesis 2:15), and ever since then most people find a peace of mind in gardening. He gave His children dominion over all of His creation (Genesis 1:26) and had them name all other living things (Genesis 2:19). Mankind was to care for all the creatures. Although the peaceful relationship between man and beast has, for the most part, been destroyed, mankind still dominates the animal kingdom, and most beasts in the wild fear man. God told His children to be fruitful, multiply, fill up the earth, and to subdue the earth, not only within the confines of the Garden of Eden, but the whole earth (Genesis 1:28). Of all the activities God has given to humanity, filling the earth seems to be the only one we have succeeded in accomplishing over the centuries. God did not give His children a lot of rules, and He left it to our own God-given creativity to carry out His tasks. There was only one thing forbidden, to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 2:17). Humanity really had a good thing going. A loving parent who was all-powerful, all knowing, and worthy of all trust, provided everything we required for life. At that time it was then truly possible to just exist in the presence of God, and not always have to be doing something. We could just be ourselves, made in our Creator's image, and not be hard-pressed to aspire to haughty worldly goals.

The Failure of Man

Although the law was not yet given, and God did not impose many restrictions on mankind, humanity managed to do the one thing they were told not to do. The forbidden fruit was knowledge of good and evil. Until our ancestors ate of the forbidden fruit they were completely innocent, without any knowledge of evil. If it weren't for the rebellion of Satan there would not have been any evil to even know about (Isaiah 14:12-14, 1 John 3:8). Our first ancestors knew what God had told them, and their fall from grace was due to their disobedience. There is more to it than just disobedience, however. Satan told Eve, "Surely you won't die. God knows you will become like Him" (Genesis 3:1-5). Eve's response demonstrated a lack of faith in God. She not only copied Satan's sin of desiring to be on God's throne, but she also saw that the fruit was good for food, and wanted to satisfy the desires of the flesh (Genesis 3:6). She put self before God. To compound the matter, Adam, who was not tempted by Satan, caved in and disobeyed God simply because Eve offered the fruit to him. Then when confronted by God, Adam blamed God and Eve (Genesis 3:12). When God confronted Eve, she blamed the serpent (Genesis 3:13). We still have a choice to make (Deuteronomy 11:26-28), and we still tend to shift the blame and not take responsibility for our actions. The pattern of behavior was set for humanity for the rest of time (Ephesians 2:3, Psalm 14:3). All sin is disobedience (Matthew 7:21, Romans 2:13). Disobedience is a lack of faith in God, believing we know better or we can do better by ourselves, which goes back to pride, the original sin. Putting self before God, our Creator and Redeemer, is really stupid, but it continues to be the source and root of all our sin. We are all truly carnal sons of Adam and carnal daughters of Eve, and what God desires are spiritual sons and daughters of His own (Romans 8:14-17, 2 Corinthians 6:8), beings in His own likeness and image.

The Cost of Rebellion

The effects of sin appeared immediately. Mankind's innocence was destroyed and Adam and Eve were dreadfully conscious of sin and evil (Genesis 3:7,9-11). Though they were accustomed to walking and talking with God in the cool of the evening, they now concealed themselves in shame (Genesis 3:8). A barrier existed between them and their Creator (Isaiah 59:2). In short order they were thrown out of the garden and the gate was sealed so they could not return (Genesis 3:22-24). They

BEYOND THE BASICS

CHAPTER 1 - GOD'S ORIGINAL PLAN

were now forever isolated from the tree of life. In spite of Satan's assurance that they would surely not die, their actions introduced death into all of God's creation (Romans 5:12-14). Without God, humanity became spiritually dead (Ezekiel 18:4). Their life of ease was replaced with one of hard labor, pain, and suffering (Genesis 3:16-19). Not only was the ground cursed because of them, but also all creation suffered (Jeremiah 12:4), and all creation still groans awaiting redemption when Christ returns (Romans 8:22). Everything Adam and Eve had been given responsibility for suffered with them. They had forfeit their authority over creation and sin abounded (Psalm 14:2&3, Ecclesiastes 7:20, Romans 3:9-12, Romans 3:23). Sin created a catastrophe on a cosmic level.

The Release of the Demonic

When Lucifer was cast out of heaven along with his rebellious angels (Revelation 12:9) he had no power over the earth. However, as soon as Adam and Eve forfeit their authority over creation Satan claimed it. When Jesus was being tempted in the wilderness the devil told Jesus the world was his to give (Matthew 4:8-10) and Jesus did not dispute the claim, only rebuked him. Many people tend to ignore the devil and act as though he either doesn't exist, or they treat him as a harmless prankster. The truth is, he committed the first sin ever (1 John 3:8). He is subtle (Genesis 3:1) and beguiled Eve into sinning (Genesis 3:13). His goal is to kill, steal, and destroy (John 10:10). He is a murderer and destroyer (John 8:44) and travels the earth looking to accuse humanity before God (Job 1:7). His authority on the earth is defined by his titles; prince of the power of the air (Ephesians 2:2); god of this age (2 Corinthians 4:4); king of death (Hebrews 2:14); prince of this world (John 12:31); ruler of darkness (Ephesians 6:12); destroyer (Revelation 9:11); and prince of demons (Matthew 12:24). Adam and Eve probably never recognized the true extent of the destruction due to their sin.