

**The Metanarrative**

Creation—Blessing

From chaos to order

From darkness to light

From unproductive to fruitful

From aimless to *telos* / blessing

From work to rest

Fall—Blessing and Curse Compete

From innocence to shame

From harmony to strife

From fruitful to futile

Israel

Jesus

The Church

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**The View From Below: Life in Eden**

**Genesis 2:9**

The LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

“The prohibition means nothing other than this: Adam, you are who you are because of me, your Creator; so now be what you are. You are a free creature, so now be that. You are free, so be free; you are a creature, so be a creature.” Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Creation and Fall*

**Question:** was humanity created immortal? Was humanity created free?

עֶזֶר כְּנֶגְדּוֹ (ēzer kenegdo)

ezer means help, usually referring to God (Deut. 33:7, Psalm 70:5, Psalm 121:1)

kenegdo—opposite to, corresponding to, equal and adequate to

**Question:** what is the relationship between man and woman at the beginning?

### **Genesis 2:25**

Adam and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.

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## **Act 2: The First Theological Conversation**

### **Genesis 3:1**

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?'"

**Question:** what is the essence of the garden sin?

### **A God Who Questions**

"Where are you?"

"Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?"

"What is this you have done?"

**Question:** are God's emotions real or figures of speech?

### The First Exile: Blessing and Curse

#### Genesis 3:15

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.

#### Romans 16:20

The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.

#### Genesis 3:16

"I will make your pains in childbearing very severe;  
with painful labor you will give birth to children.  
Your desire will be for your husband,  
and he will rule over you."

"The human being no longer regards the other person with love. Instead one person sees the other in terms of their being over against each other; each sees the other as divided from himself or herself." Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Creation and Fall*

**Question:** what relationships are ruptured already at this point?

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### A God Who Chooses

#### Genesis 4: 4-7

The LORD looked with favor on Abel and his offering, but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor. So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast.

Then the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it."

#### Genesis 4:15

Then the LORD put a mark on Cain so that no one who found him would kill him.

**Question:** How do you handle rejection from God?

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### **Blessing and Curse Multiply**

#### **Genesis 4: 26**

Seth also had a son, and he named him Enosh. At that time people began to call on the name of the LORD.

#### **Genesis 6: 1-3**

When human beings began to increase in number on the earth and daughters were born to them, the sons of God saw that the daughters of humans were beautiful, and they married any of them they chose. Then the LORD said, "My Spirit will not contend with humans forever, for they are mortal; their days will be a hundred and twenty years."

The Nephilim were on the earth in those days—and also afterward—when the sons of God went to the daughters of humans and had children by them. They were the heroes of old, men of renown.

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. The LORD regretted that he had made human beings on the earth, and his heart was deeply troubled. 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." But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD.

**Question:** What does God's regret say about His sovereignty, His knowledge?

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### **God Starts Again: Blessing and Covenant**

#### **Genesis 9: 7-17**

As for you, be fruitful and increase in number; multiply on the earth and increase upon it."

Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him: "I now establish my covenant with you and with your descendants after you and with every living creature that was with you—the birds, the livestock and all

the wild animals, all those that came out of the ark with you—every living creature on earth. I establish my covenant with you: Never again will all life be destroyed by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth.”

And God said, “This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all generations to come: I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth. Whenever I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will remember my covenant between me and you and all living creatures of every kind. Never again will the waters become a flood to destroy all life. Whenever the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and all living creatures of every kind on the earth.”

So God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant I have established between me and all life on the earth.”

**Question:** where has the curse gotten us thus far?

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## Nations and Tower

**Question:** why is Israel not named in the Table of Nations?

### Genesis 11:1-5

Now the whole world had one language and a common speech. As people moved eastward, they found a plain in Shinar and settled there.

They said to each other, “Come, let’s make bricks and bake them thoroughly.” They used brick instead of stone, and tar for mortar. Then they said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves; otherwise we will be scattered over the face of the whole earth.”

But the LORD came down to see the city and the tower the people were building.

**Question:** What will God do to turn this story around?