

Paradise Lost

Introduction

In our first two studies we learnt that the world which God created was a good and ordered world, a world perfectly suited to the needs of all living things. In such a world, human beings were well able to fulfil the mandate given to them by God. When we turn to Genesis 3 we encounter a completely different picture. Human beings, designed to live in right relationship with God, each other and their world, are deceived by the craftiness of the Serpent into rebellion against God. In the words of the Apostle Paul “*although they claimed to be wise, they became fools*” (Romans 1vs22). This rebellion has devastating consequences for the human race and for the world. First, rebellion against God’s Word leads to Divine Judgement. Second, it results in darkened understanding and futile thinking. Third, our rebellion leads to confusion within the order which God has set in place. We are to rule the world, but the world no longer co-operates with us. Relationships are strained, work becomes frustrating and the God-given mandate is no longer carried out with joy and due glory to God. Life goes on, but it does so under the shadow of death and is a far cry from the blessed life of rest that God intended for us. In the midst of this brokenness however, God makes a wonderful promise – a promise to reverse the effects of the Fall and to restore rest and blessing to His world. God remains committed to His world even though we have turned our back on Him.

Study Questions

These questions help you to see clearly what the text is saying.

Read: Genesis 3vs1-4vs26; Genesis 8vs13-9vs17; Romans 1vs18-32

- Note:**
- The description of the serpent as *crafty* (literally *wise*).
 - The description of the fruit as “desirable for gaining wisdom”.
 - The description of human nature in Genesis 8vs21
 - The description of humanity as God’s image in Genesis 9vs6
 - The references to wisdom and folly in Romans 1:18-32.
 - The promise in Genesis 3vs15.

Answer the following questions:

1. What kind of wisdom did the woman seek? How did this differ from true wisdom?

2. What consequences resulted from human rebellion? (Look in particular at Genesis 3vs16-19; Genesis 4vs13-16; Romans 1vs18-32)

3. Why was the woman named Eve? What implications does this have?

4. What two groups occur within Genesis 4? What are their distinguishing characteristics?

5. What promise does the LORD make?

6. What is the significance of the covenant with Noah?

Think it Through

1. What conclusions can we draw from the fact that the development of farming, the arts and industry are associated with Cain's line of descent?

2. What hope does humanity have?