

THE STORY
STUDY 1
CHAPTER 1

1. In what ways was life in the original creation different from life as we know it today?

a. Describe life at the original creation?

It was perfect.

God created it and declared it to be "Very good".

There were no weeds, the soil yielded its fruit, it did not have to be wrestled out of the soil.

That has become symbolic for work of all kinds, not just for farmers.

Fellowship with God was natural and easy.

If we take the picture of the lion lying down with the lamb seriously then the "wild animals" were not wild.

If we take the picture of the child playing with the snake seriously then that too is a picture of snakes and danger – or lack there-of – in the original creation.

We had access to the tree of life so physical life would have continued forever.

b. Describe life now.

Sin and sickness and broken relationship with God.

Dangerous animals.

Work results in fatigue.

The process of death - physical - started.

Spiritual death became an immediate reality in that fellowship with God was broken.

2. Why did God create humans in his own image? What does this mean?

a. We see that God had plans for human beings:

He wanted them to rule over the creation.

He wanted them to take over the creator function from him.

We see that God wanted to enjoy relationship with us in a way that he cannot enjoy relationship with the other parts of the creation.

He had special functions for human beings which are not functions allocated to the other parts of creation.

And for us to be able to do these things, for these plans of God to be fulfilled, God needed us to be created in his image.

b. Therefore, from what we read in the creation account, being created in the image of God includes:

That we are rational beings

That we are capable of thought processes

That we are able to reason things out.

That we are able to do more than simply procreate - the animals can also do that.

That we are able to "know" our spouse - in other words, to enjoy intimacy, to love and receive love. From our passage we can deduce that these things are included in what it means to be created in the image of God.

3. What was the root cause of Adam and Eve's sin against God?

Note the process leading to sin:

The devil sowed doubt about what God had actually said

The devil sowed doubt about the goodness of God
He succeeded - the woman responds by adding to the restrictions God placed on them - suggested that God also forbade them from even touching the fruit, thus making God seem like the fun-robber.

The devil then flat out contradicts what God had said - you won't surely die!

He then taps into the real temptation - you will be like God

That then is the root cause of their sin: they wanted to be like God.

And that remains the root cause of all sin from then onwards - we want to be like God.

We want to have the final say in our own lives

We want to determine what we can do, when we can do it etc.

We don't want God to have the final say.

We want to be God.

In fact every time we sin we are acting like God, determining what we can do, and doing it.

4. Why did God put the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the Garden?

God created us with the capacity to love and to be loved.

In other words, he created us with the capacity for relationship.

And he also created us with the freedom to choose relationship, or not.

God put us in a place where we had all we wanted.

But, God wanted us to choose to love him, to choose to be in relationship with him.

So, God gave us a choice.

He declared one tree to be off limits.

I do not believe that the *kind* of tree was important.

It was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, because, when they ate, they would, as the devil suggested, know the difference between good and evil.

I.e., they would have the "knowledge of good and evil".

It was, as I said, a test.

Would they choose to obey?

Or would they yield to the temptation to be like God – acting as the final authority in their own lives.

So, the tree simply functioned as test – it is a nonsense giving us free will, but then never giving us the opportunity to choose how we will exercised it.

5. Why did God bring the flood upon the earth?

We have a record of a sad slide into sin after the man and woman are removed from the Garden.

It shows that spiritual death became an immediate reality with the Fall.

The slide into sin is the inevitable consequence of being spiritually dead.

The flood was the both the punishment of God on sin, as well as creating the opportunity to give us another chance.

6. What does this act of judgement tell us about God?

It speaks of God's holiness as well of his grace.

In his holiness God deals with sin in judgement.

In his grace he finds a way to create another chance – starting again with Noah.