

Intro: In the film adaptation of the Broadway musical, Les Mis, Anne Hathaway gave an award winning performance with the song, “I Dreamed A Dream.” Playing Fantine, a woman who found herself at the bottom of the barrel, she sang a powerful song in the wake of being reduced to prostitution:

“There was a time when men were kind / When their voices were soft / And their words inviting / There was a time when love was blind / And the world was a song / And the song was exciting // There was a time/
Then it all went wrong....

Her song was a song about love gained and then tragically lost, of brokenness and pain and suffering. Her song resonated with so many of us b/c we all have a sense that something is fundamentally wrong with this world.

What I find it interesting that everyone—no matter what they believe—can imagine a better world—a world that doesn’t break bad; a world in which people are always kind and love is always blind; a world in which suffering is non-existent and death itself does not have the last laugh.

“What is wrong with the world?”

I want to invite you to join us today as we listen in to Moses, the leader of the descendants of Abraham, as **he tells them how “it all went wrong.”** And we are going to look at the ancient promise of the Coming One who would not only rekindles the dreams we dream, but will ultimately usher in a New Heavens and a New Earth.

Context: Genesis 1-2 (esp. 2:15-17). God created this world to be his kingdom, and he created humanity to serve as stewards (kings and queens) spreading his kingdom over the face of the earth. So far so good, but then it all went wrong.

3:1 Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden’?”

1. There are a lot of questions that the modern, educated people bring to this text.

- Jesus himself refers to Adam & Eve as historical figures (eg., Mark 10)
- Jesus himself teaches us about the real existence of the evil one (eg., Luke 10:17ff), a fallen angel with the title, “The Accuser” (or the Satan).
 - Rev. 20:2, “And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him....”

2. The trap: plant doubts in her mind regarding the goodness of God. Same is true now.

3:2 And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, 3 but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.”

- Her framing of the original command makes God sound unnecessarily stingy (cf. 2:17).

3:4 But the serpent said to the woman, ‘You will not surely die. 5 For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.’

1. **The temptation:** *God is holding out on you; he's not good and cannot be trusted. Take things into your own hands.*
2. **The issue:** The Creator / creature distinction: God's authority & right to define our lives for us.
3. **The choice:** do we allow God to define our lives, or will we follow our own dictates? Do I believe that I owe my very existence to God, or do I look for life and meaning apart from him?

3:6 So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.

1. **Note:** Adam was right there with her; he should have defended her & fought for what is right. But he was silent. Together they were complicit in their rage against God.
 - Instead of relying on God and his wisdom, or even praying to him, they became autonomous reserving the right to define reality themselves. They took it upon themselves to judge who was right: God or the devil.
2. **Jerry Bridges**, *Transforming Grace*, "Sin, in the final analysis, is rebellion against the sovereign Creator, Ruler, and Judge of the universe. It resists the rightful prerogative of a sovereign Ruler to command obedience from His subjects. It says to an absolutely holy and righteous God that His moral laws, which are a reflection of His own nature, are not worthy of our wholehearted obedience."
3. **RC Sproul**, *The Holiness of God*, "The slightest sin is an act of defiance against cosmic authority. It is a revolutionary act, a rebellious act where we are setting ourselves in opposition to the One to whom we owe everything."

3:7 Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.

1. **The moral fabric** of the universe is **now torn asunder**, and **it all went wrong**. Humanity is breaking bad.
2. **Their nakedness** is now marred with **shame** and **insecurity**. **Their instinct is to hide**.

3:8 And they heard the sound of the Lord walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.

1. **Literally**, "...the rushing wind of the day"; "the day" is the day of reckoning (cf. "Day" or "Day of the Lord" in the rest of Scripture).
2. **We are accountable to God**, and we know it instinctively. **We try to hide from God**.

3:9 But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?" 3:10 And he said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself."

1. **Note the God who searches for us:** It is not that Adam & Eve were especially good at hide & seek.
 - **The question is not a geographical one, but a spiritual one:** "Where are you in relation to me? What has happened that has now caused a break in our relationship?"
2. **"I was afraid...because I was naked...so I hid myself."** A perfect description of our relational strategies in a broken and fallen world. We fear exposure of what we're really like, so we hide.

3:11 He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?”

- **Again, God is prompting a spiritual evaluation.** His kind & searching question should lead us them repentance (cf. Rom. 2:4). **Repentance is an about face, a 180 turn from sin to God.**

3:12 The man said, “The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate.”

3:13 Then the Lord God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

- **Instead of repenting,** they **harden themselves** in **their sin and rebellion**, and **turn on one another.**
- **They vandalize shalom**, the way things are supposed to be.
- **The human race is now the living dead.** We are zombies in comparison to our former glory.

3:14 Then the Lord God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field; on you belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. 15 I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall crush your head, and you shall bruise his heel.”

1. **The “Proto-Gospel”** : God moves in to break the alliance between our first parents and the evil one. Here the promise of a great cosmic battle is foretold that will take place decisively on a day that has come to be known as “Good Friday” when Jesus was tortured and crucified (heel bruised), but dealt the decisive blow to the evil one (crushed his head = a sign of ultimate defeat).
2. **Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil.**
 - **1 John 3:8**, “The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.”
 - **Heb. 2:14**, “...that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil.”
 - **1 Cor. 15:21-26**, “for as by a man came death, by a man has also come the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death.”

**Main Idea: While everything is not the way it’s supposed to be,
God has promised to bring about a new creation through His Son, Jesus Christ.**

1. Intensify your mourning.

- **Mourn over the way things are because they are not the way things are supposed to be**
 - **Fantine:** “I had a dream my life would be / So much different from this hell I’m living / So different now from what it seemed / Now life has killed the dream I dreamed....”
 - **We were never supposed to mourn** with friends over the death of their children. We’re not meant to fear what the doctor has to say about our health tests. We’re not meant to experience the bentness and brokenness of our families, or to see relationships deteriorate because of sin. But then it all went wrong...so mourning—real morning about the way things are, is appropriate.

- **Mourn over the way you are because you too are not the way you are supposed to be too:**
 - **Fantine: I dreamed a dream in time gone by** / when hope was high and life worth living / I dreamed that love would never die / **I dreamed that God would be forgiving.**
 - **Romans 2:4**, "...God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance."
 - **The Good News of the Gospel of Jesus is that God is indeed forgiving**, that his love for us never dies. He offers us real and deep and transformative forgiveness, and **it's all wrapped up in the gift of his Son, Jesus**. So **we don't have to hide**, but can mourn over the way we are—our own brokenness, our own rebellion—and trust that God in Christ is indeed forgiving.

2. Deepen your hope.

- **The Gospel changes everything.** The Gospel of Jesus Christ tells us to keep on dreaming and to keep on hoping—not because we are in denial—but because the Cross & Resurrection changes everything.
 - LOTR, Samwise to Gandalf, "Is everything sad going to come untrue?"
- **Because of the Cross & Resurrection of Jesus, there is redemption for us!**
 - Therefore, we can grieve, but not as those who have no hope (1 Thess. 4:13).
- **Because of the Cross & Resurrection of Jesus, that there is redemption for the cosmos!**
 - NT Wright, *Surprised by Hope*, "The early Christians...believed that God was going to do for the whole cosmos what he had done for Jesus at Easter."

CONCLUSION:

Clarie Cloning & Paul Smith, *Homesick for Eden*, "All of us are homesick for Eden. We yearn to return to a land we've never known. Deep is the need to go back to the garden, a burning so strong, for a place we belong, a place that we know is home."

There will be a New Heaven and a New Earth that will be even better than Eden, and God "will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more" (Rev. 21:4).

Jesus spoke of the "the renewal of all things" (Mt. 19:38) **where everything sad will come untrue**, and **we will be liberated once again to boldly dream dreams** where **hope will once again be high**, and **life-eternal life—will be ours for the living**, where **"no song will be unsung, and no wine untasted."**

Isaiah 25:6-9, "On this mountain the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wine, of rich food full of marrow, of aged wine well refined. And he will swallow up on this mountain the covering that is cast over all peoples, the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death forever; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces, and the reproach of his people he will take away from all the earth, for the Lord has spoken. It will be said on that day, 'Behold, this is our God; we have waited on him, that he might save us. This is the Lord, we have waited for him; let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.'"