

187 The story of King Jesus = the gospel

God made the world as a place in which to dwell – a temple¹ – and God said, “Let us make humans in our own image”; God wanted to live with humans, in love. Adam and Eve were to be God’s ‘eikons’, God’s image-bearers, to look after the world on God’s behalf.²

In order to care for the world properly, we (in Adam and Eve) had to trust that God knows best, but we didn’t quite trust God, and we tried to run things our own way. That distrust led to fear and alienation, so we lost our intimate loving contact and wandered away – but God pursued us.

It started to go seriously wrong with Cain and Abel; nevertheless, God pledged to protect Cain, despite his having murdered Abel! (That doesn’t sound fair, but love trumps ‘fair’.)

Then God saw that Noah could be an eikon, because he trusted God. So when a massive flood was on the way, God said, “Trust me, Noah, you need to build a boat in your backyard!” He did.

But then lack of trust increased **again**.

God saw that Abraham could be an eikon, and said “I want you to go on a massive journey.” God wanted to bring blessing to the whole world through Abraham and his descendants, Israel. They were to be God’s eikons, to show people how to live in love with each other and with God.

Over the centuries, it didn’t go well because we didn’t quite trust God, and thought we had better ways to run things. But God kept sending eikons, such as Moses and the prophets, who were (not perfect but) willing to trust God and, as eikons, to reflect God’s love and God’s intentions for the good of the Israelites – and, through them, for the rest of the world.

It didn’t go well over the centuries, so for four hundred years God went silent – a pregnant pause.

Then the most remarkable thing happened! God loved us so much that they sent **the** Eikon. Jesus showed us how to live, and by his death he defeated evil and brought an end to death.

Some trusted him and saw wonderful things happening. Some who didn’t really trust God and who thought they knew better, killed him – but guess what happened three days later!

Where does that leave us? We have an Eikon to show us how to live, but we have to turn away from thinking we know best – repent and trust Him – then the most amazing thing will happen...

God, the Holy Spirit, will come to live within us, and “You will be my witnesses (eikons) in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

For now, the world is still broken, but one day the Eikon will return. God will be with us. We will help God to rule the world, and he will be our King.

Forever.³

Paul Bev. 13.11.21

¹ *The Lost World of Genesis One*, Ancient Cosmology and the Origins Debate, John Walton

² *The Story of King Jesus* (the gospel of 4–8-year-olds), Ben Irwin (page 1, but unnumbered)

³ *Ibid.* (final page, but unnumbered)