S1E8: Shiny Things That Bite

THE FALL: Humanity Rebels (Gen. 3-11)

Act 1 was creation. Act 2 is the loss of that kingdom, as Adam and Eve rebel against God as king. Gen. 3:1-6 shows how it happens: a conversation at the tree that turns on one question, can God be trusted?

Sin is more than breaking a rule. Behind the disobedience is doubt and distrust, and the attempt to put ourselves in God's place.

Who or what is the serpent?

- Across the whole Bible, this is some supernatural being, Satan or the devil. The text doesn't say so, but it's the most common reading and probably right
- Three views of "serpent": a real snake the devil speaks through; the devil taking snake form; or the Hebrew nachash as "shining," a radiant, attractive heavenly being
    - The third is the most plausible, but the answer doesn't change the chapter. The focus is the creature's character and the view of reality it sets before Adam and Eve

The heart of the temptation (Gen. 3:1-6)

- "Did God really say?" Eve affirms what God said, and the serpent answers: you won't die, you'll be like God
- The real charge: God is holding out on you. He said you have everything you need, but you're missing out, so take it for yourself
- If God can't be fully trusted, who will meet my needs? Either God will, or I will
- So sin is the attempt to put oneself in God's place, defining for myself what is good, true, and right. This is why idolatry is the gravest concern through the rest of the Old Testament
- The story is less about what Adam and Eve did and more about God's character. The whole OT is persuading humanity that God is faithful and good, so we obey because he can be trusted

What is sin, ultimately?

- Disobeying a known law is part of it, but doubt and distrust sit behind it: he won't be enough, won't satisfy, isn't good
- Genesis has one simple rule. The tree is a real tree and a physical object lesson, and the rule underneath is relational: trust me, look to me, depend on me, worship me

    - Lose that one rule and, as Chesterton might put it, a hundred other rules rush in to fill the void. That's why the law and the covenants come later
- We see it in our kids: "Why? Give me a reason!" If I'm the one who judges whether your reason is good enough, I'm the authority. That's the impulse of human sin

A pun with a bite: "naked" and "crafty"

- Both words come from the Hebrew root arum. Adam and Eve are "naked" (Gen. 2:25) and the serpent is "crafty" (3:1)
- Core idea: smooth, open, without guile, so what you see is what you get. In one direction that's innocence. In the other it's the shrewd one who looks innocent while concealing something sinister
- Adam and Eve are rightly arum. The serpent is arum with a twist, shiny and beguiling on the surface
- Gen. 3:6: good for food, pleasing to the eye, desirable for wisdom. Sin offers a claim that looks good and holds rich promise, but it's the opposite
- Like Snow White's shiny red apple, laced with poison. The counterfeit truth gets ingested, and what looked beautiful turned out to be death

Adam and Eve were already everything they needed, but they bought the counterfeit and believed they were their own best option. When we live that way with our families, money, and careers, we trade what's genuinely good for what only appears to be, and it bites.