

Chapter 2

THE MASTER PLAN: FROM EDEN TO THE CROSS

*“Who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to **His own purpose** and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus before time began.”* (2 Tim. 1:9)

*“And we know that all things work together for the good to those who love God, to those who are called according to **His purpose**. For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brothers.”* (Rm. 8:28-29)

*“...and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ;” ... “according to the **eternal purpose** which He accomplished in Christ Jesus.”* (Eph. 3:9, 11)

Calling and Destiny

Each of the above scriptures plainly reveals God has an **eternal purpose** which is His ultimate reason or intention for which all of creation came into existence. This purpose was “set forth” by the Godhead in heaven before time began—the Father being the originator of the plan, the Son the medium in which it was to be completed, and to be executed by the Holy Spirit. This eternal purpose has been a mystery, hidden from the understanding of man, until now, for He “...*having made known the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself.*” (Eph. 1:9)

The revealing of this mystery includes being **saved** (past tense) and a **calling** (present tense), and a **destiny** (future tense), in Christ. (2 Tim. 2:9) This is His master plan—a creative design for “*whosoever will*” respond by faith in Christ Jesus and give himself to the pursuit of His Divine intent or high calling. This **calling** and **destiny** is well beyond the common understanding of “being saved” from hell for heaven—that attaining heaven is the ultimate destiny. This **saving**, however, is all that is required to become aware of and be in a position to respond to God’s calling upon one’s life. This will lead to a new and different walk of life focused upon His ultimate intent. It involves a moral response to God’s grace. The Father seeks and is delighted in such a response for it brings into agreement one’s life and His master plan for that life. It is a plan that includes both function and purpose for participation in His eternal kingdom—a realm that spans not only the heavens but the earth as well.

This master plan is explicitly revealed in scripture. However, what is most grievous in this hour is the seemingly lack of understanding of this mystery by so much of the Church. The pursuit of this goal, that works transformations in the hearts, minds, and lives of believers, appears overshadowed with “religion as usual” with all its rites, rituals, programs, laws and endless activities. Religion! ...that system of “belief” that stands stagnant and is most vulnerable to intellectualism, emotionalism, formality and deception. Our faith, which should be **living** and **transforming**, springing up as a “*fountain of living water*” is being substituted for by religious “*hewn cisterns—broken cisterns that can hold no water.*” (See Jer. 2:13) This is a tragedy of immense proportions being waged upon the Church, falling short of God’s calling.

The source of this deception is obvious. Scriptures reveal, “*whose minds the god of this age has blinded,*” and “*false christs and false prophets arising...so as to deceive, if possible, the very elect.*” (2 Cor. 4:4 and Mt. 24:24) With God’s grace and our awakening may we become wise and “*walk as children of light.*” May our hearts be so apprehended as “*to press towards the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*” (Phil. 3:14) No one pursues this walk alone. Shall we walk together?

A “Model” of the Master Plan

A MODEL OF THE TABERNACLE: An Example. A model is a small replica of something in reality. Little boys play with model cars and airplanes. Little girls play with baby dolls and playhouses. These are a type of model. Beginning in Exodus 25, God instructed Moses to build the Tabernacle, “*According to all that I show you, that is the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings, just so shall you make it.*” (vs. 9) This *pattern* was God’s **model** for the true heavenly tabernacle. It was a physical model for a heavenly reality. And Moses had to be careful to follow that *pattern* precisely, for God commanded, “*just so shall you make it.*”

A friend had recently purchased a model kit of “The Tabernacle” to assemble. (Figure 1) The kit contained all the parts of Moses’ tabernacle including the outer court, the altar of burnt offering, the laver, and of course the Holy Place with its candelabra, table of showbread and incense altar and the Most Holy Place containing the Ark of the Covenant and all the intricate details. This kit was actually a model for the earthly model of the tabernacle.

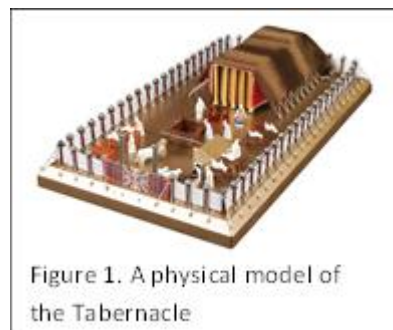


Figure 1. A physical model of the Tabernacle

The kit is a physical model of that Tabernacle with each piece made to a proper scale and assembled in a particular order. The assembly itself is a learning process and its completion something quite interesting to behold. One can gain a comprehensive understanding of its pattern in detail and the relation of all its components. A proper understanding of the Tabernacle opens one’s understanding to many other important Biblical principles. This is the purpose of a model. But not all models are physical models.

MODEL OF THE MASTER PLAN. Like the physical model, a conceptual model is in itself not the reality. This model, however, is designed to represent an aspect of reality such as an idea or concept. It is designed in a way to simplify and give a mental picture of this concept and perhaps the relationship between its different components. When seen in graphic print or recalled to mind, it enables one to visualize the idea or concept in a meaningful and understanding way.

Figure 2 is such a model. It is very simple but quite meaningful. It is general, lacking much detail (which will be filled in at a later time). It perhaps poses many questions which is partly what it is intended to do. Though some particular aspects of the model have been modified for this writing, the basics of the model are adapted and modified from the writings and illustrations in DeVern Fromke’s book, The Ultimate Intention. I chose to use this model for its simplicity, but

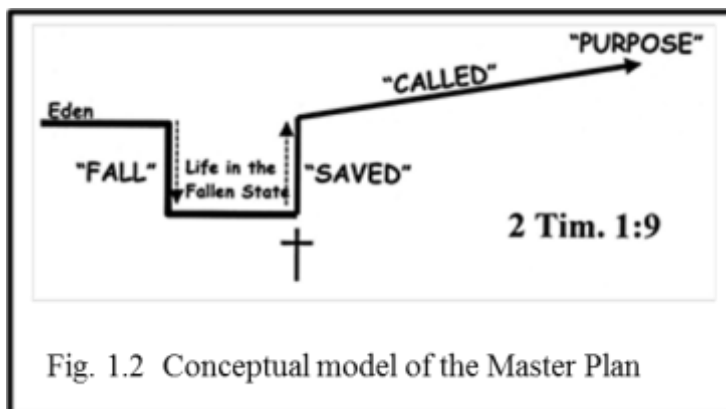
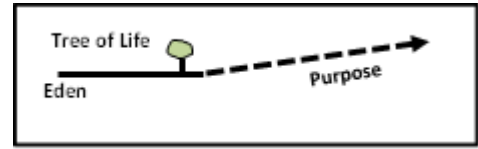


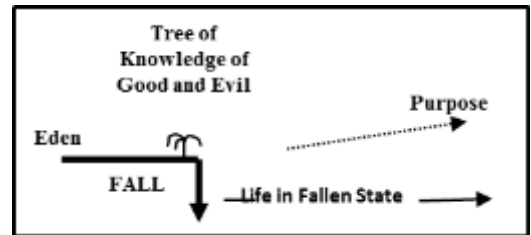
Fig. 1.2 Conceptual model of the Master Plan

meaningful, overview of God’s master plan. **It is intended to establish some foundational concepts.** It is something that has helped me and stayed with me over the years. I trust it will do that for you as well.

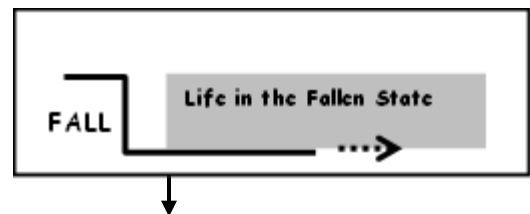
EDEN. The historical flow begins to the left of the diagram following creation with Adam and Eve in the Garden of **Eden**. To the far right is the culmination of all things according to the **eternal purpose** of God. It seems that it was never God’s intent for man to remain “as is” in this blissful Garden Paradise. But it was a beginning. There was something more in God’s purposes for man, something significantly higher. Adam and Eve were given permission to eat of the trees of the Garden, including the **Tree of life**. Eating from this tree would usher them well on their way to God’s ultimate purpose for their lives. (See Illustration) Eating of this tree would be an opening, *a threshold* to the Kingdom of God. All *thresholds* must be crossed to enter in to all that lies beyond and a corresponding leaving behind a past. Eden might have remained a part of their memory but not a part of their destiny. Something greater or higher would lie before them. **It would bring about a perpetual transformation of their lives and very importantly, their relationship to God—from God as their creative Father to God as their born-spiritually Father.** Their function would go well beyond maintenance of the Garden of Eden to eventual participation in the kingdom of God and all that it entails...quite a higher destiny. Adam, Eve and their progeny would not just be on earth, nor just in the realm of heaven, but in a place intended by God from the beginnings of creation—The Kingdom of God, where heaven and earth coincide and His dominion and government is over all.



THE FALL. Most everyone is very familiar with the Genesis account of the **fall** of Adam and Eve from this garden paradise. In the Genesis account, they were forbidden to eat of a single tree, the **Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil**. Eating of this tree would simply magnify themselves—to themselves. They would be ego-centric rather than God-centered. They would become overly “self-minded”...my needs, feelings, desires, ambitions, ingenuity, cunningness, and creativity. Their relationship with God would change. No longer would there be a freedom of approach and interaction with their creative Father. No longer would they be in a state of innocence. There is now an insurmountable barrier between God and man. The sin of Adam and Eve had contaminated them, an infection not only of their souls alone, but transmitted to all their progeny, generation to generation, even unto this day.



LIFE IN THE FALLEN STATE. Beginning with Adam and Eve and extending to this day, mankind’s life, in his severed relationship with God and from His ultimate purpose for man, is in this fallen state of darkness. The apostle Paul, while writing to Ephesian believers in Christ, makes frequent reference to this life in the fallen state. **The following scriptures are most ominous. The believer should read them with eternal gratitude in his heart, and the unbeliever must read with a foreboding concern and fear:**



*“And you He made alive, who were **dead** in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the **sons of disobedience**, among whom also we all once*

*conducted ourselves in the lust of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature **children of wrath**, just as the others.”* (Eph. 2:1-3)

*“...you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the **futility of their mind**, having their **understanding darkened**, being **alienated from the life of God**, because of the ignorance in them, because of the hardness of their heart.”* (Eph. 4:17-18)

*“Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the **wrath of God** comes upon the **sons of disobedience**.... For you were once **darkness**...”* (Eph. 5:6, 8)

These are overwhelmingly most powerful scriptures regarding the condition of mankind in this fallen state. Now separated from that **life** of promise, physical bodies would lose life daily until physical death occurred. It is a life given over to the strength and cunningness of man with hopes that **he** (man) can devise a brighter future for himself. It is a life in darkness, full of plans and fables. It exacts the best man has to offer to provide comfort, protection, prosperity, and hope for himself. Man’s plan includes a government to rule and protect, science to provide for his well-being and pleasure, and psychology and philosophy to help him deal with mental issues, relationships, and belief systems (for god, gods, or godless). But, as anyone can observe, all his efforts fall miserably short. His vain philosophies attempt to bring forth understanding of the reason for his existence and for his destiny. Religions are born out of these vain speculations. This is such a dire state in which Adam and all his progeny, to this day, find themselves.

Man began to look outside of himself for answers and direction. He still looks into the heavens and into the spirit realm for help. He has become a star gazer, astrologer, seer, and “prophet.” He looks into realms he ought not to go, realms clearly further forbidden by God. But, he thinks he knows better than God for he has eaten of the forbidden fruit and is now quite “knowledgeable.” He would do well to look into the Book of Wisdom which is at least a candle in this dark world.

It must also be remembered that the highest of all religions, that of the Jewish faith, with all of the Old Testament and the Law, the feast days, the sacrifices, and the temple, was to function within this state of darkness. As mentioned before, this religious system was/is a model for the true spiritual reality yet to come in Christ. It was designed as a temporary measure so that man might still find some degree of connection to God. But no religion, no amount of sacrifices, no vain attempts could ever deliver man out of this fallen condition. It was all to direct attention to something much higher, something far greater, yet to come. And that something was Christ. After His crucifixion and resurrection, Jesus said to His disciples, *“These are the words I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the prophets and the Psalms **concerning Me**.”* (Luke 24:44) He alone is God’s ordained to deliver man from the bondage of this fallen state.



THE CROSS. The Bible quotes from Ephesians cite the dire condition of mankind: *“dead in trespasses and sin,” “alienated from God,” and “children of wrath.”* Paul writes, *“O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord!”* (Rm. 7:24-25) Think about it, *“this body of death”*—trapped in a condition of progressive corruption of body, soul, and spirit. *“I am”* never able to do that which somewhere in my heart is a hidden longing. Praise God, deliverance has come. The central most quote of the New Testament was made by Jesus, *“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”* (Jn. 3:16) In His love for man, He cherishes and desires the best for his well-being. In *giving* to man, He offered up His Son in the ultimate sacrificial death on the cross. All so man would not *perish* in death and eternal separation.

It is further revealed in all of scriptures the two-fold mystery of the cross. First, of course, is man's **redemption** in which light enters his darkened soul and he becomes alive to God. Please take time to contemplate the following account, which shows that absolutely nothing in or of this world could redeem man, except the coming, dying, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God:

“knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ. For He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you who through Him are believers in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.” (1 Pet. 1:18-21)

“for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring word of God.” (1 Pet. 1:23)

Yes, even as Israel was redeemed by God's grace from slavery in Egypt, and set free to pursue God's destiny for their lives in a new land of promise, so too mankind might now be redeemed from enslavement to this realm of darkness to pursue the destiny God had purposed for him.

Yet, there is a further working of the cross in the life of the believer, a transforming work that brings the life of the believer into harmony with his present **calling**, and future **destiny**. *This work of the cross is clearly revealed in the scripture:*

“But God forbid that I should glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me and I to the world.” (Gal. 6:14)

So much remains to be said of this further work of the cross in the life of the believer, but we must leave it now for another chapter to come. Of utmost importance is the spiritual truth that **saved** man is no longer trapped in this state of darkness but has now crossed the threshold to the pursuing of God's highest intent for him. He has eaten of the **Tree of Life**, who is Christ. This will be discussed next as we pursue a further understanding of our model of God's Master Plan in **Chapter 3, The Master Plan: From the Cross to the Eternal Purpose**.