



## 4

# Sin Spoils God's World

## Scripture

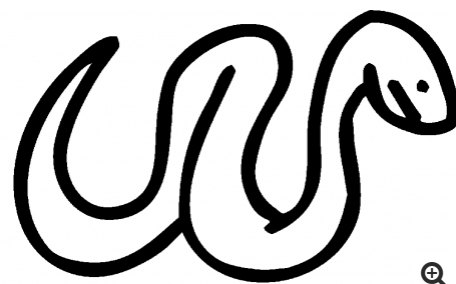
[Genesis 3](#)

## Focus

God's perfect creation was spoiled when Adam and Eve disobeyed.

## Faith Nurture Goals

- Give examples of how sin spoiled creation.
- Tell what God promised Adam and Eve.
- Celebrate our forgiveness in Christ.



## Leader Reflection

### Preparing to Tell God's Story

The seeds of this sad story can be found in chapter 2, where God set some boundaries for Adam and Eve on life in the garden. They were prohibited from eating from a certain tree, mysteriously called "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." Next to it stood the "tree of life," from which they could freely eat.

Why the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil" and why the prohibition? Isn't it a good thing to know good and evil? This prohibition points to the most important aspect of the relationship of human beings with God. We are not God. We do not know everything. Rather, we trust that what God gives us is for our good. God is good, and what God gives us is good.

An odd creature slithers his way into this pristine garden---the serpent. We don't know anything more about the serpent, and he is not designated as Satan here. This story shows us that evil---its origin and its purpose---is very mysterious. The important thing is that the serpent, like Adam and Eve, is another creature.

Note the insinuations the serpent makes about God. He makes the assumption, and passes it on to Adam and Eve, that by prohibiting this one thing, God is holding something back. Instead of just trusting and obeying God, they can be like God, knowing everything like God. Every word the serpent utters seeks to undermine their trust in God's goodness. Finally the fruit just looks too good. They grab it and eat it.

And at that moment the pristine life in God's garden falls apart along with the first recognition of their nakedness. Chapter 2 had made the point that Adam and Eve were naked and not ashamed, but now they felt shame. Nakedness represents transparency and the possibility of evil intent. The big cover-up begins.

Next God saunters into the garden for a daily walk with the beloved couple, and they hide instead of going out to greet him. They are gripped by shame---not only that they have done something wrong, but that \*they\* are wrong. Something has happened to fundamentally change their place in God's world.

God calls them, and they come slinking out of the bushes. It's judgment time. Adam, Eve, and the serpent are all given words of judgment. Their lives will never be the same. Pain, drudgery, domination, and alienation will now take the place of their carefree life in the garden.

But even as the darkness descends on the garden and Adam and Eve are sent far away, "east of Eden," a ray of hope shines through. The first is that in his words of judgment to the serpent, God promises enmity between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent: the serpent will strike the heel of the woman's descendants, but the woman's seed will crush the serpent's head. What might that mean? Then, God looks at Adam and Eve in their hasty cover of fig leaves, and he makes animal skins for them. God covers their naked shame with sturdy clothes as he sends them out of the garden. What might that mean?

This primal story is now called "the Fall." Just as the stories of Genesis 1 and 2 define the glorious possibilities of our life in the world, this story describes what we have become in our sinful rebellion against our creator.

## Steps

### Step 1 Breathe

*Use this time to focus your attention on God.*

**Do this with me: calm your head, heart, and hands as you slowly breathe in . . . and out.** (*Demonstrate a few deep "in and out breaths" with eyes closed.*)

### Step 2 Tell and Wonder

**Files:** [Story Symbols \(full unit\): Year 2 Unit 1](#)

**Let's enter God's story together. Here's the story symbol for the part of God's story that we'll be spending time in today. I wonder what clues it gives us about the story we're about to hear?** (*Show the story symbol. Accept any answers without giving away whether or not the kids have guessed correctly.*)

**Listen closely as we read the story together to see which story our symbol represents.**

*Read "Sin Spoils God's World" aloud, pausing throughout to allow children to answer the wondering questions. NOTE: It's always a good idea to read through the story beforehand so you'll be able to tell it well.*

*You can also read the story from a children's Bible or a simplified translation of Scripture like the New International Reader's Version (NIRV). Remember to pause throughout to allow time to wonder.*

#### Re★formed

Out of this story of the Fall the church has built the doctrine of original sin, which means that we are all born sinners, and as soon as we are able to sin, we will. It's important to border this truth with the doctrine of original goodness, that is, before sin invaded, we were created good, and reflections of that goodness (the image of God) remain in our world and our lives.

## Story: Sin Spoils God's World Genesis 3

Open the Bible to Genesis 3. Tell kids that today's part of God's great story is told in chapter 3 (show them). Tell kids that the chapter starts by telling us something important about this snake. Read Genesis 3:1 aloud.

Then ask, **What does the word "crafty" mean to you? What does that word tell you about the snake?** (Pause for responses.)

Tell your group that for today's story they will need to imagine you are Eve.

Perhaps you remember me. My name is Eve. I lived with my husband, Adam, in the Garden of Eden. Every day we worked together to take care of this beautiful place.

We were so happy there! Of course we were—it was perfect. There was no sin. No lying or cheating or hurting or meanness. Everything was the way God planned it to be. God used to come to the garden to walk and talk with us. Can you imagine what that was like?

**Close your eyes and imagine you are taking a walk with God and talking together.** (Pause.) **Now open your eyes and describe what you think it would be like.** (Pause for responses.)

I have such wonderful memories of those walks. We had nothing to hide from each other or from God. God enjoyed creation. God said several times that it was very good!

You may remember that God told us we could eat the fruit of all the trees, except for one—the one in the middle of the garden. It was called "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." God warned us that we were never, ever to eat from that one tree. "If you eat from this tree," God said, "you will certainly die." This was the only rule God gave us. As long as we obeyed and did not eat its fruit, we would be perfectly happy. And we were!

Then one day I saw a snake near the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Amazingly, the snake spoke to me. "Eve, did God really say that you couldn't eat from any tree in the garden?"

I quickly answered, "Oh, no! That's not true. We may eat from *all* the trees except that one right there—in the middle of the garden." I pointed to it. "God said that if we do eat from it, we will surely die."

**Do you think I was surprised when the snake talked to me? Would you have been?** (Pause for responses.)

**Why do you think the snake was asking about what trees Adam and I could eat from? Remember, he's crafty. What do you think?** (Pause for responses.)

"Ha!" said the snake with a chuckle. "You will not die! God knows that when you eat fruit from that tree you won't die. What will really happen is that you will be like God! You'll be able to decide for yourself what's good and what's evil."

I looked at that tree again—a quick look. Its fruit was big and ripe. It looked so delicious! I could almost taste how sweet and wonderful it would be. Besides, I thought, it would be nice to be as wise as God—knowing everything—even good from evil.

**What do you think? Am I getting into deep trouble? (Pause for responses.) What advice would you give me right now if you were there? (Pause for responses.)**

I reached my hand up toward the tree and picked one of the nicest pieces of fruit. I put it to my lips. Should I take a bite? I knew for sure that I should not! I paused for just a second. Then I put it in my mouth and took a big bite. Oh, it was sooooo good!

Adam was with me. He heard me talking to the serpent and saw me eat. I offered him the fruit and he ate it too.

Suddenly we were ashamed for the first time in our lives! We were ashamed of what we did. We were ashamed that we didn't have any clothes to wear. And for sure we did not want to talk to God after what we had done. So we hid.

While we were hiding behind a giant bush, we tied fig leaves together to make clothes. And there we sat—huddled together behind the bush—afraid and ashamed. The snake's words were lies! All lies! Our perfect world was gone!

Soon we heard a sound we had once loved to hear—the sound of God walking in the garden. God called out, "Adam, where are you?"

Adam was shaking. Timidly he said, "I heard you walking in the garden and I was afraid because I was naked. So I hid."

"Who told you you were naked?" God asked. "Did you eat from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?"

"The woman you put here with me—it was her fault. She gave me some fruit from the tree and I ate it." Adam struggled to get the words out.

God looked right at me. I could tell God was sad. "What have you done?" God asked me. God waited for my answer.

"It was the snake's fault—the snake tricked me!" I said.

God looked at the snake. "Because you have done this wicked thing, you will crawl on your belly in the dust and dirt for the rest of your life," God said.

Then God told us what would happen because we had chosen to disobey. Life would no longer be easy and pleasant for us. We would both have to work very hard from now on. We would have a harder time getting along with one another. And someday we would both die.

And there's more. We had to leave the beautiful Garden of Eden. We could no longer walk and talk with God. God gave us animal skins to wear so we wouldn't be embarrassed or cold, and sent us out. To make sure we didn't sneak back into the garden, God put an angel with a flaming sword to guard the gate.

That is the sad, sad story of how sin spoiled God's world and everything in it—especially the people. But we knew that God still loved us. Do you know why? Because God promised to someday send someone very special to crush the power of evil and sin and take the punishment that we deserved for disobeying God.

**Do you have an idea who that person might be?** *(Pause for responses.)*

## Step **3** Pray

Close with prayer, using the following prayer or your own words:

**Thank you, God, for keeping your promise and sending Jesus to take away my sins, the sins of everyone in this group, and the sins of all the people in the world who love Jesus. We are sorry for our sins. But we are so grateful that because of Jesus we can talk and walk with you again and we look forward to the day when you will fully restore all of your creation. Help us to listen to you and obey you always. Amen.**

See [5 Ways to Pray with Kids](#) for other ways to pray.

## Step **4** Respond

*Select and do one or more of the response activities from God's Big Story card #9 or check out [5 Ways to Retell a Bible Story with Kids](#) for some fun ways to retell this story. Include older kids in the retelling by having them read the story aloud while the younger children act it out.*

*\*God's Big Story cards can be ordered from [FaithAliveResources.org](http://FaithAliveResources.org).*

## Easy Extras

### 1. Praise Maze

**Materials:** Praise Maze cards printable page • wall putty or masking tape

**Files:** [Printable : Praise Maze Cards](#)

*Before the session begins, print out the Praise Maze cards and tape them to the walls, spaced out around the room. Underneath each card, tape a sheet of paper.*

*Invite the group to participate in the Praise Maze. Point out the cards on the walls and explain that the group will go from card to card and do the different activities. As they do, they will be honoring, celebrating, and praising God in different ways. Go to each card and read the instructions aloud. After each one, ask the group if anyone has questions. Give kids colored markers or pencils and invite them to get up and go to the praise stations in any order, like walking through a maze. Tell them if too many people are at one station, they should go to another and then come back.*

*When everyone is finished, go to each station and read what is written there. Thank the group for praising God in this way.*

*If you're leading this session online, move through the Praise Maze cards as a full group, holding each card up and inviting kids to write their responses on their own sheets of paper. (You can omit the instruction to "include your initials by what you wrote" since everyone will be working individually.) When you finish, ask for volunteers to share some of their reflections from your time.*

## 2. Age-Specific Activities

Click below to access the full age-specific *Dwell* session for this story:

- Preschool: [Adam and Eve Disobey](#)
  - Kindergarten-1st Grade: [Adam and Eve Disobey](#)
  - 2nd-3rd Grade: [Sin Spoils God's World](#)
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