

In this week's video lesson, we talked about the wonder of God's creation. Some people don't think of creation as a miracle, but it is. God made everything out of nothing! There was only darkness until God said, "Let there be light," and light came into being by the power of His spoken word.

God created the universe and everything in it in just six days. At the end of each day, God looked at what He had made and saw that it was good. Everything had order and a purpose. God then made man in His own image and put man in charge of the earth and all its creatures. Adam's job was to maintain and care for what God had made.

Adam's first order of business was naming the animals. Can you imagine what that was like? Surrounded by all of God's creatures, Adam gave each one a name. A name helps us to identify a thing and often tells us something about that thing. Naming the animals must have been fun, but Adam did not find a companion or helper among the animals. Man was alone.

God knew that it was not good for man to be alone, so He made a woman, Eve, and brought her to Adam. Now God's creation was complete, and everything was perfect. The man and woman enjoyed a perfect relationship with God and with each other. There were no arguments. There was no nitpicking, no name-calling. They didn't get jealous or frustrated with each other. They simply loved one another and served one another perfectly.

Take a moment to imagine the perfection of paradise. From the radiance of each new sunrise to the chorus of birds singing God's praises, from the blossoming flowers to the trees laden with fra-

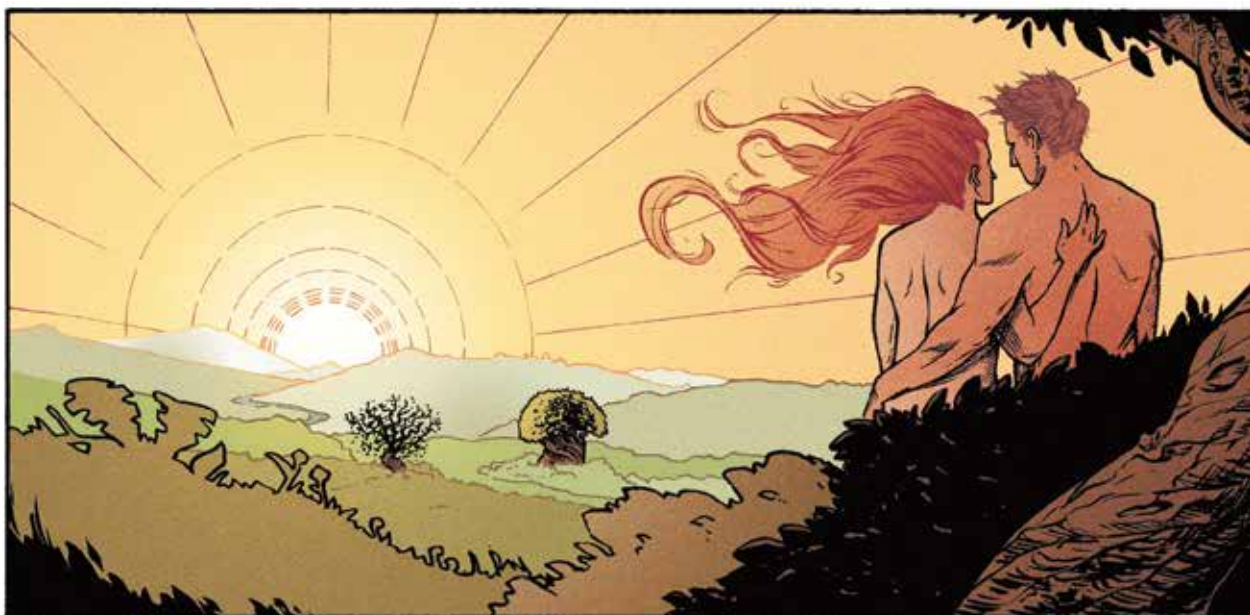


grant fruits, from the lambs and lions frolicking playfully to the bumblebees and butterflies dancing in the garden air—all was in harmony, all in perfection.

Adam and Eve lacked nothing. They didn't want for anything. They had all the beauty, all the food, all of everything anyone could ever desire. They didn't have a care. No worries, no stress.

God gave them fruit and plants for food, and it was plentiful in the garden. There was just one rule. Only one. This rule wasn't confusing or even difficult to obey. God told the man and woman they could eat any of the fruit in the garden—everything except the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which stood in the center of the garden.

Do you see how simple God's command was? He loves us so much and wants only the best for us. He wants us to always trust and obey Him, and so He makes His commands clear and easy to understand.







Enter the crafty serpent. As the man and woman were enjoying another day in paradise, the serpent sauntered over and struck up a conversation with Eve. “Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’” he asked. Eve explained that they could eat from any tree, but they could not eat or even touch the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden, for they would surely die. (Notice that Eve was wrong when she told the serpent that God said not to “touch” the forbidden fruit. This wasn’t true; God only said not to eat it.)

“You will not surely die,” the serpent replied. “God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil” (Genesis 3:1–5).

Oddly, Eve didn’t seem surprised that the serpent spoke to her. We don’t know if this was unusual behavior for a snake in the early days of creation. But Eve certainly should have been alarmed by the fact that one of God’s creatures was contradicting God and questioning His motives. That was reason enough to ignore the serpent and stop talking with it. Instead of ignoring the snake, however, she listened as he crafted his deception with soothing tones and pretty promises.

A new feeling came over Eve. The thought of knowing things and understanding, being wise like God . . . well, it sounded good, even if she had never felt any of these needs before. Now she started thinking she would like to be like God, apparently forgetting that she and Adam had been made in His image.

Peering now at the forbidden tree, she saw the tree was indeed lovely, and she knew its fruit would be delicious and make her wise. So Eve took the fruit and ate it, then she shared it with Adam. Adam could have refused, but he too ate the fruit, choosing his own desire over God and His love and provision.

Immediately, their eyes were opened, and Adam and Eve were overcome with shame, embarrassed by their guilt and their nakedness. Never before had they known anything but peace and perfect fellowship with their Creator. Now when they heard God walking in the garden, they tried to hide from Him among the trees. They were greatly afraid, for they had rebelled against God and disobeyed His one command—the first sin.

God asked, “Where are you?” He didn’t ask because He didn’t know, but rather as a way of saying that Adam and Eve had disobeyed and were not where they should have been—their sin had taken them out of the light, out of a perfect relationship with God.

He called the man and woman out of hiding and confronted them with their sin. This may sound harsh, but it was actually loving of God to call them out about their disobedience. Love desires what is best for the beloved. Love forgives, but it cannot allow or overlook destructive, disobedient, or deceitful behavior.

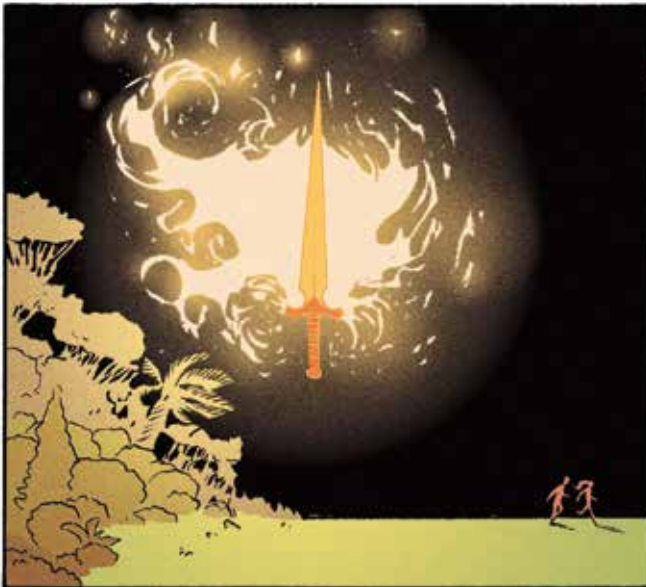


Love has to challenge actions that may seem fun or unimportant but which are actually selfish and prideful. Love says, “I love you enough that I cannot allow you to continue to act this way.” Just as your parents love you, God loved Adam and Eve enough to confront them in their disobedience.

He asked Adam, “Did you eat of the tree I told you not to eat?” Instead of confessing his guilt, Adam shifted the blame to Eve. “She gave me the fruit,” he said. God then turned to Eve and asked, “What have you done?” Instead of answering the question, she pointed to the serpent. “He deceived me.” The man and woman stood there pointing fingers, as they cowered under the fig leaves they had sewn together to hide their nakedness.

Then God pronounced His judgment. The serpent was reduced to crawling on its belly and eating dust, and it would forever be an enemy of the woman and her descendants. All snakes and every generation of mankind would have a basic dislike for one another.

God then turned to the woman. He pronounced that her distinctive role of mother would be marked by painful childbirth. And although she would want to rule over her husband, telling him what to do, she would need to submit to her husband’s authority.



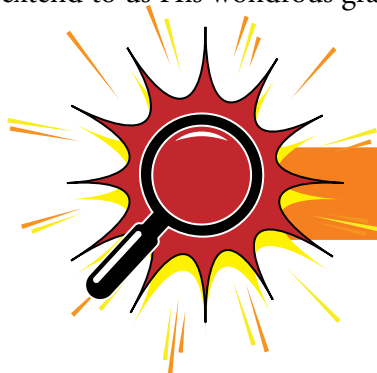
Finally, God spoke to Adam, who had been trusted with caring for God’s creation and maintaining the established order. From now on, Adam’s work would be much harder. Work wasn’t Adam’s curse—he had always worked tending to the garden, but the work had been joyful, even a pleasure. Now God cursed the ground so that it would produce thorns and thistles and Adam would struggle against the elements to grow food for his family. By the sweat of his brow he would toil, weeding and pruning, sowing and reaping—tasks that in the garden had been unnecessary.

God told them that one day they would die, as would their children and grandchildren, and their bodies would return to the dust from which Adam had been made. God made them clothing

from animal skins, then He banished Adam and Eve from the garden of Eden, their perfect home.

This event—the first sin—is what we call the fall of man, or simply the Fall. Because Adam was the first human, his sin would infect all of humanity, and we live with the consequences even today.

We don’t know how much time passed between God’s creation of the world and the Fall. What we do know is that from the very beginning, even before Adam sinned, God had a plan to redeem us. His plan is for our salvation and spiritual growth. We will explore this plan in greater detail, but an important part of His plan is that He invites us—like He invited Adam and Eve—to trust Him and obey Him. When we come to Him, confess our sins, and repent, God chooses to forgive us and extend to us His wondrous grace and mercy.



**PSALM AND PROVERB TO READ:**  
**Psalm 104, Proverbs 1:7**



# 6

## DAYS OF CREATION



Have you ever stood in a large room with no windows and all the lights turned off? How did it feel? Genesis 1:2 tells us that before there was any light, “the earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep.” God’s Spirit was everywhere, but there was nothing else but darkness.

Then God spoke and creation began. On the first day, He created the heavens and the earth. He created light and separated it from the darkness and called them day and night. And He saw that it was good.

On the second day, God created the sky. On the third day, He created dry land and gathered the water into seas. Next, He created the plants and trees and gave them seeds so they could reproduce, making other plants and trees like themselves. And He saw that it was good.

On the fourth day, God created the sun to shine its light on the earth by day, and He made the moon and the stars to shine by night. And He saw that it was good.

On the fifth day, God created all living creatures in the seas and the birds of the air. God blessed all of these creatures and told them to multiply and increase their numbers. And He saw that it was good.

On the sixth day, God created the land animals, big and small, including livestock and wild creatures. And He saw that it was good.

On that same day, God created man from the dust of the earth and breathed life into him. He created a woman from the rib of the man. Then God blessed them and gave them every seed-bearing plant and fruit tree for food, and He gave them authority over every animal on land, in the sea, and in the air.

Then God looked over everything He had made and said that it was very good!

He had completed His creation in six days. He rested on the seventh day and blessed it as a holy day.

What reminds you of God’s act of creation? Is it the sky by day or the moon and stars by night? Is it the rocks and trees? Is it the rivers and the mountains or the desert and the oceans? Or is it the people you meet every day? All of these things should remind you of God’s wonderful creation!



## LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

1. Describe a time when you marveled at God's creation.
2. Identify something in creation that points to God's creative nature.
3. Name something unusual in nature that seems able to "work" only because God made it so. An example might be hummingbirds, giraffes, or other improbable creatures or natural wonders.
4. What is a parental rule you sometimes resent? Describe how it protects you.
5. Why do you think that humans are prone to disobey, especially when they're young? Why is it right that sin separates us from God?



## Made in god's image

When God created Adam and Eve, He made them in His image. The first thing many people think of when they read this in Scripture is that God must have two eyes, two ears, a nose, and a mouth. But being made in the image of God doesn't mean we physically look like Him. God is Spirit. He doesn't have a body that we can see with our eyes.

Being made in the image of God means we are like Him in more important ways. God is morally perfect, and although we aren't perfect, we do know in our hearts the difference between right and wrong. We think about things and make choices, just not in the same way that God does these things. We experience feelings and emotions.

In Scripture, we read of God displaying emotions such as grief (Psalm 78:40) and joy (Zephaniah 3:17). Emotions are an attribute of God, but He doesn't change or react to circumstances like we do.

God is a spiritual being, and every human has a spirit that will exist after his or her earthly body has passed away. We seek out relationships—with God and with each other. Similarly, God is relational, and He exists eternally as three persons in perfect harmony—the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Human beings share these qualities with God. Theologians often call this teaching the *Imago Dei*, which is Latin for "image of God."



# Adam Speaks

Every day, Eve and I rose early to work, happily tending the garden. Every night, we fell asleep beneath a canopy of stars, serenaded by the sounds of a world at peace. Our rest was punctuated by the chirping of a cricket, the hooting of a distant owl, and the low rumble of a lion. Life was good in paradise.

The garden was a botanist's dream in the midst of Dr. Dolittle's zoo. Feathered troubadours greeted us each morning with symphonies that would make Beethoven blush. The sweet nectar of the orchard beckoned us to taste its wondrous fruits. The garden was lush and its rivers clear, revealing a stunning variety of marine life. Flora and fauna bowed as we passed, recognizing us as friends and stewards of God's creation. There was plenty of food and water. Plenty to do. No complaints. It was all good!

But I messed up paradise. I brought death into this world with a single, terrible decision. The Creator had just one restriction in the garden: He singled out a tree and declared its fruit off-limits. He was very clear on this point: Don't eat it! Pretty simple.

But as we passed by that tree each day, we ventured nearer and nearer. Then one day, the serpent crept up and hissed his seductive lies. We listened. We chose to taste the forbidden fruit. We sinned against the God who had given us everything. What fools we were!

Ashamed and afraid, we tried to hide. But nobody can hide from God. Not a chance.

Now all mankind stands outside the garden. We can't go back. Because of our foolish choice, paradise is lost to us.

And yet, even as we were banished from the garden, God made a promise to all men and women out of His infinite love and mercy. He promised a child who one day would be born of woman and crush the serpent's head. This child would then create a new paradise that will forever be open to anyone who received Him.

I know now that I completely misjudged my loving Creator. We thought He was holding something back from us, so we chose not to obey Him, and the world has paid the price. Obedience is serious business with God.

A word to the wise: When you mess up, fess up! Don't blame someone else for your mistake, and don't bother trying to hide from God.





Dear Heavenly Father,

You are the Creator of the universe, the Maker of all things: time, space, matter, and life. You spoke everything into existence. You are the Beginning of all things. You created a perfect world to worship You. Thank You for creating this world, and thank You for creating me and for loving me. Thank You for wanting a relationship with me.

Father, help me. Teach me to focus on You. There are so many distractions, so many temptations that demand my attention and would lead me astray. Don't allow me to miss Your handiwork in my life and in the world around me. As You show us Your wonders, help me to see You clearly.

In Jesus' name. Amen!

