

Take-Away

**Suffering is the result of sin,
but God still cares for us
despite our sin and suffering.**

Bible Background

- The name of the Book of Genesis comes from the Greek word meaning “origin.” The Hebrew name for the book is *Bereshit*, which translates as “in the beginning.”
- In Genesis 3:20, the name Eve means “mother of all living.” She was given her name by Adam after the Fall, when they were expelled from the garden.
- While the forbidden fruit eaten by Adam and Eve is often depicted as an apple, trees with apples are not indigenous to the Middle East. Instead, the fruit was more likely a pomegranate or fig since both are present in the region.
- Traditionally, authorship of the Book of Genesis, along with Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, has been credited to Moses. However, it is more likely that the stories of Genesis were passed down as part of an oral tradition until they were recorded at a later date, likely in the sixth century BC.
- Adam and Eve were banished from the garden of Eden, but they were not abandoned by God. God provided clothing and protection for them.

Session 1:

Expulsion From the Garden

Engage

New Life

The garden of Eden described in Genesis was a paradise. Throughout the Bible, the garden is a shorthand for paradise and what it means to live with God. Growing a garden takes time, but let’s focus today on a miniature garden that will bear quick results.

- Why is the idea of a garden so appealing?
- Why do you think the Bible describes paradise as a garden?
- What would it feel like to be banished from paradise?

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Bible Lessons for Youth

Engage

Fruit-Basket Upset (High Energy)

(10 minutes)

Supplies Needed: index cards or small pieces of paper, tape, pens, a few

pieces of fruit for prizes, a device for playing music

Before the Session: Write the names of various fruits on several index cards or slips of paper (at least one fruit per student you expect). Among the fruits, include an apple, often believed to be the forbidden fruit, as well as a pomegranate, which is more likely to have been the fruit that tempted Eve.

Scripture

Genesis 3:8-24 (Common English Bible)

⁸ During that day's cool evening breeze, they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden; and the man and his wife hid themselves from the LORD God in the middle of the garden's trees. ⁹ The LORD God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?"

¹⁰ The man replied, "I heard your sound in the garden; I was afraid because I was naked, and I hid myself."

¹¹ He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Did you eat from the tree, which I commanded you not to eat?"

¹² The man said, "The woman you gave me, she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate."

¹³ The LORD God said to the woman, "What have you done?!" And the woman said, "The snake tricked me, and I ate."

¹⁴ The LORD God said to the snake, "Because you did this, you are the one cursed

out of all the farm animals,
out of all the wild animals.

On your belly you will crawl,
and dust you will eat
every day of your life.

¹⁵ I will put contempt
between you and the woman,
between your offspring and hers.
They will strike your head,
but you will strike at their
heels."

¹⁶ To the woman he said,
"I will make your pregnancy very
painful;

in pain you will bear children.
You will desire your husband,
but he will rule over you."

¹⁷ To the man he said, "Because
you listened to your wife's voice
and you ate from the tree that I
commanded, 'Don't eat from it,'
cursed is the fertile land because
of you;

in pain you will eat from it
every day of your life.

¹⁸ Weeds and thistles will grow
for you,

even as you eat the field's
plants;

¹⁹ by the sweat of your face you
will eat bread—
until you return to the fertile land,
since from it you were taken;
you are soil,
to the soil you will return."

Key Verse

**The LORD God sent him out
of the garden of Eden to
farm the fertile land from
which he was taken.
He drove out the human.
To the east of the garden of
Eden, he stationed winged
creatures wielding flaming
swords to guard the way
to the tree of life.
—Genesis 3:23-24**

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1. Ask students to sit in a circle and, one at a time, name their favorite fruit, or the fruit they consider the most tempting. Based on this conversation, identify one fruit as the group's favorite. Write the name of this fruit on an index card also.
2. Now, ask teens to stand, remove one chair from the circle, and place a previously prepared index card on each remaining chair. Also include

the card with the group's favorite fruit.

3. Start the music and direct students to move around the circle. When the music stops, if a student sits in the seat with the index card naming the group's favorite fruit, he or she earns one point. The person left without a seat is out of the game.

4. Play several rounds, removing a chair each time. Remind students to keep track of their points.
5. At the end, award a piece of fruit to the student with the most points.

New Life (Low Energy)

(10 minutes)

Supplies Needed: small paper cups, potting soil, newspaper, packet of quick-sprouting seeds such as peas or beans, markers, water source, student books

1. Say: "The garden of Eden described in Genesis was a paradise. Throughout the Bible, the garden is used as shorthand for paradise and what it means to live with God. Growing a large garden can take time, but today we will focus on a miniature garden that will bear quick results."
2. Ask each student to label one or more paper cups with his or her name and fill the cup(s) two-thirds full with soil. Distribute seeds among the students. Ask them to read the information on the seed packets and plant seeds in the cups.
3. After the seeds have been planted, add a small amount of water to each and, if possible, place on a sunny windowsill. Monitor the plants and water them regularly each week during Lent.
4. Now ask teens to respond to the questions in the student journal. Talk about answers as a large group.

Scripture

The Snake Said What?

(8–10 minutes)

Supplies Needed: student books, markers, markerboard or large sheet of paper

1. Call on one volunteer to act as a scribe and another to read aloud the Bible Lesson.

2. Instruct students to say aloud the word *pause* whenever they hear something in the Scripture that would be unexpected if it happened today. They should also say “pause” if they have a question. On a markerboard or large sheet of paper, the scribe will record the word or phrase mentioned whenever the reading is paused.
3. After the Bible Lesson has been read, review the notes written by the scribe. Include the following events if not already included on the chart:
 - Talking snake tricked Eve into eating the fruit;
 - God punished all involved;
 - God banished Adam and Eve from the garden and stationed a guard with a flaming sword to keep them out.
4. Now, allow a few moments for teens to answer the questions in the student book. Talk about answers as a large group.

Focus

Positive/Negative

(8–10 minutes)

Supplies Needed: pens or pencils, student books, markerboard or large sheet of paper, markers

1. Say: “Often, we tell this Bible Lesson as a way to explain what people did wrong, but it can also teach us positive things about how God cares for us and how we should respond to God.”
2. Form groups of two or three each. Challenge each pair or group to come up with three positive lessons from the story (such as “God is . . .” or “We should . . .” and three negative ones (“God is not . . .” or “We should not . . .”). Allow five minutes for groups to work in the student book.
3. Call on each group to report on lessons learned, while a volunteer records them on a markerboard or large sheet of white paper.

Scripture

²⁰ The man named his wife Eve because she is the mother of everyone who lives. ²¹ The LORD God made the man and his wife leather clothes and dressed them. ²² The LORD God said, “The human being has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil.” Now, so he doesn’t stretch out his hand and take

also from the tree of life and eat and live forever, ²³ the LORD God sent him out of the garden of Eden to farm the fertile land from which he was taken. ²⁴ He drove out the human. To the east of the garden of Eden, he stationed winged creatures wielding flaming swords to guard the way to the tree of life.

The Snake Said What?

As the Bible Lesson is read aloud, say “pause” whenever you hear something in the passage that would be unexpected if it happened today. Also, say “pause” if you have a question.

- Looking at everything listed on the chart, what stands out most to you from this story?
- Why do you think it was important to include this detail?

Focus

Positive/Negative

Often, we tell this story as a way to explain what people did wrong, but it also can teach us positive things about how God cares for us and how we should respond to God.

- What are three positive lessons you can learn from this story? (for example, “God is . . .” or “We should . . .”)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

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Bible Lessons for Youth

4. When the list is complete, discuss the most common responses.



OPTIONAL Wesleyan Activity: Think It Through

(7–10 minutes)

Supplies needed: paper, pens or pencils

1. Hand out sheets of paper and pens or pencils. Ask each student to draw a square or diamond that nearly fills the page.
2. Explain that the Wesleyan Quadrilateral is a tool for theological reflection. Its four principles are Scripture, reason, experience, and tradition. Instruct youth to label each of the four sides of their



- What are three negative lessons you can learn? (for example, “God is not . . .” or “We should not . . .”)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Connect

First Memory

- Draw a picture showing your first memory of doing something wrong or getting into trouble.

Practice



Sound of Silence

Close your eyes and reflect on what Adam and Eve may have felt when they left the garden and how it changed their lives.

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drawing with one of the terms.

3. Invite students to use this tool to think about the consequences of disobeying God’s commands:

- What does Scripture tell us about disobeying God’s commands?
- What does reason say will happen if we disobey?

- What does our experience tell us about disobeying?
 - What does the church say about being disobedient?
4. After a few minutes for teens to work, talk about answers together.

Connect

First Memory

(10–12 minutes)

Supplies Needed: markers, colored pencils, crayons, student books, pens or pencils

1. Invite teens to think about a first memory of doing something wrong or getting into trouble, then draw a picture about the incident in the student book. Encourage details as they draw.
2. Say: “We’ve all done something wrong at some point, and likely we’ve all learned a lesson from whatever we did.”
3. Invite students to show their pictures and tell the story behind them if they wish to do so.
4. Now ask the following:
 - What do you think Adam and Eve learned from their experience?
 - What can we learn from Adam and Eve’s punishment?
 - What can we learn about their relationship with God before and after eating the fruit?
 - How do you move forward from suffering and pain?

Practice



Sound of Silence

(5 minutes)

1. Create a quiet, dimly lit space and explain that teens will fast from noise for the next three minutes.
2. Suggest teens take a deep breath, close their eyes, and reflect silently on how Adam and Eve may have felt when leaving the garden and how leaving changed their lives.
3. Close by thanking God for the opportunity to focus on our thoughts and learn from our experiences—our own and others’.

