

LESSON 3

GOD'S PROMISE

Our Promises

You are an important person. What you say matters to other people, to your family and to your friends. If you make a promise to them, this means you “pledge” or “give your word” to do something. Can you think of a promise you made to someone? Put in your own words what a “promise” means to you.

What was the last promise made to you?

Were these promises kept? How do you feel when someone breaks a promise to you? Do you think a promise should be made if it isn't going to be kept?

Grown-ups Make Promises

Each time your Mom writes a check she is promising to pay the grocer with the money in her account in the bank. When we go to the pharmacy, the pharmacist makes a promise, too! He promises to check every prescription he fills because if he makes one mistake someone could become ill. So we count on his promise to be careful. Can you think of other kinds of promises adults make?

God Makes Promises, Too!

God loves us very much. When He created us, He gave us the wonderful earth to enjoy, to care for, to rule. He gave us all our senses. He gave us each other so we would not be lonely. He gave us one more very important gift. Do you know what it is?

God Gave Us Freedom

Because we are free, we make **choices**. We can choose our friends. We can choose to be kind or hateful. We can choose to be helpful. We can choose to be hurtful. We can choose to tell the truth or to lie.

God gave us life. He also gave us **directions** on how to live our life. With our freedom, we can choose to follow those directions or to ignore them.

Our choices can lead us in two different ways. When we trust God, we follow the directions He gave us for a happy life. He is our friend. This choice leads us toward God. When we stop trusting God's love and stop paying any attention to His directions, our choice leads us **away from God**.

Think about the story *Pinocchio*. Pinocchio was a puppet with strings that came alive with a wish.

What was he like before he had "life"? What was he able to do? What couldn't he do?

What was he like after the wish of life was granted? Did he always follow his father's wishes or directions? What kind of choices did he make?

How is our life like Pinocchio?

When We Sin, Things Change

How does sinning change things? Here is an example.

For many years at the zoo, the zoo keeper hired guards. Their job was to protect adults and children from being hurt by the animals. Signs were put up asking people to follow some simple rules important to running a zoo. By following these directions, the zoo keeper was sure the zoo would be a pleasure for the boys and girls who came to enjoy all the special creatures.

But something terrible happened. People, for their own amusement, would give a baby giraffe bubble gum to see what the animal would do. Others would throw a firecracker into a bird's nest full of eggs. Still others would play practical jokes, which resulted in an animal getting seriously hurt. Some animals died.

The zoo keeper could not understand why anyone wanted to hurt the animals. More signs were put up, but the cruelty went on. Some barriers were built to keep people much farther away from the creatures in the zoo. Finally, more guards were hired, but this time their job was to protect the animals from the people!

How things change from the way they were meant to be! Mean, selfish actions by the few people who sinned had an effect on everything. Even the people who were respectful of the zoo's rules now had to stay much farther away from the animals, and they could not enjoy them as much.

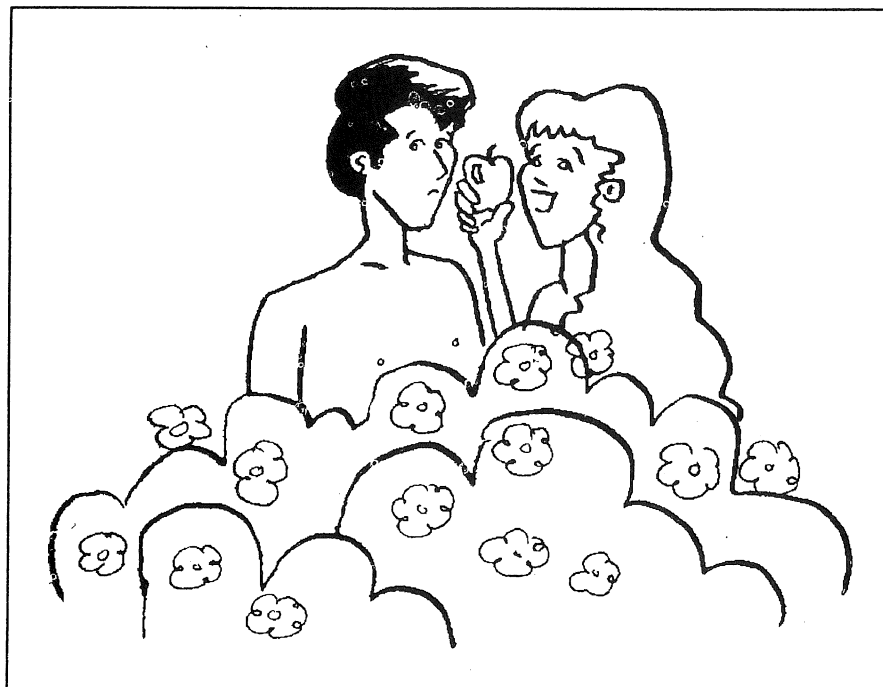
Sin

What does it mean to sin? The word **"sin"** is a Greek word meaning **to miss the mark** or **to miss the target**. When we choose to sin, it is like aiming in the wrong direction.

If We Choose to Sin

Have you ever had a friend who lied to you, or cheated you, or hurt your feelings by making fun of you? Have you ever done these things to a friend?

Choosing to be mean, greedy, unkind or unhelpful is **sinful**. It hurts the way friends feel about each other. Sinning destroys the **trust** between two friends. It is hard to keep a friend when we act like we care only about ourselves.



The Story of Adam and Eve (Genesis 2–3)

God created man and woman out of nothing but His love. He created the whole universe, the earth and everything in it out of love. He wanted Adam (who stands for every man) and Eve to get pleasure from the wonderful world God made. God made Adam and Eve in His image and likeness. This means they were good, and they were free to make their own choices.

However, Adam and Eve used their freedom foolishly. They did not obey the

simple directions God gave them. Still worse, they covered up their foolish choices by lying to God, hoping God would not see their sin. So things changed. Adam and Eve were separated from God, their friend, by their own choice. They made a space in their hearts that did not include God. They filled that space with sin.

Something very sad happened to men and women as a result of sinning. They began to fight with each other. They began to have many false ideas about how to act toward each other. The more room they made for sin in their hearts, the less space there was for the goodness God created them with! As time went on, people became more and more unhappy. They had moved so far away from God that they couldn't find their way back. They were lost.

God Makes a Promise to Help

Not all people chose to move away from God. But God saw that the world badly needed Him. He didn't want to use His power to change things back to the way they were in the Garden, though. If He did, man would be changed into a puppet. God would have to take away the freedom to choose right from wrong.

So, what would God do? **He decided to make a promise.** God said He would send a **Saviour**. The Saviour's job would be to lead man back to God. Man's job would be to follow the Saviour. The choice would belong to every man, woman, and child born of God's love.

In the Old Testament, we read that God spoke through many men. These men, called the lawgivers and the prophets, spoke to a nation of people called the Hebrew people, telling them about God's promise to send the **Saviour**. The prophets told many things about the Saviour, such as where He would be born, how He would be treated, what He would do. The Hebrew people waited and waited. They were still not sure what to expect because they didn't always listen to their prophets. But they knew one thing for sure. God had made a promise to them, and He would keep that promise. It was just a matter of time.

Old Testament

New Testament

Creation	Sin and Fall of Man	Promise of New Life (Abraham. . .)	Prophets and Psalms	Birth of Jesus	Teachings of Jesus	Resurrection of Jesus
	Noah	Moses		Baptism	Last Supper	Pentecost
<div> <div></div> <div>Story of Adam and Eve</div> </div>						

PROMISES ABOUT THE SAVIOUR

Match the sentences below with these Old Testament passages by placing the correct number of the "Promises" next to the readings.

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|-------|-------------------------------|
| _____ | Moses in DEUTERONOMY 18:15-18 |
| _____ | Isaiah 7:14 |
| _____ | Isaiah 9:6-7 |
| _____ | Isaiah 40:11 |
| _____ | Jeremiah 23:5-6 |
| _____ | Micah 5:2 |
| _____ | Malachi 4:5 |

The Promises:

1. That Bethlehem was the place the Saviour would be born.
2. That the coming Messiah would love the people as a shepherd loves and cares for his sheep.
3. God would send a great prophet, and the people were to listen to him.
4. The Messiah would be a prince of peace, and a mighty ruler whose reign would last forever.
5. The Messiah would be a wise and just and righteous king.
6. He would have a name that meant "God is with us."
7. A messenger like Elijah would be sent to prepare the people for the coming of the Messiah.

Note to Parents:

Review this lesson with your child. Discuss concept of promises and Jesus Christ as Saviour. How can you as a family be "Saviours"?