

IN THE BEGINNING...

We find in Genesis, the first book of the Bible, the account of the beginning of the world and the beginning of mankind: the story of creation. Creation is described as being "good" in the sight of God. Life appears to be blissful, peaceful, a place of untarnished beauty, and evidently, untouched by corruption or pain. Mankind was designed in the goodness and likeness of God. He set us apart and gave us authority over that which He had made. God walked with man and man lived within the presence of God, enjoying the bounty of life provided to them in the Garden of Eden.

Reflect: Take a moment to imagine what the world would have been like when God walked amongst us.

SIN AND SEPARATION

As we see in Genesis, mankind was designed to be in meaningful relationship with God, the Creator. However, as a result of sin, man has been separated from God. We, in turn, lost the abundant blessings and life we once walked in within God's faultless creation. Our sinful nature has kept man from living in God's presence. We were created in God's image, with freedoms to think, feel and make choices. God's intention is for us to live in His will; however, it is each person's choice to make the decision to live within or without His presence.

THE FALL

Read: Genesis 3:1-7 to see how sin was able to enter the world through the choices of mankind.

Sin entered the world when Adam and Eve listened to the deceptive words of the serpent. They began to doubt the authority of God and disobeyed God's instructions. In this instant, mankind desired to be as great as God, knowing what was good and evil. As a result, mankind felt distant from God and became aware of the corruptions, pain and evils of the world. We felt ashamed and insecure, and with that, lost our direct line to God. By allowing sin to now rule over man, we no longer had the privilege to have authority over God's creation, and on top of that, traded the life given to us from God, for the consequence of sin, which is death.

WE HAVE ALL FALLEN SHORT

Romans 3:23 "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

The unfortunate result of sin is now mankind are permanently separated from God. This means eternal death. Man can try with all their might to 'do good' in the eyes of God, but time and time again, we continue to fail. Mankind are slaves to sin. We see throughout Old Testament history that animals were sacrificed to atone (compensate or to apologise) for their sins, as the consequence for sin was death.

Man continued to fall short again and again, with God continuing to show grace and patience; yet the hearts of people were unchanged. Humanity was powerless to deal with sin, so God sent a perfect sacrifice to atone for the sins of mankind.

Romans 6:23 "For the wages of sin is death, but the Gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Sin is a part of all of us. There is nothing we can do that will reunite us with God; no good deeds, no rituals, and no work of mankind. The Bible says:

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this is not from yourselves, it is a gift of God- not by works, so that no one can boast." (Ephesians 2:8-9)

GOOD NEWS

The good news is that God has made a way for us to reconcile and reconnect with Him, to wash away our sin, to conquer death and receive eternal life.

John 14:6 "Jesus answered: "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."

Jesus was given as the ultimate sacrifice to take away the sins of the world, so that you and I could be in relationship with God once more. God loved us so much that He would reconcile with mankind by conquering death for us through Jesus.

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life."

Accepting Jesus as the Son of God gives us the opportunity to discover how our lives can be altered through Jesus and how we can have a direct line to God the Father. Now that we have explored the origins of sin, let's now uncover where to find salvation and the redemptive plan of God.

Read and memorise: Romans 3:23 and Romans 6:23