

BIG QUESTION UNDER INVESTIGATION

We're in... Unit 6: God, the Just and Merciful

Unit 6 Big Question and Answer and Song:

"How Did Bad Things Come to God's Good World?"
Bad Things Came Through Sin!"

PFI ESV Songs 6, Tracks 3,4

Unit 6 Bible Verse and Song: Romans 5:12

"Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned."

PFI ESV Songs 6, Track 5

BIBLE TRUTH

We're learning... Bible Truth 2:

God Treated the First Sinners with Justice and Mercy

When Adam and Eve rebelled against God, they received the terrible consequences of their sins, just as God had warned them they would. They had enjoyed a life without sin. Now all that changed. Their hearts used to be full of peace and love. Now they were afraid and selfish. Their work used to be a complete pleasure. Now it became frustrating and unsatisfying, filled with troubles. Their bodies had been full of health and life. Now they grew weak and sick. One day they would die. Worst of all, they used to enjoy wonderful fellowship with God, and now that fellowship was broken. This is what the Bible calls being dead in sin. How Adam and Eve and all God's creation groaned under sin!

Adam and Eve deserved no relief from their punishment, but God treated them better than they deserved. He gave them hope, even that day. He promised them that a son of Eve's would come to defeat Satan and bring salvation.

Who was that son? Jesus, the Son of God! He would live the perfect life that Adam and Eve should have lived, but did not. On the cross, He would offer it up as the perfect payment for the sins of all those who would ever turn from their sins and trust in Him as their Savior. God, Himself, would satisfy His justice so that He could show us mercy!

BIBLE VERSE

How do I know this is true? The Bible tells me so!

Bible Truth 2 Bible Verse: Romans 6:23

"For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

CASE STORY

Genesis 2,3; Ezekiel 47:12; Isaiah 7:14; 9:6; 59:15-16; 65:17-25; Daniel 9:25; John 10:15-18; 11:25; 14:2-3; 1 Corinthians 15:50-54; Rev. 2:7; 20:7ff; 22:1-5

Our story is: The Case of the Happy Homecoming.

As you listen to the story, see if you can figure out: 1. Who was shut out of their home? Why?
2. What was the happy new home? How would they get there?

This story starts back, thousands and thousands of years ago, not long after the creation of the world.

There simply was no going home for Adam and Eve. The mighty, six-winged cherubim and the flaming sword that flashed back and forth across the entrance of the Garden made that very clear! God was sending Adam and Eve away from home. Away from the delicious fruit on the trees that had never been more than an outstretched arm away. Away from the river that watered the plants of the Garden for them. Away from the special presence of God they enjoyed. Away from the Tree of Life, through which God would have rewarded them with eternal life to enjoy Him, each other and all He had created forever. They would have had their children there; and they, too, would have grown up knowing all that perfection, too. As they filled and subdued the earth as God had told them to, the wonderful Garden would have expanded more and more and more until it reached the very ends of the earth. Ah, the home God had made for them! It had been so wonderful!

But it was not their home no longer. Now they were sinners. They had chosen to disobey God and His good ways and it was a choice that cost them dearly. They had to leave behind the Garden and the close fellowship they had with God. Now they would have to fight weeds and hard, dry soil to grow their own food. Now they would have to haul their own water to feed the thirsty plants. Now their bodies would ache, grow old and die. Now they would grumble at each other; they would be greedy and selfish. Now they would be separated from God. Their children would grow up to be just like them. Oh why, oh why, oh why, had they not trusted and obeyed the LORD?! Now Eden was gone forever; and with it, eternal life.

But was it? Actually, it was not. God's love and mercy towards these sinners continued! It wasn't only to satisfy His justice against their sin that the LORD had sent Adam and Eve from the Garden. It was His mercy, too. God was keeping them from the Tree of Life. Eternal life was the reward for those who perfectly obeyed God. To eat from

God was keeping them from the Tree of Life. Eternal life was the reward for those who perfectly obeyed God. To eat from the Tree now as sinners would only bring God's immediate, eternal judgment. The LORD would not let that happen. He had far more glorious plans for His people than that. He would send His Son, Himself, to be their Savior. Jesus would live the perfect life His sinful people were unable to. Then, Jesus would offer His life up as the perfect sacrifice for their sins. To all who would ever turn away from disobeying God and trust in Jesus as their own Savior, He would give the reward of eternal life that He earned with His own perfectly obedient life.

This was amazing, but there was more! At the end of time, God would bring an end to the heavens and earth and would create new ones for His people to enjoy. It would be like Eden again...only a million times better. No sin, sorrow or death would ever come to that new world and it would last forever.

So, yes, it was true. Adam and Eve, nor any other human after them could never go back home to Eden. But they could look forward to a better home that lay ahead. They could trust in the God's promises to send a Savior to crush Satan and pay the wages of their sin. They could look forward in faith for God's gift of eternal life to come.

Many years passed and as they passed, God's people kept looking forward. They kept waiting for the Savior to come. They kept waiting for new heavens and new earth. Oh, how they wanted to go home!

It was hard living in this sinful world! Many times God's people lost their struggles with sin. Many times they suffered at the hands of others who rebelled against God. The Temple where they worshiped God was destroyed. It was hard to keep hoping and always look forward in faith. Yet God sent them little glimmers of hope to encourage them to persevere.

Through the prophet Daniel the LORD told them: "The Savior is coming 483 years after King Cyrus orders the Temple to be rebuilt. Don't give up! Keep looking forward in faith!

Through the prophet Isaiah the LORD told them: "I, Myself, am Your Savior. It will be Me who comes to take away your sins; keep looking forward in faith!" And behold, I am preparing a wonderful home for you to come home to, My people," He told them. "I will create new heavens and a new earth for you. This old world will never even be remembered again," He promised them. "This new home will be a delight. The sound of weeping will never

be heard again. No more will you toil at your work like you have since Adam and Eve rebelled. Everything you do will turn out just right. Even all the creatures will be at peace with each other again like they were in Eden. Keep looking forward in faith. Don't give up!" He urged them.

At last the Savior Jesus did come: "I am the Resurrection and the Life," He told the people. "I have come to lay down my life for God's people. Whoever believes in Me though He will die, yet will he live! I am going to heaven to prepare a place for you; then I will come back for you, so you can be with Me forever. Believe in Me! Keep looking forward in faith to what I will do!" He encouraged them.

Jesus lived a perfect life; then He died on the cross, paid the wages for their sins and offered up His perfect life as the substitute for God's people—all who would ever turn from their sins and trust in Jesus as their own Savior. On the third day, He rose up from the dead and went to heaven in victory. At last Satan had been crushed! At last the way to the new home for God's people had been opened up!

Even more years passed. God's people's spread the good news of Jesus that many others might be saved, too! How they wanted everyone to know eternal life with God. Oh, that they, too, might go home to live with God in the new heavens and earth one day!

Sometimes people accepted their words happily, but sometimes people became very angry. Sometimes they even hurt God's people terribly for their faith in Jesus! In times like that, it was hard to keep going. So God told them more about their new home through a special dream He gave the apostle John:

"My people! Don't stop now! Don't give up! Keep looking forward in faith! Listen to what is coming: One day, I will come back and take all My people home to be with Me. Your bodies will be raised from their graves and be changed in wonderful ways. Then, this tired, old, sin-worn world will be destroyed. Satan, the demons, and all the people who refuse to stop rebelling against Me will be put away, once and for all. But you and all the rest of My people will come at last to the new heavens and earth-- I am creating for you," the Lord told them.

"But there's even more," the Lord said. "Your new home will be more wonderful than you can imagine! It will be like the Garden of Eden, but far better in every way. Eden was a garden, but this new home will fill all of the new heavens and new earth. Eden had a river of regular water that flowed throughout it and watered the plants; but in your new home, My Spirit will flow out from My Throne

and bring My Life to everything, like a great River of Life. In Eden there was one Tree of Life, but your new home will be so full of My Eternal Life and healing for your sins that it will be like a whole grove of Trees of Life, always full of fruit. There will never be a time when I will not provide for you or sustain you with My Eternal Life. I will heal your suffering and sadness forever. Together, My precious people and I will enjoy perfect fellowship and love, face to face, forever and ever.

“Never forget this picture of your new home I am giving you! Keep looking forward!” the Lord told them.

“Don’t give up! Look forward in faith! Soon you will be going home to be with Me forever! These hard times will be gone forever!”

God’s people are still waiting today. They are still spreading the good news of Jesus that other might be saved. How that still want them to go home to live with God in the new heavens and earth one day!

Sometimes people accept their words happily, but sometimes people still become very angry. Sometimes God’s people still suffer terribly for their faith in Jesus. And yes, they are still waiting and wondering: “When will we go home?” they wonder. But just like God’s people long ago, they must not give up, but keep looking forward in faith. He will bring them home at just the right time. And every day, that wonderful day is one day closer! Come, Lord Jesus, Come!

Our Bible Truth is:

God Treated the First Sinners with Justice and Mercy

Our Bible Verse is: Romans 6:23

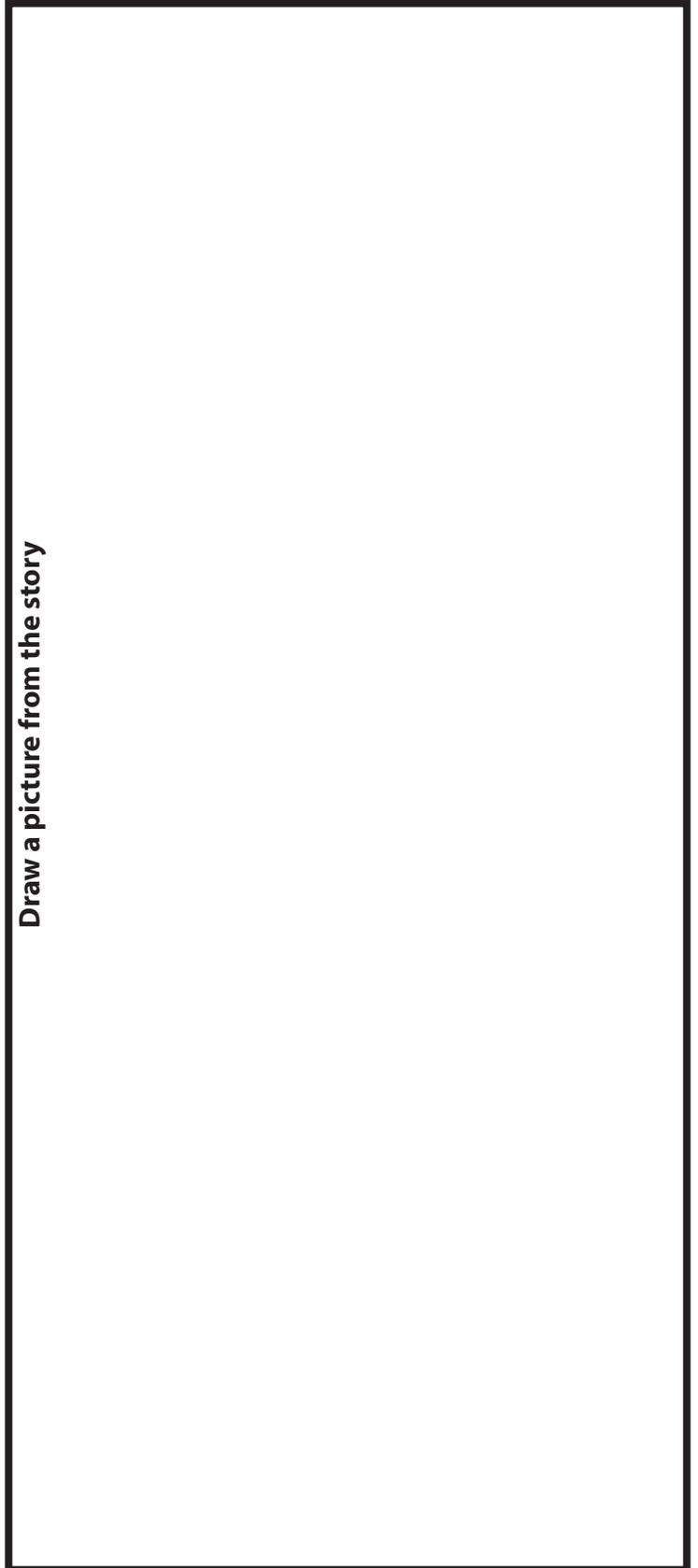
“The wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

What about you and me? Do we not sometimes get tired of this old, sin-worn world? Do we not long for suffering, sin and sorrow to end? Yes, we do! Sometimes we want to give up. What is God’s word to us, if we are His people—those who have turned from their sins and trust in Jesus to save them? It is the same as it has been to all of His people: “Don’t give up! Look forward in faith!” One day we will be home with Him. God’s gift of eternal life and healing for all for all our sorrows and sufferings awaits us, too!

Let’s praise God for being so merciful to His people and for planning such a wonderful home for them to look forward to. Let’s ask Him to work in our hearts, that we might turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Let’s ask Him to encourage us to never give up,

even through the hardest times; but to live today bravely for Him, looking forward in faith to the time when we will go home to be with Him forever.

Draw a picture from the story



SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOU
<p>1. A Question about the Bible Truth, True or False: God treated Adam and Eve with mercy by promising to send a Savior to save them and to crush Satan's power. That Savior was Jesus! Answer: True.</p> <p>2. Crack the Case Questions a. Who was shut out of their home? Why? Adam and Eve, and all of us with them. When they rebelled against God, they were driven out of Eden and lost their home of perfect fellowship with God. This was the consequences of their sinful disobedience. Through them, all of us lost our home of perfect fellowship with God.</p> <p>b. What was the happy new home? How would they get there? The happy new home is life with God in the new heaven and earth God will create at the end of time when Satan is completely defeated. All who turn from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior will enjoy this happy home. He made the way for us to live there when He paid for our sins on the cross.</p> <p>3. Fill in the missing words from the Bible Verse: Romans 6:23 "For the wages of sin is ____, but the free gift of God is ____ life in Christ Jesus our ____." Answers: death, eternal, Lord.</p>

BIBLE TRUTH HYMN
<p>Come, Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy <i>PFI ESV Songs 12, Track 10</i></p> <p>Verse 1 Come ye sinners, poor and needy, Weak and wounded, sick and sore; Jesus ready stands to save you, Full of pity, love, and pow'r.</p> <p>Refrain I will arise and go to Jesus, He will embrace me in His arms. In the arms of my dear Savior, O there are ten thousand charms.</p> <p>Words: Joseph Hart Music: Walker's Southern Harmony</p> <p>Adam and Eve--and all people after them-- suffer the consequences of their sinful rebellion. Everyone is poor and in need of a Savior. Everyone is weak and weary, sick and sore from sin. God, in His great mercy, promised Adam and Eve that one day He would send a Savior to crush Satan. Jesus paid for the sins of all who would ever turn and trust in Him. He welcomes them tenderly to come to Him and know the ten thousand charms of His love.</p>

AN ACTS PRAYER FROM OUR STORY
<p><i>A=Adoration, C=Confession, T=Thanksgiving, S=Supplication</i></p> <p>A God, we praise You for being our Savior! Jesus, You are the strong, second Adam, who always said 'no' to Satan and won salvation for God's people.</p> <p>C God, we confess that many times we give into temptation. We choose to disobey God. We deserve God's punishment! We need a Savior!</p> <p>T Jesus, thank You for always choosing to obey God, Your Father, even when it meant terrible suffering. Thank You for being our Savior.</p> <p>S God, work in our hearts! Help us to turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Help us to say 'no' to the temptations of Satan, and say 'yes' to obeying God, even when it is very hard.</p>

BIBLE VERSE SONG
<p>For the Wages of Sin Is Death <i>PFI ESV Songs 6, Track 11</i></p> <p>For the wages of sin is death, But the free gift of God is eternal life, Through Christ Jesus our Lord. For the wages of sin is death, But the free gift of God is eternal life, Through Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans Six, twenty-three.</p> <p>Words adapted from Romans 6:23, ESV Constance Dever © 2011</p> <p>Because God is good and just, He punishes sin. When Adam and Eve rebelled against God, He punished their sin. What is the punishment for sin? It is death--separation from God and all His good ways. Adam and Eve knew some of that separation from God that very day. When their bodies died they deserved to know complete separation from Him. But God is so very merciful. He treats sinners who repent of their sins and trust in Him so much better than they deserve! That same day God gave Adam and Eve the punishment for their sins, He also gave them the promise of eternal life through Jesus, the son of Eve who would crush Satan once and for all.</p>