

## Presenting the Study Sheet:

# “What Is the Source of Sin and Death?”

This study sheet, “What Is the Source of Sin and Death?” can be a good opening study because it can be used to lay the groundwork for following studies.

### Purpose

The purpose of the “Sin and Death” sheet is to show that even though sin and physical death entered the world as the *consequence* of the sin of Adam and Eve, the *guilt* of their sin was not shared with subsequent generations. The good creation of God became tainted by the sin of Adam and Eve.

### Lesson in Brief

Briefly stated this lesson shows that God created everything good, but that God placed a curse on His good creation because of sin. Sin and a knowledge of good and evil entered the world because of the sin of Adam and Eve. Infants are affected by the consequences of the sin of Adam and Eve, but they are not born bearing the guilt of the sin of Adam and Eve.

### Introduction

[In preparing the learner for this lesson, the teacher might want to ascertain how familiar he is with the Bible. A good beginning might be as follows (The following material is a word-for-word presentation of what a teacher might say as he presents a lesson):]

I do not want to insult your intelligence, but I want to begin at the most simple level so I can understand where you are in your understanding of the nature and make-up of the Bible. Do you know that the Bible is divided into two major parts? What are they?

Do you know which has more material in it, the Old or New Testament? [To indicate which has more material, open the Bible at the beginning of the New

Testament, and show the comparison between the size of the two Testaments.]

The Bible is a collection of the writings of various authors. The whole Bible contains 66 books. The Old Testament contains 39 books, and the New Testament contains 27 books.

The books of the Bible vary in size, from one page, as is the book of 2 John, to many pages, as is the book of Psalms. Each book is divided into verses.

The Old Testament contains 4 major divisions: 5 books of law, 12 books of history, 5 books of wisdom and worship, and 17 books of prophecy, which are sometimes divided into 5 books of major prophets and 12 books of minor prophets, being so-called based on the amount of material in the books. The major prophets wrote more than did the minor prophets.

The New Testament also contains 4 major divisions: 4 books of the life and teaching of Jesus, 1 book of history, 21 letters (sometimes divided into 13 Pauline letters and 8 general letters), and 1 book of prophecy.

In this lesson we are going to start at the beginning of the Bible and begin with the creation by considering a study sheet on “What Is the Source of Sin and Death?” [See page 5.]

### 1. The Creation

1. What was included in the creation? In the beginning God created what? [Have the learner read Gen. 1:1.] *What* did God create? [Have him answer. Fill in the blanks with the words “heavens” and “earth.”]

2. What did God see concerning what He created? [Have him read Gen. 1:31.] God’s creation was *what*? [Have him answer. Fill in the blank with “good.”]

Is there anything existing that God did not create? Was everything good that God created? If God

created everything good, then why is not everything good now? That is what we will examine later in this study.

## II. In the Garden of Eden

1. Now we are going to consider the Garden of Eden. What was in the middle of the Garden of Eden? [Have the learner read Gen. 2:9.] There were two trees in the middle of the garden? *What names* were given to the two trees in the middle of the garden? [Fill in the blanks with “life” and “good” and “evil.”]

[Turn the study sheet over, and *on the back* draw two trees, and label them “Knowledge of good and evil” and “Life.” Observe the drawing for this lesson on page 6 to get an idea what your drawing might look like. *Draw* only the two trees, and draw stick figures for Adam and Eve with large heads but only a single line for each eye. Wait until later when you come to the material in the lesson that suggests more drawing on the back of the sheet.]

Names in the Bible have significance. Why do you think they were called the “tree of life” and the “tree of the knowledge of good and evil”? Do you think the trees had their names because Adam and Eve, if they ate, would receive from the trees what the trees were named, i.e., “life” and the “knowledge of good and evil”?

2. What did God say would happen if they ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil? [Have him read Gen. 2:17.] If they ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, they would *what*? [Fill in the blank with “die.”]

What have we learned in this section? We have learned that God holds us accountable for what we do. Everything we do affects us in some way or other whether physically, emotionally, mentally, socially, morally, or spiritually. Eating of the trees would have an affect on their lives.

## III. The Temptation

1. Now we will consider the temptation of Eve to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. How did the serpent tempt her? [Have the learner read Gen. 3:1.] *What* did he say to tempt her? [Fill in the blank with “eat.”] Why would this cause Eve to be tempted? Was it perhaps because it caused Eve to question what God had said?

2. Did Eve know she would die if she ate of the tree? [Have him read Gen. 3:3.] *What* did Eve say that God said would happen if they ate of the tree? [Fill in the blank with “die.”]

3. What was the serpent’s reply? [Have him read Gen. 3:4, 5.] *What* one thing did the serpent say *would not* happen, and *what* two things did he say *would* happen? [Fill in the blanks with a. “You will not surely die”; b. “Your eyes will be opened”; and c. “You will know good and evil.”]

Which of these three statements the serpent made are false and which are true? Would they die? We have already learned that God said that they would die. So this is a true statement. But what about the statements that their eyes would be opened and that they would be like gods knowing good and evil? Are these two statements true or false? We will learn about these later in the lesson.

4. What did Eve see concerning the fruit? [Have him read Gen. 3:6.] *What* three things did Eve see concerning the fruit of the tree? [Fill in the blanks with a. “Good for food”; b. “Pleasant to the eyes”; and c. “Desirable to make one wise.”] Did Eve concentrate on what was good or what was bad about the fruit of the tree? Did the failure to concentrate on the evil effect of the tree cause her to be deceived?

Notice that what appealed to Eve concerning the fruit of the tree are the things of the world mentioned in 1 John 2:16. We can identify with her, for we are tempted to sin because of the same attractive things of the world.

Even though Eve knew that she would die if she ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, she ate of the tree. We also do many things that are wrong, even though we know that what we are doing is sin. Perhaps for this reason we should not feel too unkindly toward Eve for what she did.

## IV. The Results

1. Now we are going to consider the results of the eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. What happened to the eyes of Adam and Eve? [Have him read Gen. 3:7.] Their eyes were *what*? [Fill in the blank with “opened.” *On the back* draw opened eyes for Adam and Eve. See page 6.]

Does this mean that they were walking through the garden with their eyes closed? Doesn’t this mean that their eyes were closed to morality, i.e., to a knowledge of good and evil, and that eating of the tree opened their eyes to good and evil. Before they ate of the tree, they did not have to be concerned with good and evil because they had no knowledge of good and evil, but when their eyes were opened, they came to the realization that they were naked. They gained a moral consciousness.

2. How was the serpent punished? [Read Gen. 3:14.] *What* would he crawl on from now on? [Fill in the blank with “belly.”]

3. How would the woman be punished? [Read Gen. 3:16.] *What* would she have an increase of in childbirth, and *what* authority would the man have over her? [Fill in the blanks with “pain” and “rule.”]

4. *What* did God do to the ground? [Read Gen. 3:17 and fill in the blank with “cursed.”] And what other punishment did God promise Adam? [Read Gen. 3:19.] *What* would Adam return to? [Fill in the blank with “ground.”]

5. Did eating of the tree corrupt the nature of Adam and Eve? [Read Gen. 3:22.] *Whom* did God say that man had become like? [Fill in the blank with “us.”] In what way had man become like God? *What* had he come to know? [Fill in the blanks with “good” and “evil.”] *On the back* write under Adam and Eve, “Eyes opened. Like God—know good and evil.” See page 6.]

If gaining the knowledge of good and evil means that the nature of Adam and Eve became corrupted, then this means that God has a corrupted nature because He has a knowledge of good and evil.

Having a knowledge of good and evil must include the ability to distinguish between good and evil, which knowledge would mean that mankind must now be faced with the dilemma of making moral choices.

Mankind now could be tempted to do evil. Before this, they did not have to be concerned with moral decisions because they did not have a knowledge of good and evil. They could now make wrong choices, and such wrong choices would be sinful choices. Before they ate, they did not have the knowledge of good and evil and for this reason could not make sinful choices.

## V. Do Children Know Good and Evil?

1. When children are born into the world, *do they* know good and evil? [Read Deut. 1:39. Fill in the blank with “no.”]

2. Since they have no knowledge of good and evil, are they able to know how to make moral choices? [Read Isa. 7:16.] *What* do they not know how to do? [Fill in the blanks with “refuse” evil and “choose” good.]

3. If one is unable to choose between good and evil, is he able to sin? [Read John 9:41.] If one is blind, *what* does he *not* have? [Fill in the blank with “sin.”]

What does Jesus mean by “blind”? Is He talking

about physical blindness? Doesn’t He mean by “blind” the inability to see, i.e., understand? Isn’t Jesus teaching that the person who is unable to understand is not held accountable, and for this reason is not considered a sinner by God? Do not children fall into this same class?

## VI. Are Children Born Sinners?

1. Inasmuch as those who do not have the knowledge of good and evil cannot sin, is it possible for children to inherit sin from their parents and for this reason be born into the world sinners? Does the son bear the sin of the father? [Read Ezek. 18:20.] The son does not bear *whose* sin? [Fill in the blank with “father.”] Doesn’t this verse teach that each person is held accountable to God for his own sins and *not* for the sins of his parents?

Be sure to draw a distinction between *consequence* and *guilt*. All of us will die as a consequence of the sin of Adam and Eve. This, however, does not mean that we are held guilty and considered sinners because of their sin. If a man brutally beats his children to death, they will suffer the consequence of his sin, but will *not* be guilty because of his sin.

2. From whom does a child receive his spirit? [Read Zech. 12:1.] *What* does God form within man? [Fill in the blank with “spirit.”] Who is the Father of spirits? [Read Heb. 12:9.] God is the *what* of spirits? [Fill in the blank with “Father.”]

The fact that we get our spirit from God (also consider Eccl. 12:7) means that we do not come into the world with a sinful spirit, for if we did, then God would be the source of evil, which, of course, is not possible (James 1:13).

3. Who does the kingdom of heaven belong to? [Read Matt. 19:14.] The kingdom of heaven belongs to those who are like *whom*? [Fill in the blank with “children.”] If little children are evil and corrupt, the kingdom of heaven belongs to those who are like them. But if little children are pure, humble, and innocent, then the kingdom of heaven belongs to those who are like them. Surely the kingdom of heaven belongs to those who are like little children, i.e., pure, humble, and innocent people.

[*On the back* of the study sheet (see page 6) write, “Children sinners because of:

1. Own acts? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Parents, through the body? \_\_\_\_\_
3. God, through the spirit?” \_\_\_\_\_

Have him fill in the blanks. From the lesson he should have learned that the answer to all three

questions is “no.”]

### Summary

[In summarizing the lesson, the teacher will go back over the lesson by asking the questions at the major headings to see if the learner can respond correctly. The teacher should ask the questions and let the student answer them.] A good way for us to summarize this lesson is to answer the major questions in the lesson.

I. *What was included in creation?* The right answer is “very good heavens and earth.”

II. *What was in the middle of the Garden of Eden?* The tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the tree that would bring death if they ate of it.

III. *How was Eve tempted in the Garden of Eden?* The serpent led her to question God, so that she would consider the appealing qualities of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, even though she knew she would die. The serpent denied that Eve would die, if she ate, and pointed out that she would become like gods, knowing good and evil.

IV. *What resulted from eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil?* The serpent would go on his belly. The woman would have increased pain in childbirth, and the man would rule over her. The ground would be cursed. Their eyes were opened so that they became like God, knowing good and evil. They would return to the ground, i.e., they would die.

V. *Are children born into the world knowing good and evil?* Children are born into the world *without* a knowledge of good and evil, and for this reason are without sin?

VI. *Are children born sinners and excluded from the kingdom of heaven?* The son does not bear the guilt of the father’s sin, and God forms the spirit of man in him. Therefore, a child is born with a pure and innocent spirit. The kingdom of heaven belongs to those like little children.

[The teacher might ask the student: Were you baptized as an infant? Do you know why you were baptized? Were you considered a sinner and con-

demned when you were born?

The teacher might do well to consider Ps. 51:5, a passage used to prove a child is born a sinner. Some would use this verse to prove children are born sinners contrary to what we have learned in this study sheet. They do this with some translations like the NIV and the NRSV or through a misapplication of this verse. The original language, the Hebrew, simply states, “Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me.”

This verse seems to be David downgrading himself, somewhat as a lament over the imperfections in his life which had been influenced by the evil environment into which he was born. If this is true, then he was simply saying, “I’ve been caught up by the evil environment into which I was born and have been affected by it since the beginning of my existence.”

This could be compared to a person in a miserably cold, snowy part of the world saying on a cold and snowy day, “My mother conceived me in a snow storm, and I was born on a bitter wintry night while the snow was falling. No wonder I’ve stayed with such a region of the world as this.”

Such a statement would not imply that he thought he was born a snowflake just because he was born in a snow storm. In the same way David’s statement that he was brought forth in iniquity and born in sin does not in any way imply that David considered himself to be born a sinner. This statement only considers the circumstances surrounding his birth but does not deal with the nature of David after birth. To deduce that he was born a sinner is a conclusion not implied by this verse.

The teacher also might point out that a possible reason God did not want Adam and Eve to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil could have been to spare them the sorrow, distress, and guilt that would result from having the knowledge of good and evil. Sometimes we may think that God forbids things just to be mean to us, but all of God’s prohibitions are for our good.

[After making sure that the learner understands the lesson, arrange a time for the next study.]

# WHAT IS THE SOURCE OF SIN AND DEATH?

## I. What was included in creation?

1. God created the \_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_. Gen. 1:1
2. God saw that all He made was \_\_\_\_\_. Gen. 1:31

## II. What was in the middle of the Garden of Eden?

1. In the middle of the garden was the tree of \_\_\_\_\_ and the tree of the knowledge of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. Gen. 2:9
2. If they ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, they would \_\_\_\_\_. Gen. 2:17

## III. How was Eve tempted in the Garden of Eden?

1. The serpent said, "Has God said you shall not \_\_\_\_\_ of every tree in the garden?" Gen. 3:1
2. Eve knew that God said that she would \_\_\_\_\_ if she ate. Gen. 3:3
3. The serpent said: a. \_\_\_\_\_ Gen. 3:4  
b. \_\_\_\_\_ Gen. 3:5  
c. \_\_\_\_\_ Gen. 3:5
4. Eve saw the fruit was: a. \_\_\_\_\_ Gen. 3:6  
b. \_\_\_\_\_ Gen. 3:6  
c. \_\_\_\_\_ Gen. 3:6

## IV. What resulted from eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil?

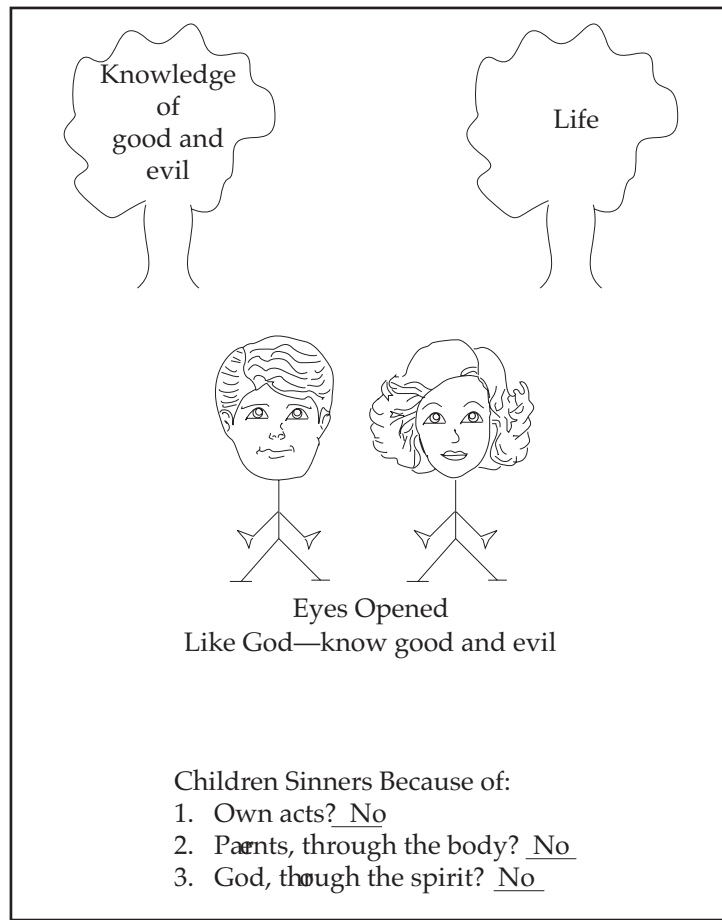
1. The eyes of both of them were \_\_\_\_\_. Gen. 3:7
2. The serpent would go on his \_\_\_\_\_. Gen. 3:14
3. The woman would have increased \_\_\_\_\_ in childbirth and the man would \_\_\_\_\_ over her. Gen. 3:16
4. The ground would be \_\_\_\_\_ Gen. 3:17 and mankind would return to the \_\_\_\_\_. Gen. 3:19
5. God said, "Man has become like one of \_\_\_\_\_ to know \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_." Gen. 3:22

## V. Are children born into the world knowing good and evil?

1. Children have \_\_\_\_\_ knowledge of good and evil. Deut. 1:39
2. Children do not know how to \_\_\_\_\_ evil and \_\_\_\_\_ good. Isa. 7:16
3. If one is blind, he has no \_\_\_\_\_. John 9:41

## VI. Are children born sinners and excluded from the kingdom of heaven?

1. The son does not bear the sin of the \_\_\_\_\_. Ezek. 18:20
2. God forms the \_\_\_\_\_ Zech. 12:1 within man, and is the \_\_\_\_\_ of spirits. Heb. 12:9 (see also Eccl. 12:7)
3. The kingdom of heaven belongs to little \_\_\_\_\_. Matt. 19:14



The Drawing for the Back of the “Sin and Death” Sheet.  
(See page 5.)