

The Fall of Adam

6

OBJECTIVE Each young man will become more familiar with the scriptural account of the fall of Adam and its consequences.

PREPARATION

1. Prayerfully study 2 Nephi 2:15–18, 22–25; 9; Doctrine and Covenants 29:39–41; 93:38–39; Moses 2:28; 3:15–17; 4:5–12; 5:10–12; and Abraham 3:25.
2. Materials needed:
 - a. Copies of the scriptures (each young man should bring his own).
 - b. Pencils for marking scriptures.
 - c. Picture 2, Adam and Eve (62461; Gospel Art Picture Kit 101).

**SUGGESTED
LESSON
DEVELOPMENT**

Introduction

Ask the young men how they would respond to someone who said: “We can blame Adam and Eve for all the difficulties we have in life. If they had not sinned, we would be much happier and better off. We would not have thorns and weeds. We would not have sickness and death. We would not have been cast out of God’s presence. It just doesn’t seem fair that we should have to suffer because of what they did.”

Allow a few minutes for the young men to respond.

Picture, scriptures,
and discussion

Display picture 2, Adam and Eve.

- What would have happened if Adam and Eve had not partaken of the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden?

Have several young men help in reading 2 Nephi 2:22–25 and Moses 5:10–12.

Help the young men understand that if Adam and Eve had not partaken of the forbidden fruit—

1. They would not have been able to have children. Consequently, we could not have come to a mortal world to obtain a physical body.
2. They would not have known good and evil. Consequently, no one could do good or evil, know joy or misery, or learn obedience in the face of opposition.
3. They could not have known the joy of their redemption or salvation. If there had been no fall, there would not have been a need for the Atonement, and we could not have progressed.

Because the fall of Adam was a necessary part of the plan of salvation, the scriptures say that “death hath passed upon all men, to fulfil the merciful plan of the great Creator” (2 Nephi 9:6).

The Fall of Adam

Scripture and
discussion

Explain that after Adam and Eve were placed in the Garden of Eden, the Lord gave them two commandments. As the young men read the following verses, have them mark the key words in each of the commandments.

Have a young man read Moses 2:28.

- What is the meaning of this commandment? (To have children.)

Have a young man read Moses 3:15–17.

- What was the meaning of this commandment to Adam and Eve? (If they ate of the forbidden fruit, they would die or become subject to both temporal and spiritual death.)

Adviser presentation

Explain that Satan, who had been cast out of the presence of God for rebellion, was allowed to come to earth. He tries “to deceive and to blind men, and to lead them captive at his will, even as many as would not hearken unto [the voice of God]” (Moses 4:4). After the two commandments had been given to Adam and Eve, Satan tempted Adam and Eve to eat of the forbidden fruit.

Scriptures and discussion

Have the young men read and mark 2 Nephi 2:15–18 and Moses 4:5–12.

- Moses 4:6 says that Satan “sought also to beguile Eve.” What does it mean “to beguile”? (To deceive, trick, or entice by way of a lie.)
- How did Satan beguile Eve? (He told her that if she ate the forbidden fruit she would know good and evil but would not die.)
- How does Satan beguile us in our day?

Consequences of the Fall

Discussion

- What were the consequences of the Fall?

Help the young men bring out that because of the Fall—

1. Adam and Eve received the power of procreation.
2. Adam and Eve gained a knowledge of good and evil by their own experience.
3. Their bodies became subject to deterioration, leading eventually to their physical death.
4. They were banished or cast out from the presence of God. This banishment is called spiritual death.

Chalkboard, discussion, and adviser presentation

Place each item from the following chart on the chalkboard at the appropriate point in the discussion, using the paragraphs that follow as needed to explain each point:

Condition before the Fall	Condition after the Fall
1. No power to procreate	1. Power to procreate
2. No knowledge of good and evil	2. Knowledge of good and evil in a world of opposition
3. No physical death (immortal)	3. Physical death
4. No spiritual death (lived in the presence of God)	4. Spiritual death

Power of Procreation

Before the Fall, Adam and Eve could have no children. For this reason Adam partook of the forbidden fruit: “Adam fell that men might be” (2 Nephi 2:25). The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that “Adam was made to open the ways of the world” (*History of the Church*, 1:283). By partaking of the forbidden fruit, Adam and Eve opened the way for us to enter into mortality.

After the Fall, Adam and Eve fulfilled the commandment of God to multiply and replenish the earth, and “they . . . brought forth children; yea, even the family of all the earth” (2 Nephi 2:20).

Knowledge of Good and Evil

A major purpose of earth life is for God’s children to prove “if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them” (Abraham 3:25). In order to prove their willingness to do all things God would command them, it was necessary that Satan be allowed to tempt man or to provide the necessary opposition to God so that choice would be possible. A knowledge of good and evil is gained only in a world of opposites, where wickedness opposes righteousness; good, bad; corruption, incorruption; happiness, misery; bitter, sweet (see 2 Nephi 2:11–12).

Explain that because Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit, their eyes were opened to a world of opposites. The Lord himself declared, “Behold, the man is become as one of us to know good and evil” (Moses 4:28).

Explain that the tree from which the forbidden fruit was taken was called the tree of knowledge of good and evil, because eating of its fruit opened the way into a world of opposites in which men and women can learn by their own experiences to know good from evil.

Physical Death

Explain that physical death, known also as temporal death, was introduced into the world as a consequence of the Fall. As a result of the Fall, all people and all forms of life upon the earth must suffer a physical death, a separation of spirit and body.

Spiritual Death

Scripture and discussion

While in the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve lived in the presence of God. They walked and talked with him.

Have the young men read and mark Doctrine and Covenants 29:39–41.

- By yielding to the temptation of Satan, what did Adam and Eve subject themselves to? (They became subject to Satan and were cast out of the presence of God.)

Explain that this is called “spiritual death” because no one in a state of transgression can dwell in the presence of God. President Joseph F. Smith explained spiritual death by saying:

“When Adam, our first parent, partook of the forbidden fruit, transgressed the law of God, and became subject unto Satan, he was banished from the presence of God, and was thrust out into outer spiritual darkness. This was the first death. Yet living [physically], he was dead—dead to God, dead to light and truth, dead spiritually; cast out from the presence of God; communication between the Father and the Son was cut off. He was as absolutely thrust out from the presence of God as was Satan and the hosts that followed him. That was spiritual death” (*Gospel Doctrine*, 5th ed. [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1939], p. 432).

The Fall and Repentance

Scripture and discussion

Have the young men read and mark Doctrine and Covenants 93:38–39.

- What does it mean to be innocent? (Free from sin or evil, not under condemnation of any kind.)

Explain that Adam and Eve were innocent in the Garden of Eden before they disobeyed. Because of their disobedience, they fell from their innocent state to a state of unrighteousness. They needed to be redeemed from their fallen state through the Atonement, upon condition of their repentance. In the same way, we commit sin, and only through repentance and the atonement of Jesus Christ can we be redeemed.

- According to Doctrine and Covenants 93:38–39, what are the ways in which we also become subject to Satan and fall from our state of purity and innocence? (Through disobedience and because of the traditions or false teachings of those who teach us.)
- What is the process that makes it possible for us to overcome the effects of our own personal fall? (Repentance, made possible through Jesus Christ’s atonement.)

The Fall Was a Great Blessing

Discussion

- Should we rejoice in or regret the fall of Adam? Why?

Help the young men understand that the fall of Adam was as necessary to the plan of salvation as was the atonement of Jesus Christ. Without the Fall, we would not have existed and would have had no need for a Savior. Without the Fall, we would not have become mortal or known the fulness of joy that comes from having a mortal body and from choosing good over evil.

Quotation and discussion

President Brigham Young stated the proper attitude we should have regarding the Fall:

“Some may regret that our first parents sinned. This is nonsense. If we had been there, and they had not sinned, we would have sinned. I will not blame Adam or Eve. Why? Because it was necessary that sin should enter into the world; no man could ever understand the principle of exaltation without its opposite; no one could ever receive an exaltation without being acquainted with its opposite. How did Adam and Eve sin? Did they come out in direct opposition to God and to his government? No. But they transgressed a command of the Lord, and through that transgression sin came into the world. The Lord knew they would do this, and he had designed that they should” (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, sel. John A. Widtsoe [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1941], p. 103).

- What is the difference between transgressing a law of God as Adam and Eve did and coming out in direct opposition to God as Satan did? (Attitude or motive. Satan rebelled against God and sought to destroy the purposes of God, while Adam and Eve transgressed one of God’s laws in order to fulfill another.)
- Many religions accuse Adam and Eve of being sinful, wicked people. Because we understand their transgression in its true light, how should we feel about them? (We should be deeply grateful for their willingness to make mortality possible. We see them as two of the greatest and most righteous people the earth has known.)

Conclusion

Scripture and quotation

Point out that Adam and Eve viewed their fall as a great blessing. Have a young man reread Moses 5:10–12.

President Joseph Fielding Smith has also given his testimony about the blessings of the Fall:

“When Adam was driven out of the Garden of Eden, the Lord passed a sentence upon him. Some people have looked upon that sentence as being a dreadful thing. It was not; it was a blessing. I do not know that it can truthfully be considered even as a punishment in disguise. . . .

“The fall of man came as a blessing in disguise, and was the means of furthering the purposes of the Lord in the progress of man, rather than a means of hindering them” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, comp. Bruce R. McConkie, 3 vols. [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1954–56], 1:113–14).

Challenge

Challenge the young men to read all of 2 Nephi 2 and 9 as a review of the fall of Adam and to think, as they read, how merciful and just the Lord’s plan of redemption is.