ADVENT WEEK 1 - HOPE

Read Genesis 3:1-14

When you think of the beginning of the Advent story, what do you imagine? Most of us probably picture a stable—a manger, maybe—filled with animals, a newborn Jesus, proud new parents, and lots of visitors. We think of shepherds, angels, and wise men. But, the story really begins way before that—in a garden.

You've probably heard Genesis 1 many times. God created the world—the sky, sea, land, plants, animals—and He said it was good. Then, He created people—and He said it was very good. Genesis 1:27 even tells us He created humans, male and female, in His own image! From the very beginning, people were set apart for a special relationship with God and a special role in caring for the rest of creation. At this point in the story, creation functioned in perfect order according to God's beautiful design and man walked in an unbroken relationship with God, fully known and unafraid.

But in an instant, everything changed as Adam and Eve disobeyed God's good instruction. Tempted by the snake, Eve ate the fruit from the one tree God had forbidden them to eat from. Eve offered the fruit to Adam, and he ate, as well. When they ate the fruit, they brought sin into the world. Instead of enjoying the relationship they had with God, they wanted to become just like Him. Because of that one decision to disobey Him, their fellowship with God was broken, peace was disrupted, and creation was thrown into chaos. Darkness, depravity, fear, shame, and selfishness flooded the human heart—separating people from God.

But from the very first moment we needed it, God had a rescue plan. He addresses Adam and Eve, later turns to the serpent, declaring that sin would not have the final say and that Satan would not prevail. Even amid the darkness, God spoke a word of hope, promising a Savior who would one day defeat the enemy and deliver God's people. We'll learn more about this soon.

Family Time (Light one of the purple candles at this point while stating this is the "Hope Candle". It reminds us of the Hope we have in Jesus.)

Talk about these questions with your family or group.

KIDS

1. Do you ever have trouble being obedient? Why can it be so hard?

2. God gave Adam and Eve everything they needed in the garden. Why do you think they chose to disobey Him?

TEENS AND ADULTS

3.How does beginning the Advent story in Genesis (instead of the New Testament) change your perspective as we enter this season? How does this impact your view of the whole story of the Bible?"

4.In what ways do we still see and feel the effects of Adam and Eve's sin, even today?

Pray

Pray that God would reveal to you areas where you have been or are currently being disobedient. Ask that these things would become clear to you and that you would move toward Him in repentance.