

God Offers Love and Mercy

Keep these ideas in mind as you study **Chapter 4**.

❖ Because of Adam and Eve's disobedience, they lost the gift of sanctifying grace. Sin entered the world, and all people are born with a tendency to sin. This condition is called original sin, which is taken away through Baptism.

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❖ After the first sin, sin spread throughout the world. Only through Mary, the sinless one, and her Son, Jesus, would a new creation be possible. Jesus' death and Resurrection save us from sin.

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❖ The only rule God gave to Adam and Eve was that they were not to eat the fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil. As punishment for their disobedience, God said that Eve would bear children with pain and that Adam would work for food with much difficulty. The serpent would be outcast from all other animals. In addition to these punishments, Adam and Eve had to leave the garden. All the descendents of Adam and Eve are born into sin.

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❖ Cain, a farmer, and Abel, a shepherd, were Adam and Eve's sons. Cain killed his brother, Abel, after God accepted Abel's gift and rejected Cain's. The story shows the consequence of sin, because Cain is cursed with banishment by God.

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❖ God called Noah to build an ark. Noah brought his family and one pair of every kind of animal on the ark. They were saved from the flood. God made a covenant with Noah and with every living creature. Rainbows serve as reminders of that everlasting covenant.

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❖ People built the Tower of Babel to make a name for themselves. God punished the people's pride by confusing their language. They couldn't live together and eventually moved to different parts of the earth.

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❖ Every sin separates us from God. Our effort to turn from sin and return to God and our neighbors is called reconciliation. Each attempt to turn away from sin helps heal that separation. We look to Jesus to learn how to return to God.

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❖ Our consciences help us make good moral choices. We develop our consciences by praying for guidance and by reading and listening to Scripture. Many other things help us make moral choices. We have the help of the Holy Spirit. We also have the help of the Church.

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