

Who is Jesus? A Short Story of the Gospel

This Spiritual Health lesson is designed to tell the entire story of the gospel in about one hour. It is to be presented in an oral-based format (as a story) and focuses on four main points;

- 1) Where Sin Came From
- 2) How We Became the Children of Satan
- 3) How God Adopted Us Into Salvation
- 4) What Will Happen When Jesus Returns

As an introduction, you may want to ask a question such as:

- Why do you think there is so much suffering in the world?
- Where do you think disease came from?
- Why are people so selfish?

There are several scriptures in the short story that you should memorize. This will give you integrity as a religious expert and you will model to your hearers that a follower of Jesus memorizes and uses scripture. Feel free to explain the scriptures after you recite them.

Part 1: Where Sin Came From

Before God made the world He made thousands of angels. God is Spirit, and these angels are also spirits. They do not have bodies like people do so they can move about between heaven and earth. But they cannot be everywhere at once like God can. They can only be in one place at a time.

God put the angels in heaven and they worship him and are his servants. Because God is holy and perfect, everything that He makes is perfect. Therefore, each of the angels that He made was perfect.

One of the angels created by God was named Lucifer. He was more beautiful and intelligent than the other angels, and he was given a job in authority over many other angels.

Lucifer should have loved and worshipped God like the other angels but, because he was especially beautiful and intelligent, he became very proud. He wanted to become important like God and the Bible tells us that he thought in his heart:

“I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of the sacred mountains. I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.” Isaiah 14:13-14.

When Lucifer had this thought, he was not worshipping God, but was thinking of himself as great. Actually, he was worshipping himself. This pride was the first sin and it was a great sin against God.

Many people ask, "If Lucifer was created perfect, then how could He sin against God?" "Did God cause him to sin?" These are good questions but the answer is very simple. Listen again to the things that Lucifer thought:

"I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of the sacred mountain. I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High." Isaiah 14:13-14

Lucifer said, "I will ascend. . . I will raise. . . I will sit. . . I will ascend. . . I will make." These were decisions that Lucifer made by himself. God did not make the decisions for him, but gave him the freedom to make decisions for himself. In fact, He gives each person and even each angel the freedom to make our own decisions.

God could have created the angels and people like automobiles that are completely controlled by the driver. Then we would go exactly where He wants us to go and do exactly what He wants us to do. We would obey every command that He gives.

But God does not want us to obey because we are forced by Him. He wants us to obey Him because we love him and choose to obey Him. Therefore He gave us freedom. When you go for prayer or give to the poor, do you do it because someone is forcing you? No. You do it because you love God and believe in Him. These are acts of freedom.

When Lucifer decided to make himself great like God, he sinned against God. So we see that God did not create sin. Lucifer is the creator and father of all sin.

Now heaven is a perfect place and so it is impossible for sin to exist there. If there were one sin in heaven then it would not be perfect anymore and would no longer be heaven. To explain this better, let me give you an example.

Suppose you had a large container of pure mountain water to offer to guests in your house. The water is clean and pure, just like heaven is clean and pure. But what if I put one small piece of goat droppings in the water and stirred it up. The piece of droppings was very small, but is the water still pure? Would you give it to your guests? Of course not! Even one tiny piece of filth has contaminated the entire container of pure water. Just as one sin would contaminate the purity of heaven.

Also understand that God is holy and is a righteous judge. And because He is a good judge, he must punish sin. Therefore, God sent Lucifer out of heaven. And when Lucifer went out, many other angels went with him. At that time, God told them that in the future they would all be punished because of their sin.

Lucifer and the bad angels became God's enemies and Lucifer's name was changed to Satan, which means, "the deceiver." The bad angels are now called demons. These evil spirits are active all over the earth. They are always trying to oppose God's plans and take glory away from God for themselves.

Part 2: How We Became the Children of Satan

It is true that Satan is God's enemy, but God is all-powerful. How could Satan ever hurt God? The answer to this comes from the story of Adam and Eve, found in both the Quran and the Bible.

After creating the angels, God created the heavens, the earth, the oceans, the land and all of the animals. Then God created the first man and woman, Adam and Eve, and placed them in a beautiful garden. In the center of the garden God placed two special trees; "the tree of life" and "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil". God told Adam and Eve that they could eat the fruit of any tree in the garden, including the tree of life, but they could not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and, if they did eat from it, they would die.

In those days Adam and Eve had a perfect relationship with God. They were able to communicate freely with Him and there was no disease or death. Also, all of the fruit of the garden grew easily so that there was always enough food to eat.

And this is where Satan hurt God. Since God is all-powerful, Satan could not hurt God directly, so, instead, he hurt God by attacking Adam and Eve, whom God loved. It is as if an evil man wanted to hurt you but he was not strong enough. So, he hurt your wife, children, or perhaps your sister instead. Obviously it would cause you great pain to see your loved ones suffer.

This is how it happened. When God sent Satan out of heaven, he went down to the earth in the form of a snake to try and deceive Eve. He said to her, "**Did God really say that you could not eat from any tree in the garden?**" Of course this was wrong, so Eve explained that they could eat any of the fruit in the garden except the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil because, if they did eat that fruit, they would die.

But Satan lied to Eve and told her that she would not die if she ate the fruit. He said that God did not want her to eat the fruit because it would give her great wisdom, like God himself, and she would know the difference between good and evil.

When Eve heard that the fruit was special and that it would give her great wisdom, she took some of the fruit and ate it. Then she took the fruit to Adam and he also ate some.

When Satan wished in his heart to be like God, this was the first sin ever. And when Adam and Eve disobeyed God by eating the forbidden fruit that was the first sin on the earth. So, just as God punished Satan for his sin, He also had to punish Adam and Eve.

At this point many people ask, “Since God is merciful, why didn’t He just forgive Adam and Eve and not punish them.” But the answer is because of God’s great holiness and righteousness. Because He is holy, He must do justice, and this requires punishment for sin. Otherwise, He would not be a good judge.

What if a man killed your brother and you brought that man before a judge. The murderer confessed his sin, but asked the judge to be merciful. So, the judge had mercy upon the man and let him go free. Would this have been right? Would that be a good judge? Of course not. Even though God is merciful, because of his great righteousness, He must punish sin.

So, here is what happened to Adam and Eve. First, God cursed Satan and told him that there would always be trouble between him and people. And that one day a certain man would come and completely destroy him. Many prophets wrote about this promised conqueror in the Holy Scriptures and he is called, “The Messiah”.

Then God told Adam, **“Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life.”** And, just as he threw Satan out of heaven, He also threw Adam and Eve out of the garden and told them that they could never return.

Adam and Eve disobeyed God’s command and their sin has brought the curse upon us all. Now, instead of being born into a perfect world where there is no disease or death and everyone walks closely with God, we are born into a world of war, evil, disease and death. And, because of the sin, we have been separated from God. In fact, we have now become children of Satan rather than of God. People do evil and selfish things because they listen to Satan and very rarely listen to God.

Before the great sin there was no death on the earth. But, because of the sin, just as God promised to Adam and Eve, every man and woman must die as payment for their sin. The Bible states this very plainly:

“The wages of sin is death. . .” Romans 6:23

Remember that heaven is perfect, and God cannot allow any sin into heaven. If he did, that sin would destroy the purity of heaven. Since we are all under the curse, then we are all sinful in one way or another. This is also stated plainly in the Bible:

“All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” Romans 3:23

So, when we die, since every human being is a sinner, God cannot allow any of us to come into His perfect heaven. Every human being must join our father Satan in hell when we die.

Part 3: How God Adopted Us Into Salvation

Just as a person cannot change their parents, we cannot change these facts. The entire world is under a curse and every person is a child of Satan that will join him in hell when they die. Some people know in their hearts that God would be a better father than Satan and they try to earn their way into God's family by being good. We try to make God happy by praying, fasting, giving money to the poor, or other religious activities. But none of these can take away the curse, change who our father is, or take away our sin. There is nothing that any man can do to earn his or her way into God's family. And there is nothing that any man can do to take away a curse placed by God.

But, God loves each one of us very much. And, since God is much stronger than Satan, He has fixed the problem for us.

Since every person with the human spirit is under the curse, God caused His own Spirit to come to earth in the form of a man. Here is how it happened. Thousands of years after the curse began there was a girl named Mary who had never been with a man. Mary, like every person, was under the curse and lived a very difficult life. But one day, an angel named Gabriel came to her and told her that she would have a child who would be the promised Messiah. The angel said, **“He shall be great and will be called the Son of God. . . and His kingdom will have no end.”**

Mary wanted to know how this could be since she had never been with a man. The angel explained to her that the Holy Spirit would come upon her and, for that reason, the holy child would be called “the Son of God”. **“Nothing is impossible for God.”** Gabriel said.

So Mary said, **“I am God's slave. Let it be done to me just as you have said.”** And it did happen, just as the angel had said.

Now, Mary was engaged to a man named Joseph and when he found out that Mary was pregnant he wanted to break the engagement, thinking that Mary had been with some man. But God told Joseph in a dream, **“Don't be afraid to take Mary as your wife. The child is conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit of God. She will have a son and you will name Him Jesus which means 'the Lord saves', because He will save His people from their sins.”**

Remember that the angel told Mary that her child **“would be called the Son of God.”** Some people get angry when they hear the words “Son of God” because we all know that there is only one God. If God had a son just like a person may have a son, then there would be two Gods—and that is impossible. But God is Spirit. He cannot have a son like we have a son. Instead, God's Holy Spirit was put inside of a baby. This has only happened once in history so there is no good word for this kind of child. That is why the angel said that the child **“would be called the Son of God.”**

On the night that Jesus was born, there were some shepherds with their flocks. That night an angel from God appeared to them and they were terrified!

“Don't be afraid,” said the angel. “I've got joyful news for everyone. Your Deliverer was born today. He is the Messiah.” And suddenly an army of angels was singing, **“Glory to God in the highest and on earth, peace to mankind.”**

Because Jesus had been born by God's Spirit, he was not under the curse and he never committed one sin. He also showed that he had the Spirit of God by doing many great miracles. He made blind people see, paralyzed people walk, cast demons out of people, and even raised people from the dead. One day he was in a boat with his disciples when a great storm came up. The disciples were frightened because they thought they might drown but Jesus said to the skies, "Be quiet!" and the storm immediately stopped. This proved that he was the Spirit of God in a man's body because he could command illnesses, demons, death and even nature.

The religious leaders hated Jesus because they were very jealous of him. So, they arrested him and ordered that he be killed on a cross. In those days, two large poles were put together to make a cross, and criminals were nailed to it in front of all of the people and were left there until they died. Even though Jesus had never committed one single sin, he was nailed to a cross like this. But this was all a part of God's plan to stop the curse. Jesus was sacrificed for the sins of the world just like a lamb is sacrificed. That is why he is also called, "The Lamb of God." While Jesus was on the cross the sky became very dark and there was a great earthquake, and then Jesus died.

Before Jesus had died, he had told his disciples that he was going to die and also told them that he would come back to life after three days. The story sounded crazy, and the disciples didn't believe him. But, on the third day after his death, some women went to the tomb and found that it was empty. An angel appeared to them and explained that Jesus had come back to life just as he had promised. Over the next forty days Jesus appeared to all of his disciples and over five hundred other people.

Jesus had brought other people back to life, but all of those people were normal human beings and they all died again. But Jesus did not die again. He went with his disciples up to a mountain and told them that he had to return to heaven, but that He would send the Holy Spirit of God to each of them to help guide them. His last words were:

All authority on heaven and on earth has been given to me. So, you must all go out and make more of my disciples among all of the people groups of the world. Teach them to obey everything that I commanded you and baptize them all in the name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit. And do not forget that I will always be with you, even until the end of the world.

Then Jesus began to float up into the sky and disappeared into the clouds. And two angels appeared next to the disciples and said, "**Why are you men looking up into the sky for Jesus. He will come back again in just the same way that he left.**"

Part 4: What Will Happen When Jesus Returns

About a month after Jesus went up to heaven, all of his disciples were sitting together when a loud sound, like a rushing wind, came into the room. Suddenly, little lights, like tongues of fire, appeared above each disciple's head and they began speaking in many different languages. It

was a religious holiday and visitors from many different languages were in the town. When Jesus' disciples went outside, the people heard them talking about God in many different languages and they gathered around wondering about this miracle. They kept asking, "These men are not from all of these different nations. How can they speak all of these different languages?"

Then one of the disciples named Peter began to speak to the entire crowd. He explained that Jesus had come from heaven down to earth and proved that he was the Spirit of God by doing many miracles. As a part of God's plan he was killed by the religious leaders but he rose up from the dead because death could not hold him. Now that he has returned to heaven, he has sent his Holy Spirit down to his disciples and that is the reason for the miracle of the many languages. When the people heard this they suddenly realized that Jesus was the Messiah who had come to take the curse away. They wanted to be freed from the curse themselves and they asked the disciples, "What should we do?"

So Peter explained to them that to become a disciple of Jesus they must first repent of their sins and be baptized in the name of Jesus. Then they would also receive the Holy Spirit. **"The promise is for you and your children,"** Peter said. **"And for all who are far away—for everyone that the Lord our God is calling."** Three thousand people became Jesus' disciples that day and since then millions of people have become disciples of Jesus. You cannot be born a disciple of Jesus. Each person must decide for themselves if they want to follow Jesus for the rest of their lives.

Later these disciples of Jesus wrote many short books which have been put together to make the New Testament. It tells many stories about Jesus and explains how God sent Jesus to save us from the curse by being sacrificed for our sins just like a lamb. It is true that we were born as children of Satan, and we can never change that. While we are alive we will always have to live in Satan's world. But, the Bible explains that, if we become a disciple of Jesus, then we will be adopted into God's family and He will give each of us the gift of the Holy Spirit to guide us. This is the free gift of salvation and is a cause for great rejoicing.

Remember that, when we were children of Satan, we were destined to join Satan in hell after our death. But, if we become disciples of Jesus and are adopted into God's family, then we will go to be with our new father, God, after we die.

You may ask, but what about our sins? We are still sinful people and we cannot take our sins into heaven when we die. This is a good point, but when you become a disciple of Jesus, everything changes. It is like this. When each person dies, they go before God and he judges them. If one single sin is found, then that person is found guilty and cannot enter into heaven. Remember the example of the tiny piece of goat droppings in the pure water. How do you think God would feel if you offered him that water to drink and you told him that it was good water? Obviously, God would be terribly insulted. In the same way, even if someone's life were 99% pure, when he offered himself to God and said that he had lived a good life, this would be a terrible offense to God. The worst thing that a person could do would be to try and rely upon his own good works to impress God. Believe me, when we meet the holy and pure God face to face, each of us will know that we are filthy sinners and will fall on our faces in shame.

It is the same way when a disciple of Jesus comes before God for judgment. He or she is also found guilty because of their sin. No one can stand as righteous before God. But, the Bible tells us that Jesus is always sitting at the right hand of God. When one of his disciples comes before God for judgment, Jesus speaks for us and tells God that He, Jesus, has already paid the penalty for our sins. The payment for sin is death, and Jesus offers the payment of his death for each of his disciples. Since the sins have been paid for, by the blood of Jesus, then we are found blameless and are able to come into heaven.

At the end of time, Jesus will come back to the earth and will judge everyone who is still alive and everyone who has died. The Bible tells us that he will separate people like sheep and goats. The group that rejected Him will be sent to hell, and the group that believed in Him and became His disciples will be taken up to heaven. Then, Jesus will take Satan and all of the demons and throw them into a lake of burning fire where they can never escape.

At the very end of the Bible it tells us what heaven will be like. It says, **No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve Him. They will see His face and His name will be on their foreheads. There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever.**"

Please understand that God sent Jesus down to earth because He loves each one of us very much and he wants us to be adopted into His family. But He will not force anyone. He gives each of us the freedom to accept Jesus, or reject Jesus. Now that you know who Jesus really is, you must decide if you believe in Him and want to become His disciple. If you do decide to give the rest of your life to him, you will also receive the Holy Spirit and He will never leave you. But, being a disciple of Jesus is also very dangerous. Jesus said, **"If they persecute and kill me, they will also persecute and kill my disciples."**

But being a disciple of Jesus will also give you a wonderful peace in your heart. Jesus also said, **"Come to me all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."** Matthew 11:28 – 30.