

# NO WAY BACK

What's the first thing you do when someone shouts fire? You run! And fast. This book is all about fires – and we're not going to run away from them. In fact, we're going to get as close as we can to the fires to see what was actually happening.

We are going on a journey back in time to the very first fire that we know about. This fire is in the Garden of Eden where Adam and Eve lived after

## On Fire

God created them. It's quite difficult to imagine Eden because what happened there changed the world so much. But let's try.

Everything is good and peaceful and happy. There is no sickness or sadness. Nobody grows old and nobody dies. Adam and Eve are always in the best of health. They never argue or fight. Lions don't eat zebras and cats don't chase mice. Everything in Eden is perfect. Best of all, Adam and Eve have God's presence there. Because they have never done anything wrong, neither of them has a guilty conscience and they are able to really enjoy being with God in their wonderful garden home.

Imagine seeing a butterfly for the first time and then think of turning a corner and nearly walking into the first giraffe you've ever seen! Now think of the tastes you'd enjoy – mangoes and pineapples, bananas and sun-warmed peaches.

## and Other Bible Stories You've Got To Hear

That was what the Garden of Eden was like until a truly terrible thing happened. God had told Adam and Eve that there was a tree in the middle of the garden called the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, and they were not to eat the fruit of that tree. If they ate the fruit, they would die. No problem! Adam and Eve had every other tree you can imagine ... and many you can't!

However, one day Satan came in the form of a serpent and spoke to Eve. Listen to what was said.

'Did God really say, "You must not eat from any tree in the garden?"' the serpent asked Eve.

Of course God hadn't said that and Eve should have told him so.

'We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden,' she replied, 'but God did say, "You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die."'

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Oops! Did God really say that they hadn't to touch the fruit? He did not! Eve hadn't been paying attention. And we should never make up things and say that God said them.

'You will not surely die,' Satan argued.

This was a lie, and Satan knew it. He went on to say that God knew that if they ate the forbidden fruit, they'd know good from evil and be just like God! Satan is clever at telling half truths that are



## *and Other Bible Stories You've Got To Hear*

really lies, and this was one of them. Yes, Adam and Eve would know good from evil, but they certainly wouldn't be like God.

You know that Eve should have turned away from the tree, but she didn't. She looked at it. Foolish woman. She thought about it. Foolish, foolish woman. Then she stretched out her hand, picked a fruit and ate it. Not only that, she gave some to Adam and he ate it too. Because Eve listened to Satan rather than God she and Adam did something that changed human history.

For the very first time Adam and Eve felt guilt and embarrassment. They tried to hide from God but that's not possible. When God asked Adam what had happened, he blamed Eve. He even blamed God because God had given him Eve who had caused all the trouble! Eve passed the blame to Satan. Suddenly all the beauty of their lives was one horrible mess.

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All three, Adam, Eve and Satan, were punished. Adam was told that he would have to work very hard in difficult conditions to make things grow. Eve was told that being a wife and mother would cause her hurt and pain. The serpent was told that someone was going to come who would crush him. And here's an interesting thing about the serpent. God said that from then on the serpent would crawl on its belly so it must have had legs before that!

This is where the fire comes in. Adam and Eve were sent out of Eden and an angel with a fiery sword was sent by God as a guard to prevent them getting back in. The fire that flashed from the angel's sword is the first fire that is mentioned in the Bible. It was a truly terrible fire for it prevented Adam and Eve from ever getting back into Eden. By their sin they brought sadness and sickness and death into the world. What God had told them was absolutely true.

## and Other Bible Stories You've Got To Hear

Do you remember that when God cursed the serpent he said that *someone* would come who would crush him? That *someone* came many years later and he is the Lord Jesus Christ. Nobody has ever been able to get back into Eden, but those who trust in Jesus go to heaven when they die and that is even better. No fiery sword can keep Christians out of heaven because God has promised them a home there.

We can't use our imaginations to go to heaven, but we can read about it in the Bible. There God tells us what it will be like for everyone who trusts in Jesus. They will be God's people, 'and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.'

(This story is found in Genesis 3 and Revelation 21:3-4.)