For Further Study

Read and meditate on the passage below:

13 To be sure, sin was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not charged against anyone's account where there is no law. 14 Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who is a pattern of the one to come. (Romans 5:13-14)

The above verses occurs in the book of Romans, which is possibly Paul's most theological treatise about salvation. It can be complicated to read, but it is very important to our understanding of the events we studied this week in Genesis 3. Paul makes an allusion to the "fall" (as it is oftentimes referred to), when Adam and Eve act against God's instruction and eat from the forbidden fruit of The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. As explained in this week's teaching, the opening chapters of Genesis are an origin story that tells about the introduction of creation, humanity, and evil in the created order, not as an act of God, but by the decision of people--just like us.

Paul emphasizes that "sin" is not conditional on having the Law or a set of rules to follow. The brokenness of sin occurs before Moses receives the Law at Mt. Sinai. Hence, sin is more about the experience of brokenness when we or others act to cause harm against someone. This results in pain, suffering, and death. Paul sees Adam as a metaphorical foreshadowing of a future human (Jesus) who will come to restore what is broken.

This week, spend some time praying over the brokenness in your life, your relationships, and the world around you. Ask God to enter into your hurt and to bring healing to your pain. Scars will remain, but God's goodness is there.

PRACTICE:
Spend time and empathize with someone who is hurting.