

Seeds and plants



Genesis 1 : 11-13, 20-25

God created the plants and also the animals. To each species he allocated suitable living space and nourishment. He also determined how they would multiply and spread.

A reverent attitude towards the creator of all life is fostered in the children. They understand that God has prepared living space and nourishment for each living creature. He has also seen to their preservation and propagation.

Andrea has really looked forward to this day. She may finally sow some seeds! Her mother helps her to prepare the soil. "The finer and lighter the soil is, the sooner the flowers will grow into beautiful plants," she tells her. Patiently Andrea crumbles the larger clods of earth and removes the stones. When she has smoothed down the soil again, she carefully takes a seed into her hands and studies it. "How small it is, and to think that it will turn into a real flower!" Mother shows her how deep and how far apart the seeds should be pressed into the soil. Diligently Andrea follows her example. Then Mother hands her a watering-can and the little gardener may water her flower-bed for the first time. "That's it. We have finished for today," announces Mother. "But you will have to water them regularly so that your little flowers can grow."

1

After an hour or so Andrea starts poking around in the soil. "What are you doing?" Mother asks. "I am looking to see whether I can see some greenery already, but nothing has grown yet," is the child's disappointed reply. Mother explains that a plant needs time and peace to grow. "One cannot dig around in the soil, otherwise you may damage the delicate roots," she tells Andrea. But it is very difficult to be patient. Mother has a good idea. She places a bean on a piece of

damp cottonwool. It germinates after a few days and shortly afterwards the first delicate green shoots appear above the earth in Andrea's little garden. Andrea claps her hands excitedly. She suddenly feels responsible for her little garden. She wants to show this miracle to everyone; also her teddy bear is allowed to look at it a few times. Soon the first leaves appear on the delicate stalks. Mother explains to her that, at first, no one knows how such a little plant will actually develop. "You can put it in a flower-pot though and check regularly on how it develops and grows stronger. One day the plant will reward your patience with beautiful flowers."

On watering the plants today, Andrea notices something moving between the leaves. She gets a terrible shock! On taking a closer look, she discovers a caterpillar crawling along the stalk. Andrea does not dare touch the caterpillar as it has such strange little hairs sticking up which could prick her or perhaps sting her skin. Then the little girl discovers leaves which have been eaten away. "This monster has feasted on my plants and eaten my flowers!" Resolutely she takes the caterpillar and puts it in a small box. Her parents can decide what to do with it.

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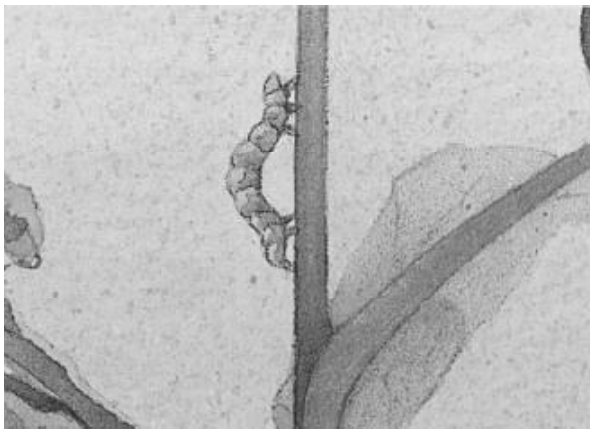
Andrea almost forgot about the caterpillar in its box prison. It is evening already when she remembers it. She takes the box to her father who looks at the caterpillar and says seriously: "It's a good thing it is still alive. Although it is small and

God is the Creator

unspectacular, it nevertheless contains a miracle. Look at it closely! Don't you think it looks pretty? It can't help that it ate the leaves of your plants. The dear Lord made it so that it can only live off the leaves of certain plants. What shall we do with it?"

"I know! I will feed it and break off some of the leaves – there are enough after all," Andrea decides.
Until Andrea goes to bed, her father tells her about some of the other animals which the Lord has created. There are so very many!

3



God created the plants and the animals.

1 We speak to the children about the mystery of life which God has laid into seeds. Different seeds, fruit, too, perhaps, can serve as visual material.

A seed contains a mysterious form of life from which a new plant can develop. It preserves the life of its species.

There are innumerable kinds of plants. Each plant carries its own seed. For instance, a pear-tree cannot grow from an apple pit.

Each plant requires certain conditions to grow: soil consistency and climate. (People sow and nurture the plants, but God's blessing allows them to flourish.)

Seeds also serve as nourishment for animal and man (wheat/beans/maize).

One could, perhaps, sow a rapidly growing plant with the children.

2 We look at the picture. God has provided nourishment for each animal. What comment did Andrea's parents make to Andrea having imprisoned the caterpillar? (Several points of view are possible.)

3 The children tell freely of animals and experiences with animals. Some of the animals could be drawn and then cut out as preparation for the next lesson. The picture in the children's book may be added to with more pictures of animals or plants.