



# CAIN & ABEL

GENESIS 4:1-16

## GOAL

- ▶ To help children understand that sin is bad, and love is important. The story of Cain and Abel emphasizes the importance of loving and worshiping God, while highlighting the dangers of anger and jealousy. Scripture uses the example of Cain as a warning for all believers (1 John 3:12).
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## GOSPEL HIGHLIGHT

- ▶ In Hebrews 11:4, we are told that Abel brought to God an offering by faith and was accepted, while Cain did not and was rejected. Later in Hebrews 11:6, we are told “without faith, it is impossible to please God.” To be accepted by God, we must place our faith in His Son, Jesus Christ and His finished work upon the cross.
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## CHARACTERS

- ▶ **Cain:** Cain was a farmer and the oldest son of Adam and Eve. Cain is remembered as the world’s first murderer, killing his brother out of jealousy. Cain rejected God’s warnings and received God’s judgement.

**Abel:** Abel was the second son of Adam and Eve and Cain’s younger brother. Abel was a shepherd, remembered for bringing God a pleasing sacrifice from his flock. Jesus referred to Abel as the first martyr in Matthew 23:35.

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## WORDS TO KNOW

- ▶ **Murder:** The unlawful and unjustified taking of another human life. Man was originally created to live in harmony with their creator and each other. With sin, this harmony was disrupted and murder entered into the human story. Jesus taught that murder was more than a physical act, but a condition of the human heart (Matthew 5:21-26).

**Jealousy:** The act of becoming envious of another person because of something they have and we do not. In 1 Corinthians 13:4, we are told that true love does not envy. Jealousy ultimately shows that we are not content with what God has given us.

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MEMORY  
VERSE

▶ **1 John 4:19:** We love because He first loved us.

MEMORY  
VERSE  
MEANING

▶ **Read Genesis 4:1-16:** Explain that God is the One who teaches us how to love. Ask children for practical ways in which they can love other people. Then, explain that love is doing. Ask the question again, "What can you do to show people that you love them?" If they have trouble, you may wish to point out specific people whom they can love, such as parents, a lonely child at their school, and siblings.

OVERVIEW

▶ **Read Genesis 4:1-16:** Sometime after Adam and Eve sinned and were commanded to leave Eden, they began to have children. Their first two children were Cain, a farmer, and Abel, a shepherd. When the time came to bring their offerings to God, Cain brought fruit from the ground while Abel brought a firstborn from his flock. God accepted Abel's offering because it was made in faith (Hebrews 11:4), but He rejected Cain's offering. This rejection fueled the jealousy and anger that had taken root in Cain's heart, leading Cain to murder his brother, Abel.

Later, God confronted Cain about Abel's murder, to which Cain responded with the famous line, "Am I my brother's keeper?" God swiftly pronounced judgement upon Cain, saying that he would no longer be a farmer, but one cursed to wander.

SUGGESTIONS

▶ The story of Cain and Abel can be confusing, even for lifetime students of the Bible. The point of the story is not sibling rivalry or laws against murder. The point is that God is just, and He desires that people love Him. Cain didn't love Him, and God knew that. Cain showed his disinterest in God when his offering didn't contain the best of what he had.

To help children grasp God's love, emphasize how God did not kill Cain, even though Cain was a murderer. Instead, He protected him from harm. God punishes sin, but even in His punishment, He is just.

Children who have brothers or sisters may understand the feeling of sibling rivalry. Opening the lesson with this concept will help them to pay attention, and understand the seriousness of their own antagonistic feelings towards a sibling.

A major application of this lesson is that God cares little for a show of religion. He cares about the heart. There is a danger in teaching children to be rule-keepers without being God-lovers.



## PRE-LESSON ACTIVITY

### **Ages 5-7** Memory Verse Relay

Break students into two teams and have each team form a single-file line. When you say “Go!”, the two students at the front of the line race to the other side and raise their hand. Choose the student who got there first or is showing the best behavior and then have them recite this lesson’s memory verse, “We love because He first loved us.” After that, have the next student recite the memory verse. When a student finishes reciting the verse they can race back to their line and send the next person in line. The first team to have all students recite the memory verse wins.

**Ages 5-10** **Character Sticks Relay** | **Supplies:** *Four plastic cups; wide craft popsicle sticks; and a permanent marker.*

On two of the plastic cups, write Cain and then write Abel on the other two. On the popsicle sticks, write characteristics about Cain and Abel (e.g., farmer, shepherd, angry, loved God, etc.). Make two sets of popsicle sticks so each team has the same characteristics to decipher. Divide the class into two teams. Set the cups up at the front of the room and place each set of popsicle sticks in front of each team, face down, so the students can’t see what is written on them. One student from each team will flip over one of the popsicle sticks, determine who it is describing, and run up to the front of the room to put the popsicle stick in either the Cain or Abel cup for their team. Continue until the first team has flipped all of the popsicle sticks and placed them in the appropriate cups. The first team to correctly place all of their sticks into the cups wins.

### **Ages 8-10** Crouching At The Door

Choose one student to be a jumper. This student is “it” and can move by taking big jumps. The rest of the kids will line up on one side of the classroom on their knees to start. The jumper starts the game crouched down low and yells: “Go!” At that point, the rest of the class must move on their knees from one side of the classroom to the other. If they are tagged by the jumper, they become a jumper and can move around with big jumps tagging students. The game continues until all students have become jumpers. After the game, remind your students of Genesis 4:7 “If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it.”



## POST-LESSON ACTIVITY

**Ages 5-7** “Offering Race” or “Lamb-orghini” | **Supplies:** *A piece of plastic fruit and a stuffed animal (preferably a lamb).*

This game is played like red light, green light. The teacher starts on one side of the room with a stuffed lamb in one hand and a piece of plastic fruit in the other. Next, the teacher places both hands behind their back and has all students line up on the other side of the room. When the teacher shows the students the lamb, they may slowly move forward. When the teacher shows the fruit, the students must stop. Any students who move when the fruit is shown must go back to the start. The first student to make it all the way to the teacher wins.

**Ages 5-10** **Giving to God** | **Supplies:** *Paper, and pencils or pens.*

Encourage children to think of something that they can give to God and write it on their piece of paper. If students get stuck, provide them with some suggestion, such as giving to the church offering or volunteering time to a ministry. Encourage students to take their offering papers home and put them in a prominent place like on top of their dresser or taped to a bathroom mirror. If you want to take this activity to the next level, create a tracking sheet on your classroom wall. Have each student draw a picture of what they will be offering and write their name on it. Hang all of the illustrations up together on the tracking sheet. The next week, use this sheet to touch base with your students, or have them get up in front of the class and share how their Giving to God went.

**Ages 8-10** **Offering Basket Toss** | **Supplies:** *4 buckets, masking tape and an equal number of large plastic fruits and stuffed animals.*

Break students into two teams. On one side of the room, draw the shooting line. On the other side of the room, draw the basket line. On the shooting line, give one team a bucket of plastic fruit and the other team a bucket of stuffed animals. Across from each team, place an empty bucket on the basket line. When the game starts, students will take turns trying to throw plastic fruit or a stuffed animal (depending on their team) from the shooting line into their corresponding basket on the basket line. Students who aren't shooting can collect their team's missed shots. The first team to shoot all of their items into their corresponding basket wins.



TAKE  
HOME



As you review the story of Cain and Abel with your children, discuss with them the following questions:

**1. Are we following the example of Cain?** It's important to remind your class that Cain's evil act began in his heart. The Bible teaches us in 1 John 3:15 "Anyone who hates a brother or sister is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life residing in him." The Holy Spirit is faithful to let us know when jealousy, envy or anger is beginning to take root in our heart's. We should respond to the Spirit's leading with repentance!

**2. What kind of Sacrifice are we offering?** God knows our hearts. We should give to God with open and happy hearts. Giving to God should not be a chore that we don't want to do. Giving is a way to act on our love for God.

**3. Are we mastering sin or being mastered by it?** God warned Cain that sin desired to have him, but that he should master it. As Christians, we can live victoriously over temptation and sin. Revelation 12:11 tells us "And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony." This verse reminds us that our victory over Satan comes not by our strength, but by the work of Jesus and the testimony of what he has done in our lives.



## QUESTION & ANSWER

### SLIDE 1



**Q1a:** What were the names of Adam and Eve's sons?

**A1:** Adam and Eve were parents to Cain and Abel.

**Q1b:** Do you have any brother or sisters?

**TN:** Siblings can be a lot of fun, but sometimes they can be difficult to get along with. Even when we are mad at them, they are family, and we love them. It is important to remember that we are family and we should always be there for each other.

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### SLIDE 2



**Q2a:** What did Cain and Abel like to do?

**A2:** Cain became a farmer and Abel became a shepherd.

**Q2b:** Can you be friends with people who only like the same things as you?

**TN:** That would get boring after awhile. People with different interests help us to expand our knowledge and view of the world. Having things in common is the starting place of friendship, but it doesn't mean we shouldn't be friends. Cain and Abel liked different things, but surely they had things in common.



## QUESTION & ANSWER

### SLIDE 3



**Q3a:** What did Abel give to God as a sacrifice?

**A3:** Abel gave God his best sheep as a sacrifice.

**Q3b:** For your birthday, your friend gives you a video game she doesn't like anymore. Is this a good gift?

**TN:** Well, it depends. If you showed interest in the game, then it's not bad. If she knew you didn't like the game either, but didn't want to come to your birthday party empty handed, so she wrapped up something she didn't care about, then it's not a good gift. Sometimes all that we have to offer doesn't seem like much, but what matters more than the actual present is where our heart is when we decide to give it. When we give to God, we should be happy to give it, and it should be the best that we can give. God wants us to be cheerful givers. Giving to God shows that we are grateful for all that He gives to us.

### SLIDE 4



**Q4a:** What did Cain do to Abel?

**A4:** Cain killed Abel.

**Q4b:** If you accidentally broke something in a store that has video cameras, do you think they would find out what you did?

**TN:** It's on video, so yes, the staff would be able to determine that we broke the item. They have video cameras in the store so they can see just those sorts of things happen. God is with us all the time, so He knows everything that we do and say. Deeper still, God knows our hearts, so He knows our feelings and thoughts about ourselves and others. With God, we cannot hide from our actions, and we cannot deceive Him.



## QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 5



**Q5a:** Where did Cain settle?

**A5:** Cain settled in the land of Nod.

**Q5b:** When we sin, does God want to punish us like He did Cain?

**TN:** No! Through Jesus Christ's sacrifice on the cross, we are forgiven. When we sin, we should apologize to God and ask Him to help us to never do it again. When we fall, Jesus is always with us to help get us get back up again and try to do better next time. There is nothing we can do that will ever separate us from God's love.





**MEMORY  
VERSE**

▶ **1 John 4:19:** We love because He first loved us.

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**BIG IDEA**

▶ We should give God our best and we should give it with a happy heart because we love Him.

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**CLOSING  
PRAYER**

▶ God, thank You for Your love. Help us to love others as You love us. Help our love for You to be real, and not just for show. We ask these things in Jesus' name, Amen.



## LESSON TRANSCRIPT

### SLIDE 1



After the fall, God banished Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden. Life was hard, and the work was difficult. But just as God had promised, Eve gave birth to a son and named him Cain. Cain was the first born. Then she had a second son and called him Abel.

### SLIDE 2-3



As the boys grew up, they showed interest in different things. Abel loved animals and became a shepherd. Cain, on the other hand, became a farmer and grew plants and food for the family.



### SLIDE 4-6



Both Cain and Abel were supposed to pray to God and thank Him for His provision. Abel loved God and it showed by the beautiful offering he brought. He gave God his best sheep as a sacrifice. Cain brought some of his crop, which probably wasn't even his best. But God loved Abel's offering more. When Cain saw this, he became very jealous and angry. God seemed to like Abel more than Cain, and this stirred up more hatred in Cain's heart.





## LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 7-9



Cain's heart was wicked, and his jealousy made him do an evil thing: He planned to kill his own brother. While out in the field one day, Cain fought with his brother and killed him. Cain's jealousy turned his anger into rage, and he murdered his own flesh and blood. Cain forgot that God knew everything, even what he did in secret. Now Cain was really in trouble. God spoke to Cain. "Cain! Where is Abel your brother?" Cain was scared. Did God know? "I don't know!" Cain lied to God. "Am I supposed to guard my brother all the time?" God was not fooled. "What have you done? I know that you've killed your brother, Abel."

SLIDE 10-11



God then cursed Cain and banished him. No longer would Cain be able to plant and harvest any crops, no matter how hard he worked. Even in this punishment, God protected Cain by placing a special mark on him. This mark meant that anyone who killed Cain would be severely punished. From that day on, Cain became a fugitive on the earth. He settled in the land of Nod, far from his family and far from God's pleasure. Cain's punishment would last the rest of his life.