



CAIN AND ABEL

Genesis 4:1-16

After they were forced to leave the perfect abode God had created in the garden of Eden, Adam and Eve had children. In the garden, Adam and Eve experienced daily communion with God. Now, that communion had ended and the consequences of their sin covered their world. Toil and labor were immediate consequences of their sin. Work became toilsome and tiring, the ground did not yield its produce, and death entered creation.

The story of Cain and Abel highlights the destructive power of sin. The two sons could not have been any more different. Cain was a tiller of the ground, and Abel was a shepherd. It is possible that God had already instituted the offering of sacrifices as a way to maintain fellowship with Him. Both Cain and Abel brought offerings before God as a part of their worship.

God accepted Abel's offering, but rejected Cain's offering. No commentary is given explaining why one offering was accepted and the other was not. It's likely that God had implemented a sacrificial system at this point, and with that, He would have given clear instructions to the worshipers about making those sacrifices. God gave Cain another chance to make the appropriate offering. Instead of making things right, Cain became furious and ultimately killed his brother.

As with the sin in the garden, this sin also carried consequences. Cain and his descendants would suffer a lifetime of hard toil to make the ground yield crops. Cain's family would also become wanderers with nowhere to call their home. Cain moved away and settled in the land east of the garden.

God described sin as crouching at the door. This visual gives the idea that sin is always lurking. We all struggle with the temptation to sin. Help kids know that God calls us to obey Him and resist the temptation to sin. Guide boys and girls to know that God wants us to turn away from sin and to love God and others.

SESSION FOCUS

BIBLE PASSAGE: Genesis 4:1-16

MEMORY VERSE: Genesis 1:27

BONUS VERSE: James 4:7

TEXT TRUTH: God wants us to turn away from sin.

BIBLE SKILLS SPOTLIGHT: Name the divisions of the Old and New Testaments. Locate all books of the Bible using the table of contents page. Use other tools for learning from the Bible, including Bible-learning apps, Bible dictionaries, and maps.

BIBLE STUDY

(35 MINUTES)

- Jump In:** “*Objects: Sacrifice of Cain and Abel Plaque*” (Printables)
- Examine the Text:** Item 5: “*Text Truth 3*” (Poster Pack), Bibles, balloon, “*Allergy Alert*” (Printables), “*The Gospel: God’s Plan for Me*” (Printables)
- Play the Video:** *Explore the Bible on Location video*
- Memory Verse:** Item 1: “*Genesis 1:27*” (Poster Pack), disposable straws, cotton balls, sticky notes, painter’s tape, timer
- Prayer:** *Family Cards*

APPLY THE TRUTH

(20 MINUTES)

- Explorer Guides:** *Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens*
- Review:** “*Review Questions*” (Printables), *offering plate or basket, strips of paper, marker*

To order the *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary for Kids* (Item No. 005268545), call Lifeway’s Customer Service at 1.800.458.2772 or order online at www.lifeway.com.

ACTIVITIES

(20 MINUTES)

- Bible Skills:** “*Bible Book Cards*” (Printables), Item 13: “*Bible Divisions*” (Poster Pack), *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary for Kids or other Bible dictionary*
- Move:** *none*
- Make:** “*Compass*” (Printables), *9-inch paper plates (one per kid), hole punch, crayons, glue, chenille stems, brads, kid-scissors*
- Explore:** “*Surh Family Photo*” (Printables); *lined paper; crayons, colored pencils, or colored gel pens in 7 or 8 colors*

Leaders, grow on the go! Listen to session-by-session training every week on Ministry Grid, Apple Podcasts, Spotify, or visit goexplorethebible.com/kids-training.

CAIN AND ABEL

Genesis 4:1-16

After they left the garden of Eden, Adam and Eve had two sons—Cain and Abel. Cain was a farmer, and Abel was a shepherd.

One day, Cain brought some of the things he grew as an offering to God. Abel also brought an offering to God. Abel brought God the firstborn of his flock. The LORD accepted Abel's offering, but God did not accept Cain's offering. Cain was angry and looked very discouraged.

The LORD asked Cain, "Why are you angry? Why do you look so discouraged? You know what the right thing to do is. Be careful. Sin wants to be in charge of you, but you must resist sin."

Sadly, Cain did not listen to God. Later, Cain said to Abel, "Let's go out to the field." While they were in the field, Cain hurt his brother and killed him.

The LORD came to Cain and asked, "Where is your brother, Abel?"

Cain lied and said, "I don't know."

But God knew the truth. God knew exactly what Cain had done, and sin always has consequences. God told Cain, "From now on, if you try to be a farmer, the ground will not grow anything for you. You will leave your home and wander the earth." But God showed mercy to Cain and promised that no one would kill Cain. So, Cain left his home.

God saw Adam and Eve's loss of their two sons. Later, God gave Adam and Eve another son that they named Seth.

God did not want Cain to sin. He warned Cain to resist sin. God also wants us to obey Him. And God warns us to resist the temptation to sin.

CHRIST IN CONTEXT:

The book of Genesis is a book of beginnings. In the beginning, God created a perfect world. Sin separated mankind from God and showed that people need a Savior. God called Abraham and promised him that one day his descendants would be God's special people and one day, He would send a Messiah—Jesus—to rescue them.

TOOLS:

- Jump In: "Objects: Sacrifice of Cain and Abel Plaque" (Printables)
- Examine the Text: Item 5: "Text Truth 3" (Poster Pack), Bibles, balloon, "Allergy Alert" (Printables), "The Gospel: God's Plan for Me" (Printables)
- Play the Video: Explore the Bible on Location video
- Memory Verse: Item 1: "Genesis 1:27" (Poster Pack), disposable straws, cotton balls, sticky notes, painter's tape, timer
- Prayer: Family Cards

BIBLE STUDY (35 MINUTES)

Need an Opening Activity? Choose one of the activities in the *Activities* section and adapt it to introduce the session.

JUMP IN

- Ask: "Have you ever been angry?" (*Allow kids to respond.*)
- Say: "Let's pretend this balloon is how we feel when we're angry."
- Blow up the balloon until it is fully filled with air, then hold the opening closed with your fingers.
- Say: "Sometimes when we feel angry, we let our anger and frustration come out and we do or say things that we shouldn't."
- Continue: "This balloon is full of all of our feelings. When we let them out quickly..." (*Release the balloon.*) "We act out of control, just like this flying balloon."
- Ask: "Can you think of someone in the Bible whose anger led them to do something they shouldn't?" (*Allow kids to respond.*)
- Display the "Sacrifice of Cain and Abel Plaque."
- Ask: "Who do you think is displayed here?" (*Allow kids to respond.*)
- Say: "Cain and Abel are displayed on the plaque. They were brothers."
- Say: "One day, Cain became very angry. He chose to do something that God warned him to resist."

EXAMINE THE TEXT

- Direct kids to open their Bibles to Genesis 4.
- Remind the group that Genesis is one of the first five books of the Bible, which are the books in the law genre.
- Explain that the books of the law help us to see that God has rules for His people.
- Tell the Bible story in your own words, using the Bible story page as a guide.
- Say: "After Cain became angry, God spoke to him."
- Ask: "Do you remember what God said?"
- Read Genesis 4:6-7 aloud.
- Say: "God warned Cain to resist sin. God told Cain that he needed to rule over it."
- Ask: "Did Cain listen to God?" (*No.*)
- Display the Text Truth.
- Say: "**God wants us to turn away from sin** too."
- Continue: "Cain chose to disobey God, but he didn't have to. God told Cain to do what was right. God wanted Cain to turn away from sin."
- Say: "God also wants us to do what is right. We can choose to obey God or disobey Him."
- Briefly review the price of sin and the good news of Jesus using "The Gospel: God's Plan for Me."

PLAY THE VIDEO

- Play the Session 3 video.
- Inquire: “Who wants to play laser tag with Cole? Who wants to play laser tag with Joel? Why do you think God wants us to resist sin?”

MEMORY VERSE

- *Bonus Verse Option: The Memory Verse activity each week is focused on the monthly Memory Verse, Genesis 1:27. If your kids quickly memorize the Memory Verse, you may opt to challenge them to learn an additional weekly Bonus Verse. This week’s Bonus Verse is James 4:7.*
- *Tape a line on the floor in the middle of the room. Place a sticky note over each word on the “Genesis 1:27” poster. Place cotton balls, one cotton ball per word of the Memory Verse, on one side of the line several feet away from the line.*
 - Remind the group that Cain was a farmer and Abel was a shepherd.
 - Ask: “Do you know what shepherds do?” (*Allow kids to respond.*)
 - Say: “Shepherds take care of their sheep. They protect them and herd, or guide, them where they need to go.”
 - Explain that the kids are going to be shepherds today and herd some sheep (*cotton balls*).
 - Distribute the disposable straws.
 - Say: “When I say ‘Go,’ blow through your straw at the cotton balls and herd them across the line.”
 - Explain that the group will have 30 seconds to herd their sheep.
 - Display the “Genesis 1:27” poster with the sticky notes covering the words.
 - Say: “For every cotton ball that crosses the line, I will remove one sticky note from the Memory Verse poster.”
 - After the time has passed, count the cotton balls and remove that number of sticky notes from the poster.
 - Then, lead the kids in reading the Memory Verse poster aloud, skipping over any words that are still covered.
 - Allow the group to play the game again, trying to get more cotton balls across the line in order to remove more sticky notes.
 - Continue playing until the Memory Verse is completely revealed.

PRAYER

- Remind the kids that God wanted Cain to resist sin.
- Say: **“God wants us to turn away from sin.”**
- Brainstorm with the group different ways that they can resist sin. (*Some examples are praying, reading the Bible, memorizing Bible verses, and so on.*)
- Distribute the Family Cards.
- Encourage the group to use their cards to share the story of Cain and Abel with someone this week.
- Pray for the group, asking God to help the kids resist sin.

APPLY THE TRUTH (20 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

- Explorer Guides: Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens
- Review: "Review Questions" (Printables), offering plate or basket, strips of paper, marker

EXPLORER GUIDES

- Distribute Explorer Guides and help kids locate today's pages.
- Select a volunteer to read about this week's object, the "Sacrifice of Cain and Abel Plaque."
- Lead girls and boys to discover "What Doesn't Belong?" in the picture of today's Bible story.
- Direct kids to examine "You Have Your Mother's Eyes."
- Help boys and girls complete the "Genesis 4 Review." (*Answers: sons, offerings, Abel's, Cain's, angry, resist, listen*)
- Invite volunteers to read aloud "All About Abel."

REVIEW

□ **Write the "Review Questions" on strips of paper. Fold the strips and place them into the offering plate or basket.**

- Ask: "Do you remember what Cain brought as an offering to God?" (*some of the things he grew*)
- Ask: "Do you remember what Abel brought as an offering to God?" (*the firstborn of his flock*)
- Remind the group that both Cain and Abel brought offerings to God, but God did not accept Cain's offering. He only accepted Abel's offering.
- Say: "In some churches, offerings to God are placed in an offering plate or basket."
- Continue: "Instead of passing the basket to collect offerings, we're going to pass the basket and choose a strip of paper."
- Explain that each of the "Review Questions" have been written on strips of paper and placed in the basket.
- Say: "When the basket gets to you, pick a strip of paper."
- Continue: "After you choose the paper, read the question aloud and answer it."
- If the question is answered incorrectly, allow the group to work together to correctly answer the question.
- Continue passing the basket, picking a question and answering it until all the questions have been answered.

ACTIVITIES (20 MINUTES)

- Select one or more of the activities to complete as time allows.



KNOWING TRUTH

Tools: “Bible Book Cards” (Printables), Item 13: “Bible Divisions” (Poster Pack), Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary for Kids or other Bible dictionary

- ❑ Cut apart the “Bible Book Cards” and the “Bible Division” labels. Display the “Bible Divisions” poster.
- Remind the kids that Cain lied to God about where Abel was, but God knew the truth.
- Ask: “How can we know truth?” (Allow kids to respond.)
- Ask: “Where can we find truth?” (Allow kids to respond.)
- Say: “One place where we can always find truth is in the Bible.”
- Continue: “Let’s work together and learn more about God’s Word.”
- Look up the word *Bible* in the *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary for Kids*.
- Read the definition aloud.
- Remind the group that there are two main parts of the Bible—the Old Testament and the New Testament.
- Look up the words *Old Testament* in the Bible dictionary and read the definition aloud. Point out the Bible divisions of the Old Testament located on the page.
- Repeat the previous step for the words *New Testament*.
- Explain that Bible divisions help us to understand how the books of the Bible are arranged and what some of the books have in common.
- Direct the kids to put the Old and New Testament books into the correct divisions using the “Bible Divisions” poster and the Bible dictionary.
- Encourage the kids to always use the Bible as their source of truth.



FOLLOWING COMMANDS

Tools: none

❑ This game is played like “Simon Says.”

- Direct the group to stand in a line. Choose one kid to be the leader.
- Direct the leader to say, “Leader says” and give simple commands for the other kids to follow. (For example, “Leader says touch your nose.” Or “Leader says spin in a circle.”)
- The leader should also give commands without saying “Leader says.” If the kids follow the commands without the leader saying, “Leader says,” then they should sit down.
- Continue playing until there is one kid left. They are now the new leader.
- Play again as time allows.
- Say: “In the game, you had to listen for the right command to follow. If you followed the wrong command, you were out.”
- Continue: “Just like you knew the right thing to do in our game, Cain knew the right thing to do.”
- Say: “God told Cain to resist sin, but Cain didn’t listen.”
- Remind the group of the Text Truth: **God wants us to turn away from sin.**
- Explain that when we listen to God, we can turn away from sin.



PRONE TO WANDER

Tools: “Compass” (Printables), 9-inch paper plates (one per kid), hole punch, crayons, glue, chenille stems, brads, kid-scissors

- Hole punch the center of the plate and the “Compass.”
- Remind the kids that as a consequence of Cain’s sin, God told him that he would wander the earth.
- Ask: “Have you ever gotten lost and had to wander until you found your way?”
- Say: “Sometimes people use a compass to help them from getting lost. A compass shows you which direction you are going.”
- Explain that the group is going to make their own compass to remind them of Cain and Abel.
- Distribute the plates, compasses, crayons, glue, chenille stems, and brads.
- Direct the kids to color their plate.
- Guide kids to cut out their compass.
- Next, lead the kids to glue their compass to the front of their plate, aligning the holes.
- Instruct the group to bend their chenille stem in half to represent the needle on a compass.
- The kids should then put their brad ends around the bent end of the stem and then through the compass and plate.
- Affix the brad to the plate.
- Ask for a volunteer to read the Text Truth from the compass.
- Remind the group that **God wants us to turn away from sin.**
- Say: “When we are tempted to disobey God, we can use our compass as a reminder to always listen to God and follow Him.”



CHROMA PRAYER ART

Tools: “Surh Family Photo” (Printables); lined paper; crayons, colored pencils, or colored gel pens in 7 or 8 colors

- Say: “Columbus, Ohio, is home to over 900,000 people. Yet, only a little over 12 percent of the population is associated with any church. There is a growing population of Somalis, Nepalese, and Bhutanese people groups in the area. New churches are needed to reach these specific groups of people.”
- Show the photo.
- Explain that Isaac and Hannah Surh, with the support of two other couples, started a new church in the Columbus area in 2019. They met weekly to pray and seek God’s will for the new church. They named the church Chroma because it means “the intensity of color as it is illuminated by a light source.” They thought that name showed how important it is for people to show the light of Jesus and share the good news about Him to others. The pandemic in 2020 caused the church to meet virtually for a while and focus on building relationships. In 2021, the church was able to begin meeting in person in the suburb areas of Columbus.
- Distribute the paper and writing utensils. Lead kids to choose one color to write *Pray for Chroma Church* spread out across their papers. Then instruct kids to keep writing over the words with additional colors to create a rainbow effect on the words. Tell kids to place their papers in a place at home that will remind them to pray for Chroma Church and its leaders as they tell people about Jesus.
- Ask a volunteer to say a closing prayer for the Surh family and Chroma Church.