

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 calls us to obey Him and resist the temptation to sin.

BIBLE SKILLS SPOTLIGHT: Name the genres of the Bible and identify books in each genre.

BIBLE STUDY

(35 MINUTES)

- Jump In:** “Objects: Sacrifice of Cain and Abel Plaque” (Printables)
- Examine the Text:** Bibles, Item 5: “Text Truth 3” (Poster Pack)
- Play the Video:** *Explore the Bible on Location* video
- Memory Verse:** Item 1: “Genesis 1:27” (Poster Pack), sticky notes or copy paper and tape
- Prayer:** Family Cards, “Christ in Context: Genesis” (Printables)

APPLY THE TRUTH

(20 MINUTES)

- Explorer Guides:** Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens
- Review:** “Review Questions” (Printables)

ACTIVITIES

(20 MINUTES)

- Bible Skills:** Item 15: “Bible Genres” (Poster Pack), “Bible Book Cards” (Printables), tape, dry erase boards, dry erase markers, timer
- Move:** Bibles, paper plates, washable markers, dry erase board, dry erase marker, permanent markers, painter’s tape
- Make:** “Allergy Alert” (Printables), cereal boxes, glue, dry seeds in different colors, scissors, markers, magnet tape, Bible, Optional: thick cardstock
- 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: Bibles, Item 5: "Text Truth 3" (Poster Pack)
- Play the Video: Explore the Bible on Location video
- Memory Verse: Item 1: "Genesis 1:27" (Poster Pack), sticky notes or copy paper and tape
- Prayer: Family Cards, "Christ in Context: Genesis" (Printables)

LEADER TIP:

Do not act this story out!

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

- Welcome each boy and girl as they arrive with a high five!
- Ask the boys and girls that have siblings what their favorite thing about them is. Encourage kind remarks. If a child doesn't have a sibling, invite him to share his favorite thing about another family member or friend.
- Say: "We will be reading in the book of Genesis about Adam and Eve's two sons, Cain and Abel. Do you think Adam and Eve talked to their sons about having to leave the garden of Eden? Do you think they were honest with them about being tempted by the serpent and how their sin lead to them being kicked out?" (*Allow time for discussion.*)
- Guide the group to look at the "Sacrifice of Cain and Abel Plaque."
- Ask: "What do you think our object is made from?" (*ivory*) "What do you think Cain and Abel are doing here?"
- Say: "Our object shows Cain and Abel giving God offerings. After Adam and Eve left the garden, they had two sons. We will hear about their two sons, Cain and Abel."
- Continue: "Because Adam and Eve disobeyed God, sin entered the world. Do you think Cain and Abel learned from their parents' mistakes to resist sin? We will continue reading about the first family in the book of Genesis."

EXAMINE THE TEXT

- Say: "Today we are going to continue Adam and Eve's story and hear what happened with their sons."
- Direct the kids to open their Bibles to Genesis 4. Remind them that Genesis is the first book in the Bible and is in the law genre.
- Teach: "The books of the Bible are categorized into genres, which describe the type of writing something is. We learned that the books are also grouped into divisions, which describe how the Bible is organized."
- Share the first two paragraphs of the Bible story.
- Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 4:6-7.
- Ask: "Why do you think God accepted Abel's offering and not Cain's?" (*Allow kids to share.*)
- Share: "The book of Genesis doesn't say exactly why God did not accept Cain's offering. Later in the Bible, John mentions that Cain's deeds were evil (*1 John 3:12*). Cain, like us, had a problem with sin. Let's see if Cain listened to God's warning to resist sin."
- Share the rest of the story in your own words, using the Bible story page as a guide.
- Remind the boys and girls that God didn't want Cain to sin, and He even warned him. Sin always has a consequence.

- Display the Text Truth.
- Continue: **“God calls us to obey Him and resist the temptation to sin.** Cain was unable to grow anything and had to wander the earth. God is always fair and gracious, even when He punishes our sin. God doesn’t want us to sin, and this story is an example for us to resist the temptation to sin.”

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 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.***
- Before the session, cover the Memory Verse poster with either sticky notes or paper.***
 - Display the covered “Genesis 1:27” poster.
 - Ask if there are any volunteers who can say the verse without the help of the poster.
 - Uncover the poster.
 - If anyone was able to recite the Memory Verse, allow them to pick a fun way for the group to say the verse (*whisper, robot style, shouting, super slow, super-duper fast, cowboy style, and so on*).
 - If you have multiple boys and girls that can say the verse without the help of the poster, allow each kid to pick a fun way for the group to say the verse together.

PRAYER

- Distribute the Family Cards and direct kids to look at the picture on the card.
- Ask: “Now that you have read and heard the Bible story, does this picture have a greater meaning to you than when you first saw it?” (*Allow kids to answer*.)
- Display the “Christ in Context: Genesis” statement and emphasize that God loves us even when we sin. God is just in giving us consequences when we do sin. God wants us to turn from temptation and not sin.
- Pray, asking God to help each boy and girl to turn from the temptation to sin. Thank God for sending His Son, Jesus, to take the punishment for our sin so that we can be forgiven.

APPLY THE TRUTH (20 MINUTES)

TOOLS:

- Explorer Guides: Bibles, Explorer Guides, pens
- Review: "Review Questions" (Printables)

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 "Cain and Abel Crossword."
- Invite volunteers to read aloud about "The Good, The Bad, and the Angry."

REVIEW

- Invite kids to take turns answering a few of this week's "Review Questions."
- Say: "When Cain's sacrifice was refused, the Bible tells us Cain was furious. God reminded Cain that he knew what was right. Do you ever know what is right and chose to do what is wrong anyway? Do you ever do the right thing with the wrong attitude? Think about your answers to these three questions."
- Ask: "When you are singing songs in church, do you sing with the right attitude? When you are praying, do you rush so that you can do something else? When you have the chance to tell your friends about Jesus, do you?"
- Say: "Cain could have done the right thing with the right attitude. Cain could have resisted the temptation to sin and obeyed God, but he didn't. This week, remember Cain and Abel as a reminder to resist temptation and obey God. God's way is always better than our way."

ACTIVITIES (20 MINUTES)

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



BIBLE GENRES

Tools: Item 15: “Bible Genres” (Poster Pack), “Bible Book Cards” (Printables), tape, dry erase boards, dry erase markers, timer

- Tape the “Bible Genres” poster to a focal wall. Cut apart the “Bible Book Cards,” and place tape on the back of each card.
- Write the genres of the Bible on the dry erase board. Leave room underneath each genre for kids to attach the cards.
- Remind the boys and girls that the word *genre* describes the type of writing something is.
- Say: “Each book of the Bible falls into a genre.”
- Say: “I am going to give you 60 seconds to look at the ‘Bible Genres’ poster. When I say ‘Go,’ you are going to work together to tape as many of the ‘Bible Book Cards’ under the correct genre as you can.”
- Encourage the boys and girls to work together.
- When you say “Go,” remove the poster or cover it up and allow the kids five minutes to play.
- When time is up, enlist a volunteer to correct any books that are in the wrong genre as you read the poster aloud.
- Say: “The Bible is God’s plan to rescue us. It is filled with true stories that teach us how to live so that we can bring glory to God.”
- End by reviewing the Text Truth: **God calls us to obey Him and resist the temptation to sin.**



JAMES 4:7

Tools: Bibles, paper plates, washable markers, dry erase board, dry erase marker, permanent markers, painter’s tape

- Divide James 4:7 into seven sections and write them on a dry erase board.
- Create a taped line on one side of the room for kids to aim their paper plates at.
- Review the Text Truth: **God calls us to obey Him and resist the temptation to sin.**
- Invite a volunteer to read James 4:7 from a Bible.
- Group the boys and girls into teams and provide each team with markers and seven paper plates.
- Guide them to write the Memory Verse on the paper plates.
- Say: “Your task is to work together to toss the plates across the tape line and get them in the correct order to form the verse.”
- Spread the groups out and allow them time to get their team’s verse in order.
- When each team has their verse in order, encourage them to say the verse together as a team.



GROW

Tools: “Allergy Alert” (Printables), cereal boxes, glue, dry seeds in different colors, scissors, markers, magnet tape, Bible, Optional: thick cardstock

- Cut large squares from the cereal boxes for each boy and girl. Cut pieces of magnet tape for kids to put on their craft at the end.
 - Optional: Substitute thick cardstock for the cereal box squares.
- Say: “Cain was a farmer. God didn’t accept what he gave as an offering, and Cain became angry. Because Cain couldn’t resist sin, he killed his brother. God did show mercy to Cain, though, but Cain had to leave his home.”
 - Explain that the kids are going to cut their squares into a smaller shape of their choice.
 - Invite a volunteer to read James 4:7 from a Bible.
 - Continue: “When we stay focused on God in our lives every day, we can resist temptation. We can turn to God, ask Him for help, and rely on Him.”
 - Guide the group to write *James 4:7* on their shape and then glue the seeds around it.
 - Say: “Put your seed magnet on your fridge as a reminder to resist sin and grow your faith in Jesus.”
 - Review the Text Truth: **God calls us to obey Him and resist the temptation to sin.**



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.