



## Session 3



# 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

### TEXT TRUTH

Love God and love others.

### BIBLE STORY

Genesis 4:1-16

### BIBLE VERSE

Matthew 22:37,39

### CHRIST IN CONTEXT

Genesis is a book about beginnings—the beginning of the world, the beginning of a people chosen by God, and the beginning of God’s plan to restore all people to Him through His Son, Jesus.

### BIBLE SKILLS: Preschoolers will . . .

- Hear that the Bible has poems, songs, letters, and stories about people and events.
- Begin to recognize names of books in the Bible.



### CONNECT WITH FAMILIES

Provide these weekly resources to help families explore the Bible together.

- Explore the Bible at Home (available on Ministry Grid)
- Preschool Activity Page
- Preschool Family Card

## MISSIONS ACTIVITY: WRITE TO A MISSIONARY



*Tools: Bible, paper, markers, crayons, envelopes, old computer keyboard (opt.), old cell phone (without battery)*

- Place the items on a table. When a child seems interested, talk to him about ways he communicates with other people. Point to the computer keyboard and cell phone.
- Say: “People often use a computer to send a message to a friend. Or a person might call on the phone or send a text message. Sometimes people write cards and notes to mail to others.”
- Continue: “Missionaries like to read letters from people at home. We can write to a missionary and tell her that we are praying for her. Maybe you can draw a picture for the missionary.”
- While preschoolers “write” messages and draw pictures, tell children you will mail their cards and letters to some missionaries.

### LEADER TIP!

Include this special missions-focused activity in addition to preschoolers’ Bible Explorations.

**TEXT TRUTH**

Love God and love others.

**BIBLE STORY**

Two Brothers: Cain and Abel  
Genesis 4:1-16

**BIBLE VERSE**

Love God with all your heart,  
and love others.  
Matthew 22:37,39

**TWO BROTHERS: CAIN AND ABEL****Genesis 4:1-16**

*God gave children to Adam and Eve—two boys—one named Cain and one named Abel.*

*The brothers grew and learned to work along with their parents. The first son, Cain, became a farmer, and he grew crops. This was the work Cain did in his family.*

*The second son, Abel, took care of the flocks of animals. This was Abel's work in his family.*

*When it was time to give an offering to God, Cain gathered some of the produce from the land he farmed. This was the offering Cain gave to God.*

*Abel chose to give an animal, a lamb from the sheep flock, to God.*

*God was very pleased that Abel chose to give the lamb as his offering. God knew Abel loved and obeyed God.*

*But God was not pleased with Cain's offering. God knew Cain did not love and obey God the way he should.*

*Cain was upset and angry. He was mad because God accepted Abel's offering. Why did God not want Cain's offering? Cain wanted to get back at his brother Abel.*

*Cain made a plan. Cain told his brother to meet him in a field. There, Cain attacked his brother, Abel, and Abel died.*

*God knew what Cain had done and God was angry. God punished Cain. Cain would no longer be a farmer or live with his family. Cain would have to find a new place to live.*

**LEADER TIP**

You choose! Are your preschoolers ready to learn memory verses? Decide which wording of the session Bible verse you want to use with your group.

**BIBLE VERSE**

From the Bible text:

*Love God with all your heart, soul, and mind. Love your neighbor as yourself.  
Matthew 22:37,39*

Paraphrase:

*Love God with all your heart, and love others. Matthew 22:37,39*

## CIRCLE TIME (10–15 MINUTES, DEPENDING ON YOUR AGE GROUP)

### GATHER

- Greet preschoolers as they arrive. After everyone is seated, ask children to play a game with you. Say: “I have a toy animal and a toy food item. I want you to pass these items around the circle while music plays. When I stop the music, I will ask the friends holding the animal and food items to tell us something.”
- Give the items to two children in the circle, then play music. After a few seconds, stop the music and tell the children holding the items to name a food or name an animal.
- After playing two or three rounds, tell children to lay the items aside.

### HEAR THE BIBLE STORY

- Say: “This game helped me think about two brothers—one who grew crops and food, and the other who raised animals. Let’s listen to a true story about these men.”
- Tell the Bible story in your words as you hold the Bible open to Genesis 4. After the story, say: “Both brothers gave offerings to God. Can you remember who gave the grain offering?” (Cain) “Who gave the animal offering?” (Abel)
- Pass the Story Picture around the circle for children to view.

### PRACTICE BIBLE SKILLS

- Show preschoolers the Bible Book Name for *Genesis*. Say: “Our stories the past three weeks have been from the book of Genesis. Genesis is the first book of the Bible. Genesis teaches us about first things.”
- Lay Story Pictures 1–3 on the floor and ask children to tell what they remember about each story. Refer to the weekly Text Truths for help.
- Turn to Matthew 22:37,39 and lead preschoolers to say today’s Bible verse.

### PRAY

- Ask preschoolers to name a way that they can show their love to God. Suggest that showing love to others is a way to show love to God.
- Pray, asking God to show us ways we can love Him and show His love to others.

### TOOLS

- Bible
- Music & Print Extras
- toy animal
- toy food item

### PACK ITEMS

- 1 Story Picture: God Created the World
- 2 Story Picture: Adam and Eve in the Garden
- 3 Story Picture: Two Brothers: Cain and Abel
- 15 Fall Text Truths Poster
- 16 Text Truths Poster Add-ons
- 21 Bible Book Names



## EXPLORATION STATIONS (45-60 MINUTES)

Set up at least three stations to provide choices of multisensory activities and movement for busy preschoolers. Use the Bible in every exploration.

### TEXT TRUTH

Love God and love others.

### BIBLE STORY

Two Brothers: Cain and Abel  
Genesis 4:1-16

### BIBLE VERSE

Love God with all your heart  
and love others.  
Matthew 22:37,39

### PACK ITEMS

3 Story Picture: Two  
Brothers: Cain and Abel  
17 September Bible Markers  
22 Love God Puzzle

### LEADER TIP!

Use today's Bible marker to help children locate the verse easily.

### DECORATE HEARTS



*Tools: Bible, white paper, scissors, marker, white glue, red tissue paper pieces, Love God Puzzle*

- Cut large paper hearts (1 per child). On each heart, write today's Text Truth.
- Put three heart cutouts on a table with the glue and tissue pieces.
- Invite three children to use glue to attach tissue paper to their heart shapes. Read the words on the hearts as children begin. Encourage preschoolers to decorate their paper hearts however they wish.
- Offer the Love God Puzzle to another child. As the child fits the pieces together, say: "God wants people to love Him and others." Turn to Matthew 22:37,39 and show the child the words of today's verse. Say the Bible verse together.

### BUILD FENCES & PLAY WITH ANIMALS



*Tools: Bible, wooden blocks, wide craft sticks, plastic farm animals, card with the name Abel printed on it, Preschool Family Card*

- Invite a child to use the materials to build fences and pens for farm animals. As the child gets busy, comment that Abel, one of Adam and Eve's sons, took care of animals.
- Show the child the name card, then turn to Genesis 4 in the Bible and show the name in the Bible.
- Point to Abel in the picture on the Family Card. Summarize the Bible story, remarking that God was pleased with Abel's offering, but not with Cain's.

## PLAY WITH A DOLLHOUSE

*Tools: Bible, Story Picture:  
Two Brothers: Cain and Abel,  
dollhouse, toy people figures*

- Prop the Story Picture beside the dollhouse. Open the Bible to Genesis 4.
- Lead preschoolers to use the people figures to play out family life. Notice when preschoolers play out loving actions and say kind words to others.
- Remark: “Sometimes people in families get angry or upset with one another. That is what happened to two brothers in Bible times. Cain got angry at his brother, Abel, and Cain was angry at God.”
- Pick up the Bible and touch the page as you tell more of the Bible story.
- Show children the Story Picture and comment on the angry face of Cain.
- Say: “God wants us to love Him and love others with all our heart.”

## MATCH & SEQUENCE BIBLE WORDS

*Tools: Bible, Activity Page,  
wooden blocks, markers,  
colored cards, paper strip*

- Write one word of the Bible verse on each card. Include the Scripture reference as well. Tape the word cards to the blocks. Write the entire verse on the paper strip.
- Read the Bible verse to a child. Then lead the preschooler to sequence the word blocks to match the words on the paper. When this is done, lead the child to say the Bible verse a few times.
- Open the Bible to Matthew 22:37,39. Point to the words.
- Remark: “God knows our hearts. He knows when we give offerings in love. He knows when we show our love to Him and others.”
- Show the child the picture on the Activity Page and tell the Bible story. Remark that Abel showed love for God.

## STEP & SAY

*Tools: Bible, heavyweight paper,  
marker, tape*

- Write the words and reference of today’s Bible verse on the paper, one word per paper. Randomly tape the word papers to the floor to make a grid.
- Open the Bible to Matthew 22:37,39 and show children the verse. Say the verse aloud.
- Say: “Let’s find the words on the floor.” Guide a child to stand on the first word paper, then step to the next word paper. Continue until the child has stepped on all the words of the Bible verse in order, saying each word as he finds it.
- Give other children turns to step on the words and say the Bible verse.
- As children master the word sequence, encourage them to increase their speed.

## TEXT TRUTH

Love God and love others.

## BIBLE STORY

Two Brothers: Cain and Abel  
Genesis 4:1-16

*The Bible story is printed on the back of the Story Picture.*

## BIBLE VERSE

Love God with all your heart,  
and love others.

Matthew 22:37,39

## PACK ITEMS

3 Story Picture: Two Brothers: Cain and Abel  
22 Love God Puzzle

## NEXT HOUR (MORE EXPLORATIONS FOR PRESCHOOLERS)

Look for printable Next Hour Helps in Music & Print Extras.

## FEEL & MATCH TEXTURES

*Tools: Bible, 2 paper sacks, 2 sets of textured items (2 pieces each of faux fur, sandpaper, felt, silk, cotton balls)*

- Place each set of textured items into the sacks. Invite a child to reach into both sacks at the same time, feel the items, and try to determine which ones have the same texture.
- Ask: “Did you feel the scratchy sandpaper or the fluffy cotton? Do you think the cotton feels like a sheep’s wool? In today’s Bible story, we learn that Abel cared for flocks of sheep. Abel gave a lamb as an offering to God. This pleased God.”
- Recall the Bible story, noting that Cain gave a grain offering to God. When God was not pleased with this offering, Cain became upset and jealous of his brother.

## STAMP LETTERS

*Tools: Bible, alphabet cookie cutters, white copy paper, red paint, paper towel, plastic plate, paper with the word LOVE written on it*

- Fold a paper towel and lay it on the plate. Pour a bit of paint over the towel to form a stamping surface.
- Show a child the word *LOVE*. Guide the preschooler to find the letters *L, O, V, E* and stamp them on the paint pad. Guide the child to stamp the letters on her paper in the correct order. Say the word *LOVE* together.
- Comment that Cain and Abel gave offerings to God. Abel’s offering was pleasing to God. God knew that Abel loved God with all his heart.

## LACE AROUND A PICTURE

*Tools: Bible, Story Picture: Two Brothers: Cain and Abel, hole punch, 18-inch ribbon or shoelace*

- Punch holes around the Story Picture about  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch from the edge and 1 inch apart. Thread the ribbon through one hole and tie it to keep it in place.

- Show a child the Story Picture. Invite the preschooler to lace the ribbon around the picture. As the child pulls the ribbon in and out, talk about the picture.
- Say: “I see two men. Do you remember their names? Cain and Abel. They were brothers. We read about Cain and Abel in the Bible.”
- Summarize today’s Bible story.

## WORK A LOVE PUZZLE

*Tools: Bible, Love God Puzzle, self-stick magnetic tape, scissors, metal pan or magnetic board*

- Cut small pieces of the magnetic tape and attach them to the back of the puzzle pieces. Put the puzzle pieces and metal pan on the floor.
- When a preschooler shows interest, pick up a puzzle piece and remark that the words on the puzzle are from the Bible. The words help us remember what God wants people to do.
- Invite the child to work the puzzle on the metal pan. After completing the puzzle, open the Bible to Matthew 22:37,39 and point to the words *Love God and love others*.

## CIRCLE TIME

### GATHER

- Play songs about God as children move to the circle.

### REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

- Pass the Story Picture around the circle, then hold it in front of you.
- Ask preschoolers a few questions to help them recall what they have learned about Cain and Abel:  
Who do you see in the picture?  
(*Cain and Abel, two brothers*)  
What was Cain’s work? (*farming; growing crops*)  
What was Abel’s work? (*caring for animals*)  
Whose offering was more pleasing to God? (*Abel’s*)

How did Cain feel about this? (*He was jealous and angry.*)

### PRACTICE BIBLE SKILLS

- Distribute Bibles to the children and guide them to find the book of Genesis.
- Remind preschoolers that Genesis is the first book in the Bible. The name *Genesis* means “beginning.”

### PRAY

- Thank God for His never-ending love and care for people.
- Ask God to help children remember that God wants people to love Him and show love to others.