

03.01 Cain and Abel (Genesis 4:1–24; 5:1–6)

✓ “Check” it out; opinion, inference, supposed conversation, or fact one can verify follows
[. . .] indicates a remark to the teacher that usually should not be read. It also indicates answers to questions.

Visuals and Tools:

- Genesis Series 1 Flash a Cards, “Creation, Adam, and Cain,” from A Beka Book or other pictures (a few are found at the end of this lesson)
- Check “Activities” and “Handwork” below for other needed resources.
- I heartily recommend Herein Is Love Commentary Series; *Genesis, A Commentary for Children*, written by Nancy Ganz and published by Shepherd Press in 2002. Thoughts or quotations borrowed from her will be acknowledged as (*Ganz*) in the story.

Bible Time Tips and Terms to Teach: [Flashcard words are at the end of this lesson. Print, cut out, and glue to card stock.]

- *offering/sacrifice*: something willingly offered to God in worship of Him
- *regard*: acceptance; approval
- *fugitive*: someone who has to run for his life and never feel safe
- *vengeance*: paying someone back for a wrong [s]he did to another
- *martyr*: a witness for the Lord Jesus who is killed for his faith

Scripture: (ESV)

Genesis 4:1 Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, saying, “I have gotten a man with the help of the Lord.” 2 And again, she bore his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, and Cain a worker of the ground. 3 In the course of time Cain brought to the Lord an offering of the fruit of the ground, 4 and Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat portions. And the Lord had regard for Abel and his offering, 5 but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his face fell. 6 The Lord said to Cain, “Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? 7 If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it.”

8 Cain spoke to Abel his brother. And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him. 9 Then the Lord said to Cain, “Where is Abel your brother?” He said, “I do not know; am I my brother’s keeper?” 10 And the Lord said, “What have you done? The voice of your brother’s blood is crying to me from the ground. 11 And now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother’s blood from your hand. 12 When you work the ground, it shall no longer yield to you its strength. You shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth.” 13 Cain said to the Lord, “My punishment is greater than I can bear. 14 Behold, you have driven me today away from the ground, and from your face I shall be hidden. I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me.” 15 Then the Lord said to him, “Not so! If anyone kills Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold.” And the Lord put a mark on Cain, lest any who found him should attack him. 16 Then Cain went away from the presence of the Lord and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

25 And Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and called his name Seth, for she said, “God has appointed for me another offspring instead of Abel, for Cain killed him.” 26 To Seth also a son was born, and he called his name Enosh. At that time people began to call upon the name of the Lord.

5:1 This is the book of the generations of Adam. When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God. 2 Male and female he created them, and he blessed them and named them Man when they were created. 3 When Adam had lived 130 years, he fathered a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth. 4

The days of Adam after he fathered Seth were 800 years; and he had other sons and daughters. 5 Thus all the days that Adam lived were 930 years, and he died.

Introduction/Review:

When Adam and Eve sinned, some terrible things happened in our world. What were some of them? [Cosmic pain and aging; conflict; thorns and weeds; disease; suffering; carnivores; venom/poison; death; sin.] What specific consequence came upon Adam because of his sin? [Hard labor in order to feed his family.] What specific consequence came upon Eve because of her sin? [Pain in child-bearing; desire to lord it over her husband.] How did God cover the nakedness of Adam and Eve? [By killing animals in order to use their skins for clothes.]

Did Adam and Eve get to stay in the Garden? [No.] How did God keep them from coming back to the garden? [Angels and a flaming sword guarded the entrance.] God said Adam and Eve would die the day they ate the forbidden fruit. How did they die? [Spiritually, they were separated from fellowship with God, and they began to die physically.]

What was the promise God made when He cursed Satan? [I will put enmity between you and the seed/offspring of the woman. It (Christ) will bruise your (Satan's) head, but you will bruise His heel.] What prophecy does this promise foretell? [The death of Jesus Christ on the cross, when He crushed Satan but was bruised in His heel.]

Story:

Adam and Eve had to find a new place to live. Now planting and weeding and harvesting demanded a lot of hard work. ✓Perhaps the couple lived in a tent of animal skins or in a cave, but they were not like the cave men we sometimes hear about in books or at school. They were very intelligent. Remember, Adam was smart enough to name all the animals!

Cain's birth

After some time, Adam and Eve had their first baby—the very first baby to be born into the world! ✓I can imagine their joy. Oh, it had hurt Eve like crazy to deliver that first boy, but when it was over, ✓she was happy to welcome their child into their little family. (It wouldn't be a "little family" for long!)

✓Eve, perhaps remembering God's promise to crush Satan's head and maybe thinking this son might be the very one to do the crushing, said, "I have gotten a man with the help of the Lord." Later on, ✓she would be exceedingly disappointed to discover that this was *not* the man child who would deliver her from sin.

Abel's birth

Another son was born. This one's name was Abel. ✓It didn't take long for Adam and Eve to understand the effects of their sin, for these boys showed those effects just as they did. As they (and others in the family) grew up, ✓they squabbled and argued and acted just like we do today in our families when we are sinning. [Teacher, it was only Adam and Eve's children who populated the earth. See "Additional Information" at the end of this lesson.] Abel took care of sheep, but Cain worked the ground and grew food.

The Bible is silent on a point I'm now going to make. ✓It seems very likely that Adam and Eve instructed their children about God's provision of animal skins for their clothing and that animals needed to be offered as sacrifices so that people might have a right relationship with God.

Cain's and Abel's sacrifices

So, the time came when the sons of Adam and Eve would offer sacrifices to God. The Bible tells us Cain brought fruit and vegetables he had grown for his offering. The Bible does *not* say he brought *the best* of his vegetable and fruits (Ganz). Even if he had, that was not the issue; bringing the right kind of offering was the thing that mattered. What did we say Adam had probably taught these sons? [To offer animal sacrifices to God.] This was the important thing. Cain did not offer an animal, but Abel did. He offered the firstborn

from the flock.

Abel's sacrifice accepted

The Bible states, "And the Lord had regard for Abel and his offering, but for Cain and his offering he had no regard." What does this sentence mean? [God approved of Abel's animal sacrifice but did not approve of Cain's fruit-and-vegetable sacrifice.]

This made Cain very angry. Cain was not just hurt or unhappy; he was *angry*—✓not angry with himself for sure, for like most know-it-alls, he didn't think he could be wrong. Cain was angry with Abel and ✓angry with God Himself! The Bible says "his face fell." Show me how Cain's face might have looked if it "fell." [Look pouty; angry.]

Cain's reaction

God saw Cain's anger and said to him, "Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted?" ✓This means that God, in essence, was giving Cain a second chance to correct his actions: "If you do well, will you not be accepted?" So, do well.

God continued, "And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it." God was saying, "If you choose not to do well—not to correct your sacrifice—it's as if sin is crouching ✓like a lion at your door, trying to catch you. You must rule over your sinful nature. Don't let your anger rule you!"

Cain's murder of Abel

Do you think Cain corrected his attitude and actions? Did he feel sorry that he had offered the wrong sacrifice, that he had gotten mad? I wish I could say he did, but I can't. Cain let his sin catch him; he did not rule over it.

This is what happened. One day when both Cain and Abel were in the field, Cain rose up and slew his brother so that Abel died. Then Cain ✓buried him and went on his way. This first son, born to parents who had been pure and perfect before they fell into sin, this man, first son of the first man Adam, committed murder; he killed his own brother! It seems inconceivable; yet it's true.

✓If some time went by and Cain's brothers and sisters asked him, "Where's Abel?" he answered, "I don't know" (Ganz). But when God asked Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" Cain added to his careless "I do not know" a most-disrespectful retort—"Am I my brother's keeper?" In other words, "Am I supposed to know where my brother is all the time?" How dared he talk to God like that? ✓He showed his own utter disdain for God.

God's confrontation of Cain

Of course, Cain knew where his brother was. So the Lord said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying to me from the ground." God knows all things. Cain's crime of murder was so hideous that it was to God as if Abel's blood was screaming from the ground, ✓"Cain murdered me!"

Then God proclaimed the punishment for Cain's crime: "Now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. When you work the ground, it shall no longer yield to you its strength." This sounds a little like Adam's punishment, but it is different. For Cain, even with pain and sweat, the ground would no longer grow any fruit or vegetables; he could never be a farmer again. In addition, God said, "You shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth." What, again, is a fugitive? [Someone who has to run for his life and never feel safe.]

Cain's punishment

"Oh, no!" protested Cain. "It's not fair! This punishment is more than I can take. I can't farm! I will be hidden from Your presence. I have to wander around the earth! If I go anywhere, I will be slain!"

“Not so,” replied God. “If anyone slays you, vengeance on him will be seven times as much as your punishment is.”

You know, Cain deserved to die himself for the murder of Abel, for God later stated, “If you shed a man’s blood, your blood will be shed by a man” (Genesis 9:6). However, God, in this case, was merciful and let Cain live. Oh, he had a hard life, but he lived. I wish I could say he feared God after this experience, but he did not. He moved east to a land called Nod where he built cities.

Thankfully, Adam and Eve had many other sons and daughters. Only one other is named in the Bible for us. His name is Seth. It is through Seth’s descendants that Jesus, the Saviour, came.

Additional Information

- *The population of the earth at this time.* “The Scriptures are clear that Adam was the first man created (Genesis 2:7,18–19; 1 Corinthians 15:45). Furthermore, his wife Eve was given her name because she was the mother of all living (Genesis 3:20). Adam and Eve had many more sons and daughters than Cain and Abel and Seth (Genesis 5:3, 4). God had promised Eve that he would greatly multiply her conception (Genesis 3:16). In fact Jewish tradition states that Adam had 33 sons and 23 daughters! Therefore many people could have existed at the time when Cain killed Abel. It has been conservatively estimated that 32,000 people could have been alive at the time this event occurred.

“It seems, then, that Cain . . . must have married a sister. If the entire human race came from an original pair then this was unavoidable. Does this present us with the problem of incest? The answer is no. These early intermarriages between brothers and sisters does not violate the commands God later gave in the Book of Leviticus which condemned these relationships. Although Genesis condemns incest—relations between children and parents—it does not forbid a man from marrying his sister or niece. The Bible records other examples of intermarriage within families. Abraham, for example, married his half-sister Sarah (Genesis 20:12). It was when God gave the people the law of Moses that He established laws forbidding a man from marrying a sister or niece.

“What about the question of genetic damage? Today the risk of genetic damage is high among relatives who intermarry. However, in the beginning, there would not be the usual genetic defects arising from intermarriage among family members. Adam and Eve were created perfect with a perfect gene pool. The Bible says when God created everything it was very good (Genesis 1:31). The perfect world began to degenerate only with the entrance of sin. Cain and Abel would have few, if any, imperfect genes. . . . The danger of genetic damage by intermarrying between brothers and sisters was not an issue in those early days” (https://www.blueletterbible.org/faq/don_stewart/don_stewart_717.cfm, edited).

Just the length of Eve’s life would allow for many sons and daughters. If Eve delivered a single birth (certainly she had multiple births as well) every other year until the age of 400, she would have had 200 children. (That’s a lot of pain if her body could have handled that many births!)

- *Long life in Genesis.* Adam was 800 years old when Seth was born and 930 years old when he died. This is repeated over and over when conditions on earth were more suitable to longevity and when genes were purer. [This is a brief summary; more complete explanations can be found at Answersingenesis.com and other creation internet sites.]

Lessons from this lesson:

- Why did Cain kill Abel? Because Cain belonged to the evil one—Satan—and because his own works were evil, and his brother’s righteous (1 John 3:12). We must never condemn the righteous, especially since our own works are sinful.
- Don’t let your sin catch you as Cain did. Trust the Lord and pray for God’s will to be done in your life.
- The Bible states that Abel still speaks to us (Hebrews 11:4). How is this? “His faithful example,

recorded in Scripture, proclaims to us that the only way to be accepted by God is through the Sacrifice of the Lamb. . . . Abel was the first martyr, the first man to be killed for his faith in Christ, the first soul beneath the altar in heaven ‘of those who had been slain because of the Word of God and the testimony they had maintained.’ His was the first voice that called out, ‘How long, Sovereign Lord, Holy and True, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?’” (Revelation 6:9, 10; Ganz) Have you been saved by the blood of Jesus Christ, the Lamb?

- “It’s not fair!” is not for us to say to God. When you have trouble, cry to God for help.

Activities:

- Play dough: fruits and vegetables; lamb; altar
- If you have a play time, provide toy tools for the garage and kitchen with which children may “work” as Adam did.
- Review the songs found in previous lessons and the new one found below
- Review questions: (Game: See next item, Cain and Abel chart, for rewarding correct answers.)
 1. Who were the first two children ever born on this earth? [Cain and Abel.]
 2. Which son brought an acceptable sacrifice to God? [Abel.]
 3. What was the acceptable sacrifice to God? [A lamb—or a blood sacrifice.]
 4. What did Cain offer to God? [Grains, vegetables, fruit.]
 5. Why did Cain murder his brother Abel? [Because he was angry that God accepted Abel’s sacrifice and not his.]
 6. What did Cain answer when God asked him where Abel was? [“I don’t know. Am I my brother’s keeper?”]
 7. Why is it important not to have hatred in one’s heart? [Because it often eventually leads to murder.]
 8. Why did God accept only a sacrificed animal? Or, the lamb was a type of whom? [The lamb is a picture or type of the Lord Jesus, who offered Himself as a sacrifice on the cross for sinners.]
 9. How was God merciful to Cain? [He put a mark on him so that no one would kill him.]
 10. After Abel died, Adam and Eve had another son. What was his name?[Seth.]
- Present the illustration of the wormy apple (see below), or use a puppet for its presentation.

Handwork:

- Vegetable stamps. Before class prepare vegetable stamps. For each stamp, cut about 2” off the big end of a carrot or a potato. On each vegetable trace a simple heart, cross, star, or flower. Cut around the design and carve the vegetable away from the design. Use a stamp pad or a thin layer of liquid tempera to make your print. Practice to get the right amount of paint on the stamp. Children may decorate gift bags or make designs around the edges of paper on which written the memory verse.

Memory Verse[s]:

- Genesis 3:15—“I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.”

sacrifice

offering

fugitive

regard

vengeance

martyr

Cain and Abel Song by Sheila Hamil, altered

(Tune: "This Old Man"; video with composer's artwork available at <https://sites.google.com/site/sheilahamilmusic/music/kaleidoscope-of-characters-1-of-4>)

Eve bore Cain, her firstborn son.
Abel was her second one.
(Genesis 4:1 and 2)
She was not alone;
Adam helped her in the home.

Cain and Abel, brothers two,
Fine and tall and strong they grew.
(Genesis 4, verse 3)
Even when they'd grown,
They had strengths to call their own.

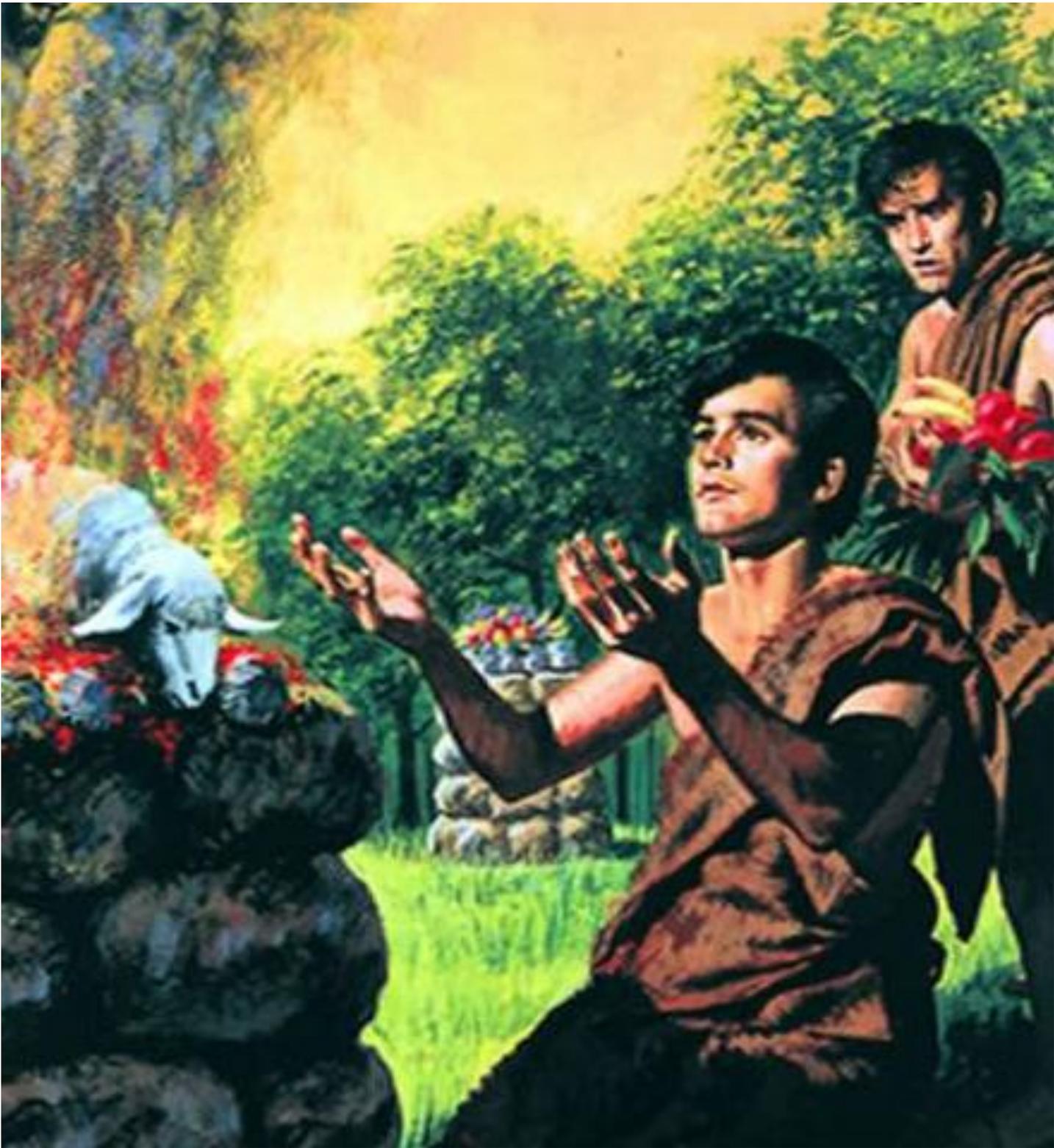
Cain was "able"; he grew seed.
He was gifted, yes indeed.
(Genesis 4:3 through 5)
Gave God what he'd grown.
Abel gave fat meat on bone.

Abel's gift was loved the more;
Sin came crouching at Cain's door.
(Genesis 4:4 through 8)
Jealousy is sin;
So he did his brother in.

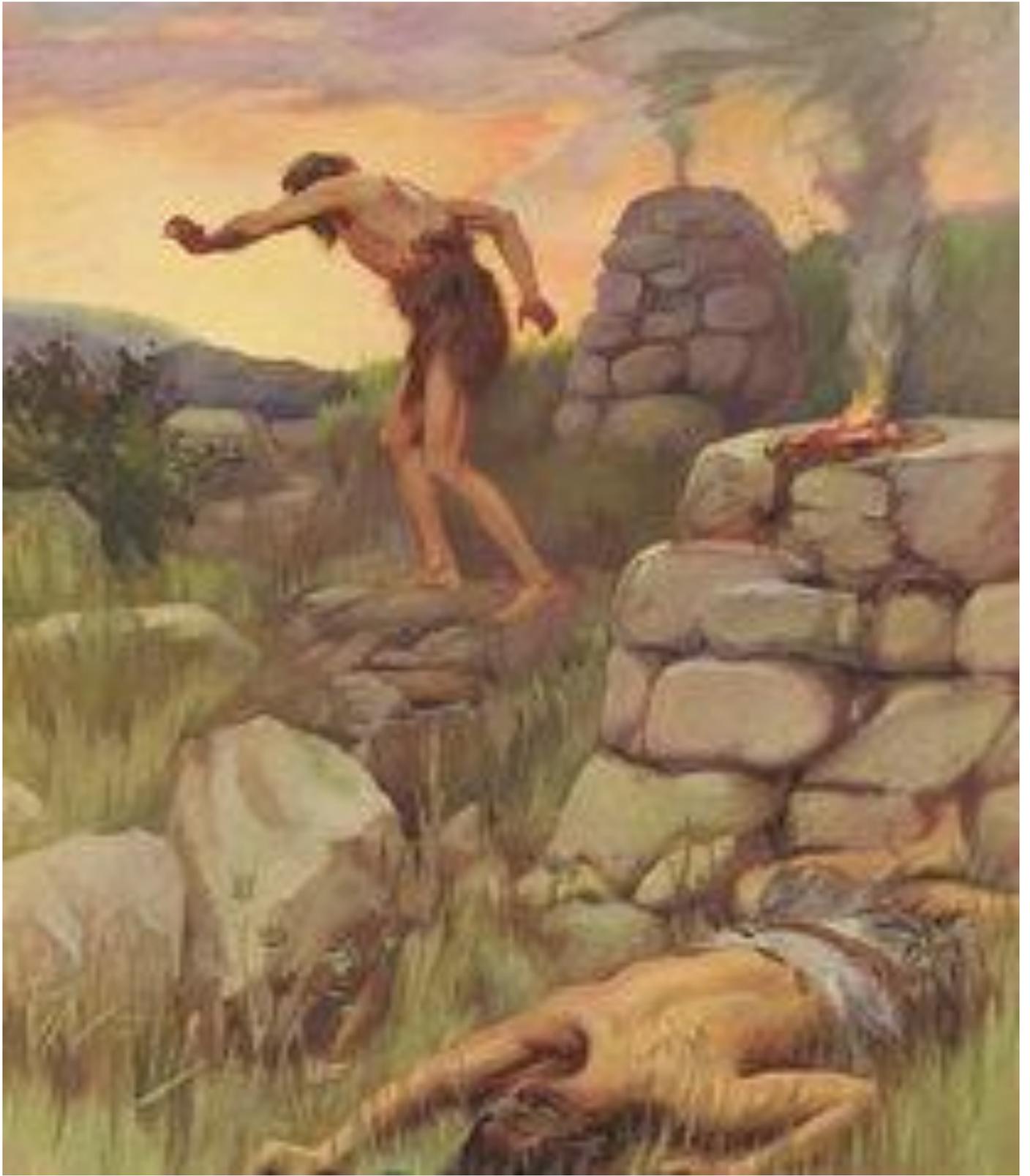
"Where is Abel? Is he alive?"
"I don't know," said Cain, who lied.
(Genesis 4:4 and 10)
Listen to the sound:
Abel's blood cries from the ground.

Abel's death was cold and slick;
What was done Cain could not fix.
(Genesis 4:4 through 16)
He ran away from God;
Off he fled to a land called Nod.





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And the LORD said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper?

Cain

God was
not pleased

Offered food

Did not
obey God

Farmer

Angry

Abel

God was
pleased

Offered
a lamb

Obedied
God

Shepherd

Not angry

An Illustration of Sin Being Passed from Adam to Us
(Adapted and altered from a story by Josephine Neil; drawings by CEF of Minneapolis)
(Use with the story of Cain and Abel, Genesis 4)

See this apple? It looks pretty good, doesn't it? Oh, you noticed a spot on it? What does that spot tell us?

In the very heart of the apple there is something wrong. A worm lives in that apple, and it will never be a choice apple. Where did that worm come from?

Here is a picture of a leaf. Oh, look! There's a worm! Before the buds came forth, the worm placed a small egg in the bud. As the weeks went by, that egg changed into a living worm. It hid itself in the bud, and it was there in the blossom, growing bigger all the time.

When the apple formed, the egg was still there. When the apple was full grown, so was the worm, doing its damage inside the apple.

This wormy apple illustrates how sin can be passed to us from Adam and Eve. When Adam and Eve sinned, sin came in, and when their children were born, the seed of sin was in their hearts, separating them from God.

Our apple will never be made better. In the same way, those born into this world are sinners, helpless and hopeless. They cannot make themselves good enough to satisfy the righteous demands of God.

But God is merciful. He has made a way for sinful people to be made new—to have a new life that lives in obedience to Him.

Jesus Christ came to earth to die for the sins of people who believe in Him. He came forth from the grave to show that He can give believers eternal life. He can change a person corrupted by sin to become a child of God.

Jesus Christ can save sinners. We all are sinners. We all need Jesus to save us from our sin. We need to believe that Jesus Christ died on the cross to take away our sins. May you trust Jesus to be your Saviour.

(Show pictures in this order: apple, leaf, buds, blossoms, apples halves)

(See the next page for a puppet adaptation of this story.)

Adaptation of the above story to use with a puppet

Matt the Moose: Hey, kids. It's Matt the Moose again.

See this apple? It looks pretty good, doesn't it? Oh, you noticed a spot on it? What does that spot tell you? In the very heart of the apple there is something wrong. A worm lives in that apple, and it will never be a choice apple. Where did that worm come from?

Here is a picture of a leaf. Oh, look! There's a worm on it! This is what he does: the worm places a small egg in the bud. As the weeks go by, that egg changes into a living worm. It hides itself inside the bud, and when the bud blossoms, it's still there, growing bigger all the time.

What comes from the blossom? Yeah, an apple. When the apple grows and matures, the egg is still there, growing, eating, and doing its damage inside the apple.

This wormy apple illustrates how sin can be passed to people from Adam and Eve. When Adam and Eve sinned, God's perfect creation was ruined. It even made changes in animals like me. I know I look pretty cute as a puppet, but you'd better not get close to a moose in the wild. Since Adam and Eve's sin, we moose can hurt you *bad* if you get too close to us.

What about changes in people? When Adam and Eve's children were born, the seed of sin was in their hearts, separating them from God. "Death passed upon all people; all have sinned" (Romans 5:12).

Our apple will *never* be made better. In the same way, those born into this world are sinners, helpless and hopeless. They cannot make themselves good enough to live for the perfect God.

That's all that I, a puppet moose, will say. I'll let your teacher tell you the *good* news. 'Bye.

Teacher: Here is the good news. God is merciful. He has made a way for sinful people to be made new—to have a new life that lives in obedience to Him. "But God showed his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).

Jesus Christ came to earth to die for the sins of people who believe in Him. He came forth from the grave to show that He can give believers eternal life. He can change a person corrupted by sin to become a child of God. We all are sinners. We all need to believe that Jesus Christ died on the cross to take away our sins. May you trust Jesus to be your Saviour.

