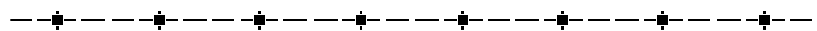


Old Testament

Mission Arlington • Mission Metroplex Curriculum • 2008

Families of the Old Testament



Created for use with young, unchurched learners
Adaptable for all ages including adults

Old Testament

A Family Member
Gives God His Best

Cain and Abel

Genesis 4

A Family Member Gives God
His Best
Genesis 4:1-8

Memory Verse:

By faith Abel offered God a better
sacrifice than Cain did.
Hebrews 11:4

Lesson Goals:

1. Understand that Abel gave God his best.
2. Understand that we should give God our best.
3. Understand that Cain sinned and was punished.

In last week's lesson we talked about how God created the first family. We learned that God created a special partner for Adam. But Adam and Eve disobeyed God. God took them out of the garden and promised to send a deliverer.

Read the Bible

READ: Genesis 4:1-5 (Hold your Bible open throughout the story.)

Begin with Prayer

In today's lesson we will learn about the gifts given to God by Cain and Abel. Abel's gift pleased God. Let's find out why.

The family of Adam and Eve grew when they had two sons. Their names were Cain and Abel. Abel took care of flocks of animals and Cain worked the land. But their family would face some problems.

One day they brought sacrifices to God. Cain brought fruits. "Abel brought fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock. The LORD looked with favor on Abel and his offering, but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor. So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast." (Genesis 4:4-5 NIV)

"By faith Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain did." (Hebrews 11:4 NIV) The Bible doesn't tell us much more about the sacrifices. It just lets us know that Abel offered his best to God. God was pleased with Abel's gift. (Genesis 4:4) In the New Testament, Abel is described as a righteous, or godly, man. (Matthew 23:35)

The Lord hates the sacrifice of sinful people. But the prayers of honest people please him. (Proverbs 15:8 NIV) God wants us to give Him our best. When we give Him our best, God is pleased.

The Lord always does what is right, so he loves it when people do what is fair. Those who are honest will enjoy his blessing. (Psalm 11:7 NIV)

Abel was the type of man who was righteous, fair, and honest. Abel was a man who wanted to please God so he brought his best.

Sometimes when we want to please God, others are not happy with it. Cain was not happy that God was pleased with Abel's gift but not his.

Cain became angry. He was angry at God and angry at Abel. Cain deceived Abel into going out to a field with him (not unlike the serpent deceived Eve). Cain killed Abel and probably buried him to hide his sin. (Genesis 4:8)

Adam's disobedience brought sin into the world. Now Cain sinned by killing his younger brother. Abel is the first man that we read about who died. God told Adam that if he ate of the fruit of the tree he would die. Death did come.

Cain and Abel Bible Facts

1. Cain and Abel offered gifts to God.
2. Abel offered his best.
3. God was pleased with Abel.
4. Cain sinned against God.
5. Cain was punished.

Cain was supposed to love and take care of Abel. Abel was his baby brother. Cain hurt his whole family. He disappointed God with his actions.

When God asked Cain what he did, Cain did not take responsibility (not unlike Adam and Eve). Instead, he asked God, "Am I my brother's keeper?" (Genesis 4:9)

God had to punish Cain for killing a member of his family, his brother. God told Cain that the land would not produce fruit for him and that he would be a wanderer. (Genesis 4:12) Sadly, Cain did not repent. He complained that his punishment was too great. He was afraid that he would be killed. So God said that if anyone tried to kill Cain, they would suffer seven times over. (Genesis 4:13-15)

Adam and Eve lost two sons. But God was merciful and they had many more sons and daughters. (Genesis 5:4) Sometimes, family members are not easy to love. But God wants us to love Him and all our family members. We can pray and ask God to help us.

Abel was innocent. He was a righteous man. Abel wanted to please God. He gave God his best. God wants us to give him our best as well. Obedience is the best way to show God that we love Him. When we disobey we suffer the consequences just as Adam, Eve, and Cain did. God is merciful. When we ask Him to forgive us, He does.

Review Questions

1. **What did Cain and Abel give God?** (Cain brought fruits and Abel brought fat portions of the firstborn of his flocks)
2. **Was God pleased?** (God was pleased with Abel's gift but not Cain's)
3. **Why was Abel's gift better?** (Abel offered the gift by faith in order to please God—he gave his best)
4. **What did Cain do?** (Cain became angry at God and his brother. Cain killed Abel.)
5. **What did God do?** (God punished Cain—the land would not produce for him and he would be a wanderer)

Do you know Jesus?

Adam sinned. Eve sinned. Cain sinned. We all sin. (Romans 3:23) But God had promised to send a deliverer. Jesus is that deliverer. He came to save us from sin. I John 1:9 says, "But God is faithful and fair. If we admit that we have sinned, he will forgive us our sins. He will forgive every wrong thing we have done. He will make us pure." God wants us to know Him not just know about Him. In order to know Him, we must invite God to be a part of our lives. We have to confess that Jesus is Lord and believe in our hearts that God raised Him from the dead. (Romans 10:9-10) When we do those two things God sends His Holy Spirit to live in us. (Ephesians 1:13) God helps us to live for Him. (Philippians 2:13)

Prayer Time

1. Take a moment to listen to God.
2. Thank God that Jesus was willing to die for our sins.
3. Ask God to help you love Him and all the members of your family.
4. Pray for those family members that are most difficult to love.

Application

Adam, Eve, Cain and Abel were a family. Cain grew up and worked the land. Abel grew up and took care of flocks. God wants us to love Him and to love our family.

Abel was a righteous man. He wanted to please God. Abel gave God his best. God was pleased with his gift. God wants our best, too. In order to give God our best, we have to know Him.

God wants us to know that sin is wrong and sin has consequences. But God is willing to forgive us if we ask Him to forgive us.

God wants us to know and love Him. God wants us to love our family, too. He will help us do that if we ask Him.

Planning for the next week:

Noah (A Family Leader Obeys God) — Genesis 6

Preschool Lesson

READ: Genesis 4:1-5 (Hold your Bible open throughout the story.)

Sing a song about family. (“Family of God”)

Have you ever been angry or unhappy because someone got something and you did not get the same thing? God wants us to be happy when others get good things, not just when we get good things. In today’s lesson we are going to learn about a man who gave God his best. His brother was not happy about it. Let’s see what happened.

The family of Adam and Eve grew when they had two sons. Their names were Cain and Abel. Abel took care of flocks and Cain worked the land. But their family would face some problems.

One day they brought gifts to God. Cain brought fruits. Abel brought the best he had. He took care of animals. God was happy with Abel’s gift. But God was not happy with Cain’s gift. So Cain was very angry and unhappy. (Genesis 4:4-5 NIV) The way Cain acted was wrong. We can pray and ask God to help us be happy for others.

In the New Testament, Abel is described as a righteous, or godly, man. (Matthew 23:35) That means that Abel did what God wanted him to do. God sent Jesus to show us how to live. Jesus is the example we should follow.

God wants us to give Him our best. When we give Him our best, God is happy. God always does what is right.

Do you know how we can find out what is right and what God wants us to do? We can learn what the Bible says. The Bible tells us what is right. The Bible tells us what God wants us to do. Once we know what is right, we should do what is right.

Prayer Time

1. Take a moment to listen to God.
2. Thank God for sending Jesus.
3. Ask God to help you love Him.
4. Ask God to help you do what is right.

Did you know? Preschoolers have an attention span of about 7 minutes (varies with age).

Consider timing yourself to ensure you tell the story in 5 minutes or less.

Consider telling the story from memory using notes on a note card to highlight main points.

Learning Activities

- **Memory verse activity**— Write the memory verse on cards shaped like a wrapped gift. Give each child one. Have them exchange their cards. Practice the memory verse.
- **Test your memory**— Write questions and answers related to the story on construction paper. Have the children put the answers with the questions to review the story. For younger children, have them match pictures related to the story. Have a picture representing Abel and one representing Cain. Match pictures (flocks with Abel, fruit with Cain, a man praying to represent Abel, a man wandering to represent Cain).
- **Taste activity**— Bring fruits, vegetable or meat. Talk to the children about the different jobs that Abel and Cain had. Talk about why Abel's gift was accepted by God.
- **Think about it** — Talk about jealousy. Tell the children that God wants us to have a good attitude when we serve Him. Tell them God does not want us to feel obligated to worship Him. He wants us to worship Him because we love Him. Tell them it is the same when we help at home. We should help because we love our parents.

Talk about the importance of asking God for forgiveness. Tell the children God wants us to feel sorry sinning not for getting caught doing wrong.

- **Touch activity**— Bring different types of things for the children to touch like wool and leather. Tell the children that caring for animals is hard work. Bring a book about sheep or shepherds.
- **Run and play**— Bring balloons that are already inflated. Form a small circle. (It must be tightly knit or several small circles if you have a large number of children). Tell the children to keep the balloon in the air. They may not move from their spot. Talk about working together.
- **Listen**— Take time for silence. Ask the children to think of things that they have done which may displease God. Tell them to ask God for forgiveness. Reassure that God forgives us when we ask Him.

Memory Verse

By faith Abel
offered God a
better sacrifice
than Cain did.
Hebrews 11:4

Word Art

Trace the letters.

Abel

gave

God

his

best.

Word Puzzle

Y L A T N P P R E S F A
I T N O I N U P M O B R
A G I F T R I N P E H I
R E A I M R A N I P E G
N E S T Q E B K E S A H
F L H B D E T Y E A H T
A A O T A E V E H P E E
U S M E O J N I U S N O
A V G I M R T O G V E U
B J I A L G B S S R A S
E Q V N G Y O I M R O E
L A E B E S T N N L H F

ABEL

BEST

RIGHTEOUS

FAMILY

BROTHER

GIFT

SIN

PUNISH

FORGIVE

Word Puzzle



ABEL

BEST

RIGHTEOUS

FAMILY

BROTHER

GIFT

SIN

PUNISH

FORGIVE

Anagram

1. LBEA _____

2. SBTE _____

3. OESTHGRIU _____

4. EEPALSD _____

5. TGFI _____

6. EIAICCRSF _____

7. YGLDO _____

8. HUIPNS _____

9. EIOGFRV _____

Anagram

1. LBEA— ABEL
2. SBTE — BEST
3. OESTHGRIU — RIGHTEOUS
4. EEPALSD — PLEASED
5. TGFI — GIFT
6. EIAICCRSF— SACRIFICE
7. YGLDO— GODLY
8. HUIPNS— PUNISH
9. EIOGFRV— FORGIVE