



Cain & Abel

Genesis 4



Adam and Eve's sin was passed down to their children, grandchildren, and every human being who has ever been born. Each one of us has sinned, and we have all been separated from God. But in His great mercy, God had a plan to bring us back to Him. Today we see a glimpse of what God's plan looks like. We must each come to God His way.

Day #1: Better Sacrifice

Adam and Eve had two sons, Cain and Abel. When the boys were grown, the older son, Cain, became a farmer, while Abel took care of sheep. Both men brought an offering to the Lord.

The Bible does not tell us when God instructed Cain and Abel to bring Him an offering. But other parts of the Bible tell us about the offerings that God required. For the **covering of sins**, God's law required the **shedding of blood** from an animal sacrifice (Hebrews 9:7, Leviticus 17:11). Because God never changes, we know that an animal sacrifice has always been God's requirement to cover sins. Let's look at the offerings brought by Cain and Abel:

† *When it was time for the harvest, Cain presented some of his crops as a gift to the Lord. Abel also brought a gift - the best of the firstborn lambs from his flock. The Lord accepted Abel and his gift, but He did not accept Cain and his gift.* - Genesis 3:5a

What did Cain bring? (Fruit, vegetables, or grain) What did Abel bring? (The best firstborn lambs) Because Abel had faith in the Lord, he offered what God required. Hebrews 11:4 says that Abel's offering gave proof that he had faith in God.

But God did not accept Cain's offering. This made Cain very angry. He thought his gift should be good enough for the Lord. Cain did not trust that God's way was the only way. He was not willing to do what God required of him. In his pride, Cain wanted to do things his way.

* We can never be made right with God by doing things our way. We are only made right with God by our faith in Him. Pray that God will give you the faith you need to trust Him, and do things His way.

Day #2: Pursuing Cain

† *Then the Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry? Why are you looking so sad? Do what is right. Then you will be accepted. If you don't do what is right, sin is waiting at your door to grab you. It longs to have you. But you must rule over it." - Genesis 4:6-7*

Just as God came after Adam and Eve when they had sinned in the Garden of Eden, God came after Cain. The Lord lovingly gave Cain another chance to do what was right - to trust God and offer the sacrifice that He required. God revealed His own kindness by urging Cain to do the right thing and by warning Cain that sin was about to totally take over his life.

However, Cain did not admit he was wrong. He did not **repent** of his sin. To repent is to *agree with God*, or see *things God's way*. 2 Chronicles 6:37 describes repentance as a change of heart in which we admit, "We have sinned, we have done wrong and acted wickedly."

* Discuss what Cain's response should have been to the gentle urging of the Lord who loved Him and wanted what was best for him. (He should have repented and done things God's way.)

No one wants to hear that they have done something wrong. Many times a person who is in authority over us, like a parent or teacher, is the one who must tell us when we have wrong behavior or a wrong attitude. How do you respond when someone tells you that you have done wrong? Do you look at the situation and make excuses and blame others, or do you accept the fact that you have done?

God's Holy Spirit speaks to our heart, and tells us when we have sinned (John 16:7-11). When you feel this urging in your heart, do not ignore it. It is God coming after you, to bring you to repentance, and to bring you back to Him. God does this because He loves us and wants what is best for us.

Day #3: Sin Takes Over

Get three scraps of paper and three crayons or markers: one red, one blue, and one purple. Now, imagine that a teacher told her students to draw a red star. On one scrap, draw a red star. On another scrap draw a blue star. On the last scrap, draw a purple star. Hold up the paper that meets the teacher's requirement. Only the red star is correct. What about the other two stars? The purple one is *more* red than the blue one. But it is not what the teacher required. She is not comparing one star to another star. She only looks at whether each

Day #3 continued:

student did exactly what she said. Set these papers aside for a moment.

Cain refused to do exactly what God said. Cain was not willing to repent, or agree with God that he had done wrong. Instead, he became furious with his brother. Cain must have reasoned that he looked bad because his brother looked so good. He did not understand that his offering had nothing to do with his brother. God does not compare one person to another. It was just between him and the Lord. Just as God had warned, Cain's pride, jealousy, and bitterness overtook him. Cain invited his brother to go out to a field. There Cain attacked Abel and killed him.

God gave Cain a chance to confess this terrible sin he had committed.



Then the Lord said to Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?"

"I don't know," he replied. "Am I supposed to look after my brother?" - Genesis 4:9

Even after committing murder, Cain would not admit he had done anything wrong! Cain's way of making himself look better (getting rid of his brother) did not work. It only made things worse - much, much worse.



Now, tear up the red star. Does this make the blue or purple star more red? Certainly not. They still are not what the teacher required. Remember that God does NOT compare you to anyone else. He looks ONLY at **your** response to **Him**.

Day #4: Separation

Because God is holy, He cannot keep sin in His presence (Ezekiel 28:17). As a demonstration, fill a bowl with water. Now sprinkle black pepper into the water. The pepper in the water represents people in the world. Remember, all people have sinned. Now spread some liquid dish soap onto your finger. This will represent our pure, holy God. Dip your finger into the center of the bowl. What happens? This is a reminder that our sin separates us from God.

God announced Cain's punishment. Cain had been a farmer. God put a curse on Cain so that no matter how hard he worked, he could no longer produce a good crop of food. Cain would have to find another way to survive. And God sent him away from his homeland.



*Cain said to the Lord, "You are punishing me more than I can take. Today you are driving me away from the land. **I will be hidden from You.** I'll be a restless person who wanders around on the earth. Anyone who finds me will kill me." - Genesis 4:13-14*

Notice that Cain was afraid that someone would do to him what he had just done to his brother. This is further proof that Cain knew how evil his sin was. But the Lord

Day #4 continued:

said He would not allow anyone to kill Cain.

So Cain went away from the Lord. He lived in the land of Nod. It was east of Eden. - Genesis 4:16

The worst part of Cain's punishment was being sent out of God's presence. **Sin always separates us from God** (Isaiah 59:2).



List some words that describe what it is like to be separated from someone you love. (Lonely, sad, deserted, rejected, empty, cold) What are words that describe what it is like to be brought back together with someone you love? (Happy, joyful, warm, complete)

Pray that God will help you to understand that until we come to God His way, we are separated from Him.

Day #5: God's Way

List ways you think you can please God. Some people think that if they do good things, like go to church or help other people, God will accept them. Let's see what God Almighty thinks about the good things that we do:



All of the good things we do are like polluted rags to You. - Isaiah 64:6b

Imagine an old rag that has been out in your garage for months. It has been used to wipe off dusty tools, and clean grease spots off the floor. It has been dropped in the dirt and used to knock down spider webs. It is one filthy, polluted rag. God is perfect and holy. Because we are sinners, everything within us is polluted like that rag.

Some people think that they are not as bad as others, so God will think they are okay. The Bible says:

Everyone has sinned. No one measures up to God's glory. - Romans 3:23

Just like with Cain and Abel, God does not compare one person to another. We are each measured according to God's perfect standard, and no one measures up.

This sounds pretty bad - and it is. But there is GREAT NEWS! God has provided a way for us to be right with Him. God wants each one of us to come to Him, **His way** (2 Peter 3:9). God provided a perfect blood sacrifice when He sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to die on the cross for us. All we must do is believe in Him, and place our trust in Him. There is NO OTHER WAY for our sins to be forgiven, and to be made right with God (John 14:6).



Read this paraphrase of Ephesians 2:8-9:

I am only saved from my sin by having faith in Jesus. There is nothing I can do to be made right with God. It is a gift from God. I can never brag about earning God's acceptance.

Take time to thank God for His free gift.