

## **LESSON IDENTIFICATION**

Week #: 4 Date: January 25, 2026 Lesson Title: Cain & Abel – God Sees the Heart Primary Scripture Passage(s): Genesis 4:1-16 Bible Timeline Placement: Early Genesis, immediately following the Fall (Genesis 3)

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## **PURPOSE OF THIS LESSON**

Children should understand that God cares about the heart behind our actions, not just what we do on the outside. Sin grows when it is not dealt with, but God lovingly warns, corrects, and calls people to do what is right. This lesson shows our deep need for a Savior and points forward to Jesus, who obeyed God perfectly and offered Himself as the acceptable sacrifice.

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## **BOOK & PASSAGE BACKGROUND**

Book Name: Genesis Traditional Author: Moses Approximate Date Written: Around 1400 BC Original Audience: The people of Israel Purpose of the Book: To reveal who God is, how the world began, why sin exists, and how God began His plan to rescue humanity through His promises.

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## **HISTORICAL & CULTURAL CONTEXT**

Cain and Abel lived very early in human history. Families worked the land and cared for animals to survive. Offerings were brought to God as an act of worship, gratitude, and trust. God had already shown that sin leads to death (Genesis 2:17; Genesis 3:19), and blood sacrifice was connected to covering sin (Genesis 3:21). Worship was not casual; it reflected a person's heart toward God.

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## **IMMEDIATE BIBLICAL CONTEXT**

Before this passage: Adam and Eve sinned and were separated from God's presence, but God promised a future Rescuer (Genesis 3:15).

After this passage: Sin continues to spread through humanity, leading eventually to widespread wickedness before the Flood (Genesis 6:5).

Why this moment matters in God's plan: This is the first recorded murder and shows how unchecked sin grows from anger to destruction, exactly as God warned.

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## KEY THEOLOGICAL TRUTHS — APPLIED TO THIS WEEK'S LESSON

### CORE TRUTH #1: What this lesson teaches about God

God is holy, just, and loving. He sees beyond outward actions and looks at the heart. God lovingly warned Cain before he sinned, showing His patience and care (Genesis 4:6-7). God also acted justly when Cain refused to repent (Genesis 4:10-12).

### CORE TRUTH #2: What this lesson teaches about people

People are responsible for their choices. Sin begins in the heart and grows if it is not resisted. God clearly tells Cain that sin was “crouching at your door” and that he must rule over it (Genesis 4:7). This shows humans need God's help to do what is right.

### CORE TRUTH #3: What this lesson teaches about salvation

Abel's acceptable offering points forward to the need for a righteous sacrifice given in faith.

Scripture tells us plainly: "The Lord looked with favor on Abel and his offering" (Genesis 4:4).

Later Scripture explains why: "By faith Abel brought God a better offering than Cain did" (Hebrews 11:4).

Cain brought an offering from the fruit of the ground—something he produced through his own effort. Abel brought the firstborn of his flock—the best—and did so in trusting obedience. The contrast is not merely about what was given, but why it was given.

Cain wanted to present something he had done. Abel wanted to please God.

This pattern appears throughout Scripture. God consistently rejects worship rooted in pride or self-reliance (Isaiah 1:11-17), while accepting worship that flows from humble faith (Psalm 51:16-17).

Abel's sacrifice points forward to Jesus, who did not offer human effort, but offered Himself in perfect obedience to the Father (Hebrews 10:10).

### CORE TRUTH #4: Trusting God's Word

God's warning proved true exactly as spoken. When Cain ignored God's Word, sin led to death, separation, and sorrow (Genesis 4:8-12). God's Word is always trustworthy.

### CORE TRUTH #5: God as Trinity

God speaks, warns, judges, and shows mercy. Throughout Scripture:

- God the Father commands righteousness
- God the Son is the righteous One whose blood speaks a better word (Hebrews 12:24)
- God the Holy Spirit convicts hearts of sin (John 16:8)

God is one God in three Persons.

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## **RELIABILITY OF SCRIPTURE**

Genesis presents a consistent explanation of human sin that matches real human experience across cultures and history. The spread of violence, jealousy, and guilt is observable and aligns with God's Word (Romans 3:23). The unity between Genesis and later New Testament teaching confirms Scripture's reliability.

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## **APOLOGETICS FOUNDATION**

This account explains why violence and jealousy exist in the world—not because God failed, but because humans resist God's authority.

Cain's sacrifice represents human-centered religion: giving something to God while refusing to surrender the heart.

Abel's sacrifice represents faith-centered worship: trusting God enough to obey Him fully.

Scripture consistently teaches that God is not impressed by outward actions alone: "The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart" (1 Samuel 16:7)