Use Week of:

Cain and Abel

BIBLE PASSAGE: Genesis 4:1-16,25-26

MAIN POINT: Cain's sin separated him from God and people.

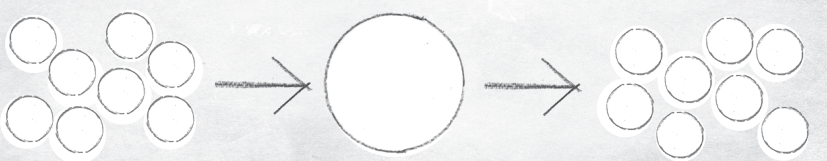
UNIT KEY PASSAGE: 1 Corinthians 8:6

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What is sin? Sin is breaking God's law, and sin separates people from God.

SMALL GROUP OPENING
(10–15 MINUTES)
PAGE 58

LARGE BIBLE STUDY
(25–30 MINUTES)
PAGE 60

SMALL GROUP ACTIVITIES
(25–30 MINUTES)
PAGE 66



Leader BIBLE STUDY

Imagine Adam and Eve's joy as their family grew. With each birth, maybe Eve hoped that this son would be the one to end the curse of sin, to crush the head of the snake. (Gen. 3:15) But as her sons Cain and Abel grew up, she and Adam probably witnessed with grief how sin affected their own children. Cain was not the Promised One, and neither was Abel.

When they were grown, Cain and Abel each had jobs. Abel was a shepherd, caring for his flocks of animals. Cain worked the ground as a farmer. One day, they each presented an offering to the Lord. God accepted Abel's offering, but He did not accept Cain's.

© 2015 LifeWay

God warned Cain about sin, and told him what he needed to do to be accepted. Then Cain and Abel went out into the field, and Cain killed Abel. God knew what Cain did, and He punished him. God sent Cain away from the land to wander the earth. Cain's sin separated him from God and people.

Some time later, Eve gave birth to another son. She named this baby Seth. Seth was not the Promised One either, but Jesus would come from Seth's descendants. (See Luke 3:23-38.)

As you teach, help kids develop an awareness of the deep effects of sin. Then point them to the future hope—the hope we now realize—in Jesus Christ. Generation after generation, God's people lived with an expectant hope. Could this son be the One? And for many generations, they faced the reality of sin. No one was good enough.

Every baby was born a sinner—like his parents and like Adam and Eve. Still, the people hoped. At just the right time, God would send His Son to save sinners. (Heb. 11:13; Gal. 4:4) God always keeps His promises.

MINISTRY GRID
training made simple

Additional resources for each session are available at *gospelproject.com.* For free training and session-by-session help, visit *www.ministrygrid.com/web/thegospelproject.*

Cain and Abel

Genesis 4:1-16,25-26

After **Adam and Eve** left the garden of Eden, they **had a son named Cain and another son named Abel**. Both Cain and Abel were sinners because of Adam and Eve's sin. **Abel became a shepherd, and Cain worked the ground** by growing plants and crops.

One day, Cain gave God an offering of some of the produce he grew. **Abel gave God some of the firstborn of his flock. God accepted Abel's offering, but He did not accept Cain's offering.**

Cain was furious. God asked Cain why he was so angry. God told Cain that if he would do what is right, his offering would be accepted. God warned Cain that sin was crouching at the door, waiting to control Cain if he did not do what is right.

"Sin wants to control you," God said. "But you must control it."

Then Cain invited Abel to go out into the field. While they were in the field, Cain killed his brother.

God asked Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?"

"I don't know," said Cain. "Is it my job to look after him?"

But **God knew what had happened. He said to Cain, "What have you done?"**

God punished Cain. God told Cain that he would spend the rest of his life wandering the earth. If Cain tried to work the ground, nothing would grow for him. Cain would not have a home; he would have nowhere to rest.

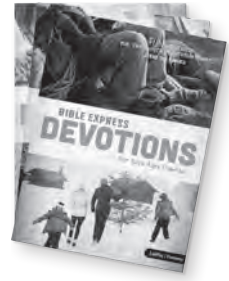
"This punishment is too much!" Cain said. "If I have

to leave this land and wander the earth, whoever finds me will kill me!"

So God put a mark on Cain to protect him so that whoever found him would not kill him. Then **Cain left the land and went to live in Nod**, a land to the east of Eden.

God gave Adam and Eve another son. They named him Seth. Adam and Eve's family grew. Seth grew up and had a son named Enosh (EE nahsh). **Around this time, people began to call on the name of the Lord.**

Christ Connection: God had promised that one of Eve's descendants would put an end to sin and death. Cain was not that descendant. He was sinful like his parents, Adam and Eve. So people kept living and trusting God to keep His promise. At just the right time, God would send His Son to save sinners. (Hebrews 11:13; Galatians 4:4)



WANT TO DISCOVER GOD'S WORD? GET *BIBLE EXPRESS!*

Invite kids to check out this week's devotionals to discover that God kept His promise to give Eve a descendant who would destroy sin: Jesus. (Gal. 4:4) Order in bulk, subscribe quarterly, or purchase individually. For more information, check out *www.lifeway.com/devotionals.*

Small Group OPENING

SESSION TITLE: Cain and Abel
BIBLE PASSAGE: Genesis 4:1-16,25-26
MAIN POINT: Cain's sin separated him from God and people.
UNIT KEY PASSAGE: 1 Corinthians 8:6
BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What is sin? Sin is breaking God's law, and sin separates people from God.

Welcome time

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group. Prompt kids to share about a time someone else got something they wanted. How did they feel? Were they jealous or happy for the other person?

Activity page (5 minutes)

- "Key Word Search" activity page, 1 per kid
- pencils or markers

Invite kids to complete the "Key Word Search" on the activity page.

SAY • All of these words are in our Bible story today. Do you remember Adam and Eve from our story last time? Today's Bible story is about two of their sons. Their names were Cain and Abel.

Session starter (10 minutes)



- marshmallows
- plastic bowls

OPTION 1: Offering toss

Form two teams and direct them to stand in single-file lines. Give the first player on each team a plastic bowl, and give the rest of the players one marshmallow each.

Tell the first player to stand a few feet from her team and hold the bowl on top of her head. When you say go, players should take turns tossing a marshmallow toward the bowl.

The player with the bowl should move to try to catch the marshmallows. The team that lands the most marshmallows in its bowl wins. Play a few rounds as time allows. Point out that the marshmallows look like sheep, white and fluffy.

SAY • In today's Bible story, two brothers brought offerings to God. An *offering* is a gift people give to God. One of the brothers brought some produce he had grown, and the other brought some sheep from his flock.

Remind kids that God does not need anything from us; everything we have comes from Him. But we can thank God and worship Him by giving an offering.

OPTION 2: Shepherds and farmers

- masking tape or painter's tape
- cotton balls
- raisins or sunflower seeds
- Allergy Alert printable

Guide kids to form pairs. Give each pair four 12-inch lengths of tape, and instruct them to arrange the tape on a floor or table to form a tic-tac-toe board (a 3-by-3 grid with 9 equal square spaces).

Explain that one player will be the shepherd, and the other player will be the farmer. Give each shepherd five cotton balls and each farmer five raisins or sunflower seeds. Invite the pairs to play several rounds of tic-tac-toe.

Encourage the shepherds to get three "sheep" in a row to gather their flock; encourage farmers to "plant" three seeds in a row to harvest a crop.

SAY • Today's Bible story is about two brothers—Cain and Abel. Cain was a farmer, and Abel was a shepherd.

Transition to large group

Large Group LEADER

SESSION TITLE: Cain and Abel
BIBLE PASSAGE: Genesis 4:1-16,25-26
MAIN POINT: Cain's sin separated him from God and people.
UNIT KEY PASSAGE: 1 Corinthians 8:6
BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What is sin? Sin is breaking God's law, and sin separates people from God.

Countdown

- countdown video

Show the countdown video as your kids arrive, and set it to end as large group time begins.

Introduce the session (3 minutes)

- Bible
- heavy rocks or sandbags
- rope

[Large Group Leader enters carrying rope and a Bible. Heavy rocks or sandbags are positioned at the front of the room. You might paint cardboard gray to simulate heavy rocks.]

LEADER • Hello, everyone! I sure am glad to see you today. I could really use your help. Things got a bit out of control last time, to say the least. So I'm collecting some tools that might be helpful to keep my hot air balloon from being tossed around by the wind. I think my best bet is to anchor it to the ground. So I have some rope and some big rocks. [*Begin to wrap the rope around a rock.*] I just need to tie it up here.

[*Stand up suddenly.*] Oh! Do you know what? This is making me think of our Bible story today. It's about someone who had no control over something, and it almost ruined him! Let's take a step back and see where we are and where we are going.

Giant timeline (1 minute)

- Giant Timeline or Big Story Circle

LEADER • Our timeline shows us pretty close to the beginning. Right about … here! [*Point to today's story.*] This says "Cain and Abel." That's right! It's all coming back to me now. So we started at the very beginning when God created everything. **God created everything for His glory!** God made people, and the first two people were Adam and Eve. But they sinned, and that changed everything.

Adam and Eve's sin separated them from God. But God had a plan to rescue them from sin. God said that someone from Eve's family would put an end to sin and death. Then Adam and Eve had a family. Their first two sons were named Cain and Abel. I wonder if one of them put an end to sin and death. What do you think?

Big picture question (1 minute)

LEADER • Last week we learned the answer to our big picture question, ***What is sin?*** Does anyone remember the answer? ***Sin is breaking God's law, and sin separates people from God.*** Sin affected everything! Creation began to break down. Today's Bible story is about how sin spread to Adam and Eve's children. Let's listen.

Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

- Bibles
- "Cain and Abel" video
- Big Picture Question Poster
- Bible Story Picture Poster

Open your Bible to Genesis 4. Tell the Bible story in your own words, or show the Bible story video "Cain and Abel."

LEADER • Adam and Eve had the very first family! They had two sons, Cain and Abel. Let's see how much you remember about them.

Form two groups. Designate one group as shepherds and the other as farmers. Read the following sentences. If the sentence describes Abel, the shepherds should say, "Baa!" If it applies to Cain, the farmers should shout, "Yeehaw!"

1. He worked the ground by growing plants and crops. (*Cain*)
2. He gave an offering to God. (*Cain, Abel*)
3. God accepted his offering. (*Abel*)
4. He was so angry. (*Cain*)
5. God warned him that sin wanted to control him. (*Cain*)
6. He died in the field. (*Abel*)
7. God punished him by making him wander the earth. (*Cain*)
8. God put a mark on him to protect him. (*Cain*)

LEADER • Adam and Eve had probably been so happy to see new life come into the world when their sons were born. Maybe Eve wondered if Cain or Abel might be the One God promised would put an end to sin and death. Is that what happened? Did Cain and Abel obey God perfectly and save the world from sin? No! Cain and Abel were sinners, just like their parents.

Cain's sin separated him from God and people.

How do you think Cain felt when God sent him away to wander the earth? Cain deserved to be punished, but God was kind to him anyway. God put a mark on Cain so that no one would kill him.

God gave Adam and Eve another son. They named him Seth. Seth was not the Promised One either. Everyone after Adam and Eve sinned. When their children had families, they all sinned too. None of them was the descendant God promised. None of

them was good enough. But people still trusted God to keep His promise. And God did. At just the right time, God sent His Son, Jesus, into the world to save sinners.

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me (optional)

Use Scripture and the guide provided with this session to explain to boys and girls how to become a Christian. Assign individuals to meet with kids who have more questions.

Encourage boys and girls to ask their parents, small group leaders, or other Christian adults any questions they may have about becoming a Christian.

Sing (4 minutes)

- "All Creatures of Our God and King (He Is Our Gain)" song

LEADER • Wow. The story of Cain and Abel is really sad. Once sin entered the world, it spread quickly! Sin didn't affect other people just a little bit; it affected them completely.

I am so thankful that God had a plan to put an end to sin and death. It makes me want to sing!

Sing together "All Creatures of Our God and King (He Is Our Gain)."

Key passage (5 minutes)

- Key Passage Poster
- "There Is Only One" song

LEADER • ***What is sin? Sin is breaking God's law, and sin separates people from God.*** We sin when we think we know what is best instead of God or when we do not trust God to do what is best. God always does what is best. He created us, and we exist for His glory. That's what our key passage is about.

Show the slide or poster of 1 Corinthians 8:6. Lead the boys and girls to read the verse together. If any kids have

memorized the verse, allow them to recite it from memory. Then sing together "There Is Only One."

Discussion starter video (4 minutes)

- "Unit 1, Session 4" discussion starter video

LEADER • After Cain killed his brother, God confronted Cain. God said, "Where is your brother?" God knew what Cain had done, and He wanted Cain to confess. But Cain did not confess his sin and say that he was sorry. Do you think Cain felt bad for what he had done? Do you always feel sorry for doing something wrong?

Show the "Unit 1, Session 4" discussion starter video. Lead kids to discuss a time they were punished for doing something they shouldn't have. Were they sorry for what they had done or sorry that they were being punished?

LEADER • God had warned Cain, "Sin wants to control you, but you must control it." The desire to sin is strong, and it wants to control us too. On our own, we have no power over sin. We are not strong enough to put an end to sin. But when we trust in Jesus, He gives us power to say no to sin! [*See 1 Cor. 15:57.*]

Prayer (2 minutes)

LEADER • It's almost time to go to your small groups. Let's pray to God right now. Lord God, You know our hearts. We are sinners! But we have hope because You kept Your promise to send someone to rescue us from our sin. Thank You for Jesus. Amen.

Dismiss to small groups

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means "good news." It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.

 **God rules.** Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.

 **We sinned.** Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)

 **God provided.** Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.

 **Jesus gives.** Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:19.

 **We respond.** Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus.

Small Group LEADER

SESSION TITLE: Cain and Abel
BIBLE PASSAGE: Genesis 4:1-16,25-26
MAIN POINT: Cain's sin separated him from God and people.
UNIT KEY PASSAGE: 1 Corinthians 8:6
BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What is sin? Sin is breaking God's law, and sin separates people from God.

Key passage activity (5 minutes)

• Key Passage Poster
• numbered cube

Instruct kids to stand in a circle. Display the key passage poster and lead kids to read the verse together. Then choose a volunteer to roll a numbered cube.

If the volunteer rolls a 2, kids should take turns saying the key passage, two words at a time. If he rolls a 4, they say four words at a time, and so on. Encourage kids to say the verse from memory. If a kid does not know a word, invite the rest of the group to help him.

Challenge kids to say the verse quickly around the circle a few times. Then allow another kid to roll the cube and play again. As kids begin to master the verse, cover the key passage poster.

Bible story review & Bible skills (10 minutes)

• Bibles, 1 per kid
• Main Point Poster

Distribute Bibles and instruct kids to turn to Genesis 4. Ask for volunteers to describe what happened in Genesis 1–3.

SAY • In today's Bible story, we see the effects of sin on Adam and Eve's family. Cain sinned, and **Cain's sin separated him from God and people.**

Ask the following review questions. If a kid knows the answer, she should raise her hand:

1. What were the names of Adam and Eve's first two

sons? (*Cain and Abel, Gen. 4:1-2*)
2. What job did Abel do? (*Abel was a shepherd, Gen. 4:2*)
3. What job did Cain do? (*Cain worked the ground, Gen. 4:2*)
4. What did Cain and Abel give to God? (*an offering, Gen. 4:3-4*)
5. Whose offering did God accept? (*Abel's, Gen. 4:4*)
6. Whose offering did God not accept? (*Cain's, Gen. 4:5*)
7. What did Cain do to Abel? (*Cain killed his brother Abel, Gen. 4:8*)
8. How did God punish Cain? (*God told Cain that Cain would spend the rest of his life wandering the earth. Cain would not have a home; he would have nowhere to rest; Gen. 4:10-12*)
9. ***What is sin? Sin is breaking God's law, and sin separates people from God.***

Option: Retell or review the Bible story using the bolded text of the Bible story script.

Activity choice (10 minutes)



OPTION 1: Are you the one?

Guide kids to form a circle. Explain the game and give a few examples of rhythm movements such as clapping, snapping, or stomping.

1. You will choose a volunteer to turn around and cover his eyes. Then silently choose a player in the circle to be the leader. The leader will use her hands or feet to develop a simple rhythm. Everyone in the circle should copy the rhythm.
2. After a few seconds, the leader will change the rhythm. The rest of the group should copy her movements.

3. Invite the volunteer to uncover his eyes and stand in the middle of the circle. He should watch everyone's motions to try to figure out who is the leader.
4. When he thinks he knows, he should point to the player and ask, "Are you the one?" If he is correct, the leader becomes the guesser and covers his eyes. If he cannot figure out the leader in three guesses, he may choose another player to take his place.

Play again as time allows.

SAY • God had promised that one of Eve's descendants would put an end to sin and death. Cain was not that descendant. Cain killed his brother, and **Cain's sin separated him from God and people.**

Adam and Eve's children were sinners like them. So the people kept living and trusting God to keep His promise. At just the right time, God would send His Son into the world to save sinners.

OPTION 2: Build a dam

- long, shallow plastic containers, 1 per group
- sand
- small rocks or aquarium gravel
- craft sticks
- water
- Bible

Form groups of three or four kids. Give each group a plastic container. Fill the bottom of each container with sand and instruct each group to dig the path of a river in the sand.

Supply craft sticks and gravel. Explain that a dam is a structure that stops a river from flowing. Challenge each group to build a dam that will stop or slow the flow of their river. Give groups several minutes to work. Groups may test their dams by pouring water down the path of the river.

Help a volunteer find Romans 5:12 in the Bible, and ask him to read the verse aloud.

SAY • Were you able to stop the water? Sin entered the world through one man—Adam—and no one could stop it. Sin and death spread to Adam and Eve's

children and their families. Cain sinned, and **Cain's sin separated him from God and people.**

Sin and death have spread to us even today. Everyone has sinned. Our sin separates us from God and from each other, but God had a plan to bring people back to Himself. He sent His Son, Jesus, to save sinners.

Option: Review the gospel with boys and girls. Explain that kids are welcome to speak with you or another teacher if they have questions.

Journal and prayer (5 minutes)

- pencils
- Journal Page
- "Cain's Code" activity page, 1 per kid

Give each kid his journal page. Remind kids that **Cain's sin separated him from God and people.** Sin not only hurts our relationship with God, it hurts our relationships with others. Prompt kids to think of someone who might feel hurt by something they did. Kids should write that person's name on the journal page. Encourage kids to seek forgiveness this week.

SAY • We should ask our friends to forgive us when we sin against them. Everyone sins against God, and He would be right to punish us. But God loves us and sent Jesus to take the punishment we deserve for our sin. When we trust in Jesus, God forgives our sin.

As time allows, lead kids to complete "Cain's Code" on the activity page. Help kids use their Bibles to list the names of the first six books of the Bible. (*Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua*)

Then kids will fill in the letter for each symbol to decode the Bible story main point. (*Answer:* **Cain's sin separated him from God and people.**)

Tip: Give parents this week's *Big Picture Cards for Families* to allow families to interact with the biblical content at home.

Journal Page

God the Creator

Key Passage: 1 Corinthians 8:6

Big Picture Questions: Why did God create the world? God created the world and everything in it for His glory.
What is sin? Sin is breaking God's law, and sin separates people from God.

Session 1: God Created the World
Genesis 1:1-25
God created everything for His glory.

Session 2: God Created People
Genesis 1:26-2:25
God created people in His own image; God created them male and female.

Session 3: Sin Entered the World
Genesis 3:1-24
Adam and Eve's sin separated them from God.

Session 4: Cain and Abel
Genesis 4:1-16,25-26
Cain's sin separated him from God and people.

Session 5: Noah and the Ark
Genesis 6:5–9:17
God is holy, and He punishes sin.

Session 6: The Tower of Babel
Genesis 11:1-9
God created people to give glory to Him alone.



© 2015 LifeWay • OK to Print

There is one God, the Father. All things are from Him, and we exist for Him. And there is one Lord, Jesus Christ. All things are through Him, and we exist through Him.

1 Corinthians 8:6



There is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.

1 Corinthians 8:6



There is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.

1 Corinthians 8:6



There is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live.

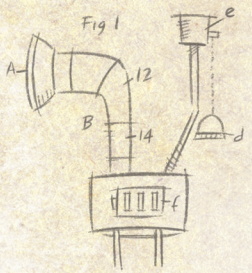
1 Corinthians 8:6



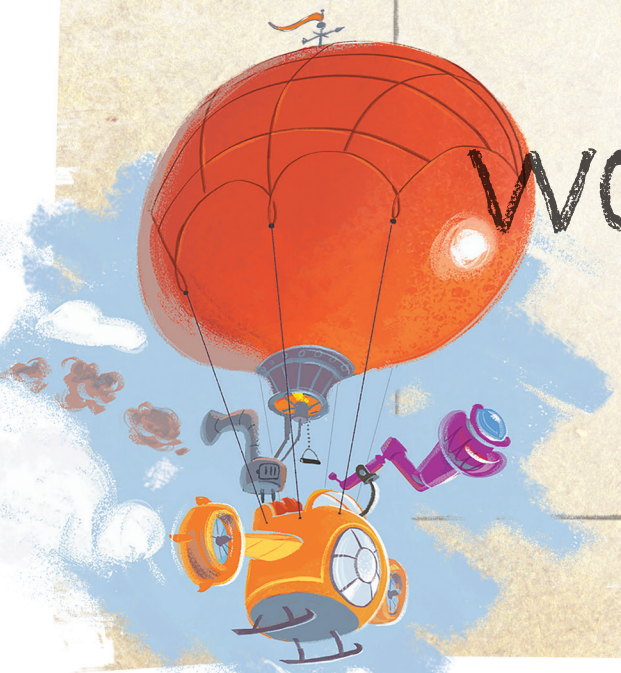
Why did God create the world?

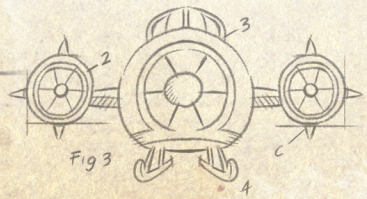


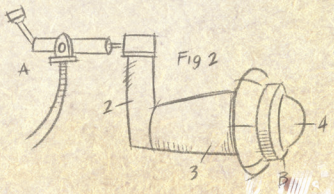
Why did God create the world?

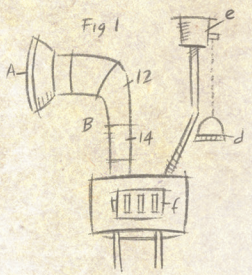


God created the world and everything in it for His glory.



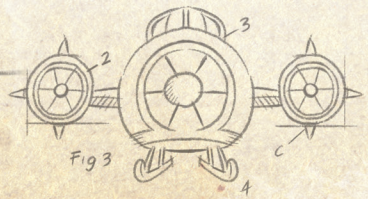


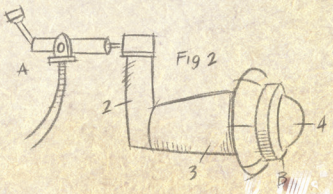




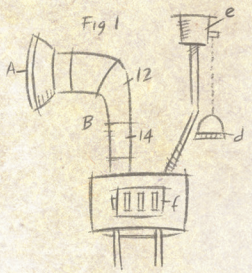
What is sin?





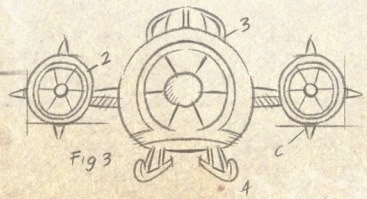


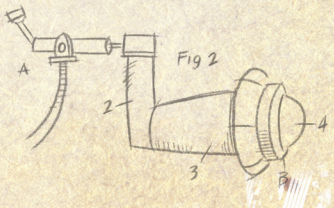
What is sin?



Sin is breaking God's law, and sin separates people from God.

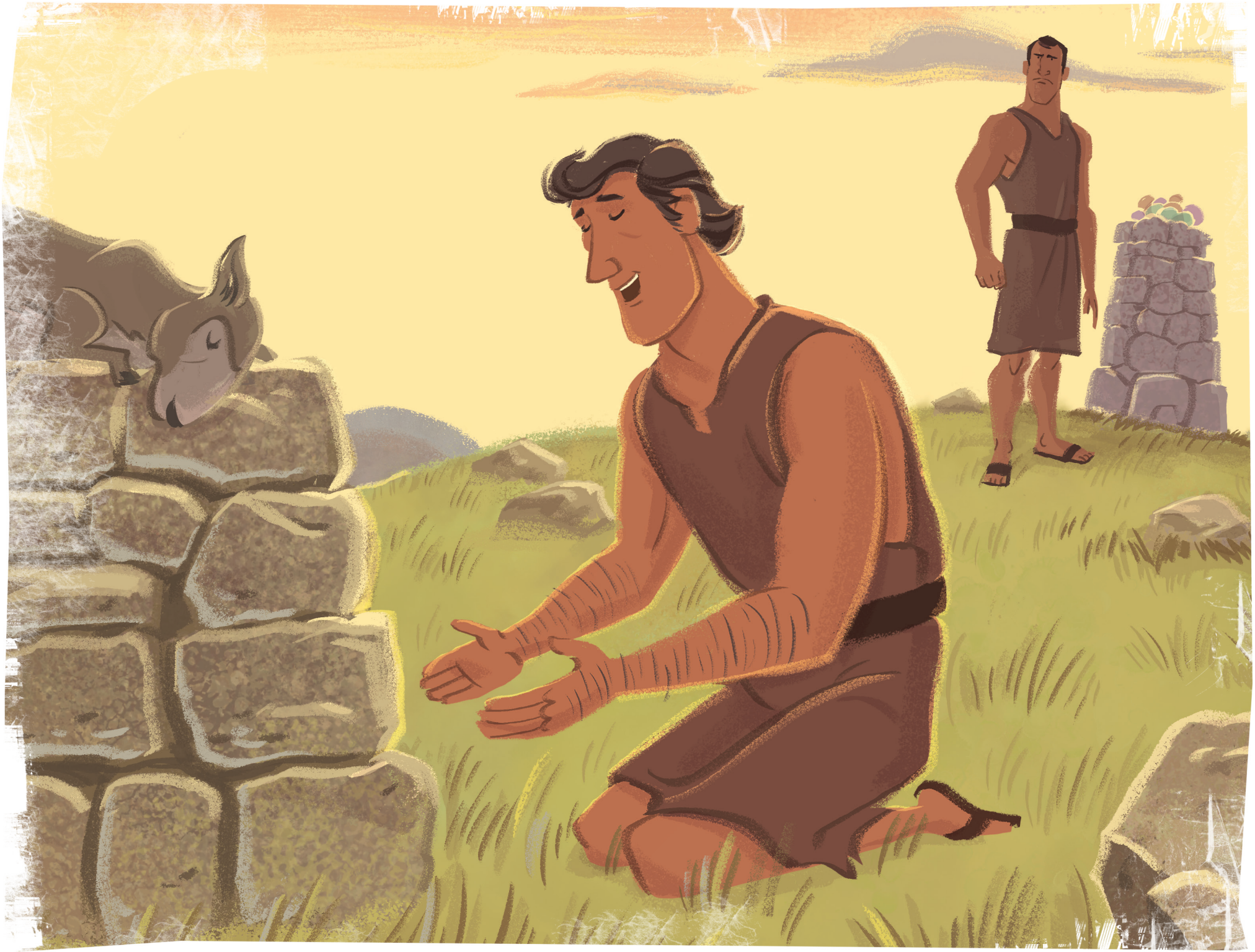






Cain's sin separated him from God and people.





Journal Page

Sin not only hurts your relationship with God, it hurts your relationships with others. Can you think of someone who might feel hurt by something you did? Write his or her name below. This week, ask that person for forgiveness.



FAMILY DISCUSSION STARTERS

- What offering did Cain and Abel bring? (See Genesis 4:3-4.)
- Cain sinned. What is the required punishment for sin? (See Romans 3:23; 6:23.)
- How can your family bring an offering to God this week?

FOLD



Cain and Abel

Genesis 4:1-16,25-26

MAIN POINT: CAIN'S SIN SEPARATED HIM FROM GOD AND PEOPLE.

Adam and Eve had a son named Cain and another son named Abel. Abel became a shepherd, and Cain worked the ground.

One day, Cain gave God an offering of the produce he grew. Abel gave God some of the firstborn of his flock. God accepted Abel's offering, but He did not accept Cain's offering.

Cain was furious. God warned Cain that sin was crouching at the door, waiting to control Cain if he did not do what is right.

Then Cain invited Abel to go out into the field. While they were in the field, Cain killed his brother.

God knew what had happened. He said to Cain, "What have you done?"

God punished Cain. God told Cain that he would spend the rest of his life wandering the earth. If Cain tried to work the ground, nothing would grow for him.

"This punishment is too much!" Cain said.

Cain left the land and went to live in Nod.

God gave Adam and Eve another son. They named him Seth. Around this time, people began to call on the name of the Lord.

Christ Connection: God had promised that one of Eve's descendants would put an end to sin and death. Cain was not that descendant. He was sinful like his parents, Adam and Eve. So people kept living and trusting God to keep His promise. At just the right time, God would send His Son to save sinners. (Hebrews 11:13; Galatians 4:4)

KEY WORD SEARCH

Find the key words from the Bible story. Words may appear horizontally, vertically, or diagonally.

- CAIN
- ADAM
- EVE
- SETH
- FLOCK
- ABEL
- SHEPHERD
- SONS
- FIELD
- SIN
- OFFERING
- PUNISHMENT

Q	A	G	M	S	I	N	Y	Q	L	Z	L
H	R	K	G	Y	W	S	O	N	S	D	K
C	A	I	N	J	R	J	D	J	R	G	L
K	P	U	N	I	S	H	M	E	N	T	Z
K	J	B	Z	L	K	M	H	I	L	U	I
K	P	O	J	C	S	P	R	S	E	Z	Z
H	F	Y	O	V	E	E	M	W	B	V	Y
L	Q	L	K	H	F	I	T	D	G	O	E
W	F	O	S	F	G	M	L	H	A	X	W
K	W	A	O	C	A	E	T	S	D	A	U
E	B	X	D	D	I	O	Y	A	B	E	L
[illegible]	X	X	A	F	A	M	W	R	S	L	X

CAIN'S CODE

Fill in the names of the Bible books to decode the secret message.

GENESIS
EXODUS
LEVITICUS
NUMBERS
DEUTERONOMY
JOSHUA



C N ' N
P R T H
F R G
N P P L