

Grade 8

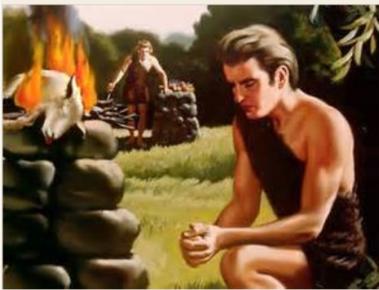
Unit 1, Lesson 3

AIM: To realize and understand the sovereignty of God, the attitude of Cain (human beings) to God and his brother Abel (other fellow beings).



Theme: Cain's attitude to his brother (fellow human beings)

offerings of Cain and Abel



Lesson Outline

Cain's offering and Abel's offering (Gen. 4:3)

Cain's attitude towards God and his brother (Gen. 4:5)

Abel's attitude towards God and his brother (Gen. 4:4)

It is impossible to please God without faith (Heb. 11:6)

Consequences of anger and jealousy turned into murder

Genesis 4:1-16 (NRSV)

9 Then the Lord said to Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?" He said, "I do not know; am I my brother's keeper?"

10 And the Lord said, "What have you done? Listen; your brother's blood is crying out 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 till the ground, it will no longer yield to you its strength; you will be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth."

13 Cain said to the Lord, "My punishment is greater than I can bear!

14 Today you have driven me away from the soil, and I shall be hidden from your face; I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth, and anyone who meets me may kill me."

15 Then the Lord said to him, "Not so! Whoever kills Cain will suffer a sevenfold vengeance."

And the Lord put a mark on Cain, so that no one who came upon him would kill him. **16** Then Cain went away from the presence of the Lord, and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

Hebrews 11:1-4 (NRSV)

The Meaning of Faith

1 Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

2 Indeed, by faith our ancestors received approval.

3 By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was made from things that are not visible.

The Examples of Abel, Enoch, and Noah

4 By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain's. Through this he received approval as righteous, God himself giving approval to his gifts; he died, but through his faith he still speaks.



Teacher's Preparation

In Genesis 4, we learn the story of Cain and Abel. This story explains the relational aberrations of human to God and human to human. Even though Cain and Abel had similar upbringing, ultimately they developed different character.

When Cain chose wicked ways, God considered Abel as righteous. (Matthew 23:35)

This was the first incident recorded in the Bible after Adam and Eve were ousted from the Garden of Eden. Cain was the first human born and Abel was the first human to be murdered by his own brother because of anger and jealousy.

Offering:

The offerings of Cain and Abel were different. Cain showed a proud, unbelieving heart with his lame selection of offering. Therefore he and his offering were rejected. Whereas Abel was obedient in his selection to offer the best for God, by his sacrifice expressing humility, sincerity, and believing obedience. Thus his sacrifice had a token that God accepted it. Abel offered in faith, and Cain did not, (Matthew Henry's commentary on Genesis 4) and God was pleased at his attitude and not just the matter.

Cain's anger and jealousy:

Cain was not happy at God's response to his offering over Abel's sacrifice. His jealousy fueled his anger, which made him kill his own brother. God punished him as a consequence of his own poor choices.

Student Introduction

How many of you have siblings?

How are you different from each other?

Did you ever get angry at your sibling over something?

Can you explain at least one incident?

BIBLE exploration

Cain was believed to be the first-born son of Adam and Eve. Like his father he became a farmer. His younger brother Abel became a shepherd by profession. One day the brothers brought offerings to the Lord. The Bible says God was pleased with Abel's sacrifice, but not with Cain's, this made Cain jealous of his brother. Cain allowed his jealousy to turn to anger and then his anger to hatred. Instead of bringing him up, by doing better next time, he chose to take Abel down. He committed premeditated murder of his own brother. The story of Cain and Abel leaves us wondering exactly why God looked with favor on Abel's offering, but rejected Cain's. There are different theories and answers about the reason why did God accept Abel's offering and rejected Cain's offering.

There are four prominent answers on this they are as follows:

1. Absence of blood in the sacrifice of Cain
2. The poor quality of offered sacrifice of Cain.
3. The attitude of Cain in the giving and sacrifice.
4. The sovereignty of God, which we can't understand or question.



A mystical element and experience. We can't understand fully the purpose and plan of God. (have faith and believe-without faith we can't please God) We can see all these elements and factors in the offering, but can't say one answer is better or more correct than the other. We can't question the sovereignty of God.

In verse 6 and 7 of Genesis 4 sheds more light into the story. After seeing Cain's anger over the rejection of his sacrifice, God said to him, "Then the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry, and why has your countenance fallen? 7 If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is lurking at the door; its desire is for you, but you must master it". Here it clearly explains that Cain's offering was not up to the Lord's expectations.

In Hebrew 11:4 you see "By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain's. Through this he received approval as righteous" God was pleased by the way Abel offered the sacrifice. Also, Cain should not have been angry, because apparently both he and Abel knew what God expected as the "right" offering. God must have already explained it to them. Both Cain and God knew that he had given an unacceptable offering. Perhaps even more important, God knew that Cain had given his offering with a wrong attitude of heart. Yet God offered Cain a chance to make it right and warned him that the sin of anger would destroy him if he did not master it.

Upon deliberately refusing God's instructions, Cain followed his heart. His poor choice made him plunge into serious trouble. God punished Cain to be a restless wanderer, and that his work on the ground no longer yield good crops. Instead of repenting and correcting himself, Cain complained to God again. His attitude had not been changed. But the merciful God showed His mercy and justice to him and put a mark on him, so no one can kill him. In this story we see a righteous God who is pleased at the right response from his people. Abel's faith in the Lord and his devoted attitude to the supreme Lord made him to be called as righteous by the Lord himself. Our God looks on the attitude of our hearts, rather than the matter of our offering.

activities

Questions for Discussion



Q: What kind of offerings should we present to God?

Q: What does God want us to do to one another?

Q: Does God really look for the type of offering or the heart of the person who offers it to Him?

'Anger is one letter short from danger.'

lesson review

1. Why was God pleased at Abel's sacrifice over Cain's offering? Gen.4:4, Heb.11:4
2. What was Cain's response to God when He questioned him about Abel? Gen.4:9
3. What are the differences in Cain's and Abel's approaches to God in regard to their offering? Gen.4:3-7, Heb. 11:4

Values *for* LIFE

Have good faith in the Lord.

Our attitude towards Him does matter to God.

Accept God's warning in life and attempt to fix it.

Express God's love to fellow humans

Faith in Action

How can you improve your attitude towards God based on the principles you have learned from this lesson?

How can we improve our relationship with our fellow beings?

Does our response to our siblings reflects the love and forgiveness we received freely from the Lord?

Memory Verse

1-Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.6-And without faith it is impossible to please God, for whoever would approach him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

Hebrews 11:1,6

prayer

Lord, we thank you for teaching us that it is important to keep our faith and offer the best of ourselves with the right attitude to you. Lord, help us to improve our relationship with others and also to keep us away from destructing forces like anger and jealousy. Lord, strengthen us to love others the way you loved us. Amen.

