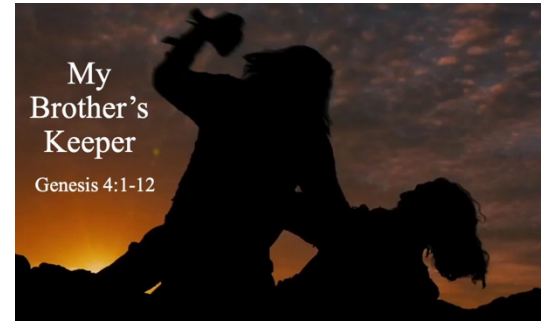


## Bible Study Guide

# My Brother's Keeper

**Text: Genesis 4:1-12 & 1 John 3:10-12 (read)**

**Bible Study Focus:** Every great story has a villain who adds dimension and meaning to the narrative. When it comes to biblical villainy, outside of Lucifer himself, few figures provoke more thought than Cain—the first murderer. This study will focus on how a person can move from proximity to God into rebellion—and how we can guard our hearts from becoming like Cain.



**Key verse:** “If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it.” – **Genesis 4:7 (NASB)**

## • Cain's Legacy

- **1 John 3:10-12** (summary) – By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: **anyone who does not practice righteousness** is not of God, nor the **one who does not love his brother**. For this is the message which you have heard from the beginning, that **we should love one another; not as Cain**, who was of the evil one and slew his brother. And for what reason did he slay him? *Because his deeds were evil, and his brother's were righteous.*"
- Two marks of a child of God:
  - **Practicing Righteousness** – producing a righteous lifestyle
    - **Practicing – poieo – to do; to produce.**
  - **Loving your brother** – love – *agape* – **unconditional** love; not *phileo*, which is **brotherly** love.

**Question:** Which is harder: doing right consistently or loving others unconditionally? (This could be a trick question. LOL)

**Question:** Why do you think John chose to use the word *agape* instead of *phileo*?

- **The Brother Problems**

- (verse 3,4) - 3 So it came about in the course of time that Cain brought an offering to the Lord of the fruit of the ground. 4 Abel, on his part also brought of the **firstlings** of his flock and of their **fat** portions.
- (verse 4,5) - And the Lord had **regard** for Abel and for his offering; 5 but for Cain and for his offering He had no regard. **So Cain became very angry and his countenance fell.**

CAIN	ABEL
Brought fruit of the ground	Brought firstlings + fat portions
No specifics on quality or priority	Gave the first and the best
God had no regard (lo' sha'ah)	God had regard (sha'ah)

- **Regard** – *sha'ah* – to look at; to gaze; to have **respect**
- **Angry** – *charah* – to be hot; fire; kindled; **enraged**

**Hebrews 11:4 (NLT)** – It was by faith that Abel brought a more acceptable offering to God than Cain did. Abel’s offering gave evidence that he was a righteous man, and God showed his approval of his gifts.

**Question(s):** Why was Abel’s sacrifice more acceptable to God? How are you able to discern whether or not your sacrificial offering is acceptable to present to God?

**Question:** Did Cain have a “right” to be angry?

- **If You Do Well...**

- (verse 7) - If you do well, will not *your countenance* be lifted up (won't you be accepted)? And if you do not do well, **sin** is **crouching** at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must **master** it.”
  - **Do well** – *yatay* – to do good; to do the **right** thing
  - **Accepted/lifted countenance** – *se'eth* – to be lifted up; to be **elevated**; accepted
  - **Master it** – *mashal* – to have **dominion**; to dominate
- (verse 8-12) - Cain told Abel his brother. And it came about when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him. 9 ***Then the Lord said to Cain, “Where is Abel your brother?” And he said, “I do not know. Am I my brother’s keeper?” – Cain left the presence of God to kill his brother.***
- **Cain’s response to the Word of God**
  - He lacked **confession**; He lacked repentance; He was dishonest and indifferent
- Cain should have: surrendered; **submitted**; **confessed**; repented.