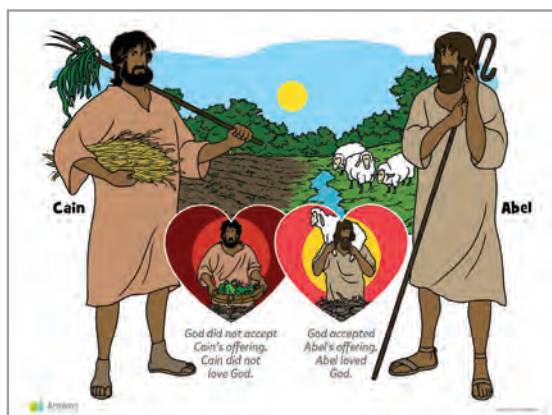


Lesson 22

Cain and Abel

God knows our hearts.



K-1st Lesson

Introduction

Refer to Lesson 21 Flip Chart. When Adam and Eve sinned by eating the fruit God told them not to eat, sin entered the world, and everything changed.

? How did God punish Eve for her sin? *Pain in childbirth. Husband would rule over her, making it harder to love each other.*

? And how did God punish Adam for his sin? *Thorns and thistles grew and work would be harder.*

Because of that first sin, everyone would sin, and all living things would die.

? Is that the way God created it? *No.*

No. God created everything to be very good. It was sin that ruined God's perfect creation.

But God promises that he will make a new heaven and new earth that will be perfect with no sin in it—ever!

? What do we call that time when God will do this? *The Consummation.*

Before we get started with our lesson, we're going to play a little game. Everyone stand up. When I say a word, I want you to show me how it makes you feel. So if I say happy, you would smile and look happy, and if I say sad, you would show me a sad face. Ready? *Have students change the looks on their faces as you call out several emotions, such as happy, sad, angry, scared, surprised, worried, etc.*

? Very good! We can show how we feel by the look on our face, can't we? But let me ask you a question. Did you actually feel angry or sad or scared when I said those words, or were you just pretending to look like it on the outside? *Just pretending.*

You were just pretending because that's what I told you to do. We can pretend on the outside when we're thinking something else on the inside. Today, we're going to see how someone in the Bible did that, too. But God knew that he was just pretending.

Offerings of Cain and Abel

Let's go back to Genesis right after God's perfect creation was ruined by sin. Adam and Eve left the garden and started their family. They had many children, but today we're going to talk about just two of their sons, Cain and Abel.

? Who has the Bible? Bring that up now, please. *Make this a special time as the student brings the Bible and opens it to where the sticky note is. Show the students where the book is. Let them look at it. Carry it around your circle.*

Genesis 4:2

First, let's see what the two brothers did when they grew up. Listen carefully as I read—the Bible tells us what they did. *Read Genesis 4:2 emphasizing "Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a worker of the ground."*

? Refer to the Lesson Flip Chart. What do we call someone who takes care of sheep? *A shepherd.*

Right! Abel was a shepherd.

? And what do we call someone who plants seeds in the ground and grows fruit and vegetables? *A farmer.*

Yes. Cain was a farmer.

Genesis 4:3

One day Cain and Abel brought offerings to the Lord. They were giving gifts to God. Let me read what they brought! First I'll read about Cain. *Read Genesis 4:3 emphasizing "an offering of the fruit of the ground."*

? What does this say Cain offered? *Fruit.*

Show the children the fruit and vegetables or pictures you brought. Cain was a farmer. So he brought some of the things that he grew in his garden to offer to God. That sounds good, doesn't it?

Genesis 4:4

? Refer to the Flip Chart. Now what do you think Abel, the shepherd, brought as an offering to the Lord? *Allow discussion.*

Let's find out. I'll read what it says in the Bible. *Read Genesis 4:4 emphasizing "the firstborn of his flock."*

? What did Abel bring? *A sheep from his flock.*

? Bring out pictures of sheep or the stuffed toy sheep. Right! Abel brought a young sheep from his flock to give to God. That sounds good, too.

They both brought God offerings from their work—Cain had fruit and vegetables, and Abel had a sheep from his flock.

? What do you think God thought of these offerings? *Allow discussion.*

? Hmm. Where can we find out for sure what God thought? *The Bible.*

Right! Listen as I read Genesis 4:4 again. *Reread Genesis 4:4 emphasizing "the Lord had regard for Abel and his offering."*

Did you hear that? This says the Lord had regard, or respect, for Abel and his offering. That means God liked and accepted Abel's offering of the sheep.

Genesis 4:5

So what did God think of Cain's offering? The Bible tells us that, too! *Read Genesis 4:5 emphasizing "had no regard" and "Cain was very angry."*

Wow! God did not respect Cain's offering of fruit and vegetables.

? How did that make Cain feel? *Angry.*

Yes. Cain got very angry at God and at his brother Abel. He was not happy at all.

? Why would God accept Abel's offering, but not accept Cain's? *Allow discussion.*

Refer to your props or pictures. You see, on the outside, Cain brought an offering that seemed really good, and so did Abel. But God knew what was really in their hearts.

Refer to the Flip Chart. God accepted Abel's offering because Abel loved God. And God knew Abel wanted to do his very best for him. But God did not accept Cain's offering because he knew Cain's heart was sinful, and his works were evil. God knew that Cain did not really want to do his very best for him.

God knows our hearts, too. He knows exactly why we do what we do. We can't fool God—

ever, even if we try to put on a happy face on the outside. God wants us to do our best for him all the time. And God knows when we aren't doing our best. He sees everything. He knows everything about our hearts, just like he knew Abel's heart was good and Cain's heart was bad.

Cain Kills Abel

So what happened next? Remember that Cain was really angry at God and at his brother because God did not accept his offering.

Genesis 4:8

Listen to what happened! *Read Genesis 4:8 emphasizing "killed him!"*

? What did Cain do to his brother? *He killed him!*

Yes. It was a terrible thing for him to do! But that's what he did.

? What made people become so mean and evil? *Sin.*

Right! Once sin came into creation, it didn't take long for people to get really mean and angry and want their own way. Sin entered the world when Adam and Eve disobeyed God in the garden. Everyone after them also sinned—including their son, Cain. And Cain became very angry—so angry he killed his brother!

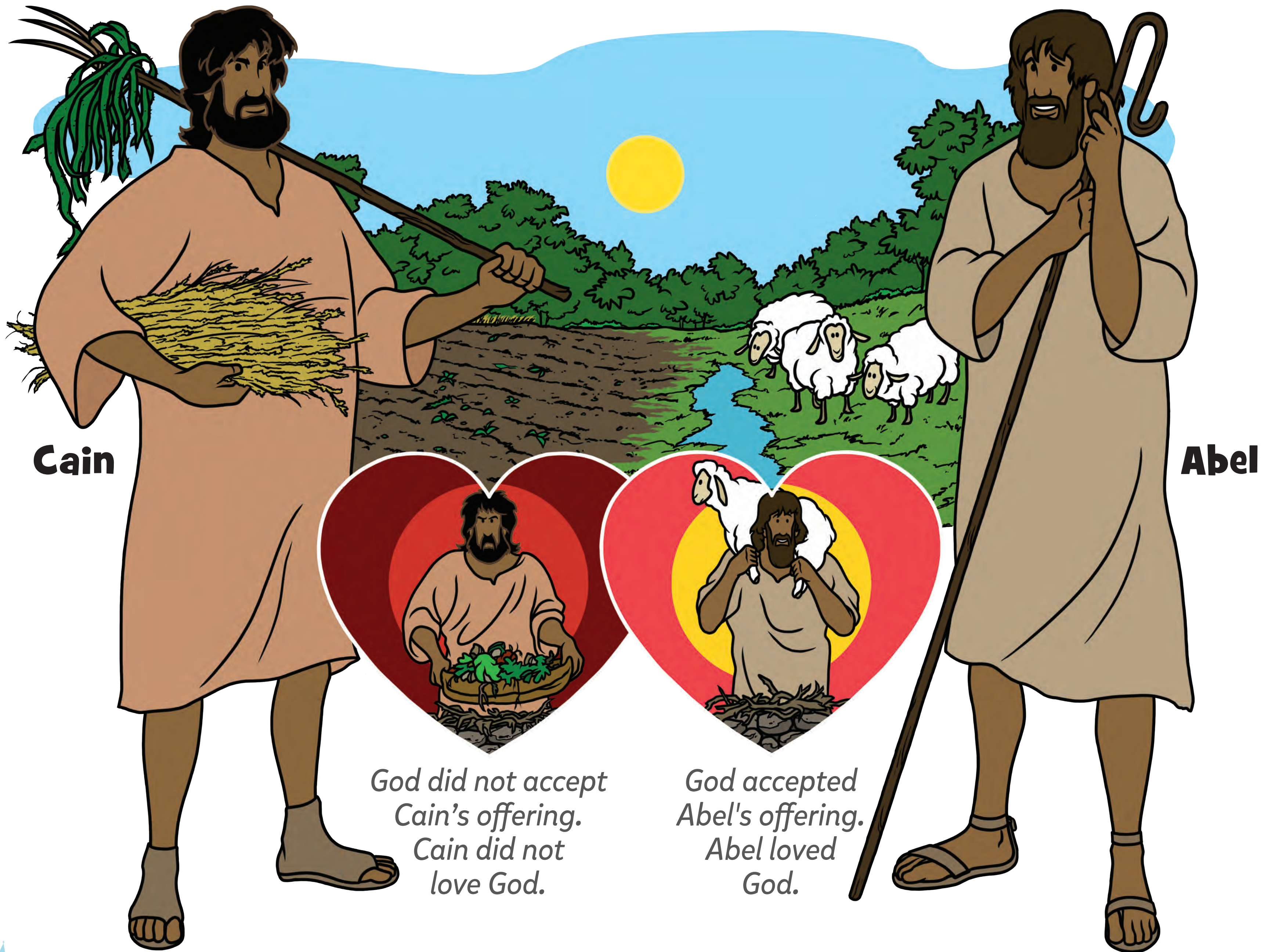
God Is Omniscient

Cain and Abel both made offerings to God. God accepted Abel's offering but did not accept Cain's because God knew their hearts. God knew that Abel loved the Lord and wanted to do his best for him. And God knew that Cain did not love him and did not want to do his best for the Lord.

God knows our hearts, too. We can't forget that. We may try to pretend on the outside, but God knows what we are thinking and what we are doing all the time. He is omniscient! That means God knows everything. He is all-knowing. Let's say that a few times together. *Repeat the word "omniscient" a few times, followed by the definition "all-knowing."*

The Bible says we are all sinners, and God knows sin is in our hearts. But God has made a way for sinners to be forgiven through Jesus Christ. When we turn away from sin and turn to Jesus, he will make our hearts clean so we will want to do our best for God.

Continue with the Lesson Review Game.



Cain

Abel

God did not accept
Cain's offering.
Cain did not
love God.

God accepted
Abel's offering.
Abel loved
God.