

Cain and Abel

MEMORY VERSE:

"Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."

1 Samuel 15:22

Adam and Eve were sad to leave the beautiful garden! It had been a wonderful place to live. However, because they had been disobedient, God could not let them eat from the Tree of Life. The entrance to the garden was barred by a flaming sword which turned every which way.

In a short time, Adam and Eve had a baby boy whom they named Cain. And a little later another boy whom they named Abel.

Cain loved to be outside with his hands deep in the dirt. He loved to watch things grow and carefully tend them. When he grew up he planted a garden full of fruits and vegetables. He was proud of what he had managed to grow. Abel loved to be with animals. He became a shepherd and looked after the sheep and goats out in the open fields.

After Adam and Eve had been put out of the garden, God wanted them to understand that when they did what was wrong they deserved to die. However, God is a loving and merciful Father and He provided a way for them to have their sins forgiven. When they wanted to ask forgiveness from God, they would have to take an animal, one of the very best of their flock and offer it to Him. The sheep or goat would die instead of them.

But God didn't want people to live however they wanted, offer a sacrifice once in a while and then go right back to doing wrong things again. The sacrifice was to bring peace between God and the person who was truly sorry for what they had done, and wanted to live a life that would please God.

One day both Cain and Abel came to offer sacrifices to God. Abel brought the finest young animal he could find to give to God. Cain brought some of the finest food he had grown in the field. Cain wanted to do things his own way and this did not please God. Cain saw that God was not pleased with his offering but had accepted Abel's. Instead of admitting that he was wrong and trying again, he became angry and jealous.

It's not good to be jealous, is it? God wants us to love each other, but jealousy can make us hate someone. We can do horrible things when we hate people. And that's what Cain did.

One day, when he and his brother were alone in the field, Cain killed Abel. This was very wrong and Cain knew it. Perhaps he thought that no one could see what he had done. But someone did know. God can see what we do no matter where we are.

He called to Cain and asked him where his brother was. "Am I my brother's keeper?" Cain replied. And then God told him that He knew what Cain had done. "Your

brother's blood cries to me from the ground," God said. God sent Cain away from his family to live by himself.

Things to remember:

- God would rather we obeyed Him than tried to honour Him in our own way.
- Jealousy can make us do horrible things - don't be jealous of people.
- We cannot hide anything from God.

Discussion

God created the idea of families. Families are meant to look out for one another and love one another. Sadly, this didn't work out with Cain and Abel and the end result was not a happy one. We need to learn to not blame our problems on other people, but instead see if there is something about ourselves that we need to change. Our family is there to support and help us and be there when we need them.

Why was Cain angry?

How was Cain punished for killing his brother?

Activity Suggestions

Draw a picture of your family. Think of some words that describe what a family should be like.

Make a family tree of your family. Cut out a tree trunk from brown paper. Draw a picture or write the names of family members on leaves cut from green paper. Glue them on your tree. See how far back you can go.