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Cain and Abel



Picture 7.1 - Cain's and Abel's Offerings

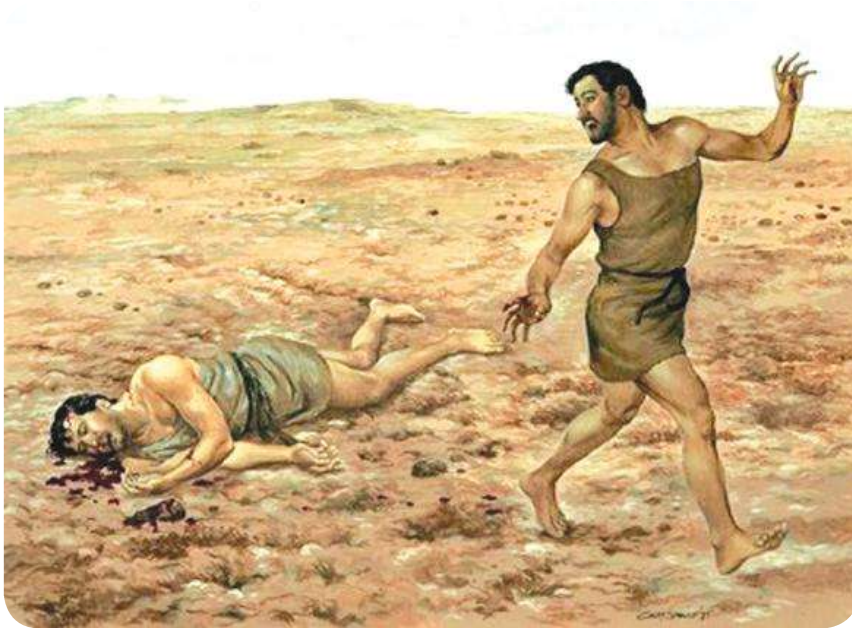
Adam and Eve had two sons, namely Cain and Abel. Abel was a shepherd. Cain was a farmer. After some time, Cain made an offering to God out of the harvest that he made from the ground. Abel offered the firstlings of his flock. God accepted Abel and his offering, but not Cain and his offering. Therefore, Cain got angry and he was jealous of Abel. Hence, God advised Cain:

The LORD said to Cain, “Why are you angry, and why has your countenance fallen? 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.

(Genesis 4:6-7)

When Cain learnt that God was pleased with his brother, Abel, he was jealous and furious. When God learnt that Cain was full of evil and going astray, He advised Cain and instructed to do away his evil intentions and become a good person. If he tried to be good, God promised that He too would help him.

When we do wrong, God advises us through various persons. Such persons are religious leaders, parents, teachers and elders. We must listen to those who guide us in the correct path.



Picture 7.2 - Cain has killed Abel

Cain said to his brother Abel, “Let us go out to the field.” And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel, and killed him.

(Genesis 4:8)

The act of killing Abel by Cain shows that man sinned against fraternal love. Full of jealousy, Cain went against fraternal love and killed his brother. As children of God, we have to live in fraternal love. We should not be jealous of others. We should be happy, when others make various achievements. We have to protect the lives of others.

God questioned Cain who fell into sin in spite of His advice:

God : Where is your brother Abel?

Cain : I do not know; am I my brother’s keeper?

God : What have you done? Listen; your brother’s blood is crying out to me from the ground!

These are the punishments and the consequences of sin that Cain received:

1. He became a cursed person
2. Dispelled from the ground
3. When he tilled the ground, it would no longer yield to him its strength.
4. He would be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth.

When Cain was questioned about Abel, he says that he was ignorant of him: “I do not know.” He lied. This shows that he has become stubborn as a result of sin. Even though man sins on the sly, it cannot be hidden from God. Even though God punished Cain, He showed mercy towards him. The following passage testifies to that:

Cain said to the LORD, “My punishment is greater than I can bear! 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.” 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.

(Genesis 4:13-15)

According to the above Bible passage, the one, who kills Cain, will get a sevenfold punishment. This shows that even the life of the sinner belongs to God. We cannot take a life of an offender. We cannot judge others. The sign, put on Cain, was a sign of protection, but not of a punishment. This shows that the sinner, who prays to God, will receive God’s mercy. We should keep away from sin, i.e. jealousy, envy, murder, etc. We must live with fraternal love.

Activity



1. Write three guidelines that you get from the story of Cain and Abel.
2. Write four groups of people who guide us when we do wrong.
3. Write three things that help us to overcome jealousy.



For Life

- ★ Do not be jealous of others.
- ★ Listen to those who guide us on the correct path.
- ★ Always live in fraternal love.