

# HOME STUDY LEAFLET.

LESSON 3.

JANUARY 21st, 1894.

1st QUARTER.

**Cain and Abel. Gen. 4: 13-13.**

**GOLDEN TEXT:** "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain." Heb. 11: 4.

**COMMIT TO MEMORY** verses 3-5.

**PROVE THAT**—God accepts heart worship only. John 4: 24.

**SHORTER CATECHISM**—Quest. 84. What does every sin deserve?

## DAILY PORTIONS.

(The Selections of the International Bible Reading Association.)

MONDAY.	TUESDAY.	WEDNESDAY.	THURSDAY.	FRIDAY.	SATURDAY.	SABBATH.
Gen. 4: 3-13	Ps. 51: 10-19	Heb. 11: 1-6	Matt. 5: 17-24	1 John 3: 10-18	Eph. 4: 25-32	Heb. 12: 18-26.

**To the Teacher**—Do not credit any Scholar with having prepared the lesson who does not at least try to answer the questions. Take the leaflet home and assign a value to each answer, announcing the result on the following Sabbath. *Take, or send, the Leaflet to absent scholars.*

**Always bring your Bible and Shorter Catechism to the Sabbath School.**

## HELPS IN STUDYING.

**INTRODUCTORY.**—The human race had multiplied for at least 125 or 130 years before the events narrated in this lesson occurred. It is estimated that the population of the earth at this time may have been 500,000. Men had devoted themselves to different pursuits, and the rites of worship were observed. Doubtless these were appointed by God himself. What is forbidden in the second commandment?

**LESSON PLAN.** I. Sacrifice. vs. 3-5. II. Sin. vs. 6-8. III. Suffering. vs. 9-13.

**I. SACRIFICE. 3.** In process of time—lit. "at the end of days." The word implies a considerable lapse of time. In 1 Kings 17: 7 the same expression is rendered "after a while" (see margin), and in 2 Chr. 21: 19 it means two years. There may have been a united festal service of all the family of Adam on the occasion on which this occurred and in that case Cain would have felt publicly humiliated, and all the more deeply since he was the eldest son. An offering—the same word is used of Abel's sacrifice, so that we cannot emphasize the special sense which it afterwards bore of "a bloodless offering." The divine displeasure does not seem to have been directed so much against the gift as against the spirit in which it was presented. Cain's offering was one of those afterwards commanded. (Ex. 22: 19, Neh. 10: 35, 36.) and was in itself appropriate. **4-5. Firstlings**—Ex. 13: 12; 34: 19; Lev. 27: 26; Num. 18: 15; Prov. 3: 9. The fat thereof—Either, the fat of the victim was consumed on the altar, or he offered the fattest and best in addition to the firstlings, according as we understand "thereof" to refer to "flock" or "firstlings." **The LORD had respect**—This may have been shown by fire from heaven as in 1 Kings 18: 38. See Lev. 9: 24; Judges 6: 21; 1 Chr. 21: 26; 2 Chr. 7: 1. The reason is given in Heb. 11: 14. The worshipper's state of heart makes all the difference. Compare what is said of Israel's offerings in Isa. 1: 11-18; Hos. 8: 13; Amos. 5: 21, 22, 26. **Very wroth**—lit. "it burned with Cain exceedingly." His pent up wrath showed itself in sullen, lowering looks. There is no humble penitence, self-examination, or prayer for instruction and pardon.

**II. SIN. 6-7.** In wonderful condescension, God reasons with him. He is the same forbearing and merciful God still, Isa. 1: 18, 43: 26, Ezek. 33: 11; 2 Pet. 3: 9. **Accepted**—lit. "is there not lifting up," either (1) of the guilt, i. e. the burden of sin removed, or (2) of the sacrifice i. e. it is accepted with God, or (3) of the dejected countenance. Acceptable service must spring from right motives and dispositions, but

Published weekly at 5 cents a year, for the Sabbath School Committee of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, by Rev. T. F. Fotheringham, M. A., Convener, St. John, N. B.

if these are unworthy or evil, "sin lieth at the door" crouching like a wild beast eager to devour its prey. "But thou shouldst rule over it," master the evil. (Rom. 6: 12; 8: 3; 12: 21; Col. 3: 5; Jas. 4: 7; 1: 14, 15). The majority of commentators find the essential difference between the sacrifice of Cain and that of Abel to lie in the absence of bloodshedding in the former thus revealing on Cain's part a wilful rejection of the divinely appointed way of salvation. In accordance with this view the seventh verse is understood to mean, "If thou offerest not the appointed sacrifice, a sin offering lies at hand, present it, and thy rights as an elder brother shall be restored and secured. Abel will look up to thee and thy authority shall be unquestioned." It is necessary to choose between conflicting views of a very difficult passage but it seems to us that the word for "offering" cannot here have its technical meaning of a "bloodless offering." If this narrative is, as is not improbable, an extract from a primitive document, the general sense of the word may have been the only one known to the times of the writer. The fundamental principles of all worship are here emphasized—the state of the heart determines acceptability, and persistent wrong-doing terminates in spiritual death, the religious faculty itself is atrophied. 8. Talked with—We are not told what they talked about. Some translate it "told it to Abel his brother" and connect it with the preceding verse. Others suppose that their conversation was about the whole subject of the rejected sacrifices and that Cain's temper was aroused by the discussion. Notice how often the word "brother" occurs. (Matt. 23: 35, 1 John 3: 12, 15; Jude 11).

III. SUFFERING 9. Brother's keeper—An insolent answer, both in form and substance. What is required and what is forbidden in the sixth commandment? Every man is his brother's keeper as far as regards his influence for good or evil. 10. Crieth unto me—Heinous crimes are figuratively said to "cry to heaven." Compare ch. 18: 20; 19: 13; Ex. 3: 9; Also ch. 9: 5, and read Ps. 116: 15; Heb. 11: 4; Jas. 5: 4; Rev. 6: 9, 10; Isa. 26: 21; Ezek. 24: 7; Job. 16: 18. The blood of Christ cries louder for mercy than Abel's did for vengeance. (Heb. 12: 24). 11. Cursed from the earth—"The very ground curses thee and refuses to yield thee subsistence or a home." Compare Lev. 18: 25, 28; 20: 22; also Deut. 18: 15-20. The race of Cain abandoned agriculture and founded cities, inventing arts and music. Here again the curse carried a blessing latent in it. 12. Lashed by the stings of a remorseful conscience, he could no longer endure the reproachful eyes of men. 13. My punishment—Marg. "My iniquity is greater than can be forgiven." Either way there is no real penitence. He expresses no regret for the crime, utters no cry for pardon. He realizes his hard lot and dreads just vengeance from man when the protecting care of God is withdrawn. In reply God sets a mark upon him and guarantees that his life shall be preserved. He is given time for repentance and is constantly reminded of the divine mercy in sparing him.

- 1—What did Cain bring as an offering? (3)
- 2—What did Abel bring? (3)
- 3—Why did God accept the one and refuse the other? (5)
- 4—When Cain shewed his anger what did God say to him? (Give the sense of it in your own words). (6)
- 5—When God asked Cain for his brother, what answer did he make? (5)
- 6—What curse was pronounced upon Cain?

Name, \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Teacher,—Please excuse my absence from Sabbath School to-day, I cannot come because I have read the "Daffy Portions" and answered the questions as well as I could. I have committed to memory \_\_\_\_\_ verses in addition to the Golden Text, and \_\_\_\_\_ Questions in the Catechism and have recited them to \_\_\_\_\_ I was at church \_\_\_\_\_

I send with this my Weekly Offering of \_\_\_\_\_ cents.