

**The Freeman Road Church of Christ**  
**1006 Freeman Road, Neosho, MO**

*Old Testament Examples Series*  
*Issue 1*

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**[www.neoshococ.org](http://www.neoshococ.org)**

**Abel**

The first two children mentioned in the Bible, are brothers named Cain and Abel. These two boys were the first children of Adam and Eve (Genesis 4). In the short space of God's Word they fill, great lessons are found.

God's Word explains very little about Cain and Abel beyond the facts that Abel was a keeper of sheep and Cain was a tiller of the ground. On account of Adam and Eve's sin in the Garden, their children had to work hard in order to eat and live. God told Adam that his sons would have to live by the sweat of their brow. Genesis 4 relates that in the process of time both Cain and Abel offered a sacrifice to God. Cain offered a portion of the fruits of the soil he had reaped. Abel offered the firstborn of his flock. In Genesis 4:4-5, we discover that God respected Abel and his offering, but He did not respect the offering of Cain. This made Cain very angry, and even after God rebuked Cain, Cain allowed his anger to overcome him. He killed his brother Abel, becoming the first murderer in human history.

While the story of Abel's life is very short, it speaks volumes to his character as a child of God, and gives us a great example to follow in our Christian lives.

First of all, *the story of Abel teaches us the importance of proper worship.* Both Cain and Abel worshipped God, but only Abel's worship was accepted. This teaches us the principle that there is a right and wrong way to worship God.

Many people today teach that any form of worship is acceptable. The example of Cain and Abel teaches us that such is an old error. When God sets forth the way He wants to be worshipped, He expects His children to worship Him exactly as He commands. When we change the way we worship God our worship is not respected or accepted by Him. If however, we worship the way He commands us to, then, like Abel, our worship will be respected by God.

Secondly, in worshipping God properly Abel displays another worthy attribute—obedience. When God told Abel how to worship, Abel obeyed. Evidently, Abel applied this principle in all areas of his life, not just sacrificial worship. Because Abel was obedient he was respected by God. Obedience has always been at the heart of truly following God. More than 1,000 years after the life of Abel, Moses instructed the Children of Israel to fear God, walk in His ways, and love Him (Deut. 10:12). Solomon wrote, *“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man's all.”* (Eccl. 12:13). And Jesus Himself said, *“If you love Me, keep My commandments.”* (Jn. 14:15). In Abel we see an example of obedience worthy of imitation.

Thirdly, we can learn a great lesson in faith from the example of Abel. God's commands required Abel to make a sacrifice. While it would have been easy for Abel to trust in himself rather than God, Abel had faith enough in God's ability to care for him that he willingly offered the best of his flock in sacrificial worship to God. Abel's brother Cain clearly did not share Abel's measure of faith, for he did not offer what God commanded. Abel offered obedient sacrifices in worship of his God, and in doing so was counted as righteous in the sight of God. Jesus referred to Abel as “righteous Abel” (Mt. 23:25) and Heb. 11:4 tells us *“By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still*

*speaks.*” By emulating the faith of Abel, we today can also be righteous in the sight of God.

Lastly, Abel teaches us the importance of serving God, no matter what the cost. Abel lost his life because he faithfully followed God’s will. Had Abel compromised his faith he might not have been slain by his brother, but he would have jeopardized his eternal salvation. Abel was brave enough and faithful enough to serve his God, even though it cost him his life. Abel was not the last of God’s children that suffered because of their obedience to God. Many prophets and other Old Testament characters were persecuted and even killed for their faith. Many New Testament Christians, such as Stephen (Acts 7) and most of the apostles were slain for their faith in Christ. While Abel does not stand alone as a martyr for his faith, he was the very first. Stephen became the first Christian martyr, but Abel was the first martyr of God’s people in all of human history. Although we may not face death for our faith, we will face persecution. Paul told Timothy, *“Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution”* (2 Tim. 3:12). Persecution causes many to falter in their faith (Mt. 13:20-21). Instead of faltering though, we should remember and emulate the faith of characters such as Abel, and stand true and faithful no matter what the cost.

Although very few verses are spent telling the life of Abel, he is a great example from the very dawn of human history of what it means to be a child of God. Today, we as Christians would do well to emulate the obedience, faithfulness, and courage of Abel as we go about our daily lives. We should worship God in faithful obedience as Abel did. We should be faithful enough to make sacrifices in order to follow God as Abel did, and we should be courageous enough to stand firm in our faith even in the face of persecution, just like Abel. Let us learn from the example of Abel, and apply those lessons we learn from his life to be better servants of God in our lives today.

Article by: Nate Bibens

## January Teaching Schedule

### Sunday, Jan. 2<sup>nd</sup>

10:00 Nate Bibens  
4:00 Lee Owens:  
Proverbs

### Wednesday, Jan. 5<sup>th</sup>

7:00 Reading  
2 Thess. 1-3

### Sunday, Jan. 9<sup>th</sup>

10:00 Randy Blankenship  
4:00 Nate Bibens:  
Ecclesiastes

### Wednesday, Jan. 12<sup>th</sup>

7:00 Nate Bibens:  
Review of  
1 Corinthians

### Sunday, Jan. 16<sup>th</sup>

10:00 Roger Owens  
4:00 Roger Owens

### Wednesday, Jan. 19<sup>th</sup>

7:00 Randy Blankenship

### Sunday, Jan. 23<sup>rd</sup>

10:00 Lee Owens  
4:00 Nate Bibens:  
Song of Solomon

### Wednesday, Jan. 26<sup>th</sup>

7:00 Roger Owens

### Sunday, Jan. 30<sup>th</sup>

10:00 Roger Owens  
4:00 Lee Owens

## Contact Information:

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