

HEROES OF THE FAITH

Topic: Abel

Scripture: Hebrews 11:1-4

Memory Verse: Hebrews 11:4

Lesson 1 Abel - *The Man Whose Actions Spoke Louder Than His Words*

INTRODUCTION: Hebrews 11 has been called by many the great “*Hall of Faith*” chapter of the Bible. In this chapter are recorded the names of many of the great heroes of the faith who did amazing things for God because of their faith. The first hero of the faith listed in this chapter is a man by the name of “Abel.” The Bible does not record much about this great man. Although there are no recorded words in the Bible that Abel ever spoke, it is recorded that “*Cain talked with Abel.*” (Genesis 4:8) But, though not one word that Abel ever spoke is recorded, the testimony of Abel has sounded out through his actions for almost 6,000 years of human history. Abel is definitely **THE MAN WHOSE ACTIONS SPOKE LOUDER THAN HIS WORDS.**

I ABEL IS THE SECOND MAN EVER BORN

Genesis 4:1-2 - “. . . *And she again bare his brother Abel. . .*”

- A. Abel learned right and wrong from his parents
 - 1) Abel’s mother was a woman named Eve which means “*life-giver*” (Genesis 3:20). Eve had, no doubt, told her son the story of how she had done wrong when she disobeyed God and ate the forbidden fruit. (Genesis 3:1-6)
 - 2) Abel’s father was a man named Adam which means “*red.*” (Genesis 2:19) Adam had, no doubt, told his son the story of how he had done wrong and sinned when he followed Eve and ate the forbidden fruit also. (Genesis 3:6-12) Adam must have also told the story to Abel of how God killed an animal in order for them to have clothes to wear. (Genesis 3:21) Through this story the principle of a blood sacrifice became very clear to young Abel. (Hebrews 9:22)
 - 3) Abel’s name means “*breath*” or “*exhalation.*” Abel grew up to become a “*keeper of sheep.*” (Genesis 4:2) Abel determined as a young man to do his best to obey God and give to God the blood sacrifice that God required. He realized that the “*firstling of his flock*” which he gave as a sacrifice to God pictured the “*seed of the woman*” Who would be bruised for his sin. (Genesis 3:15; 4:4)

- B. Abel’s brother was the first man ever born
 - 1) Abel’s brother was a man named Cain which means “*acquisition.*”

(Genesis 4:1) Adam and Eve may have thought at first that they had acquired the perfect “*seed of the woman*” Who would defeat the “*serpent*”, the devil. However, they must have been truly disappointed the first time Cain sinned and they realized that he was not the promised “*seed.*” (Genesis 3:15)

- 2) Cain grew up to become a “*tiller of the ground.*” (Genesis 4:2) Farmers can many times become very proud people. They become proud of their crops, how straight their rows have been ploughed and even the size of their harvest. (Luke 12:16-21)

II **ABEL IS THE FIRST MAN TO EVER DIE**

Genesis 4:3-8 - “. . .Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.”

- A. Both Cain and Abel give their offerings to God
Cain, in disobedience and pride, gives to God an offering “*of the fruit of the ground.*” (Genesis 4:3) Abel obediently gives to God an offering of the “*firstlings of his flock.*” (Genesis 4:4) Both offerings were of the very best quality, yet God accepted the blood sacrifice given by Abel and rejected the fruit and vegetable offering given by Cain. (Genesis 4:4-7)
- B. Abel is murdered in the field by his brother Cain
Cain must have accused Abel of being a “*Daddy’s boy*” or a “*goody-two-shoes*” because Abel did what was right. Many times the liberal accuses the conservative or fundamentalist of being mean-spirited or unloving, but notice that it was not the right-doing fundamentalist who murdered the liberal, but it was the liberal who murdered the fundamentalist.
(Genesis 4:8) The first murder ever committed was done over religion!
- C Both Cain and Abel are a picture of someone else
 - 1) Cain is a picture of the devil
 - a) Cain is disobedient to God and wants his own way
(Genesis 4:5) The devil is disobedient to God and wants his own way. (Isaiah 14:12-15)
 - b) Cain was mad at God and took it out on Abel. (Genesis 4:5-8) The devil is mad at God and takes it out on mankind.
(1 Peter 5:8)
 - c) Cain was a murderer. (Genesis 4:8; 1 John 3:12) The devil is a murderer. (John 8:44)
 - d) Cain was a liar. (Genesis 4:9) The devil is a liar. (John 8:44)
 - e) Cain was cast out to roam the earth. (Genesis 4:11-12) The devil is cast down to earth. (Ezekiel 28:14-16)
 - 2) Abel is a picture of Jesus Christ
 - a) Abel was a shepherd. (Genesis 4:2) Jesus is the good Shepherd. (John 10:11)

- b) Abel suffered wrongfully. (Genesis 4:8) Jesus suffered wrongfully. (1 Peter 3:18)
- c) Abel was put to death because of jealousy. (Genesis 4:5-8) Jesus was put to death because of jealousy. (Matthew 27:18)
- d) Abel's blood cries out. (Genesis 4:10) Jesus' blood cries out. (1 Peter 1:18-19; Ephesians 1:7)
- e) Abel was a righteous man. (Matthew 23:33-36) Jesus is a righteous Man. (Luke 23:47)
- f) Abel though dead keeps speaking. (Hebrews 11:4) Jesus though He died, yet He lives. (Revelation 2:8)

CONCLUSION: Abel was the first Christian martyr and as such became the first human soul to enter into paradise. He did not live a long life upon the earth. Not one word he ever spoke was recorded. Yet, Abel's actions speak so loudly that wherever the Word of God has traveled for almost 6,000 years, his testimony has been heard and "*by it he being dead yet speaketh.*" (Hebrews 4:11) Abel truly is "***THE MAN WHOSE ACTIONS SPOKE LOUDER THAN HIS WORDS.***"

TEACHERS' TIP: WE SHOULD CONSIDER NOT SO MUCH WHAT THE CHILD IS TODAY AS WHAT HE MAY BECOME TOMORROW.

NEXT MEMORY VERSE: Hebrews 11:5

Study Questions

Write the correct name (Cain or Abel) in the blank next to the statements describing these two brothers.

1. The first hero listed in Hebrews 11. _____
2. The oldest of the sons of Adam and Eve. _____
3. His name means "*breath or exhalation.*" _____
4. His name means "*acquisition.*" _____
5. He became a "*keeper of sheep.*" _____
6. He became a "*tiller of the ground.*" _____
7. The first man to ever die. _____
8. He brought an offering of the fruit of the ground. _____
9. He brought a blood sacrifice offering. _____
10. He is murdered by his brother. _____
11. He was a picture of the devil. _____
12. He is a picture of Jesus. _____
13. "*By it he being dead yet speaketh.*" _____
14. He represents the fundamentalist. _____
15. He represents the liberal. _____

BONUS: The first murder committed was done over _____.