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INTRODUCTION

The Bible is one of the two or three oldest books in the world, but unlike most of the ancient books, it is found not only in great libraries, but in almost every home of the civilized world; and it is not only studied by learned scholars, but read by the common people; and its many stories grasp and hold the attention of little children. Happy is that child who has heard, over and over again, the Bible stories until they have become fixed in his mind and memory, to become the foundations of a noble life.

It is with the desire of aiding parents and teachers in telling these stories, and aiding children to understand them, also in the hope that they may be read in many schools, that a few among the many interesting stories in the Bible have been chosen, brought together and as far as necessary simplified to meet the minds of the young.

THE STORY OF ADAM AND EVE

The first man's name was Adam and his wife he called Eve. They lived in a beautiful Garden away in the East Country which was called Eden, filled with beautiful trees and flowers of all kinds. But they did not live in Eden long for they did not obey God's command, but ate the fruit of a tree which had been forbidden them. They were driven forth by an angel and had to give up their beautiful home.

So Adam and his wife went out into the world to live and to work. For a time they were all alone, but after a while God gave them a little child of their own, the first baby that ever came into the world. Eve named him Cain; and after a time another baby came, whom she named Abel.

When the two boys grew up, they worked, as their father worked before them. Cain, the older brother, chose to work in the fields, and to raise grain and fruits. Abel, the younger brother, had a flock of sheep and became a shepherd.

While Adam and Eve were living in the Garden of Eden, they could talk with God and hear God's voice speaking to them. But now that they were out in the world, they could no longer talk with God freely, as

before. So when they came to God, they built an altar of stones heaped up, and upon it, they laid something as a gift to God, and burned it, to show that it was not their own, but was given to God, whom they could not see. Then before the altar they made their prayer to God, and asked God to forgive their sins, all that they had done was wrong; and prayed God to bless them and do good to them.

Each of these brothers, Cain and Abel, offered upon the altar to God his own gift. Cain brought the fruits and the grain which he had grown; and Abel brought a sheep from his flock, and killed it and burned it upon the altar. For some reason God was pleased with Abel and his offering, but was not pleased with Cain and his offering. Perhaps God wished Cain to offer something that had life, as Abel offered; perhaps Cain's heart was not right when he came before God.

And God showed that He was not pleased with Cain; and Cain, instead of being sorry for his sin, and asking God to forgive him, was very angry with God, and angry also toward his brother Abel. When they were out in the field together Cain struck his brother Abel and killed him. So the first baby in the world grew up to be the murderer of his own brother.

And the Lord said to Cain, "Where is Abel, your brother?"

And Cain answered, "I do not know; why should I take care of my brother?"

Then the Lord said to Cain, "What is this that you

have done? Your brother's blood is like a voice crying to me from the ground. Do you see how the ground has opened, like a mouth, to drink your brother's blood? As long as you live, you shall be under God's curse for the murder of your brother. You shall wander over the earth, and shall never find a home, because you have done this wicked deed."

And Cain said to the Lord, "My punishment is greater than I can bear. Thou hast driven me out from among men; and thou hast hid thy face from me. If any man finds me he will kill me, because I shall be alone, and no one will be my friend."

And God said to Cain, "If any one harms Cain, he shall be punished for it." And the Lord God placed a mark on Cain, so that whoever met him should know him and should know also that God had forbidden any man to harm him. Then Cain and his wife went away from Adam's home to live in a place by themselves, and there they had children. And Cain's family built a city in that land; and Cain named the city after his first child, whom he had called Enoch.