



"This is the Story..."

Written by Talashia Keim Yoder and Daniel Yoder. Artwork by Christa and Jonathan Reuel.
Song lyrics and music by Jonathan Reuel.

Week 3: On Skin and Sky

Genesis 4-11

Intro Video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b9POM5RxueA&list=PLiSIfKtmhnBYndDKZqJJ2xS8wuUH7JJH3&index=5&t=0s>

Review the big story: God created the cosmos and humans and called it all good. We were created to live in harmony, but sometimes we miss the mark. Adam and Eve missed the mark, and they had to live with the consequences, but God stuck with them and continued to love them.

- **Key verses:** Genesis 4:15b, Genesis 8:22, Genesis 11:9

Tell the story: Here are some more stories about people who missed the mark and dealt with consequences - and some more stories about how God stuck with them. Adam and Eve had two sons, named Cain and Abel. Cain got jealous of Abel and killed him, and had to leave his home. Several generations later, the earth was full of wickedness, some serious missing of the mark. God was "grieved to his heart," and decided to make a fresh start. One man, Noah, was "righteous and blameless." God instructed him to build an ark to save himself, his family, and the animals. The waters covered the earth for many days and nights, but those on the ark were saved. God sent a rainbow as a sign of the covenant God made with Noah, to never destroy the earth with a flood again. After several more generations, the people missed the mark again. This time, they decided to put their trust in a structure instead of in God. God confused their language and scattered them.

- Read Genesis 4-11, or choose just one story to focus on:
 - Genesis 4:1-16 (Cain and Abel)
 - Genesis 6:1-9:17 (The Flood)
 - Genesis 11:1-9 (The Tower of Babel)
- Read pages 18-22 in the *Shine On* story Bible.

Prime the pump:

- **Try writing or saying what you know** about these stories before you read them. Just like with Genesis 3, you may find that you have read some things into the story that aren't actually in the Bible! Unpack that.
- **Background information for all three stories:**
 - The first 11 chapters of Genesis are called "primeval history," and the main character in them is God. Emotions are mostly assigned to God, and the passages about humans are fairly matter-of-fact. As you read this, notice all the emotions assigned to God - and all the times God talks to God's self. How does this change or resonate with your understanding of God?
 - In Genesis 4:7, we see the first mention of "sin." There are fifty Hebrew words translated into English as "sin," and this one is the most common, "hatta," which literally means "to miss the mark." Missing the mark can have minor consequences, like a mess to clean up,

or it can have catastrophic consequences. How does this definition of sin resonate with or challenge how you think about sin?

- Notice that there's always grace in the consequence. What are the gifts of grace in the consequences faced by these people who miss the mark?
- **Genesis 4:1-16 (Cain and Abel)**
 - Notice how God describes sin in Genesis 4:7. Do you ever experience sin in this way?
 - Cain is a farmer, and when he spills his brother's blood on the ground, one consequence is that the ground will no longer yield to him. Think about what that would mean for him.
- **Genesis 6:1-9:17 (The Flood)**
 - A couple different accounts of the flood get mashed together here. Were there two of every animal or six pairs? How long were they on the ark? We don't actually get a clear answer. Do you think the exact numbers are crucial to the story? Why or why not?
 - Genesis 6:11 describes the earth as "corrupt," which some say translates more accurately as "annihilated." How does the story change if we read it with that word?
 - Noah is described as "righteous and blameless." "Righteous" refers to right relationships with humans and creation, while "blameless" refers to right worship - right relationship with God. A phrase we often take to mean "perfect" really means that Noah was living in harmony with God and creation. What does it mean, here and now, to be righteous and blameless?
 - Read Genesis 8:1. The "wind" here is *ruach* - where do we know that word from? Try reading these two passages side by side.
 - Notice the parallel of the blessing of Genesis 9:1 with God's blessing in creation. There's another parallel in Genesis 9:6. If you enjoy parallels like this, consider starting a list of the times the Bible talks with itself!
 - The sign of the covenant is a rainbow. What weather has to happen for a rainbow to appear? What might that metaphor clue us into about life?
- **Genesis 11:1-9 (The Tower of Babel)**
 - Why do you think the people in Genesis 11 wanted to build a great city?
 - Do you ever want to "make a name for yourself"?
 - Why do you think God isn't a fan of their plan?

Microsong: "On Skin and Sky" (Listen: <https://youtu.be/1zzBLm10L8E>)

Cain got jealous and acted badly. The world got violent and God was sorry, but the mark of Cain and a rainbow sign were God's love written on skin and sky

Sing the Big Song: (Listen: <https://youtu.be/Gx1mkGgsAg>)

This is the story of how it all began. God made matter, and chaos shattered.

Eve and Adam, they tried to hide.

The world got violent and God replied with a mark and a flood and a rainbow sign, God's love written on skin and sky,

God loves every one of us, it's true, and God loves the universe.

Go do your household project!