THE QUESTION

Did Abel have any children?

Asked by a THF member on October 28, 2026 · published November 9, 2026 · 6 numbered quotations · the 20 early Christian passages and 185 Bible verses we kept are listed at the back, each with a link.

Read it online: thehistoricfaith.com/early-church-questions/did-abel-have-any-children

The short answer *Interpretation: our reading of the passages, not their words*

No children of Abel are recorded. Cain killed him, and the early writers say God gave Eve a new son, Seth, in Abel's place, and the rest of the human race came from Seth. Abel's lasting legacy was his faith and his death as the first martyr, not a family line.

LIBRARY ONLY	This study was written only from The Historic Faith's library of early-Christian writings and the Bible, never from the web. Every passage we kept from what the library gave is listed at the back, with a link to read it.
HOW IT WAS MADE	Compiled by machine learning from The Historic Faith's library of early-Christian writings and the Bible only. Every quotation was matched word for word against our stored text. Not yet reviewed by The Historic Faith.
SHARING WITH AN AI?	Every quotation here comes from The Historic Faith's library. If you paste this study into an AI, anything it adds beyond these pages comes from that AI, not from us.

IN THIS STUDY

1	Abel was killed by his brother	**2**	**5**	Abel's true family shares his faith	**3**
2	Seth was born in Abel's place	**2**	**6**	Abel is remembered as the first martyr	**4**
3	Only the lines of Cain and Seth appear	**2**		What these passages don't tell us	**4**
4	Seth's line carried the righteous family forward	**3**		The Sources: 20 early Christian passages and 185 Bible verses, with links	**4**

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POINT 1 OF 6

Abel was killed by his brother

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Theophilus retells Genesis. Abel pleased God, and Satan, full of spite, stirred up Cain to kill him. Theophilus sees this as the moment death entered the world.

1 "And when he saw that Abel was pleasing to God, he worked on the heart of his brother Cain and caused him to kill his brother Abel."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Theophilus of Antioch,** *To Autolycus* 29 (c. 169–183 AD) **Source 3, page 5** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

POINT 2 OF 6

Seth was born in Abel's place

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Theophilus says God let Eve bear Seth to take the place of Abel. He traces the rest of the human race through Seth, not through Abel.

2 "And in place of Abel, God allowed Eve to conceive and bear a son who was called Seth. From Seth the rest of the human race has come down until now."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Theophilus of Antioch,** *To Autolycus* 30 (c. 169–183 AD) **Source 2, page 5** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

POINT 3 OF 6

Only the lines of Cain and Seth appear

Our note · compiled by machine learning · Interpretation: our reading of the passages, not their words

Theophilus lists Cain's descendants down to Lamech's sons and then says the rest of Cain's line was forgotten. He names no line for Abel at all. That silence is why we say no children of Abel are recorded.

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3 “Up to this point, the line of Cain is recorded. As for the rest, the descendants of his line have sunk into oblivion because he killed his brother.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Theophilus of Antioch,** *To Autolycus* 30 (c. 169–183 AD) **Source 2, page 5** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

POINT 4 OF 6

Seth's line carried the righteous family forward

Our note · compiled by machine learning · Interpretation: our reading of the passages, not their words

Julius Africanus explains that Seth's descendants are called sons of God, because the righteous men and patriarchs came from him, all the way to Christ. So the godly line that might have come through Abel came through Seth instead.

4 “In my opinion, what is meant by this is that the descendants of Seth are called the sons of God because righteous men and patriarchs came from him, all the way down to the Savior Himself.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Julius Africanus,** *Extant Writings* 1 (c. 232–265 AD) **Source 8, page 5** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

POINT 5 OF 6

Abel's true family shares his faith

Our note · compiled by machine learning · Interpretation: our reading of the passages, not their words

Commodianus contrasts the race of Cain with the race of Abel. He does not mean children by birth. He means believers who, like Abel, trust in Christ.

5 “But the race of Abel already believes in a merciful Christ.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Commodianus,** *Writings* (c. 250–300 AD) **Source 17, page 5** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

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POINT 6 OF 6

Abel is remembered as the first martyr

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Cyprian honors Abel as peaceful and righteous. He says Abel was the first to show martyrdom and that his blood pointed ahead to the Lord's suffering. His legacy is his witness, not a family tree.

6 “So he who first displayed martyrdom, and first foreshadowed the Lord's passion by the glory of his blood, had both the Lord's righteousness and His peace.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Cyprian,** *Treatises* (c. 248–258 AD)
THF's updated English

Source 12, page 5 **Read it in the library ›**

THE LIMITS

What these passages don’t tell us

- These passages never state outright that Abel had no children; they simply record none.
- They do not say how old Abel was when he died or whether he was married.
- A word-for-word match shows that a quotation really is in our text. It does not show that our reading of it is right, or who wrote each work.

WHERE EVERY QUOTE CAME FROM

The Sources

The 20 early Christian passages and 185 Bible verses we kept for this question (repeats and weak or off-topic search hits were left out): early Christian passages first (sources 1–20, grouped by writer, earliest first), then Bible verses in The Faith Once Delivered Bible (sources 21–102, in Bible order), then 103 more verses THF links to these passages, by reference. **Quote 1, page 2** beside a source shows where the study quotes it. Passages are in THF’s updated English unless marked “1885 English” (the Roberts–Donaldson translation, public domain). “… [continues online]” marks a passage the library gave only in part. **On paper?** At **thehistoricfaith.com**, Bible verses are in the **Audio Bible** and early Christian writings in the **Library** (search for the title).

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITERS *20 passages from 11 writers*

Ignatius of Antioch, *c. 98–117 AD · source 1*

1 *Epistles of Ignatius* (1885 English; on point 1) “who didst raise up against Abel the murderous Cain… [continues online] **read ›**

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Theophilus of Antioch, *c. 169–183 AD · sources 2–3*

2 *To Autolycus* 30 (1885 English) **Quotes 2, 3, pages 2, 3** “in place of Abel, God granted to Eve to conceive and bear a son, who was called Seth… [continues online] **read ›**

3 *To Autolycus* 29 **Quote 1, page 2** “she said, "I have gotten a man from God… [continues online] **read ›**

Clement of Alexandria, *c. 190–215 AD · source 4*

4 *Stromata* 3 (on point 2) “and bore a son, and called his name Seth: for God has raised up for me another seed instead of Abel,” Genesis 4:25. You see whom they attack with… [continues online] **read ›**

Tertullian, *c. 196–220 AD · source 5*

5 *An Answer to the Jews* 5 (on point 1) “son, that is, of Israel. And the opposite sacrifices were shown to be those of the younger son, Abel, that is, of our people. For the elder, Cain, offered gifts… [continues online] **read ›**

Origen, *c. 215–254 AD · sources 6–7*

6 *Commentary on John* 6 (1885 English; on point 2) “for the text in Genesis about the resurrection, the churchman will rejoin with a text to an opposite effect, God has raised up for me another seed in place of… [continues online] **read ›**

7 *Against Celsus* 59 (1885 English; on point 1) “not Abel against Cain, nor Jacob against Esau: for if this had been the case, Celsus would have been correct in saying that we give the same accounts as do… [continues online] **read ›**

Julius Africanus, *c. 232–265 AD · source 8*

8 *Extant Writings* 1 (1885 English) **Quote 4, page 3** “that the descendants of Cain are named the seed of men, as having nothing divine in them, on account of the wickedness of their race and the inequality of their… [continues online] **read ›**

Cyprian, *c. 248–258 AD · sources 9–14*

9 *Treatises* (1885 English; on point 6) “at the very beginning of the world, the righteous Abel was the first to be shin by his brother… [continues online] **read ›**

10 *Epistles* (1885 English; on point 6) “Let us, beloved brethren, imitate righteous Abel, who initiated martyrdoms, he first being slain for righteousness' sake… [continues online] **read ›**

11 *Treatises* (1885 English; on point 6) “Abel, who first initiated and consecrated the origin of martyrdom, and the passion of the righteous man, makes no resistance nor struggles against his fratricidal brother, but with lowliness and… [continues online] **read ›**

12 *Treatises* **Quote 6, page 4** “even in the sacrifices that Abel and Cain first offered, God looked not at their gifts, but at their hearts. So the one who was acceptable in his heart was… [continues online] **read ›**

13 *Treatises* (1885 English; on point 1) “Cain, when he offered his gift to God, already slain his brother… [continues online] **read ›**

14 *Epistles* (on point 6) there in the conflict of the world, since in the beginning, even at the first, the righteous Abel was slain, and afterward all righteous men, and prophets, and apostles who… [continues online] **read ›**

Apostolic Constitutions, *c. 250–380 AD · sources 15–16*

15 *Apostolic Constitutions* (on point 2) and promised him life after the resurrection. And not only this, but when You had increased his posterity into an innumerable multitude, those who continued with You, You glorified, and… [continues online] **read ›**

16 *Apostolic Constitutions* (on point 4) the saints in every generation. I mean Seth, and Enos, and Enoch, and Noah, and Abraham and his posterity, and Melchizedek, and Job, and Moses, and Joshua, and Caleb, and… [continues online] **read ›**

Commodianus, *c. 250–300 AD · sources 17–18*

17 *Writings* (1885 English) **Quote 5, page 3** “the race of Abel already believes on a merciful Christ… [continues online] **read ›**

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18 *Writings* (1885 English; on point 5) “therefore perceive, that the younger are approved by Christ… [continues online] **read ›**

Archelaus, *c. 270–300 AD · source 19*

19 *Disputation with Manes* 1 (on point 6) has never stopped requiring their blood from the hands of the wicked, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zacharias. And from where, then, did righteous Abel… [continues online] **read ›**

Clement of Rome · *source 20*

20 *First Epistle to the Corinthians* (on point 1) “Cain said to Abel his brother, Let us go into the field… [continues online] **read ›**

THE BIBLE *82 verses, The Faith Once Delivered Bible (Old Testament from the Septuagint), in Bible order*

21 **Genesis 4:1** Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, and she said, “I have gained a man through God.” **read ›**

22 **Genesis 4:2** Again she bore his brother Abel. Abel became a shepherd of sheep, but Cain was a worker of the ground. **read ›**

23 **Genesis 4:3** After some days Cain brought from the fruits of the earth a sacrifice to the Lord. **read ›**

24 **Genesis 4:4** Abel also brought from the firstborn of his sheep and from their fat portions. And God looked upon Abel and upon his gifts, **read ›**

25 **Genesis 4:8** Cain said to Abel his brother, “Let us go out into the plain.” And while they were in the plain, Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him. **read ›**

26 **Genesis 4:17** Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bore Enoch. He was building a city, and he named the city after his son, Enoch. **read ›**

27 **Genesis 4:18** To Enoch was born Gaidad; Gaidad fathered Mahalalel; Mahalalel fathered Methuselah; and Methuselah fathered Lamech. **read ›**

28 **Genesis 4:20** Adah bore Jabal; he was the father of those who live in tents and raise cattle. **read ›**

29 **Genesis 4:25** Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore a son and called his name Seth, saying, “For God has raised up for me another seed in place of Abel, whom Cain killed.” **read ›**

30 **Genesis 5:3** Adam lived two hundred and thirty years, and he fathered a son according to his own form and according to his own image, and he called his name Seth. **read ›**

31 **Genesis 5:4** The days of Adam that he lived after he fathered Seth were seven hundred years, and he fathered sons and daughters. **read ›**

32 **Genesis 5:10** After he fathered Kenan, Enosh lived seven hundred and fifteen years, and he fathered sons and daughters. **read ›**

33 **Genesis 5:13** After he fathered Mahalalel, Kenan lived seven hundred and forty years, and he fathered sons and daughters. **read ›**

34 **Genesis 5:22** After he fathered Methuselah, Enoch was well-pleasing to God for two hundred years, and he fathered sons and daughters. **read ›**

35 **Genesis 5:26** After he fathered Lamech, Methuselah lived eight hundred and two years, and he fathered sons and daughters. **read ›**

36 **Genesis 5:28** Lamech lived a hundred and eighty-eight years and fathered a son. **read ›**

37 **Genesis 5:30** After he fathered Noah, Lamech lived five hundred and sixty-five years, and he fathered sons and daughters. **read ›**

38 **Genesis 6:1** When men began to grow numerous on the earth, and daughters were born to them, **read ›**

39 **Genesis 6:10** Noah fathered three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth. **read ›**

40 **Genesis 10:22** The sons of Shem were Elam, Asshur, Arpachshad, Lud, Aram, and Cainan. **read ›**

41 **Genesis 10:24** Arpachshad fathered Cainan, Cainan fathered Shelah, and Shelah fathered Eber. **read ›**

42 **Genesis 11:12** Arpachshad lived a hundred and thirty-five years and fathered Cainan. **read ›**

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43 **Genesis 11:13** After he fathered Cainan, Arpachshad lived four hundred years, and he fathered sons and daughters, and he died. Cainan lived a hundred and thirty years and fathered Shelah. After he fathered Shelah, Cainan lived three hundred and thirty years, and he fathered sons and daughters, and he died. **read ›**

44 **Genesis 11:14** Shelah lived a hundred and thirty years and fathered Eber. **read ›**

45 **Genesis 11:15** After he fathered Eber, Shelah lived three hundred and thirty years, and he fathered sons and daughters, and he died. **read ›**

46 **Genesis 13:16** I will make your seed like the sand of the earth: if anyone can count the sand of the earth, then your seed also shall be counted. **read ›**

47 **Genesis 15:5** He brought him outside and said to him, “Look up now to heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them all.” And he said, “So shall your seed be.” **read ›**

48 **Genesis 19:36** Thus the two daughters of Lot conceived by their father. **read ›**

49 **Genesis 22:18** In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice.” **read ›**

50 **Genesis 25:19** These are the generations of Isaac the son of Abraham: Abraham fathered Isaac. **read ›**

51 **Genesis 26:4** I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and I will give to your seed all this land, and in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, **read ›**

52 **Genesis 28:14** Your seed shall be like the sand of the earth, and it shall spread out to the sea and to the south and to the north and to the east. In you and in your seed all the tribes of the earth shall be blessed. **read ›**

53 **Genesis 30:39** So the sheep conceived at the rods, and the sheep bore young that were white-marked and varied and spotted with ash color. **read ›**

54 **Genesis 36:10** These are the names of the sons of Esau: Eliphaz the son of Adah the wife of Esau, and Reuel the son of Basemath the wife of Esau. **read ›**

55 **Genesis 46:7** his sons and his sons’ sons with him, his daughters and his daughters’ daughters; all his seed he brought into Egypt. **read ›**

56 **Numbers 26:8** And the sons of Pallu: Eliab. **read ›**

57 **Deuteronomy 22:9** You shall not sow your vineyard with another kind of seed, lest the produce be made holy, together with the seed that you sow and the produce of your vineyard. **read ›**

58 **Ruth 4:21** Salmon fathered Boaz, and Boaz fathered Obed; **read ›**

59 **2 Samuel 3:3** his second was Daluia, of Abigail the Carmelitess; and the third, Absalom the son of Maacah the daughter of Talmai king of Geshur; **read ›**

60 **2 Samuel 20:18** Then she said, “In former times they used to say, ‘Surely inquiry was made in Abel and in Dan whether the things that the faithful of Israel established had failed.’ They will surely inquire in Abel in the same way, whether they have failed. **read ›**

61 **1 Chronicles 1:3** Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech, **read ›**

62 **1 Chronicles 1:24** and Arpachshad, Shelah, **read ›**

63 **1 Chronicles 1:27** Abraham. **read ›**

64 **1 Chronicles 1:28** The sons of Abraham: Isaac and Ishmael. **read ›**

65 **1 Chronicles 1:32** And the sons of Keturah, Abraham’s concubine: she bore him Zimran, Jokshan, Midian, Medan, Ishbak, and Shuah. And the sons of Jokshan: Dedan and Sheba. **read ›**

66 **1 Chronicles 1:34** Abraham fathered Isaac. And the sons of Isaac: Jacob and Esau. **read ›**

67 **1 Chronicles 1:35** The sons of Esau: Eliphaz, Reuel, Jeush, Jalam, and Korah. **read ›**

68 **1 Chronicles 2:13** and Jesse fathered Eliab his firstborn, Abinadab the second, Shimeah the third, **read ›**

69 **1 Chronicles 2:16** Their sisters were Zeruiah and Abigail. And the sons of Zeruiah: Abishai, Joab, and Asahel, three. **read ›**

70 **1 Chronicles 2:29** The name of the wife of Abishur was Abihail, and she bore him Ahban and Molid. **read ›**

71 **1 Chronicles 6:13** Shallum fathered Hilkiah, and Hilkiah fathered Azariah, (Septuagint 1 Chronicles 5:39 (1 Chronicles 6:13 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

72 **1 Chronicles 8:38** Azel had six sons, and these are their names: Azrikam his firstborn, Ishmael, Shearіah, Obadiah, Hanan, and Asa. All these were the sons of Azel. **read ›**

73 **1 Chronicles 9:44** Azel had six sons, and these are their names: Azrikam his firstborn, Ishmael, Shearіah, Obadiah, Hanan, and Asa. These were the sons of Azel. **read ›**

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74 **1 Chronicles 25:12** the fifth, Nathan; his sons and his brothers, twelve; **read ›**

75 **Job 5:25** And you shall know that your seed is many, and your children shall be like all the grass of the field. **read ›**

76 **Psalms 112:2** His seed will be mighty on the earth; the generation of the upright will be blessed. (Septuagint Psalm 111:2 (Psalm 112:2 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

77 **Ecclesiastes 7:17** Do not act very ungodly, and do not be hard, lest you die before your time. **read ›**

78 **Isaiah 13:17** Behold, I am stirring up the Medes against you, who do not regard silver, nor have need of gold. **read ›**

79 **Isaiah 17:6** And it will be as if stubble were left in it, or like two or three olive berries on the very top, or as if four or five were left on their branches. Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel. **read ›**

80 **Isaiah 48:19** and your seed would have been like the sand, and the offspring of your womb like the dust of the ground. Even now you shall certainly not be utterly destroyed, nor shall your name perish before me. **read ›**

81 **Isaiah 61:9** And their seed will be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring in the midst of the peoples; everyone who sees them will recognize them, that they are a seed blessed by God, **read ›**

82 **Ezekiel 21:8** And the word of the Lord came to me, saying, (Septuagint Ezekiel 21:13 (Ezekiel 21:8 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

83 **Ezekiel 42:13** And he said to me, “The rooms toward the north and the rooms toward the south, which are in front of the spaces, these are the rooms of the holy place, in which the priests, the sons of Zadok, who draw near to the Lord, shall eat the most holy things; and there they shall lay the most holy things, and the sacrifice, and the sin offerings, and the offerings for ignorance; for the place is holy. **read ›**

84 **Amos 3:13** Hear, O priests, and testify to the house of Jacob, says the Lord God Almighty. **read ›**

85 **Wisdom of Solomon 3:13** their offspring is cursed. For blessed is the barren woman who is undefiled, who has not known a bed of transgression; she will have fruit at the visitation of souls. **read ›**

86 **Wisdom of Solomon 3:16** But the children of adulterers will not come to maturity, and the seed of an unlawful bed will vanish. **read ›**

87 **Wisdom of Sirach 10:19** What seed is honored? The seed of man. What seed is honored? Those who fear the Lord. What seed is dishonored? The seed of man. What seed is dishonored? Those who transgress the commandments. **read ›**

88 **Wisdom of Sirach 41:6** The inheritance of sinners’ children will perish, and disgrace will continue with their seed. **read ›**

89 **Wisdom of Sirach 44:12** Their seed stands firm, and their children for their sakes; **read ›**

90 **2 Maccabees 7:17** But as for you, hold out, and see his mighty power, how he will torment you and your seed.” **read ›**

91 **4 Maccabees 13:17** If we suffer in this way, Abraham and Jacob will receive us, and all the fathers will praise us.” **read ›**

92 **4 Maccabees 16:20** For his sake also our father Abraham hastened to slay his son Isaac, the father of the nation; and Isaac, seeing his father’s hand bearing a sword coming down upon him, did not cower. **read ›**

93 **4 Maccabees 17:6** For your bearing of children was from Abraham the child. **read ›**

94 **4 Maccabees 18:23** But the children of Abraham, with their victorious mother, are gathered together into the chorus of the fathers, having received immortal souls from God. **read ›**

95 **1 Enoch 22:7** And he answered me, saying, “This is the spirit that went out from Abel, whom Cain his brother killed; and Abel makes his appeal concerning him until his seed is destroyed from the face of the earth, and his seed is wiped out from among the seed of men.” **read ›**

96 **1 Enoch 106:18** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

97 **1 Enoch 107:3** And when Methuselah heard the words of Enoch his father — for he had shown it to him in a mystery — he returned and showed it to Lamech; and his name was called Noah, who gladdens the earth from the destruction. **read ›**

98 **Luke 11:51** from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah, who perished between the altar and the sanctuary.’ Yes, I tell you, it will be required of this generation. **read ›**

99 **Romans 9:7** Nor are they all children because they are Abraham’s seed. But, “In Isaac your seed shall be called.” **read ›**

100 **Galatians 3:16** Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, “And to seeds,” as of many, but as of one, “And to your seed,” who is Christ. **read ›**

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101 **Hebrews 11:4** By faithfulness Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain, through which he was attested to be righteous, God bearing witness to his gifts; and through it, though dead, he is still spoken of. **read ›**

102 **Hebrews 11:18** to whom it was said, “In Isaac your seed shall be called,” **read ›**

ALSO LINKED BY THF TO THESE PASSAGES *103 verses, by reference*

Partly machine-linked: related to the passages, not always quoted in them. Each reference links to the verse in our audio Bible.

Exodus 2:14 · 3:6

Leviticus 15:18

Deuteronomy 8:18 · 18:15 · 20:5 · 20:19

1 Samuel 28:13

1 Kings 22:21

Proverbs 1:5 · 9:17

Isaiah 50:9

Jeremiah 23:24

Haggai 1:13

Malachi 4:5

Matthew 5:35 · 6:19 · 6:24 · 7:21 · 10:18 · 11:14 · 13:35 · 13:55 · 16:13 · 18:20 · 19:6 · 22:29 · 23:9 · 28:19

Mark 6:16 · 16:9 · 16:15

Luke 1:13 · 1:17 · 1:35 · 1:65 · 6:46 · 14:11 · 20:25 · 20:27 · 20:34 · 24:45

John 1:12 · 1:19 · 1:21 · 2:12 · 3:6 · 4:11 · 4:51 · 6:27 · 8:37 · 8:40 · 8:41 · 8:42 · 8:46 · 8:49 · 9:31 · 11:57 · 13:3 · 13:7 · 13:8 · 13:18

Acts 23:4

Romans 1:25 · 2:14 · 2:15 · 3:20 · 6:5 · 7:4 · 7:12 · 10:18 · 14:19 · 14:21

1 Corinthians 6:12 · 6:18 · 7:5 · 7:8 · 7:9 · 7:14 · 7:32 · 7:39 · 8:13 · 10:1 · 14:32 · 15:56

2 Corinthians 3:6 · 3:7 · 7:1 · 11:3

Galatians 3:13 · 5:13 · 5:17

Ephesians 2:2

Philippians 4:3

Colossians 2:20

1 Timothy 3:2 · 4:1 · 4:3 · 5:14

Hebrews 6:4 · 7:17 · 13:5

1 Peter 3:20

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Searched: Ante-Nicene Fathers volumes 1–9 and the Bible, including the Septuagint.

ABOUT THIS STUDY

A THF member asked “Did Abel have any children?” on October 28, 2026. The Historic Faith answered it as a public study on November 9, 2026.

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How to cite this study. The Historic Faith, “Did Abel have any children?” Early Church Questions, published November 9, 2026, https://thehistoricfaith.com/early-church-questions/did-abel-have-any-children. To cite one quotation, add its number and source, for example “quote 1, source 3.”

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THE END OF THIS STUDY