

The First Murder

Genesis 4:1-26

- I. THE BIRTH OF TWO BOYS (Genesis 4:1-2)
 - A. The Different Births in Scripture
 1. There are four (4) different kinds of births of man. (1) The Dust birth—Adam was created out of the dust of the ground. (2) The Rib birth—Eve was made from a rib of Adam. (3) The Virgin birth—Christ was born of a virgin. (4) The Natural birth—Cain was the first to come by natural birth which is the way all people have been born since, except for Christ. You could also add a fifth; (5) The Spiritual birth—Those who accept Christ as their saviour are born again.
 2. Two Lines of People
 - a. From Adam and Eve came two different lines.
 - b. The godly (faithful) line and the ungodly (unbelieving) line of people.
 - c. Cain began an ungodly line of people.
 - (1) Of the sixteen (16) times that Cain’s name is mentioned in this chapter, he’s only mentioned or spoken of only three more times in the Bible (Hebrews 11:4; 1 John 3:12; Jude v. 1).
 - B. The Birth of Cain (Genesis 4:1)
 1. Eve’s comment
 - a. *“I have gotten a man from the LORD.”*
 - b. This was likely a comment of faith on the part of Eve in the promise of God given to her and Adam after the fall that the seed of the woman would bruise the head of the serpent (Genesis 3:15).
 - c. Cain certainly did not turn out to be that seed, but Eve thought at birth (and hoped) that he was.
 - (1) This reminds us that our timing and our ways are not God’s (Isaiah 55:8)
 - (2) It is also important to note that the seed could have come through Cain if he had only not had slew Abel. Note: Her hope did not waiver as she would say something similar concerning Seth, and the seed would come through Seth eventually (Genesis 4:25; Luke 3:38).
 - C. The Birth of Abel (Genesis 4:2)
 1. Eve’s second son
 2. Abel’s character was vastly different from that of his brother Cain’s, as we will note shortly.
 - a. A person’s heart condition may remain hidden for a time, but it will eventually come out during times of trouble and hardships.
 - b. How we deal with trouble is an outward show of what is inside of us.
 - (1) The heart is deceitful (Jeremiah 17:9)

- (2) Whosoever trusteth in his own heart is a fool (Proverbs 28:26)
 - (3) Out of the heart proceeds all kinds of sins (Matthew 15:19)
- D. The Career of the Two Boys
1. Cain was a tiller of the ground (farmer).
 2. Abel was a keeper of sheep (sheep herder).
 - a. Both professions were noble.
 - b. It wasn't the profession that was the problem, but the heart of the man.
 - (1) Some may think that Cain had an inferior job to that of Abel.
 - (2) However, this is not the case.
 - (3) In fact, Cain's job is the first one mentioned in scripture. (Genesis 2:5, 15)

II. THE BURNT OFFERINGS OF CAIN AND ABEL (Genesis 4:3-5)

- A. The Bringing of the Offerings (Genesis 4:3-4)
1. Cain brought of the fruit of the ground (the fruit of his labours). (v. 3)
 2. Abel brought of the firstlings of his flock. (v. 4)
- B. The Three-Fold Contrast of the Offerings Brought (Genesis 4:3-4)
1. One of Faith—(Hebrews 11:4) Hebrews 11:4 tells us that Abel brought his offering by faith, which says that Cain did not offer by faith. Bringing an offering by faith, says Abel was following the instructions of God for the offering. Cain did not obey God's instructions regarding the offering. Cain was not trying to please God, but Abel was.
 2. Of the Finest—Abel's offering was "*of the firstlings of his flock and the fat thereof*" (Genesis 4:4) which indicated that Abel brought the best, the finest. Nothing is said of Cain's offering that would indicate it being the best. When we depart from God's way, we will not give God our best.
 3. Of the flock—"*Cain brought of the fruit of the ground*" (Genesis 4:3). The command was for an animal sacrifice (Genesis 3:21). Especially emphasized in the animal sacrifice is the blood atonement (Leviticus 17:11). One of the first things an apostate attacks is the necessity of the blood in salvation. But "*without shedding of blood is no remission*" (Hebrews 9:22). "*Being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.*" (Romans 5:9)
- C. The Acceptance of the Offerings (Genesis 4:4-5)
1. The respect of the offerings
 - a. Although we are not specifically told here, God usually showed his pleasure (respect) for an offering by sending fire down from heaven to consume it. This likely happened with Abel's offering but not to Cain's.
 - b. Abel's offering was consumed, while Cain's offering was not. The respect was therefore evident to both Abel and Cain. There was nothing hidden about the rejection of Cain. (Luke 8:17; 12:2-3; Eccl. 12:14)
 2. The condemnation of the offering
 - a. Both Cain and the offering were rejected.
 - b. We are identified with our offering.

- (1) When we receive Christ, we are accepted in Him.
 - (2) Cain was not accepted, as he was trying to offer something in “his own way.”
 - (3) You may be accepted by everyone else, but if God does not accept you, you are under Divine condemnation. (John 3:17-21)
3. The wrath over the offerings (Genesis 4:5)
 - a. “*Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell*” (v. 5)
 - b. No repentance on the part of Cain.
 - c. Cain instead went into a rage over his offering.
 - d. Many people in churches today do the same thing.
 - (1) Instead of repenting of the sins that the preacher has preached against, they go into a rage against the preacher.
- D. The Offerors Contrasted (Genesis 4:5)
1. Here we find that Cain and Abel were not only separated by interests and occupations, but also in their spiritual lives. This can often happen in families and is one of the most difficult things to deal with in families.
 2. Three kinds of peoples found in scripture—
 - a. In reference to Joseph and his brethren (Genesis 43:32), in Genesis 43:32 we find three categories of people—all of whom were unable to eat (fellowship) with the other.
 - (1) The Egyptians—who are a picture of the lost.
 - (2) The brothers of Joseph—who are a picture of believers who are out of fellowship with God. They had sold Joseph into slavery but had never repented of their deed.
 - (3) Joseph—a picture of the believer in right fellowship with God.
 - b. The need for right fellowship
 - (1) The believer who is right with God cannot fully fellowship with the believer who is in rebellion. However, when Joseph’s brothers confess their sin against him and repent, they are able to enjoy fellowship again with him. There is a threefold division found in scripture. Consider the following titles found in 1 Corinthians:
 - (a) The natural man— (1 Corinthians 2:14) The lost man.
 - (b) The carnal man— (1 Corinthians 3:1, 3, 4) The carnal believer.
 - (c) The spiritual man— (1 Corinthians 2:13, 15; 3:1) The believer in right fellowship with God.

III. THE WRATH OF CAIN (Genesis 4:6-7)

- A. His Wrath
 1. From the heart
 2. Blaming others in his wrath
 - a. Toward God
 - b. Toward his brother Abel
- B. His Countenance
 1. Changed from what it was in his wrath.

2. It fell before God.
 - a. Cain went into a rage.
 - b. Revealing what was already in the heart.
 - (1) What was on the inside came out (Matthew 12:34-35)
 - (2) What goes on in the heart will eventually come out and make itself known (Luke 6:45)
- C. An Opportunity to Change (Genesis 4:7)
 1. His heart
 2. To make the right sacrifice (Hebrews 11:4)
 3. To make things right
- D. God's offer to Cain (Genesis 4:7)
 1. Well-doing will be accepted. (Job 42:8; Ecclesiastes 8:12-13; Isaiah 3:10-11)
 2. Rebellion puts sin in charge. (Numbers 32:23; James 1:13-15)
 3. Obedience gives strength and authority (likely a reference to Abel)
 - a. His desire will submit to you.
 - b. You will rule over him.

IV. THE BRUTALITY OF CAIN (Genesis 4:8-10)

- A. The Predicting of Brutality
 1. "*Cain...slew him [Abel].*" Our attitude toward man will be reflected by our attitude toward God. Cain was out of sorts with God, so he mistreated his fellow man. When men turn to God, the crime problem will improve.
 2. Unbelief will attack faith.
 - a. The Children of Israel against Moses (Exodus 32:1-6; Numbers 12:1-9, 10-15; 16:1-7, 12-26, 31-35)
 - b. The Children of Israel against Joshua and Caleb (Numbers 13:25-33; 14:1-10)
 - c. The men that followed David (1 Samuel 30:6)
 - d. The Pharisees against Christ (Matthew 12:24, 28; 15:12; 22:15; Mark 8:11, 15; Luke 5:30; Luke 11:39)
 - e. The Jews against Paul (Acts 23:1-10)
- B. The Performing of Brutality (Genesis 4:8)
 1. The speaking before the action
 - a. "*Cain talked with his brother Abel...*"
 - b. Speaking was before the slaying. Venomous words predict violent actions.
 - (1) Deceitful words (Proverbs 12:5, 17, 20; 14:8; 20:17)
 - (2) Defiling words (Proverbs 6:8-9; 12:17; 14:5; 19:5, 9)
 2. The scene of the action
 - a. "*When they were in the field*" – The field was away from everyone, so the crime could be committed. Sin loves darkness. (John 3:19-21)
 3. The slaying performed
 - a. Persecution against the faithful can get very bloody as history has shown with the martyrs of the faith.

- b. Also, we see that the righteous do not always live the longest.
 - c. Cain lived longer than Abel, but he will never enjoy the blessings that Abel enjoyed.
 - d. It's not living long on this sin cursed world that matters most but living holy on the earth that matters most.
- C. The Proclaiming of the Brutality (Genesis 4:9-10)
- 1. The asking by the Lord
 - a. The Lord didn't ask the question because he didn't know the answer.
 - b. Rather, the Lord asked the question to get Cain to think and to see if he would be honest. (Genesis 3:9-11; Psalm 9:12)
 - c. The Lord did this countless times with the Children of Israel as well as other individuals in the Bible.
 - 2. The denial by Cain
 - a. Reminiscent of Joseph's brothers (Genesis 37:32)
 - b. The wicked deny that God requires the punishment of their wrongdoing (Psalm 10:4, 11-13; Ecclesiastes 8:11)
 - 3. The cry of the innocent (Genesis 4:10; Psalm 9:12)
 - a. The questioning of the deed (Genesis 3:11, 13; Joshua 7:19)
 - b. The voice from the ground (Numbers 35:33; Deuteronomy 19:10; 2 Samuel 3:28; 2 Kings 9:26; Revelation 6:10)

V. THE SENTENCING OF CAIN (Genesis 4:11-16)

- A. The Curse in the Sentencing
- 1. The placement in the curse
 - a. *"from the earth"* (Genesis 4:11).
 - b. This means that Cain would be moved from the favourable farmland to where the ground would be even harder to farm.
 - c. When a person disobeys the commandments and laws of God, they only make it harder on themselves to produce and function in society and with God and man. (Proverbs 14:12; Isaiah 45:9; Acts 9:5)
 - 2. The productivity in the curse
 - a. *"It shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength"* (Genesis 4:12)
 - b. The land would be poor land that Cain would farm in the future. This feature of the curse is tied in with the previous one.
 - 3. The person in the curse
 - a. *"A fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth"* (Genesis 4:12)
 - b. Cain would have no set home but would always be on the move.
 - c. The definition of the word *fugitive* is "one who flees, a runaway", therefore they are always on the move. The word involves fear.
 - d. *A vagabond* is one who is *"wandering, unsteady."*
 - e. A criminal fears his own shadow because of being afraid of getting caught.
- B. The Complaint in the Sentencing (Genesis 4:13-14)
- 1. Cain's punishment
 - a. Greater than he could bear.

- (1) This is the complaint of every criminal. Yet he gave no thought of what he had just done to his brother and his family.
 - (2) Cain only saw himself, and blames God for being too harsh!
 - (a) One of major problems in our society today is that many people in high places sing the song of Cain.
 - (b) So today, courts are lenient on crime and ignore the suffering of the victims.
2. No repentance (Genesis 4:14)
 - a. There is no word of repentance recorded from Cain.
 - b. Sin makes one selfish; and Cain only thought of himself.
 - c. Cain's concern of being killed by "every one" indicates his realization that his crime merited death. Sin brings guilt and fear of judgment. (Genesis 9:6)
- C. The Compassion in the Sentencing (Genesis 4:15)
1. *"The LORD said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold.*
 2. If ever the grace of God was exhibited it is here with Cain. God even goes so far as to place a mark (v. 15) on Cain as a way of protection for him.
 3. Many have tried to figure out what this mark was. The best approach to this is to take God at his word and to try and not to discover some "unknown" fact that He (God) hasn't revealed. Whatever this "mark" was it quickly and clearly distinguished him from other men.
 4. This act of grace on the part of God did not take away the sentence God had placed on Cain. Cain would still bear the full punishment about which he complained.
- D. The Country in the Sentencing (Genesis 4:16)
1. Cain left the country he was in...
 2. Dwelt in the "land of Nod."
 - a. Thus begins the fulfilling of the curse of being a "fugitive" and a "vagabond" (Genesis 4:12).
 - b. The worst part of this curse was with Cain leaving "the presence of the Lord."
 - (1) When Adam and Eve were cast out of the Garden of Eden, they did not go very far from the Cherubim which guarded the tree of life.
 - (2) They were still close to the presence of God (Genesis 3:8). God still spoke to them in an audible voice (Genesis 4:6, 9) and they did not think it unusual.
 - (3) But now Cain leaves the presence of God.
 - (a) Moses so valued the presence of God that he did not want to go on with the Children of Israel unless God went with him (Exodus 33:14, 15). The wilderness is better with God's presence than a beautiful palace without it.
 - (b) However, Cain had both the curse of the wilderness and the absence of God.

VI. THE BEGETTING OF CAIN (Genesis 4:17-24)

- A. The Son of Cain
 - 1. Cain knew his wife
 - a. This fact has stirred many of conversations; “where did Cain get his wife?”
 - b. The simple answer:
 - (1) All of mankind are descendants of Adam and Eve (Genesis 4:1 ,2)
 - (2) Eve was the mother of all living (Genesis 3:20)
 - (3) Adam is the first man (1 Corinthians 15:45)
 - (4) Man is of (1) one blood (Acts 17:26)
 - (5) Adam and Eve beget sons and daughters (Genesis 5:4)
 - c. It is likely that Cain married a sister, and they had their own children. Remember the law against marrying a sister would not be in effect until the law given to the Jews (Leviticus 18:6).
 - 2. His first son (Genesis 4:17)
 - a. His son Enoch
 - b. After his son was born, Cain would build a city and name it after him.
- B. The Record of the Line of Cain (Genesis 4:17-22)
 - 1. Enoch (the son of Cain)
 - 2. Irad (the son of Enoch)
 - 3. Mehujael (the son of Irad)
 - 4. Methusael (the son of Mehujael)
 - 5. Lamech (the son of Methusael)
 - 6. Jabal (the son of Lamech – dwelt in tents, a cattle herder)
 - 7. Jubal (the son of Lamech – a maker and player of the harp and organ)
 - 8. Tubal-cain (the son of Lamech – an artificer in brass and iron)
- C. The Life of Lamech (Genesis 4:19, 23-24)
 - 1. Lamech’s wives
 - a. “*Lamech took unto him two wives*” (Genesis 4:19)
 - b. This is the first case of bigamy in scripture.
 - c. This shows the influence of sin upon the world, even upon Christians.
 - d. So much of this influence is present today in the matter of marriage, morals, divorce, and the like. (Genesis 2:23-24; Matthew 19:3-9).
 - 2. Lamech’s children (Genesis 4:19-22)
 - a. Jabal
 - b. Jubal
 - c. Tubal-cain
 - d. Naamah (a daughter)
 - 3. Lamech’s confession (Genesis 4:23)
 - a. “*I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt.*”
 - b. Cruelty and violence occurred despite the highly developed civilization. (Genesis 4:17, 20, 21, 22)
 - c. It is not better culture, housing or federal programs that man needs to be better. It is a change of heart, the gospel of Jesus Christ that man needs to make the difference.

4. Lamech's conclusion (Genesis 4:23-24; Genesis 4:15)
 - a. Instead of Lamech being remorseful for his wrongdoing, he was only interested in the outcome for him.
 - b. Many times, wrongdoers would punish those severely who harm them, but plead for leniency regarding their own evil (cp. Genesis 4:13). Instead, we need God's fair judgment in all things.

VII. THE REPLACEMENT OF CAIN (Genesis 4:25, 26)

- A. The Appointed Seed – Seth (Genesis 4:25)
 1. Cain's murder of Abel was Satan's first attempt to destroy the godly line that would one day lead to the promised seed. But it failed.
 2. God gave another son, Seth, who would be the appointed seed to carry the line of the Messiah. (Luke 3:38)
- B. The Beginning of Prayer (Genesis 4:26)
 1. This is the beginning of the godly line which will be the main theme of scripture from now on. Cain's line, though quite successful in the development of civilization, was not successful at all in spiritual matters which are the most important.
 2. You can build great and mighty cities, be highly developed in all different kinds of fields, but if you neglect the spiritual then you are a failure at best. (Mark 8:36; Romans 6:19-23; Hebrews 11:24-26)
 3. Up until the time of the birth of Enos, God just spoke to men when He wanted to tell them something.
 4. Now, they must learn to pray and "call upon the name of the LORD."