



**Study #4**

**Genesis Chapter 4**

**Summary of the passage:**

Life in a fallen world was very different from life during Adam's state of innocence. Worship required blood sacrifices. Enmity arose between true and false worshippers of God, which manifested the depth of sin's corruption within the human heart. Abel's murder and Cain's punishment revealed a world already spiraling downward. Apostasy, departure from God, set in when Cain went out from the presence of the Lord. Two lines of peoples were dwelling on the earth. Cain's descendants lived in rebellion to God, while Seth and his offspring turned to the Lord to worship Him and live for His glory. Those who worshipped God through blood sacrifices declared they were sinners before a holy God, while those who rejected worship through blood sacrifices presumed they may become as gods, as formerly suggested by Satan.

**Key verse:**

"And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering." Genesis 4:4

This text reveals the necessity to worship God by a blood sacrifice. God's acceptance of Abel's person and his worship was based on the death of the animal sacrifice and its offering unto the Lord.

God introduced the absolute requirement of blood sacrifice for sin.

**Observations – Lessons from this chapter.**

1. **There is evidence that Adam and Eve had faith in the promised Redeemer, spoken of in Gen. 3:15, which referred to the "seed" of the woman.** Also, God had clothed their nakedness with animal skins (Gen.3:21). While this clothing, which required the death of an animal on their behalf, was suggestive of their redemption, beyond that there is good evidence of their faith in the Lord as Saviour in Eve's spirit of thanksgiving to the LORD [Jehovah] at the birth of Cain. She gave the Lord the honour for the birth of their son as God's gift and she took delight that it was a male child. These details show her trust in the Lord and Eve may have considered that Cain would be the deliverer of their souls. The naming of their second child, Abel, which means 'vanity', drives home the point that Eve was impacted by the vanity of this fallen world, and had put her hope in the promised Saviour.
2. **The enmity between Cain and Abel is a display of the enmity between the seed of the woman, with the promised Christ, and the seed of Satan.** Cain's anger was stirred up after God accepted Abel's offering of a blood sacrifice while his offering from the labour of his own hands was rejected. The Lord's direct question to Cain, "**Why art thou wroth**" etc., revealed the inner hatred of his heart. He also rejected God's offer of acceptance for doing well. He spurned the warning that rejection of the only way of blessing through blood atonement would lead to greater depths of sin. See God's statement in v7 "**if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door.**" Cain's choices were limited to the way of the blood, or the way of sinful rebellion to God. He chose the way of sin. This course of rebellion to God was further manifested in his refusal to obey God and enjoy God's offer of power to rule over Abel. The inner hatred in his heart was so strong that he could not bring himself to obey God and seek good terms with Abel. From the order of events as recorded in v 8, it was while Cain talked with Abel that his heart plotted Abel's murder causing him to seek a time and place to kill him, making it premeditated murder. **Henry, M. Morris pointed out,**

“The seed of the Serpent was quickly striking at the Seed of the woman, corrupting her first son and slaying her second, thus trying to prevent the fulfillment of the proto-evangelic promise right at the beginning of human history.”

See 1John 3:12 for a N.T. description of the evil of Cain’s heart.

**3. Cain’s unrepentant heart made him a fugitive in the earth?**

God’s questions to Cain were searching. “Where is Abel thy brother? v9 followed by, “**What hast thou done?**” v10? These questions left Cain as naked before God. His answer, “Am I my brother’s keeper?” showed that he had no regard for his brother’s life, nor his welfare. Abel’s blood cried out unto God for vengeance. He was guilty before God, but remained unrepentant and was headed for judgment. He was “**cursed from the earth’** v11. The ground would no longer sustain him v12. He became a “**fugitive and vagabond**” v12.

The saddest words recorded of Cain are found in v16 “**And Cain went out from the presence of the LORD and dwelt in the land of Nod.**” Nod means wandering. Cain removed himself from God’s care and rule. He sought to build a future without God. Throughout the Bible Cain stands as the man who went apostate. (“**They have gone in the way of Cain.**” Jude 11).

**4. Genesis 4:16-24 gives a picture of the development of the world during the days prior to the flood.**

The record shows that many dwelt in cities, others lived in tents, herded cattle, developed music, worked with metal. Lamech became a polygamist, and as a poet he boasted in his violence and bully tactics.

**5. The birth of Seth, v25, commenced a new line of people of faith who worshipped the Lord.** It is from the line of Seth that the knowledge of God was preserved until the time of the great flood. Seth’s name means appointed, or substitute, and may have been so named with an eye to the promise of a Saviour. Through this line, men learned to depend on God as they called on His name. This meant that they resorted to the power of prayer to commune with God and enjoy His favour.

**Application: – How does this apply to me?**

To live in a fallen world, where sin abounds, and Satan is active, we must expect the promotion of many forms of evil. Evil comes from the heart of man, who is fallen and depraved in all his faculties. We cannot plead that man will make the right choices if given the right conditions and the right opportunities. When sin is in the hearts of men and women they will always choose evil, if left to themselves. The doctrine of total depravity finds strong support from the earliest figures of human history. The fall of man was not a slow devolution, but a sudden plunge into spiritual warfare against God right from within man’s heart.

**Things to do in light of this study:**

1. Read the Westminster Confession of Faith Ch. 9 on Free Will to learn more on the doctrine of man’s total depravity. Note how it sets forth the difference in the state of man’s will prior to the fall in Adam’s state of innocence and the time after the fall. It states that man “*hath wholly lost all ability of will to any spiritual good ... being altogether averse from that good, and dead in sin, is not able, by his own strength to convert himself, or to prepare himself thereunto.*”
2. Count the 7<sup>th</sup> man from Adam in the line of Cain and you will come to Lamech – a leader in iniquity ch.4:19-24. Then count the 7<sup>th</sup> man from Adam in the line of Seth and you will come to Enoch, the man who walked with God. He was translated from the earth at age 365 (Ch. 5:23).

**Further questions and points to study:**

- Why was it important that there be a line of the promised seed that survived, even through Noah’s flood?
- What is significant about the development of different skills in music, metal production, animal husbandry in a brief period of time?
- What is the significance of the name Seth (substitute)? And the significance of the name Enos (mortal)?