

Cain Kills Abel: Sin Passes to a New Generation

Genesis 4.1-16

Sin entered the world, and with it God's judgment, but life goes on. The death-curse of sin was mitigated by God's grace, and Eve gave birth to two sons. But the *disease* of sin could not be contained – it spread to a new generation. And *death* played its hand...

Birth to Death: The Downward Path of Sin

- Born with the help of God (1-2)
- Pride: Envyng the righteous (3-5)
- Disregarding the warnings (6-8)
- Denying responsibility for sin (9)
- Protesting the punishment for sin (10-14)
- Grace: God's goodness toward guilty sinners (15-16)

Timeless Lessons from the Dawn of Time

We can still follow the 'way of Cain' today. (Jude 11)

Life without God and His blessing is an experience of death.

True worship involves a desire to please God.

The blood of many...and the blood of the One.

**Digging Deeper**

1. After the announcement of the births of Cain and Abel, the text turns to their respective offerings to the Lord. The key question the reader must answer is, *Why did God accept Abel's offering, but reject Cain's?* Clues to the reason for the opposite responses lie in the text. Examine the descriptions of Cain's and Abel's sacrifices: Any difference in *quality*? Note also that the person bringing the offering is named before the content of his offering (4b, 5a): What does this suggest? Read 1 Sam 16.7; Ps. 40.6-8; 51.16-17; Hosea 14.2; Micah 6.6-8; Heb.13.15-16. Taking into account Cain's response to God, what might be the reason for God rejecting his sacrifice? Think about your own giving to the Lord: What is your attitude and motivation in giving?
2. Compare and contrast Genesis 3.1-5 and 4.6-8. In both cases, humans are addressed, and prompted to act. But that is where the similarity ends. What Satan was trying to get Eve to *do*, and what God was trying to get Cain *not to do*? Reflect on the difference in the human condition *before* and *after* the fall.
3. Focus on v7: How is sin characterized here? (Can you see any connection with the way Satan is characterized in 1 Peter 5.8?) The Hebrew word translated 'desire' is used in Gen.3.16 of the woman. How did Eve's actions in the Garden toward Adam resemble what 'sin' wanted to do to Cain here?
4. In v9, Cain derisively asks God, *Am I my brother's keeper?* He assumed the answer to his question was *No*. Is it? Compare the teaching of Lev. 19.17-18 and Luke 10.25-37. How can we be the kind of people God wants us to be, and not like Cain?
5. Why did Cain react so intensely to God's judgment (vv11-14)? What was the significance of being *hidden from God's face* (v14)? What do God's responses to Cain's protests show about how He feels about vengeance (see Heb. 10.30), and His grace (even for an unrepentant, guilty sinner!)?