

## Genesis 4 - The Nature of Sin

- ❖ Recap – Genesis is filled with so much SUBSTANCE from God
  - Genesis 1
  - Genesis 2
  - Genesis 3
  - **God has given such an abundance in just the first 3 chapters of the Bible...**
    - And... let me say... so much happened during the time span that Genesis covered
    - But God only gives us 50 chapters to cover over 2,200 years
    - That is more time than all the rest of the books of the Bible cover
      - I say this so you know... every chapter is very important.
      - God has written these things down for you to know
      - They are very important....
- ❖ Introduction
  - **First... as we study God's Word...**
    - Always consider... what does the text teach me about God and His character
      - And what does it teach me about the nature and character of man...
      - Then... how can I align myself to the ways of God
  - **Consider the time frame of Genesis 4**
    - **We know that Adam and Eve had Cain and Abel.... And Eventually Seth...**
      - Before Seth was born... 130 years had passed.
      - Meaning... from Genesis 1 to the end of Genesis 4 we are talking about a span of 130 years
  - **One question always comes up... Where did Cain find wives? And who was He afraid would kill him?**
    - **And this is really not a problem considering...**
      - Abel had a brother HE should have been afraid of... Cain...
    - **So... Cain was afraid of those who would seek vengeance bc of the death of Abel...**
      - 130 years passed before the birth of Seth...
      - But this does not mean that Adam and Eve did not have many other sons and daughters
        - ◆ It would have been odd for Eve to only have had 2 children by the time she was 129
      - We are only given 2 narratives for the first 130 years...
        - ◆ I can promise you that A LOT more went on during that time..
    - **Not to mention God's command to Adam and Eve to be fruitful and Multiply...**
      - We also do not know if maybe Abel had children.... This is not impossible...
        - ◆ It is very possible considering Cain likely had a wife at the time his sin
    - **Also... people lived much longer... over 900 years...**
      - That is over 10x our lifespan today...
      - meaning... women could have been able to bear children for 10x as long
      - And likely 10x the children... meaning it was possible for Adam to have
        - ◆ Easily fathered over 100 children... A lot can happen in 900 years....
        - ◆ 400 years ago we had our first settlers here in America...
          - Now we have 323 million...
  - **Let's take a look at Genesis 4**
- ❖ **1) The Lord Blessed Man with Children**
  - **Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, saying, "I have gotten a man with the help of the Lord." <sup>2</sup>And again, she bore his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, and Cain a worker of the ground.**

- **The translation of “I have gotten a man with the help of the Lord.” Is difficult...**
  - But... this translation does make sense... Eve is likely very excited about the birth of her Son
  - And this is probably because this is her first born son... and she is thankful to the Lord
- **We do not know for certain if Eve had other children before Cain...**
  - There is nothing that explicitly states that...
  - However... from the context I think we can be fairly certain he is at least the first born Son
    - ◆ Which I take from what seems to be her excitement on having a “man child”
    - ◆ And from Cain’s disappointment in God’s reaction to his offering...
      - Which may have been connected to his first born status...
- **Then... we see after Cain that Abel is born...**
  - We know Abel is younger than Cain...
  - But the text never says if Eve had other children b/w Cain and Abel
- **Then we see that these two brothers had different vocations**
  - Cain was more so a farmer type that worked the ground... providing food from it
  - And Abel was like a shepherd taking care of flocks of animals...
    - ◆ Could have been any type of herd or flock animal...

## ❖ 2) Cain and Abel’s Offering to the Lord

- **<sup>3</sup>In the course of time Cain brought to the Lord an offering of the fruit of the ground, <sup>4</sup>and Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat portions. And the Lord had regard for Abel and his offering, <sup>5</sup>but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his face fell. <sup>6</sup>The Lord said to Cain, “Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? <sup>7</sup>If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it.”**
- **Notice what is happening...**
  - There is obviously fellowship b/w man and God... although they are not in the garden of Eden
    - And in this fellowship... there is an expectation of offering to the Lord.
  - **And this is likely an offering for the covering of their sins... until the coming of the promised one**
    - This is the point of these kinds of offerings in the O.T.
    - And they were all foreshadowing and prophetic of the coming Messiah...
    - The coming true Lamb of God... where God himself would become the Lamb...
    - **This same Lord... Yahweh...who commanded these...**
      - ◆ would show up on earth years later to offer Himself
  - **So it is not hard to understand why God would institute an offering system for them...**
    - So they would be reminded of their sin... and constant need for atonement
    - Here we see Cain bringing an offering of the fruit of the ground
    - And Abel brings an offering of the firstborn of his flock and their fat portions...
- **But God does not regard Cain’s offering**
  - **What does He mean by “He had no regard”?**
    - Means that he did not accept it... He did not see it as a worthy offering
    - He did not think much of what Cain brought
  - **Cain’s response to this was to get very angry... and his whole demeanor changed...**
    - And his anger is toward God... but it is likely pointed at his brother...
- **Why was Cain so Angry?**
  - It seems likely that Cain... being the first born son... (which is very likely)
  - **Held this status as a badge of honor... there seems to be a connection in the text**
    - With his firstborn status and his offering and the Lord’s rejection of it
    - And with God not accepting Cain’s offering... His status is taking a hit...

- **Or at the least... He is not seen as acceptable in the sight of God and man...**
  - As his brother Abel... creating a jealousy that leads to anger
- **Why was Cain's Sacrifice Disregarded by God? Let's consider what we know for sure...**
  - **1) Cain brought an offering from the ground VS Abel brought firstborn of his Flock**
    - We see this clearly in the text... Notice that Abel's offering was of the firstborn
    - Cain's was not... it was simply an offering from the ground
      - ◆ Some have speculated that it should have been an animal for a sacrifice...
      - ◆ We can't be sure of that... because God allowed many grain offerings...
      - ◆ But there may be some merit to it... as it makes sense...
    - The main thing we see is that Abel seemed to provide a true sacrifice...
      - ◆ His firstborn from animals... Cain however... just brought an offering...
  - **2) Hebrews 11 By Faith Abel offered a more acceptable sacrifice**
    - **Hebrews 11:4 <sup>4</sup>By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain, through which he was commended as righteous, God commending him by accepting his gifts. And through his faith, though he died, he still speaks.**
    - Here we see that Abel brought an offering that was more acceptable...
      - ◆ And the means by which it was more acceptable was by **Faith**...
      - ◆ He trusted and believed God.... **Cain obviously did not come with this sort of faith**...
      - ◆ Showing that you can know who God is.... Without ever believing on Him
    - **Application:**
      - ◆ People can come to God, yet not be accepted by Him
      - ◆ **We talk of people accepting Jesus into their hearts...**
        - this terminology is not found in the Bible... following Jesus is...
        - Trusting and receiving and believing are...
        - There are many people that came to God...
          - That were later found out to be false... Remember... God knows the heart...
          - A person's faith must be acceptable to God when they come...
          - I am confident you can see the connection with our own lives...
  - **3) He did not do well**
    - After Cain gets Angry... God confronts him... Saying... **"if you do well"**
    - **Cain had not done right... God confronts him...Abel did right... Abel did well... but Cain did not...**
    - **How often do we also find ourselves very jealous of those who do well at something**
      - ◆ Yet... what we offered was not good... or not considered good
      - ◆ How frustrating is it to all of us when we are not the ones selected
      - ◆ How many horrible things have been said and done over this...
    - **So Cain is angry here... He did not measure up to his brother Abel...**
      - ◆ He saw himself in light of Abel... instead of in light of the God...
  - **4) John 3:11 gives us more insight**
    - **1 John 3:11 <sup>12</sup>We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous.**
      - ◆ John says Cain's deeds were evil... and Abel's were righteous...
      - ◆ So he got angry and killed in response...
      - ◆ Abel was essentially the very first martyr for the sake of righteousness
    - **Isn't it amazing how Sin hates what is Holy...?**
      - ◆ Evil hates what is righteous.... It makes it angry...
      - ◆ This was the heart of Cain... anger and resentment... a desire to kill the man of faith
    - **Wasn't this also seen when Jesus came?**

- ◆ The Pharisees and priests and scribes and elders gathered together to examine
- ◆ And they saw this righteous Jesus... and were angered by Him...
- ◆ Because His Words and actions revealed their sin... their evil actions...
- ◆ He showed them like He showed Cain... their offering was unacceptable...
- ◆ Instead of repentance... they rose up in Anger... and instead of killing their brother...
- ◆ They banded together as brothers to Kill their God...

➤ **Finally... Notice God's Warning to Cain...**

- **If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it."**
- **I want us to apply this closely to our own hearts this morning...**
  - You may align yourself with Abel in this story...
  - But it may be more likely that some of us are more like Cain...
  - And if we are not like him now... We once were... lost in our trespasses and sins...
- **Hear God's Warning to Cain about sin... apply it in your own life**
  - **Sin is crouching at the door**
    - ◆ It is ready for you... waiting on you... looking to pounce on you...
    - ◆ As soon as you open the door... ready to ambush you
  - **Its desire is contrary to you..**
    - ◆ Its inclination... or hunger... what it wants... craving
    - ◆ Contrary means "against" it is not for you...
  - **But you must rule over it**
    - ◆ Here we see God putting the ball in Cain's court...
    - ◆ God has given him the warning and the insight... telling him what sin is doing to him
    - ◆ Telling him how to respond... **God had given mankind this earth to rule...**
      - And here God tells Cain... He must also rule sin...
- **Let's think practically this morning...**
  - We are all tempted aren't we? This word is for us this morning... Straight from the Lord
  - **Oh how well do I know the truth of this verse!!!! Sin is always working.. hiding to attack**
  - **We are told to rule over it...**
    - ◆ **Romans 6:12-13 <sup>12</sup> Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions. <sup>13</sup> Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness.**
  - **Also... God has given us what we need to fight...**
    - ◆ I think sometimes we think we are just too weak... and this is just who we are
    - ◆ And God made us this way and He understands... so its ok... **I don't think this is true...**
    - ◆ Some may also think... we just **have to sit back** and let the Holy Spirit do the work...
    - ◆ Let go and let God... And I would never dismiss God's role in this... But...
    - ◆ **The Scriptures teach us that we are to be active in this fight...**
      - **2 Peter 1:3 <sup>3</sup> His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness,**
      - We have what we need to fight and battle... we just need to fight... to the death
- **How Hard do we fight? Paul suggests we fight sin till shedding blood**
  - **Hebrews 12:3-4 <sup>3</sup> Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted. <sup>4</sup> In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood.**
  - Cain did not resist like this... rather... he shed someone else's blood

### ❖ 3) Cain's Sin and Arrogance Toward God

- <sup>8</sup> Cain spoke to Abel his brother. And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him. <sup>9</sup> Then the Lord said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" He said, "I do not know; am I my brother's keeper?" <sup>10</sup> And the Lord said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying to me from the ground.
- **Cain Kills his brother...**
  - We have already considered why... But it is still remarkably shocking...
- **I must say that the most shocking sin in all of the Bible is this sin...**
  - The first two brothers mentioned in the Bible are at odds with each other
  - It is so bad... that the older kills the younger... Oh how far man has fallen...
- **Never be caught off guard by the true nature of sin...**
  - **It is never innocent...** you are never as far away as you may think from sin's destruction
  - **How many of us feel confident handling a snake? Some**
    - What about a poisonous snake? Still some may be...
    - What about the cotton mouth? I doubt anyone would say yes... Sin is like a Cotton Mouth
  - **When handling the sin in your life... when giving it room to breathe...**
    - Please never forget how quickly jealousy can turn to murder...
    - Lust can turn to adultery... Greed can turn into thievery
    - Coveting can turn into idol worship...
- **When Cain is confronted... He does not admit his wrong...**
  - He lies.... He is unrepentant... He is not sorry... as a matter of fact... he never apologizes
  - He simply sarcastic with the Lord...
    - Saying essentially.... Am I the shepherd's shepherd? What a smart Alek
- **But God knows.... He always knows doesn't He?**
  - **Psalm 69:5 O God, You know my foolishness; and my sins are not hidden from You.**
    - He asks Cain a rhetorical question... one in which he already knew the answer to....
    - Abel was dead and his blood... his life was crying out to God from the Ground...
- **Life is precious in the sight of God...**
  - There will not be a drop of blood spilled on this earth that God does not notice

### ❖ 4) God's Judgment on Sinful Man

- <sup>11</sup> And now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. <sup>12</sup> When you work the ground, it shall no longer yield to you its strength. You shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth." <sup>13</sup> Cain said to the Lord, "My punishment is greater than I can bear. <sup>14</sup> Behold, you have driven me today away from the ground, and from your face I shall be hidden. I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me."
- **As a Result of Cain's horrific crime...** God passes judgment down to Cain...
- **God could have very well struck Cain down...**
  - He could have taken Cain's life bc of His sin...
  - But God does not do this... And this is not the last time he would allow a murderer to live
  - Sometimes the punishments of God are delayed... **mercifully**
- **God's punishment toward Cain is very harsh...**
  - His livelihood is taken away... The ground that was once very fruitful to him...
  - **Will be even less fruitful....** God had already made it more difficult for me b/c of their initial sin
  - **It is about to get much worse for Cain...**
    - When he tills the ground... it would not give back to him abundantly...
    - He would suffer from meager crops the rest of his days...

- **Also... he would have to live his life as a fugitive... running...**
  - People would likely seek Cain... looking to avenge the death of their brother or uncle Abel
  - He would live his days in this constant fear
- **And even worse... He would be hidden from the face of God**
  - His fellowship with God is now broken...
  - His sin and arrogance and lack of repentance that followed broke his walk with God
  - Which was already previously marred by a lack of faith in God...
- **How Terrible this must have been for Adam and Eve...**
  - To lose two sons that day...
- **For Cain... It is beyond what he can handle...**
  - He finally breaks... saying he can not bear it... and you see he is afraid

#### ❖ 5) God's Mercy in Cain's Broken Fellowship

- **<sup>15</sup> Then the Lord said to him, "Not so! If anyone kills Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold." And the Lord put a mark on Cain, lest any who found him should attack him. <sup>16</sup> Then Cain went away from the presence of the Lord and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden.**
- **Even though Cain has done a very terrible thing...**
  - And was incredulous toward God in the aftermath...
  - After Cain receives judgment... He sees the weight of his crimes...
  - As you notice... He is afraid for his own life now
- **So God shows him kindness... and essentially offers him protection**
  - He places some sort of mark on Cain... We have zero idea of what it may have been...
  - Some even speculate that the mark was in his name... We don't know...
- **But we know that God placed a mark that protected him from vengeance...**
  - And then... in the saddest part of this story...
  - This likely firstborn son of Eve... **went away from the presence of the Lord**
    - As a result of his sin... He is driven even further away from God than his parents were...
    - And the consequences of sin continue to grow

#### ❖ 6) Man's Sin Multiplies

- **<sup>23</sup> Lamech said to his wives: "Adah and Zillah, hear my voice; you wives of Lamech, listen to what I say: I have killed a man for wounding me, a young man for striking me. <sup>24</sup> If Cain's revenge is sevenfold, then Lamech's is seventy-sevenfold."**
- **Here we see one of the descendants of Cain... 7<sup>th</sup> generation grandson**
- **Looks like He killed a man for pretty much nothing... And He is Boasting!!!!**
  - And says... that vengeance on anyone coming against him would be 10x that of Cain
- **What we notice here is the growth of the depravity of man...**
  - And it only adds to the context of rebellion of man that will soon produce the flood...
  - But it is sad to note the effect of one man's sin on his children...
  - **And this is something we should all be oh so careful to note in our own lives**
    - **Oh the terrible consequences of sin!**
- **But...**

#### ❖ 7) God's Plan Continues

- **<sup>25</sup> And Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and called his name Seth, for she said, "God has appointed for me another offspring instead of Abel, for Cain killed him." <sup>26</sup> To Seth also a son was born, and he called his name Enosh. At that time people began to call upon the name of the LORD.**
- **We know what Cain did was wrong... very sinful...**

- But we also know that Satan tempted him... Satan had been working on his heart...
- Satan wanted to thwart the plan of God..
- **But... God's plan continues with Seth...**
  - God gives Eve "another offspring"
  - And this is significant if you consider that God's judgment on her and the snake
  - Also contained a promise of a coming Messiah Figure
- **Here we see Seth as the line that Jesus would one day ultimately be born through...**
  - God's plan of redemption is firmly in place

#### ❖ Invitation

- The call of God on people today is that they bring themselves as the offering...
  - Give themselves over to God
- Do you need to come and bring yourself as an offering?
  - Or... as a Christian... Do you have sin that you need to repent over?