

10/17/04

The First Bad Seed, Cain
Gen. 4:1-16

The number of people who have destroyed their lives by a series of ongoing bad decision or on one mayor decision are not a few in the history of man, Cain is just the first.

There was a young man who grow up in the church but chose to live apart from God and instead of turning to God in repentance before it was too late, recently he was given a sentence of thirty-five years to life in prison.

Turning to God for salvation and abandoning one's sin will make a great difference in one's life!

Cain should be a warning to all of us, lest we think that we are the exception to the destruction by sin in our lives.

We want to look at the life of the first family outside the Garden of Eden with sin-nature in operation in full force.

Our focus will be on the account of Cain killing his brother Abel, which is revealed to us in a simple three-fold division. Gen. 4:1-16

- I. The men Cain and Abel. Vs. 1-2
- II. The sin of Cain. Vs. 3-8

III. The judgment of Cain. Vs. 9-16

I. The men Cain and Abel. Vs. 1-2

- A. Cain was the first son born to Adam and Eve. Gen. 4:1
 - 1. His father Adam knew his mother Eve sexually and she conceived and bore Cain. Vs. 1a-b
 - a. The word to “know” in this context biblically is used as a euphemism for sexual intercourse. Gen. 4:17, 19:5, 8, 24:16
 - b. Twenty-three chromosomes of Adam and twenty-three chromosomes of Eve came together to form Cain.
 - c. The composite of the forty-six chromosomes resulted in the first birth in the human race.
 - 1) The process altered Eves body tremendously lasting nine months.
 - 2) The delivery was of the first infant of the first earthly parents, a sinner in the image of Adam and Eve. Gen. 5:3
 - a) It meant Cain possessed no potential for pleasing God nor could he do anything to change his not regenerate his soul, repent with godly sorrow or exercise faith which resulted in salvation on his

- own, apart from God. Is. 64:6,
Rom. 3:10-12
- b) He was a slave to sin due to his sin nature having no power to resist consistently or victoriously through the fall. Gen. 3
- 4) The very birth process must of astonished Adam as well as Eve, as a child came forth from her womb, yielding new life.
2. His mother Eve declared, “I have acquired a man from the Lord.” Vs. 1c-d
- a. The name Cain means “get” or “acquire”.
- b. Some point out that the proper root means “spear” or “smith” a worker of metal but the expression of Eve would seem to indicate that “get” or “acquire” is the correct meaning.
- c. The expression was a proclamation of her belief in faith regarding the promise of the “seed of the woman” and perhaps her hope that this man was the who would redeem as promised.
- * Man is “ish” a wordplay as she came from man, now she bore a man.
- d. The phrase “from the Lord”, being an acknowledgment of the Creators endowment and blessing to procreate in kind. Gen. 1:28

- B. Cain had a brother who was the second son born to Adam and Eve. Vs. 2
1. Abel “Hebel” means vapor, transitory or breath , perhaps in view of his anticipated murder.
 2. Able was a keeper of the sheep, a shepherd.
 3. Cain was a tiller of the ground, a farmer.
 4. Cain and Abel’s age difference is not stated.
 5. Cain is mentioned eighteen times in chapter four of Genesis but in no other part of the Old Testament.
 6. Cain is mentioned only three times in the New Testament and all in a negative way. Heb. 11:4, 1Jn. 3:12, Jude 1:11.
 7. Cain is identified with the family of the Kenite, the tribe from which the father-in-law of Moses was a member and which lived in the area between southern Palestine and the mountains of Sinai. Num. 24:22, Judges 4:11

Illustration

G. K. Chesterton said, “Whatever else may be said of man, this one thing is clear: He is not what he is capable of being.” (Illus. Biblical Preaching: Green: 230)

Application

1. What an incredible pleasure it is to have your first child.

- a. The child represents the beginning of your extended family.
 - b. The child is a composite of you and your spouse.
 - c. The child is the beginning of new motivation for living in such a way to benefit the upbringing of the child.
 - d. The child is the talk of every conversation, a sheer delight.
* “Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD, The **fruit** of the womb is a reward.” Ps. 127:3
2. What a surprise to see how different two siblings can be from each other.
- a. The second child comes along and he or she is nothing like the first child.
 - b. The first child sleep all night, the second is up all night.
 - c. The first child is tranquil, the second is wired constantly.
 - d. The first child is compliant, the second child is confrontational.
 - e. The first child is neat, the second messy.
* “**Chasten** your son while there is hope, And do not set your heart on his destruction.” Prov. 19:18
3. What a wise God He is to stretch us.
- a. Lest we are self-righteous and look down on parents that have an noncompliant child.
 - b. Lest we think it is because of us and not God’s wisdom that are children turn out right.

The men were Cain and Abel!

II. The sin of Cain. Vs. 3-8

- A. Cain and Abel brought their offerings to God. Vs. 3-5a
1. The time is said to be, “In the process of time”, describing an indefinite measure of time without number.
 2. The man Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the Lord. Vs. 3
 - a. The word brought “bow” means carried or introduced.
 - b. The practice of worship was known and practiced by the first family.
 - c. The place is not disclosed.
 3. The man Abel brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat. Vs. 4a
 - a. The firstlings “b@kowrah” means the firstborn! Ex. 13:2, 12-15
 - b. The fat was the choices part of the animal that later in the Law was to be offered to the Lord. Lev. 3:16, Deut. 32:38
 4. The Lord respected Abel and his offering, but He did not respect Cain and his offering. Vs. 4b-5a
 - a. The word for respected “sh’ah” means to look, regard or to pay attention to.
 - b. There are some who have taught that the reason God did not respect Cain’s

offering was that he offered the work of his hand in contrast to Abel's blood offering, which was the basis of atonement, but we know that even in the Levitical law one could offer bloodless gifts. Gen. 3:21, Lev. 1-6

* There is nothing in the text to support it even though the LXX renders the verse to mean that Abel offered the correct sacrifice but it is not a correct interpretation.

c. The scriptural reason for God respecting Abel and his offering over Cain and his offering was due to the condition of his heart, according to the New Testament.

* Note that the Scripture focuses on the person, not the gift!

1) By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that **he was righteous**, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks. Heb 11:4

* Abel was in a right relationship with his brother, mother and father, the evidence of being right with God.

2) For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another, not as

Cain who was of the wicked one "poneros" and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his works were evil and his brother's righteous. 1Jn. 3:11-12

* The sin of envy and jealousy was the reason Cain's gift was not accepted by God!

3) Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, who as a brute beasts in their natural thinking corrupting themselves. Jude 1:11

4) You have the godly line and the ungodly line of mankind!

B. Cain responded in anger at the rejection of his offering. Vs. 5b

1. Cain's inner conflict is described as very angry, a work of the flesh. Gal. 5:19-21

a. The adjective very "meod" marks the intensity meaning exceedingly, abundant or great.

b. The word angry "chara" means to be hot, furious, to burn, towards God and Abel.

2. Cain's outer countenance was fallen.

a. His facial expression was expressing the inner reality, discontent and resentment.

- b. His facial countenance was a mere reflection of his heart condition, a fit of violent rage in heart.

C. Cain was called to repent by God. Vs. 6-7

1. The Lord attempts to bring conviction to Cain's heart. Vs. 6
 - a. He asks Cain, "Why are you angry?"
 - 1) God did not ask Cain in order to know the reason, for God knows all things.
 - 2) God asked Cain in order that Cain would examine his heart and confess his sin.
 - * Sin is already present in the heart but not fully manifested in any deed outwardly!
 - 3) This is a parallel to the question God posed to Adam. "Where are you?" Gen. 3:9b
 - * The answer to both questions was "out of fellowship with God".
 - b. He asked Cain a second question, "Why is your countenance fallen?"
 - 1) God wanted Cain to know that sin can not be hidden, it will reveal itself in thought, word, deed or action. Matt. 15:18-20
 - 2) God wanted Cain to see that sin is not a harmless thing but it affects man's demeanor, perspective, attitude and character.

- 3) This also is a parallel to the second question to Adam, "Who told you that you were naked?" Gen. 3:11b
 - * The answer to both questions was the same again, "Conviction of sin, seeking confession".
2. The Lord gave to Cain two choices. Vs. 7
 - a. If he did well, he would be excepted.
 - 1) The doing well was like Abel, which the sinful nature focused on and progressed in sin.
 - 2) The doing well meant the acknowledging of his sin, confessing it and abandoning it, being forgiven. 1Jn. 1:9, 2:1
 - 3) The result would be fellowship with God and his fellow man, resulting in joy. 1Jn. 1:1-4
 - 4) Then his offering would be excepted to God.
 - b. If he did not do well, repent of his sin, he would not be excepted.
 - 1) Sin would lie at the door, meaning his envy, jealousy and anger, that would lead him to greater sin.
 - 2) Sin nature's desire would be towards him to master and rule his life through various sins.
 - 3) Sin nature and sin would destroy him.
 - 4) The possible choices implies that Cain had the ability to turned from

his sin by God's provisions of salvation. 1Cor. 10:13

a) The text is a picture of a ravenous beast crouching ready to leap on its prey, the beast is sin that lies at the door of our hearts and minds to destroy our lives!

Gen. 3:16d

b) The phrase "Its desire is for you". Gen. 3:16, Song. Sol. 7:10

D. Cain murdered his brother Abel. Vs. 8

1. Cain chose not to deal with his sin but to take things into his own hands.

a. Cain talked with Abel his brother as they were in the field. Vs. 8a-b

* The Greek LXX adds Cain saying, "Let us go into the field".

1) The location was far enough away from any witnesses or help.

2) The scenario was one of calculated premeditated murder!

3) Cain was angry and resentful at his brother for having been accepted by God over him. Vs. 5b

4) Cain had refuse to confess and repent but rather to feed his anger and allow the beast of cultivated sin leap on his brother. Vs. 7

b. Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him. Vs. 8c

1) Cain stood up and walked towards Able to assault him, is the idea, having all his unsuspecting trust.

2) Cain killed "harag" his brother Abel, meaning to slay, destroyed.

3) The magnitude of the treacherous act is marked by the two-fold mention of "his brother".

4) The one who came from the same womb and had his unquestionable trust.

2. Cain's first impression must of been startling.

a. This was the first time physical death of a man had been witnessed by man.
* What a horrible shock and pain it must have been for Adam and Ever as they thought on all they had brought on the human race!

b. The man that was alive seconds previous was now laying lifeless.

c. The promise of God had come to pass on the physical level, "You shall surely die!" but this by human hands, was the first "Martyr" for his faith.

1) Physical death is the separation of the spirit from the body.

2) Spiritual death is the separation of the soul and spirit from the presence of God for ever.

d. Jesus charged Israel with her guilt of all the righteous blood shed on the

earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zachariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. Matt. 23:35, Lk. 11:51

Illustration

Sow a thought, reap a deed.

Sow a deed, reap a habit.

Sow a habit, reap a character.

Sow a character, reap a destiny.

Application

1. God sees all men alike and can not respect on over the other.
 - a. He see all mankind as sinners. Rom. 3:23
 - b. He sees all mankind in need of salvation. Eph. 2:12
 - c. He sees those who will come to Him by the way and provision that He has made for mankind. Jn. 3:16
2. Man under the power of sin nature is portrayed as having the capacity to do things that stagger the human mind.
 - a. The nature of man is bent towards evil and self as the norm, with some potential for good and consideration of other.
 - b. Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually. Gen. 6:5

- c. The heart of man is deceitful and desperately wicked above all thing. Jer. 17:9
 - d. Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.” Gal. 5:19-21
3. Man too often is like Cain thinking that he can control and master his sin nature and acts of sins.
 - a. Sin nature is evil and ruthless.
 - * The wages of sin is death. Rom. 6:23a
 - b. Sin nature can not be mastered or controlled by man.
 - * Man’s righteousness is as filthy rags. Is. 64:6b
 - c. Sin nature is deceiving, destructive and self serving.
 - * Sin is deceitful and hardens the heart. Heb. 3:13
 - d. Sin nature allows no sin to be static but progressive and climactic, beginning with evil thoughts.
 - * They proceed from the heart. Matt. 15:18-20, 2Cor. 10:5

- e. Cain's sin of envy and jealousy caused him to be in a wrong relation with God and out of fellowship with man, his brother.
* Envy is desiring what another person has, jealousy is despising a person for what they have!
- f. Cain's refusal to deal with his envy and jealousy led him to the sin of anger.
- g. Cain's refusal to repent from his anger led him to murder.
* A sound heart is life to the body, but envy is rottenness to the bones. Prov. 14:30
- h. Jesus said, "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment. But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, 'Raca!' shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be in danger of hell fire." Matt. 5:21-22

This sin of Cain ended in murder!

III. The judgment of Cain. Vs. 9-16

- A. The Lord sought out Cain for confession. Vs. 9-10
* This is the second trial recorded on earth by the judge of all.

- 1. The Lord said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" Vs. 9
 - a. This is a parallel to Adam, his father. Gen. 3:9b
 - b. He said, "I do not know."
 - 1) He lied to God, yet I am sure he knew that God knew he had killed Abel.
 - 2) He denied his sin rather than acknowledge it.
 - 3) He hardened his heart to the guilt of his sin.
* Happy is the man who is always reverent, But he who hardens his heart will fall into calamity. Prov. 28:14
 - c. He said, "Am I my brother's keeper?"
 - 1) He uses callus sarcastic cynicism after committing such a heinous crime by the phrase, alluding to the profession of his brother Able, a shepherd, as if he had to watch him constantly.
 - 2) He refused to take personal responsibility for his actions.
 - 3) He refused to take personal accountability for his sin.
 - 4) He refused to recognize responsibility to society as well as his affect on society.
- 2. The Lord gives Cain a second opportunity. Vs. 10

- a. God said, “What have you done?”
 - 1) Cain should of said, “I killed my brother.”
 - 2) Cain would of been forgiven, if it was genuine in his repentance.
 - * He who is often rebuked, and hardens his neck, will suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy. Prov. 29:1
- b. God knowing his unwillingness to confess and repent charged him with the crime of murder, “The voice of your brother’s blood cries out to Me from the ground.”
 - 1) God knew the sin because He is Omniscient and Omnipresent.
 - 2) But God calls attention to the blood of Abel as the witness against Cain, which means he buried Abel.
 - 3) In the book of Leviticus, it is stated, “The life of the flesh is in the blood”, it was crying out to God. Lev. 17:11
 - 4) Blood pollutes the land, therefore it must be covered by the blood of the one who shed it. Gen. 9:5, Num. 35:9-34, Deut. 19:1-13
 - 5) The word cries “tsa’ aq” means to cry out for help.
 - a) It is used for one in desperation of food. Gen. 41:55

- b) It is used for one oppressed by his enemy. Judges 4:3
 - c) It is used for a woman crying out for help against rape. Deut. 22:24, 27
 - d) It is used for a victim of injustice. Ex. 22:22
- B.** The Lord sentenced Cain for his crime. Vs. 11-12
- 1. Cain heard the verdict directly from God, he would be cursed from the earth. Vs. 11-12a-b
 - a. The reason was that the blood of Abel had been received by the earth at his hand. Vs. 11b
 - 1) The earth was given to provide a blessing of food not to hide one’s sin.
 - 2) The earth was the substance that man was created from and now was defiled by blood. Num. 35:33
 - 3) The curse of the fall had claimed the first man back to the dust. Gen. 3:19
 - 4) The earth was cursed through Adam but now Cain is the first man to be cursed, which is far more serious.
 - b. The result was that the earth would yield less to Cain than the fullness of

it's strength in it's fallen state when he would plow it. Vs. 12a-b

* His profession was a tiller of the ground. Gen. 4:2d

2. Cain would be a fugitive and a vagabond on the earth. Vs. 12c
 - a. As a fugitive "nuwa" meaning he would be a fleeing having no stability or permanence, due to running from his crime and to the enemy, Satan.
 - b. As a vagabond "nuwd" meaning a wonderer, he would roam, as a drifter and wonderer in fear of his life, so as not to be known by others in community to receive the normal benefits of comfort and security.
 - 1) Expulsion for all family relationships.
 - 2) Expulsion further away from God.

C. The Lord heard Cain's complaint for the consequences. Vs. 13-14

1. Cain declared that his punishment was more than he could endure for the rest of his life. Vs. 13
 - a. Cain understood the curse by the repetition of it and was attempting to blame God for the verdict, he had been driven out of that day from the face of the ground, parallel to his father driven from Eden but more severe. Gen. 3:24

- b. Cain said he would be hidden from God's face, more severe than his father hiding in the trees. Gen. 3:8
 - 1) If there is any person who could be recorded in Scripture of blasphemy while living, I believe Cain could be the one, for spiritual death is defined by the Bible as being separated from God forever.
 - 2) Cain is categorized along with names like, Jezebel, Delilah and Judas.
 - c. Cain feared his life of a fugitive and vagabond would end in someone killing him, due to retribution by other family members.
 - d. This should not be mistaken for personal repentance for his sin but it is regret for the consequences of his sin only.
2. Cain declares the particular consequences. Vs. 14
 - a. God had driven Cain from the face of the ground, which meant the particular location which Adam and Eve had been given by God to dwell in after the fall. Vs. 14a
 - b. God's face would be hidden from Cain which implies unconfessed sin having no fellowship or access to God without repentance. Vs. 14b

- c. God had made Cain vulnerable to vengeance by others for his sin of murder and they would attempt to kill him. Vs. 14c-d
 - 1) Remember that the other people were all of the same family.
 - 2) Cain knew the awful apprehension of God's judgment being banished from the Lord's presence even as Paul declares about those who do not repent, "Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." 2Thess. 1:9

D. The Lord set His mercy on Cain. Vs. 15

- 1. God declared that anyone who would kill Cain would receive a seven-fold punishment. Vs. 15a-c
 - a. The seven-fold vengeance is referring to full divine retribution.
 - b. The number seven as we have seen is symbolic of completeness.
 - c. The statement does not mean that God would kill six relatives and the person who murdered Cain, nor seven generations.
- 2. God set a mark on Cain, lest anyone finding him should kill him. Vs. 15d-e
 - a. This was not some visible mark as some believe, for out of the seventy-

six times the word appears, it is always translated "sign" given not "mark" on Cain.

- b. What it was, no one knows, be it the mere sign of his wonderings, fear of being killed, it is speculation.
 - c. What is clear is that the purpose of the mark was for protection by the mercy of God, just as the coverings for Adam and Eve's nakedness were by the mercy of God, the parallel is unmistakable. Gen. 3:21
- E. The Lord turned Cain over to a self-will. life Vs. 16**
- * Some believe that Cain repented but the evidence seems to reveal the opposite.
 - 1. Cain went from the presence of the LORD.
 - a. Cain lived a life further from Yahweh than he could of ever imagined.
 - 1) He started in the presence of God with an offering, along with Abel his brother.
 - 2) Now he is going out from the presence of Yahweh, just like his parents had gone out of the garden but further from the presence and consciousness of God, completely apart from Yahweh.
 - b. How did it happen? A refusal to deal with present sin, decisively and immediately!

2. Cain dwelt in the land of Nod on the east of Eden.
 - a. The name Nod “dwn” means wondering, indicative of his judgment by God and monument to his own legacy.
 - 1) This could very well be the sign given to Cain by the name of the city “wondering”, kind of like the Refuge Cities to come in the Law for the “blood redeemer”. Num. 35
 - 2) Whenever a person rejects to repent and get right with God, he or she merely wonders without direction in life!
 - b. The direction was east of Eden “Nde” which means pleasure.
 - 1) Just like his parents from the paradise of pleasure God had intended for man but sin ruined it all.
 - 2) But now Cain is removed further away from that place of blessing by the covenant God Yahweh. due to much greater sin.

Illustration

Oswald Chambers declared this about the judgments of God, “The judgments of God leave scars, and the scars remain until I humbly and joyfully recognize that the judgments are deserved

and that God is justified in them.”(The Best from All His Books:190)

Application

1. The judgment of people’s sins is made available here on earth before a person dies, not after death.
 - a. The Bible tells us, “For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.” Jn. 3:17
 - b. “Or do you despise the riches of His **goodness**, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the **goodness** of God leads you to repentance?” Rom. 2:4
 - c. “But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.” Rom. 2:5
 - d. “While it is said: “Today, if you will hear His voice, Do not **harden** your hearts as in the rebellion.” Heb. 3:15
2. The judgment of sin on people’s lives first takes place here by their own doing.
 - a. Decisions of impulse or passions, though gratifying at the time are self-serving and after the fact they bring shame and regret, causing people to live with the difficulties of those consequences.
 - * “Be sure your sin will **find** you out.” Num. 32:23c

- b. Decisions that have only the immediate present in mind usually sacrifice the more important and valuable things in the future
- 1) “The heart knows its own **bitterness**, And a stranger does not share its joy.” Prov. 14:10
 - 2) “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.” Gal. 6:7-8
- c. Declared regret for consequences of the sinful acts or deeds, should never be mistaken for repentance of the sin.
- * “Your own wickedness will **correct** you, And your backslidings will rebuke you.” Jer. 2:19a-b
3. The judgments of God are always full of His mercy.
- a. And the LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, “keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation.” Ex. 34:6-7, Deut. 4:31, Jonah 4:2
 - 1) Mercy is less than we deserve.
 - 2) Law is what we deserve.

- 3) Grace is what we don't deserve.
- b. “They are **new** every morning; Great is Your faithfulness.” Lam. 3:23
- c. God makes the rain to fall on the just and the unjust. Matt. 5:45
- d. God delights in mercy. Mic. 7:18
- e. God appeared in the ark of the covenant above the mercy seat. Ex. 25:20-22
- f. The believer is to come before the throne of grace to find help and mercy in time of need. Heb. 4:14-16
 - * God will one day will charge every man and woman with their sins if they die without salvation!

The judgment of Cain was just!

Conclusion

The murder of Abel by his brother Cain is revealed to us in a simple three-fold division.

- I. The men Cain and Able!
- II. The sin of Cain ended in murder!
- III. The judgment of Cain was just!