

Genesis 4

- I. First Chapters in Genesis
- The first chapter in Genesis establishes many patterns that will carry out through the rest of the Bible
 - Every time a pattern is repeated, it is slightly changed to show a different perspective or to teach a different lesson
 - God created an ideal world, humans failed to live up to the ideal and each time the repetition is to reflect on humanity trying to obtain the ideal and each time failing
 - Done through many chosen people who are unable to obtain the ideal and the following generations pull away
 - Until a person becomes worthy enough to fulfill God’s ideal and unite God and humans under one kingdom
- II. Overview of Genesis 4:1-26

Scenes	Overview
A: Birth Scene #1 (4:1-2)	Cain and Abel born
B: Story #1 (4:3-16)	Cain murders his brother <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sacrifices and Cain’s test • Murder and dialogue with God • God’s punishment and mercy God’s mercy: 7x blood vengeance for Cain
A: Birth Scene #2 (4:17-18)	Cain has son and builds city named after him
B: Story #2 (4:19-24)	Lamech murders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lamech’s 2 wives • Lamech’s 3 sons • Murderous poem Lamech declares 77x blood vengeance on himself
A: Birth Scene #3 (4:25-26)	Seth is born

III. Comparison of Birth's

Birth Scene #1: Eve "Creates" a Son	Birth Scene #2: God "Appoints" a Son
<p>a: ¹Now the man had relations with his wife Eve,</p> <p>b: and she conceived and gave birth to Cain,</p> <p>c: and she said, "I have gotten a manchild with the help of the LORD."</p> <p>b: ^{2a}Again, she gave birth to his brother Abel.</p>	<p>a: ²⁵Adam had relations with his wife again;</p> <p>b: and she gave birth to a son, and named him Seth,</p> <p>c: for, she said, "God has appointed me another offspring in place of Abel, for Cain killed him."</p> <p>b: ²⁶To Seth, to him also a son was born; and he called his name Enosh. Then men began to call upon the name of the LORD.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cain – <i>qayin</i> which means spear or metalsmith • Gotten/created – <i>qanah</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used in other places to describe God as creator of the world, Israel, people, wisdom... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gen 14:19,22; Deut. 32:6; Ps 139:13; Prov. 8:22 • Seems as if Eve is attributing the creation of Cain to her own power and ability • Word "with" is more likely implying a comparison (Gen 39:6; Ex 20:23) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attributes own blessing of children to their own plan or power – always ends in conflict <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sarai (Gen. 16:1-6), Rebekah (Gen 27:1-46), Leah and Rachel (Gen 30:1-43) • Abel's name means vapor or mist (vainity Eccl. 1:2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seth – <i>Sheth</i> • Appointed – <i>shith</i> • Eve changes her wording from her doing the creating, to God doing the appointing • Enosh is another word for man

IV. Genesis 4 Mirrors Genesis 2-3

Theme	Gen. 2-3: Adam and Eve	Gen. 4: Cain and Abel
Human given a significant choice about "good"	2:14 – can eat from any tree, but not from the tree of good and evil = death	4:5-6 – God didn't regard Cain's offering, Cain gets angry, if he does good, he'll be lifted up
Human tempted by an "animal"	3:1 – Snake converses with the woman and says the tree will give them wisdom	4:6 – sin is crouching at the door
Human gives into temptation with destructive consequences	3:6 – Woman takes from the tree	4:8 – Cain rises up out of anger and kills Abel
God shows up to ask a leading question	3:9 – God asks "Where are you?"	4:9 – God asks "Where is your brother Abel?"
	3:12 – God asks the woman "What have you don't?"	4:10 – God said "What have you done?"
Human dodges the question	3:12 – the woman you gave me	4:9 – Am I my brother's keeper
The perpetrator is cursed	3:14 – serpent is cursed	4:11 – you are cursed from the ground
Working the ground will be more difficult	3:17b – in pain you will eat from the ground	4:12 – work the ground and it won't give its strength
	3:23 – God sent him from Eden to work the ground	
Human is banished from the divine presence	3:24 – god banished the human east of the garden	4:14 – banished me from the face of the ground – went east of Eden

¹Now the man had relations with his wife Eve, and she conceived and gave birth to Cain, and she said, "I have gotten a manchild with *the help* of the Lord." ²Again, she gave birth to his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of flocks, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. ³So it came about in the course of time that Cain brought an offering to the Lord of the fruit of the ground. ⁴Abel, on his part also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions. And the Lord had regard for Abel and for his offering; ⁵but for Cain and for his offering He had no regard. So Cain became very angry and his countenance fell. ⁶Then the Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? ⁷If you do well, will not *your countenance* be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it." ⁸Cain told Abel his brother. And it came about when

- Farming is often associated with cities – civilizations were built on farming
 - Babylon, Egypt, and other major empires were founded on organized agriculture
 - Foreshadows what will come in the coming verses
- Shepherding was associated with those who migrated and lived in rural areas – lower class
 - Viewed as despicable to urban Egyptians (Gen 43:32; 46:34)
 - God typically identifies himself with the shepherd and reveals himself in the desert
- Cain's offering is simple, valid, but simple
 - Grain offerings are mentioned in Leviticus
- Abel's offering gains extra detail
 - Firstling – greatest symbolic value, would take time to select and kill
 - Fat Portions – best part of the animal, always given to God as a sacrifice
- Abel is understood in giving everything to God
 - Fault isn't in the offering – both are specified in Leviticus 1-7
 - Fault is in what the offering indicated about the character of one of the offerings
- Giving an offering in worship to God
 - Where is this offering being given?
 - The door at the garden of Eden, in front of the cherubim at the entrance into the holy place of God's heavenly presence on Earth
 - Sinful, animal-like temptation to rebel against God has exited the garden with them
- God looked with favor on Abel's offering – doesn't mean He rejected Cain's offering
 - Cain reacts as if it is a rejection and God talks to him
 - God can discern in Cain's offering that all is not well in his heart, mind, and character – invites him to do the right thing to experience favor
 - Heb. 11:4 "By faith Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained the testimony that he was righteous, God testifying about his gifts, and through faith, though he is dead, he still speaks."
- Cain was the firstborn and the first to bring an offering – expected to receive the greater inheritance
 - Abel unknowingly shows him up and starts a major theme through the book of Genesis

they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.

⁹ Then the Lord said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" And he said, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?" ¹⁰ He said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying to Me from the ground. ¹¹ Now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. ¹² When you cultivate the ground, it will no longer yield its strength to you; you will be a vagrant and a wanderer on the earth." ¹³ Cain said to the Lord, "My punishment is too great to bear! ¹⁴ Behold, You have driven me this day from the face of the ground; and from Your face I will be hidden, and I will be a vagrant and a wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me." ¹⁵ So the Lord said to him, "Therefore whoever kills Cain, vengeance will be taken on

- God carries his promises in ways that challenge traditional wisdom in human societies
- God deals with Cain as a Father to their child
 - God not only seeks response, but also hints that there's no good reason for Cain to feel this way
 - Also wants Cain to make the decision for doing good and giving him a chance/test to see how Cain will react
- If Cain does according to God's will – God will accept Him – cure is obedience
- If Cain insists on His own will – He is welcoming sin or allowing sin to rule over him
 - Romans 6:12-16 "Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts...present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead...For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace...Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness?"
- Cain chooses to take the path of disobedience
 - Allows sin to enter
 - Language suggests that it was premeditated
- Cain, in contrast to Adam, tells an outright lie – becoming more sinful than the previous generation
 - Response is indifferent
- Ground becomes a witness to the murder
 - Humans were made from the ground – now a human returns the ground in blood
 - Cain is cursed from the ground – defiled something sacred
 - Num 35:29-34 (blood pollutes the land); Heb 12:24 (Christ's blood speaks louder than Abel's)
- Begins pattern in the Hebrew Bible of cities built on bloodshed and when the innocent cry out, God hears and responds
- In the curse, Cain's livelihood is taken away – forced to switch rolls
 - Ground once represented life for Cain, and now it represents death
 - Taken away from His family and God
- Cain complains about his punishment and that he has fear that someone will kill him because he has blood on his hands
 - Still no remorse, repentance, or apology

him sevenfold.” And the Lord appointed a sign for Cain, so that no one finding him would slay him.

¹⁶ Then Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

¹⁷ Cain had relations with his wife and she conceived, and gave birth to Enoch; and he built a city, and called the name of the city Enoch, after the name of his son. ¹⁸ Now to Enoch was born Irad, and Irad became the father of Mehujael, and Mehujael became the father of Methushael, and Methushael became the father of Lamech. ¹⁹ Lamech took to himself two wives: the name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other, Zillah. ²⁰ Adah gave birth to Jabal; he was the father of those who dwell in tents and *have* livestock. ²¹ His brother’s name was Jubal; he was the father of all those who play the lyre and pipe. ²² As for

- Understands that he needs God’s protection
- Hints forward to the kinsman redeemer – family responsible for avenging the murder of a relative (Num 35:12-25)
- Sign is not specified – many theories
 - Beginning of a pattern – When god confronts humanity’s evil, he usually brings justice while also showing mercy and marks the distinction with a sign or symbol to communicate the meaning of the event on a deep level
 - Rainbow, circumcision, plagues, cord of scarlet
 - God stands for Cain’s judgment for his murder and no one else has the right to exact vengeance, but Cain also stands under God’s mercy
- Nod just means “wandering” – He was wandering in the land of wandering
 - Still defies God by settling down – creates a society
 - Not known where Nod is
- Where did Cain’s wife come from?
 - Cain married one of his sisters
 - Whole point of Cain’s punishment is isolation
 - Indicator that it’s possible that Adam and Eve were not the first humans on Earth, but were the first one’s chosen by God to be priests in the Garden of Eden
 - There would be other humans outside of Eden
- Enoch = “dedicated”
- Cain forms his own protection in the form of a city – lack of trust in God protecting him
 - Similar to later cities of refuge
 - Will later protect an even worse murder
- Only other city created in Gen. 1-11 is the city of Babel – another place where sin flourishes and man tries to prosper and raise themselves up on their own
- As the generations go on, we start to see that the sin is multiplying and become greater
 - Connected to Gen 3:15 – enmity between the snake and the woman, and between the snake’s seed and the woman’s seed
 - It seems as if when we open the door to sin and allow it to rule over us – we become the seed of the snake
 - Clear that the conflict between the 2 seeds will be an ongoing theme throughout the Hebrew Bible
- First mentioned to have 2 wives
 - Contrasted to God’s design for Man and Woman’s union in gen 2:24

Zillah, she also gave birth to Tubal-cain, the forger of all implements of bronze and iron; and the sister of Tubal-cain was Naamah.

²³ Lamech said to his wives,

“Adah and Zillah,
Listen to my voice,
You wives of Lamech,
Give heed to my speech,
For I have killed a man for wounding me;

And a boy for striking me;

²⁴ If Cain is avenged sevenfold,
Then Lamech
seventy-sevenfold.”

²⁵ Adam had relations with his wife again; and she gave birth to a son, and named him Seth, for, *she said*, “God has appointed me another offspring in place of Abel, for Cain killed him.” ²⁶ To Seth, to him also a son was born; and he called his name Enosh. Then *men* began to call upon the name of the Lord.

- Adah = pleasure, ornament
- Zillah = shade
- Lamech is the 7th generation from Adam through Cain
- The three sons represent the advancement of civilization and the creation of culture, as well as the furthering of violence
 - Jabal = stream, river or tribute offering – creates animal reproduction on a mass scale
 - Jubal = water course, canal or tribute offering – creation of musical art
 - Tubal-Cain = tribute offering of Cain – metal fashioning of tools and of weapons
 - Naamah = loveliness
- After being told that his son invented weapons – we learn Lamech is a murder
 - Puts a negative connotation on the advancement of the society
- Lamech is even more violent and arrogant than Cain – even boasting about his violence
- Lamech exceeds the limit of retaliation by exacting more vengeance than what was deserved
 - Defining law on his own authority
 - Believed he could promise a greater retribution than God
 - Found a counterpoint in Jesus’ response to Peter about forgiveness (matt 18:21-22)
- In contrast to Eve’s first birth – attributing herself the creation, and also Cain’s birth of Enoch – creating a city named after him, Seth’s birth highlights God’s generosity in giving Eve another son to replace Abel
- Moving on in the future, we will see many places where things are put in place of someone else
 - Ram offering in place of Isaac
 - Judah in place of Benjamin
- In contrast to Cain’s Enoch, Seth’s son is Enosh which means “human”
 - It’s like humanity is getting a fresh start and gives hope to a dark story
- Chapter begins and ends with the worship of God
 - People are invoking God – first instance of prayer or calling out to God in worship, in need, ect.

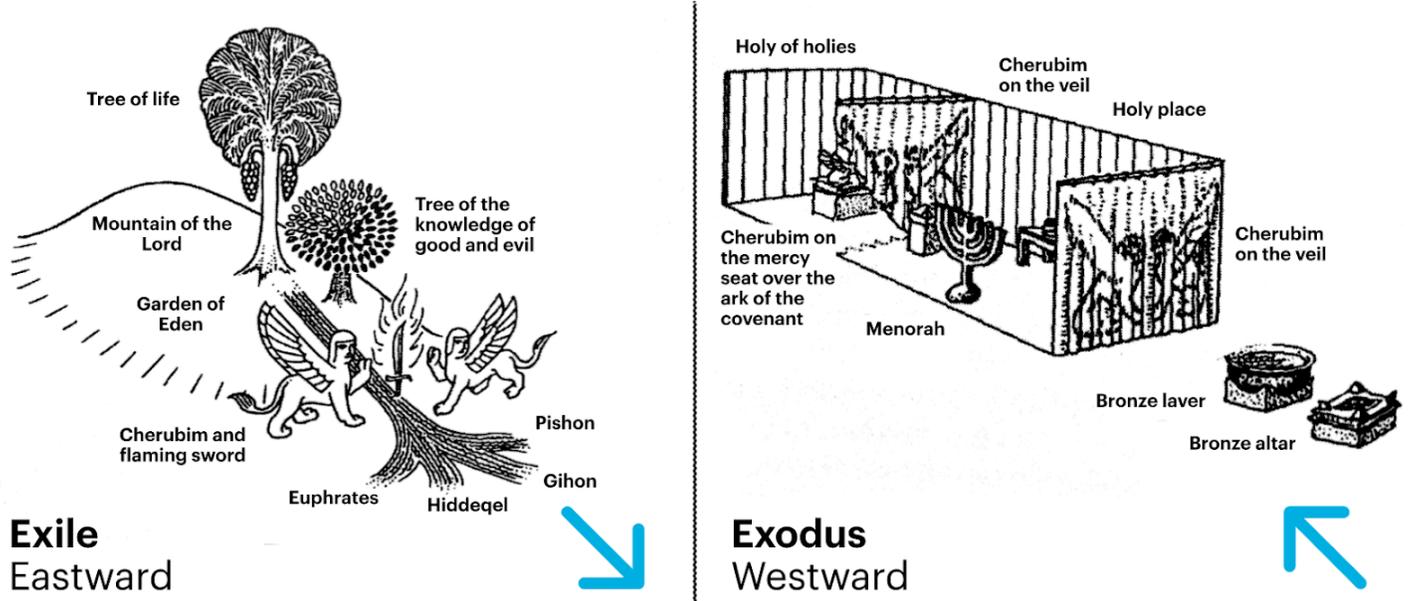


Image adapted from Morales, Michael L. (2015). *Who Shall Ascend the Mountain of the Lord?: A Biblical Theology of the Book of Leviticus*. IVP Academic.

V. Cyclical Pattern Throughout the Hebrew Bible

A1 God gives an ultimate gift (Creation and Blessing)

B1 Humans Bring exile and curse upon themselves (Failure)

B2 Next Generation fails

C1 Non-Chosen line and their destruction (Rebellion increases)

C2 Chosen Line is presented (Hope for future)

B3 Some type of Cosmic Rebellion in Heaven and Earth

A2 Remnant is Saved to begin a new humanity (Re-Creation and Blessing)

- Tension between justice and mercy is presented
- Leading to someone that can fulfill both God's justice and mercy