

# Genesis 4:1-16

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[ 0 : 00 ] Okay, you can turn your Bibles to Genesis chapter 4. So we've come as far as Cain and Abel. How long did Cain hate his brother?

As long as he was Abel. That's about the best I got. I had to look that up online. So we will read through the text.

We will get down through verse 16 today. And then we'll pray and dive in. And Adam knew his wife, Eve, and she conceived and bare Cain and said, I've gotten a man from the Lord.

And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. And in the process of time, it came to pass that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord.

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, but unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect.

[ 1 : 11 ] And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth, and why is thou countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?

And if thou doest not well, sin lies at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him. And Cain talked with Abel his brother. And it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and slew him.

And the Lord said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not. Am I my brother's keeper? And he said, What hast thou done?

The voice of thy brother's blood cries unto me from the ground. And now art thou cursed from the earth, which has opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand.

When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength. A fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth. And Cain said unto the Lord, My punishment is greater than I can bear.

[ 2 : 16 ] Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth, and from thy face shall I be hid. And I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth. And it shall come to pass that everyone that finds me shall slay me.

And the Lord said unto him, Therefore, whosoever slays Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the Lord set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him.

And Cain, he went out from the presence of the Lord and dwelt in the land of Nod on the east of Eden. Let's pray. Father, we thank you for your word that you put before us, Lord.

We pray that we would see in it this morning what you want us to see, Lord. That we would hear your heart behind this account, Lord. There's so much, Lord, that you could speak to us in your word, Lord.

And regarding creation, regarding the fall of man, regarding history. And yet each thing that you've put in here, Lord, is for a specific purpose, Lord. To instruct us, to give us the picture that you want us to see that shows your heart, your character, and ultimately that shows us your redemption for man through Jesus.

[ 3 : 23 ] So we pray that you would open your word to us, Lord, and help us to be there. And in Jesus' name, amen. So remember when we looked at the fall with Adam and Eve, or with Eve and the serpent in the garden.

And we said we have that kind of Sunday school picture. And I was in church since I was born. And in Sunday school. And, you know, my history is the flannel graph and all of that.

And so that's the picture you get. Well, we saw that the picture of Eve, that like kind of 1930s movie star face next to the tree with the serpent in it. And let's not actually the scripture portrays it.

Well, this is kind of what you see with Cain and Abel. It's like the Hardy Boys, you know. Frank and Joe with their 1950s hairdo, kind of duking it out. Teenagers, Lassie's there for some reason. But that's not really what we're going to see in scripture. That's not quite what it was. But, you know, you're trying to convey it to the kids that it was brothers.

[ 4 : 27 ] And I liked this next slide. You know, Cain, he's going to bring the fruit of the ground. And Abel's going to bring the fruit of the field. And this one says, Oh, Cain, so what if everybody in class liked my animal crackers better than your vegetable crackers?

I like that. Especially in today's world. The whole meat, anti-meat, vegan, whatever. It's just hilarious. So, but we're going to see as we go through chapter four and then eventually chapter five. Not today. We're going to see two men, two lives, two ways of worship, two choices, two chances, two lines, and two deaths. Some of that we're going to see today.

Some we're going to see next week. But we have this split that's happening in the garden because sin has entered the world. And now there is the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent. And that's not some weird thing that like serpent-like people. It's just saying the two foundational hearts of man now. There's the heart that's of sin.

[ 5 : 28 ] And then there's the heart that God wants to give, the new heart to man. And there's, and right from the garden, right from the beginning, there's a split that's going to happen. Today, if you wanted to break up the outline, this is just the way I'm looking at it today.

Verse one and two, a family is born. The first family, not the president, but the very first family.

Verse three to seven, a family goes to worship. Verses eight through 12, a family fight.

And verses 13 through 16, a family forsaken. And so we'll see that as we jump into the text. I want to get a mindset with Cain and Abel as we go on before we just kind of start reading and look at the narrative.

We're going to see two very different people. And I think as we go through scripture, we're going to see their heart. You can get a sense of that. In Galatians 4.29, it tells us, but is then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the spirit.

Even so it is now. Right from the beginning of the garden, right from the beginning, you had the flesh and the spirit. As soon as sin entered the world, you had that which was of God and that which is not of God.

[ 6 : 39 ] And it's the same. 2 Timothy 3.5 says, Having a form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof. He says, from such turn away. So that they look good.

It looks godly. It looks moral. But there's no power there. What does that mean? There's no inner moral strength that comes from anything outside of ourselves. That's Cain.

That's his heart. That's the attitude. That's the picture that we want as we go into this. Cain is, he has a form of godliness, but he does not have any reality. Abel, it tells us in Hebrews 11 verse 4, By faith, Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain.

He offered a sacrifice by faith. God looked at it and he said, Hey, that one's Abel. Yeah. Yeah. Anyway, that was from the hip and it didn't go well.

So, by faith. So, we see Abel's offering came by faith. Cain's did not. 1 John 3.12 tells us about Cain.

[ 7 : 45 ] It says, Not as Cain. Don't be like this. Don't be like Cain, who was of that wicked one and slew his brother. And why did he kill him? Because his own works were evil and his brother's righteous.

That's why. And so, we have this two distinct pictures as we go through this. Let's jump into the text in chapter 4 verse 1.

And Adam, he knew Eve, his wife. And she conceived and bare Cain and said, I've gotten a man from the Lord. And so, Adam and Eve, they've been sent out of the garden.

They're kind of having to make it on their own now. We're going to see eventually in Cain's line next week when we get into his descendants. Obviously, Cain's descendants go to the flood and that's it. Adam's descendants through Seth and then through Noah will go through the flood and will be what populates the earth afterwards. Cain's is only going to go to the flood. But we get a picture of some interesting pictures there of sin and its effect.

[ 8 : 45 ] But Cain, he will eventually start his own line. And one of the men from his line is the first, it says, that dwell in tents. And it makes note of that.

So, if you think, okay, they've just fallen. Sin has entered the world. But the world is still in a pretty good state. It's before the flood. There's better temperature regulation is the idea. Did they have houses?

I don't know. I don't think they were cavemen, right? God created fully formed, fully functioning people. And now, wherever they're living, Adam and Eve, wherever they're making home, they have a child.

And I like the wording there, and Adam knew Eve his wife. This is the first instance in Scripture of a husband and wife knowing each other, coming together as one physically. And what God had created by taking the woman out of man, this is as one flesh, then the rejoining of one flesh.

And it's something that God designed to enhance a relationship as far as, like, it's something you have to know. You know the person, and it enhances that. The world today is, you know, they've taken that and turned it into just something horrible and something that is no longer sacred and no longer is used to build up relationships.

[ 9 : 59 ] It tears down relationships. But anyway, she conceives and bears a child. And she's probably thinking, I wonder what it would have been like to not have my pain multiplied. And she has a son.

Now, God had promised them that through her seed that there would be one who would crush the head of the serpent. And so she names him Cain, or Possession, or I've gotten. I've gotten a man. She thinks this is it. Yes. Okay, we blew it. We fell. We disobeyed God. Sins enter the world in death. But God's going to give a deliverer through my line. And here he is.

Imagine being Cain growing up in that situation. You know, you're the only child. The first child ever. You're spoiled. Your parents think you are the chosen one.

Right? The pressure as you're starting to grow and you have a sin nature. Cain, the chosen one wouldn't do that. Don't be doing that. And then Abel comes along in verse two.

[ 10 : 58 ] And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep. But Cain was a tiller of the ground. So Abel's name means breath or gentle or breeze.

And we know in scripture that the breath of God is always a picture of the spirit. So man. And even as you see their occupations. Cain, a tiller of the ground. And Abel, a keeper of sheep.

We'll go into that in a minute. But so here comes brother number two. As we go through the scripture, there's other people in the line of Adam and Seth. And also of Cain. And they'll make note of this guy. Well, this guy begat this guy.

It wasn't like their only kid. Or to say Adam, he had Seth when he was like, after he begat Seth. He was 130 years old when he begat Seth.

So it wasn't like he had Cain, Abel, waited 100 years, and had Seth. There's many other children that are being begotten. But the Bible is just specifically targeting these ones for us.

[ 11 : 57 ] So Abel, though, the way this is worded, it does seem like it was Cain, then Abel. Not like Cain, a bunch of kids, and then Abel. It's brother one and brother two. They come on the scene. You picture them growing up, right?

They're growing up in this home. They come home from school. How was it today? Oh, man, Mom, I was so bullied. It was bad. You know, right? You know you're homeschooled when you're your own bully. I was homeschooled, so I can say that.

So, but you're always the top in your class, unless you're a twin. But so they didn't have all those pressures, right? You think of Adam and Eve. They didn't have to worry about taxes.

They didn't have to worry about mortgages. They didn't have to worry about, you know, traffic. None of that. They didn't have to worry about neighbors annoying them or cutting across their grass line, right, into their yard. None of that.

But what we saw from Scripture there in Galatians, that even so it is now that the flesh persecutes that which is of the Spirit. They had the exact same fears and worries that we had.

[ 12 : 59 ] How do we know that? Because the word that Jesus speaks to us in the Gospels and then Paul in the New Testament, those words he writes 2,000 years ago, they're just as applicable to people now as people then.

Because we are all after Adam's kind. And as it says here, and Adam knew his wife and bare Cain. And it was, you know, after his kind. I think it actually says that Seth says that. That it was called him after his image. In his own likeness and after his image.

I'm sorry, that's Seth. But either way, that what Adam is, his kids will be. So here are these two boys. And it says, Cain, he kept the ground. Abel, a keeper of the sheep. If you remember God's curse to Adam and also his protection was and provision was, hey, you're going to work the ground. And it's no longer going to just yield its fruit to you just for the asking. [13:54] You're going to work by the sweat of your brow. And it's going to be hard. And it's going to be laborious. But it was also provision that kept them alive. But if you think at this time, you've just had a child.

It's the first child. You're Adam and Eve. Like, that's got to be a little bit, like, how do we keep it alive? I mean, Adam is the sole provider. Literally. He can't go to the grocery store. Whatever he does in the field and brings home, that's what's going to keep them alive. Eve's responsibility to keep alive these children. So they had the same fears and they had the same worries.

And they passed those traits on, those sin traits to their children. Abel, he kept sheep and Cain the ground. What was the point of keeping sheep at this time?

If you remember that God said to Adam and Eve that he gave them of the herb of the fruit of the tree to be their food. And then in the curse, he said that in the sweat of your face, you shall eat bread from the ground.

[14:53] So they're still not eating animals. It would still be the fruit of the tree and then the bread of the ground. Probably till after the flood, because after the flood, God specifically says to Noah, now you eat animals.

But at this time, you know, whatever the nutritional value of the plant life was, it was enough that it was greater than that of the animals. The animals are also not in animosity towards them.

You know, they're friendly. So it's very different. So Cain's working the ground. But Abel's keeping sheep. Well, there's only one reason to keep sheep. And that's for sacrifice.

That's for worship. There's no other reason for that. But Abel's life was spent in activities that revolved around his relationship with God. Cain's out tending the ground.

Firstborn, you know, Adam's like, come on, son, I'm going to teach you how to do this. We're going to go do this. Abel comes along. You know how it is. You got a lot of pictures of your firstborn.

Secondborn comes along.

[15:49] And they're like, was there a record of my birth? It's like, yeah, we got a birth certificate in here somewhere. You need a license? Yeah, but I guess we got to find one. So Abel comes along and he ends up, he's a keeper of sheep.

And so his life is revolving around these activities that are in relation to his God. And so we're going to see these two types of worship between these two. And in the process of time, it came to pass that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord.

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. So we see some very specific things there. We're going to look at Abel first.

Abel brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. So when we get into Leviticus much later in the law, God will specify how to do sacrifices and how to burn the fat and that which is a sweet aroma unto the Lord.

At this time, he's definitely given some kind of instruction to Adam. Because Adam has instructed Abel, it's the firstlings of the flocks, the first fruits. It's the fat thereof.

[16:55] And I like how it says of his flock. So he's specifically keeping. It's not like he's just going out and finding a sheep somewhere. Like this is a flock he's caring for. And he's bringing this offering unto the Lord.

And then Cain, he brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. How old were they? Well, I don't think they were teenagers. Because after this fact, it's going to say that Cain went out from the presence of the Lord to dwell in the land of Nod and that he and his wife had children.

It doesn't say he goes and finds a wife. It says he and his wife have children. So they're at a point, obviously, where there are other kids, siblings, that have also grown.

So they could be 40, 30, 40, I don't know, at this time that this is taking place because there are other people at this point. And God does not specifically prohibit marrying between family, between children, siblings, until the law.

Even Abraham and his half-sister Sarah. So they're probably about, let's say they're in their 30s, you know, maybe 40. And Cain, at this point, he's gone through the motions, right?

[18:02] He's been doing the family worship. He's been going to church with everybody. Abel, obviously, has much more of an interest in this and more of a heart for this. And now Cain's at the point where he's like, I'm going to bring something.

I'm going to bring something to the Lord, an offering that's of my efforts, that's from my hand. So there's two types of worship here. Cain, he brought something also that came from what?

The ground. The ground was cursed. Cain is bringing something to the Lord that's not been ordained by the Lord, and it's also not been covered in blood. And we know that without the shedding of blood, there's no remission of sins.

Why? Because the wages of sin is death. And so sin begets death. And so everybody pays the penalty for their own sin. And to get out from under the penalty of sin, the penalty still must be paid, but someone has to pay it for me.

You can't pay for my sin because you have sin, and I can't pay for yours. So a sinless one would have to. And he would have to be what? After our kind. He has to be. That's why the animal sacrifices couldn't do it.

[19:09] They could temporarily cover because they pointed to Jesus. They pointed to the one who was of our kind, who was sinless in perfection, and who could take that place for us.

Did it matter that Cain brought the fruit of the ground? I mean, because it was super special. Like, there's something inherently special about Abel's sacrifice as opposed to Cain. No.

What was it that set it apart? It was that God had said, this is how we're doing sacrifice. If God had said, hey, when you come to worship me, I want you to stand on one leg, turn around three times, you know, and stick your hand in the air and throw a rock.

If that's how he said to do worship, we would do it that way because he's the one who gets to decide. And so for Cain to come, he's trying to do exactly what the serpent tempted Eve to do in the garden, which was, you shall be like God.

And so Cain is attempting to elevate self by bringing God down to his level. Still attempting to be like God. I want to set the rules. I want to decide how to worship God. Well, I don't like that Jesus is the only way.

[20:12] Well, I don't like that there's this expectation I have to repent of my sin. I want to continue living this way. I mean, I'm doing pretty much the same thing. I'm still coming to church.

I'm still bringing this offering. But it was in self-effort. And so we have two types of worship. The first type of worship, effort. Effort is anchored in my understanding of myself and my abilities.

I am seeking God not for himself, but for the validation of myself. And the proof of that is going to be Cain's reaction. Cain just wants to validate himself. I'm good. I'm set.

But we see that a lot today. Maybe you've heard of this movement recently. He gets us. Right? It's about Jesus. It's being like Jesus gets us.

And it's this idea that Jesus, he was a man. And he's like me. And he understands me in my sin, in my fallen nature. And that's true. He does.

[21:09] In the early century, after the time of the apostles, the time of like origin and maybe 100 AD, the heresy at the time was Jesus wasn't man.

Jesus was God. Man, flesh, whatever's of the flesh by nature inherently was sin and evil. So Jesus, he couldn't have been man. He, because God's pure.

And so the flesh would have tainted him. Today, it's the opposite. Today, oh, Jesus was man.

Jesus, yeah, he's like us. He gets us. Come just as you are. Yes.

But Jesus doesn't leave us as we are. He does get us. The reason that he gets us is to change us, is to make us new. So yes, Jesus wants to get us. It's this idea of seeking to validate, using God to validate myself.

It's what we see with Cain. Two people, the first two people removed from Adam and Eve. Sin has just entered the world. And right away, here's this man who's turned from God to his own efforts.

[22:12] Abel was anchored in faith, which is anchored in a knowledge of myself. Well, wait a minute. Of self? Yes. A knowledge of myself as a sinner. And I seek God's grace for a greater knowledge and realization of himself.

Self. So when I come with my own self-effort, when I want to worship God, not for himself, but for myself, I want to validate self. I want God to say, you're okay as you are.

You don't need to be changed. You don't need Jesus. You don't need to be born again. And that was awakened in the garden. That idea of self and self-realization. That I can be like God. And so it's hard for us to come in humility and by faith to say, God, I'm a sinner. And man, I need to be saved. And I need to be changed. And so those two types of worship.

Cain attempted to cover by good works what can only be covered by blood. Or Abel came by faith. And Abel's worship centered life. It must have looked pretty foolish to Cain.

[ 23 : 17 ] To Cain, who was spending all of his time and effort to keep the family alive. This is what God gave us to do after all. We're out here working, working, working. I don't got time for church.

I don't got time for things of the Lord. Man, I struggle with that. I struggle with that. Now that I don't have time for church. Here I am. But I don't have time. I find that the struggle is during the routine of the day.

Especially in the evenings. I know the Lord in the afternoon. The evening is like, you need to spend more time with me. And I know that because when it gets to Saturday and I'm trying to prepare for today. I'm like, I thought it was a lot further than I was.

And I don't think that's so much a preparation thing. Like, material. I think that's a heart thing. And the Lord is just like, you just need to come away with me some more. So it's hard. It's hard to give time to that when it feels like I should give it to something else.

If you remember Jesus, when he had gone to Bethany to the home of Mary and Martha and Lazarus. After he had raised Lazarus from the dead, they were putting on a party for him.

[ 24 : 20 ] Kind of a thank you party. And Martha is doing all this work. All this preparation. And Mary is sitting at Jesus' feet. Eventually, Martha got pretty mad. And she goes, and she goes, Master, do you not care that I am doing all this work?

And she's doing, and my sister does nothing? And Jesus said, Martha, Martha, you are troubled by many things. But only one thing is needful. And Mary has chosen the greater part. He didn't say, Martha, you don't need to serve.

You don't need to work. No, he said, you are troubled by many things. These things are causing you trouble. Cain, go in the field and work. Yes. Yes. But then take time to come and worship me. And to bring that offering in faith. And so Cain must have looked at Abel and thought, this is nuts. What is he doing?

And in verse 5, or I'm sorry, verse 4, it says at the end of it, And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering. The word respect there means to look, to gaze upon. He was able to look at it and say, I accept that.

[ 25 : 26 ] I accept that offering. And we saw in Hebrews 11, the first part of that in verse 4. We'll read the rest of it now. By faith, Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous.

God testifying of his gifts. And by it, he being dead yet speaks. What was the witness? How did God testify of it? Leviticus 9.24 tells us at the dedication of the tabernacle.

And there came a fire out from before the Lord, and it consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat, which when all the people saw, they shouted and fell on their faces. So the Lord sends a fire from heaven to witness.

When Elijah was on the mount with the prophets of Baal and Mount Carmel, God sent a fire and burnt up the offering as a witness. Psalm 20, verse 3 says, speaking to the Lord, remember all thy offerings and accept thy burnt sacrifices.

That word, therefore, offerings, actually is ashes, the idea behind it. Remember thy ashes and accept thy burnt sacrifices. And so that God sent this witness. Habakkuk 1.13, And so by faith, we approach the Lord through the blood, through the sacrifice of Christ.

[ 26 : 47 ] Abel did the same thing, looking forward to that sacrifice, came by faith, and God sent witness. Poof. Cain's turn. He comes forward. He puts his little cornucopia on the altar, you know.

He's got all his fruit and his vegetables, whatever, arranged nicely. He steps back and goes, Lord, look what I did for you. Adam was alive in perfection in the garden.

Imagine Adam looking at Cain's fruit, whatever it was, the work of his hands coming from the ground, and being like, you don't even know.

You don't even know what it was like in the garden. I think of Adam as he's working, you know. And the plants start to grow. And most likely, the type of production the ground gave back then was, we would look at it and think it's like miraculous compared to where we're at now.

But for Adam, he must have looked at that and, you know, picks up his 800-pound strawberry, and he's like, this is nothing, you know. Oh, remember the garden.

[ 27 : 52 ] And so how tragic to see his son trying to bring something that's going to please God out of something that's cursed. And just try and comparing that to what he had in the garden.

And what the Lord must see when he looks down, and he did not have respect to it, but unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wrath. And his countenance fell.

He was angry. Why? Well, because he was attempting to get God to validate his life instead of coming to God on his terms.

And so Cain was disillusioned. A life built around self will always lead to disillusionment, distance, and death. Cain, he's disillusioned.

He'll eventually put distance between himself and the Lord, and it will lead to death. Sin always leads to death. It just depends on who's the one who's going to die.

[ 28 : 50 ] Disillusionment means a feeling of disappointment resulting from the discovery that something is not as good as one has believed it to be. Anybody order anything from Amazon?

You open it up and you're like, that is not what I thought it was going to be. I remember when eBay was first a thing. Back when I was a teenager, we had these family friends.

They lived on a farm. He ordered this huge milk pitcher. Huge. And it showed up and it was about that big. About eight inches tall. And they had a ton of kids. You know, and he's like, yep. It's the same.

We've been looking at houses, right? Trying to find a house. You look online, you know, and with .5 photography now, with all of our phones that can make the room look bright and big and beautiful. And you go to this house and it's like this little Cracker Jack box. And you're like, what? Very disillusioning. Very disappointing. Resulting from the discovery that it was not as good as I had built it up in my mind.

[ 29 : 50 ] And so Cain has crashed right now. He's very disillusioned. And the Lord said to Cain, Why? Why are you wrath?

And why has your countenance fallen? If you do well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if you do not well, sin lies at the door. And unto you shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.

God's desire was for Cain not to fall prey to sin. Cain can rule over sin when God first rules over Cain.

So God's questions are always to guide us to truth. We looked at that with Adam and Eve when God came and said, Adam, where are you? Have you eaten of the tree of the garden? And his questions revealed, where are we?

Who are we? And what have we done? And it's the same with Cain. God's desire is to lead Cain to this place where Cain is willing to say, I, yeah, I was trying to do it on my own.

[ 30 : 51 ] Think how simple right now it is for Cain to turn away from the path he's on. He brought this. There's no condemnation. The Lord just says, Cain, why are you upset?

If you do well, you know what's going to happen. And there's an opportunity for us to do well in every situation we're in. I realized that this last week. And just realizing that I am not doing well right now.

And there's an opportunity in every situation the Lord would have us do well. And doing well is always choosing God's way over mine. But Cain had no capacity at all to handle sin.

But he did have the capacity to choose to let God handle sin. You know, if any man be in Christ, he's a new creation. Old things have passed away. Behold, all things have become new. Well, that means if you're not in Christ, you're not a new creation.

Old things have not been passed away. All things have not become new. But God still comes to us with the same questions. And he says, Hey, if you do well, won't you be accepted? I have new life for you.

[ 31 : 51 ] Cain had the capacity to choose. There's a responsibility there that never went away. Why? Because Adam and Eve were created in God's image. With the option to choose and have morality.

So whether in the presence of sin or not, there is still the fact that they are created in God's image. Now, verse 7, it's usually kind of interpreted.

The idea is, you know, Hey, Cain, sin wants to rule over you, but you can rule over sin. There's another way we could word that. And it's kind of like God's presenting it to him and saying, Is there

not, Cain, if you do well, acceptance?

And if you do not well, at the opening, a sin offering is crouching. And unto thee it's desire, and thou shalt rule over it. Word a little funny. That's the literal translation.

The idea is, Cain, if you don't do well, there is an offering. There is a sin offering right here for you. It's ready. You can rule over this. You don't have to go into sin. There is an offering, Cain, for you, if you will accept it.

[ 32 : 56 ] We're given the opportunity to choose as well. Joshua, we know this famous verse, 24, verse 15. He says, If it seems evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your father served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell.

But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. That's a choice. The choice that nobody can ever take from you. You can choose that. So, Cain, if you do well, there is an opportunity for you to receive a sacrifice for sin.

Jesus said that he is the way, the truth, and the life that no man comes to the Father but by him. I mean, you have to choose that way, that truth, and that life. And as we do that, we then get to walk in that new life.

So, Cain has this option put in front of him. And we see two choices. Cain is going to be given two choices and two chances. Right now, he has a choice. He has a choice to turn to the Lord.

Eventually, he's going to have a choice to repent if he wants to. And he's given two chances. God gives him a chance right now. Cain, turn. Turn to me. Your hope is in me. One quarter of the world's population right now is at stake.

[ 34 : 14 ] Actually, no, because they're probably in their 30s, 40s, and there's tons of other kids. So, this is a long time harboring in Cain. This is a long time coming. This wasn't like overnight.

This is something that Cain probably worked up to. He had brought that sacrifice before. He had brought maybe the lamb. He had, okay, I'm going to do that. That's what the family does. And now he's like, you know what?

I'm my own man. I'm going to do it myself. I'm going to bring my own sacrifice. And verse 8, And Cain talked with Abel his brother, and it came to pass that when he was in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and slew him.

The wording for that verse could better be translated, and Cain said unto Abel his brother, let us go into the field. And it came to pass in there being in the field that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and slew him.

So, it's not just that they were in the field walking, that he said, hey, come on. And Abel said, hey, bro, what's the big rock for? Oh, it's a surprise. But where do they go?

[ 35 : 20 ] They go to Cain's turf. They go to where he's comfortable. Let's go into the field. Come here, let's go in the field. Abel, you think you're so hot? Look at all this. That was by my hand.

I built that. I did that. What do you got? Stupid sheep. You just walk around and they follow you.

They eat food. You didn't provide that food. You take them to the stream, they drink from it.

And then we go and we kill them. What's the big deal? This is keeping us alive. This is where your focus needs to be, Abel. He took them out there and as they talked.

What do you think they talked about? I think Abel probably repeated the exact same thing that the Lord had spoken to Cain. I think he probably turned to him when they were talking about that and said, Cain, bro, if you do well, won't God accept you?

And I think Cain rose up and was like, and killed him. But that was it. He couldn't take it. And that's in us. It's still in us. I don't know why.

[ 36 : 17 ] Even as a believer, born again, new in Christ, you hear something good that's happening in someone else's life or what the Lord's doing in their life and you have this tendency to be like, well, they think they're so hot and the Lord's doing things in my life too.

I got friends over here. There's just that tendency of like, I don't know. Again, 1 John 3, 12, not as Cain, we are not to be as Cain who's of the wicked one, slew his brother.

Interesting, who was of that wicked one. He chose, he could have been of the seed of the woman, but he chose the serpent and he slew him because his own works were evil and his brothers were good.

Cain did exactly what Satan did, what Lucifer did. So what does it say there? Cain rose up and Lucifer, he says in Isaiah, for thou hast said in thine heart, God speaking to him, I will ascend into

heaven.

I will exalt my throne above the stars. As we said before, we cannot actually elevate ourselves. Only God can lift us up. Humble yourself in the sight of the Lord and he shall lift you up, but what can we do?

[ 37 : 20 ] I can tear you down to make myself feel higher. And that's what Cain's doing. He can't actually bring himself up to Abel's level. So he's bringing him down so that he can feel good about himself. Slight deviation.

I want to talk about relationships. All relationship is sacrifice and is maintained through humility. No relationship can survive pride, i.e.

the elevation of self. Cain and Abel had this relationship. The relationship they had was not one of mutual humility, was not one of sacrifice.

One side in pride dominated that relationship. All relationships are sacrificed. How so? Because if I'm going to listen to you talk, I have to be quiet. I have to die to myself and let you dominate at that moment.

If you listen to me, then you're going to have to be quiet. In a marriage, there's give and take.

There's constantly choosing to die to self, to die to my own way, to let someone else's.

[ 38 : 24 ] If you don't, there is a relationship which is all one side dominated. What's that called? Master. Servant. Slave. Right?

It's still the same. The relationship is still sacrifice and humility except the master is dominating over the servant. The servant is obeying. He's sacrificing his will and desire.

In humility, he's obeying, but it's not willingly. Right? So, in a one-sided relationship, what happens? Well, Proverbs 11, verse 2 says, when pride comes, then comes shame, but with the lowly is wisdom.

Ephesians 5, 21, submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. If you have a relationship where one side is not willing to sacrifice in that relationship and it's pride, that pride is going to end up pushing that person away.

It's going to push away. So, maybe there's relationships in your life where you're looking at it and go, I just don't, I don't know why, but I don't really like being around that person. You know, I mean, they're a friend, but, you know, maybe it's because it's a one-sided relationship.

[ 39 : 34 ] Is there humility? Is there sacrifice? Or is it just one-sided that you, you know, am I always the one having to sacrifice? Now, this sounds bad because it sounds like, wait, what about me?

But that's not the point here. The point is, there needs to be mutual humility, submitting yourselves one to another. Or, do you find people pulling away from you? Maybe check, check your heart and see, am I the one who's not acting in humility in this relationship?

That's got to be my way. And there's people in my life, nobody like to tell anybody about, but there's people I've known in life that I've had friends where it's like, I just am not comfortable.

I just find myself pulling away. And they may even be like, hey, what's going on? We don't hang out as much. It's like, why? And then you realize, oh, because that relationship is all about that person.

And whenever I try to bring something to it, there's no sacrificing on their side to let me come in.

Now we come in with humility ourselves, but all relationship is sacrifice and humility. And it also results in death.

[ 40 : 42 ] We choose to die. If we don't, what happens? Well, sin always results in death. It just depends on whose death it is. So for Cain and Abel, instead of Cain dying to self willingly, Abel had to die so that Cain could maintain his place in who he thought he was and in the relationship.

It killed the relationship with his brother because he had to maintain his place in that relationship.

Had to be about him. There was no submitting himself one to another. For us, sin will always result in death.

Just depends on whose death, doesn't it? Is it going to be your death? Or maybe somebody's already died for you and then it doesn't have to be your death. And then the Lord comes and he says to Cain, where is your brother?

Where is Abel your brother? And he said, I don't know. Sin begets more sin. Now he's a liar. Am I my brother's keeper? No, Cain, you're not, but you're his killer. You're his killer.

And guilt always overreacts. Guilt will always overreact. God just says, hey, Cain, where's your brother? I don't know. Wasn't me. Didn't do it. Nope. Your kid's a little. It's like, hey, do you know

how that happened?

[ 41 : 57 ] No, no, I have no idea. I have no idea how that happened. I was just over there playing with that and messing with it even though I shouldn't. Somehow it broke and it wasn't me. Guilt overreacts.

But repentance confesses. Guilt depresses. We're going to see Cain just go further down this hole of depression as he allows guilt to just pile on.

Instead of repenting, God's giving him another chance. Cain, turn. Cain, come on. Cain could let God hide him from sin or sin's going to hide him from God. He said, Cain, where's your brother? He said, am I my brother's keeper? He said, what have you done? The voice of your brother's blood cries unto me from the ground. So was Cain his brother's keeper?

Are we our brother's keeper? Well, as soon as Cain decided he was going to be his killer, he put him in the place of authority in Abel's life.

[ 42 : 55 ] And he put himself responsible now for what happened in Abel's life because it was not his place to determine if Abel was to live or die. But as soon as he stepped into that role and said, I am now going to determine for you.

Well, yes, he then made himself his brother's keeper. He took the role of his keeper and he didn't do a good job. We can do the same thing when I judge someone. As soon as I put myself in the role of judge and look at someone, I don't mean like we were talking about recognizing sin, recognizing frailties and failings and dealing with them.

I mean judging someone like, oh, that person, you know, this is what they should do and this is what's wrong with them. I've now stepped in to a position that was not mine to hold and now I'm responsible for how I deal with that.

And God, that's why the scripture says, you will be judged how you judge because I put myself now in this position that was only God's and God says, okay, you're going to be the judge? Let's see how you judged.

You're going to be his keeper? What did you do with him, Cain? You killed him. And then he's going to go now into this curse and so we saw we had the family born, the family went to worship and now the family falls apart.

[ 44 : 04 ] In verse 11, Now art thou cursed from the earth which opened her mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. Though earth was cursed through Adam and Adam had to dwell in a cursed earth, Cain is now cursed, excuse me, from the earth.

When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength. A fugitive and a vagabond thou shalt be in the earth. Unconfessed sin results in doubling down on the curse. So Cain has not confessed his sin.

He's not repented. And now the curse, he's doubling down on it. This is not God's choice. This is Cain's. A fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth.

And Cain said unto the Lord, My punishment is greater than I can bear. Was it? Was it really? No. But sin always pities itself. Sin always looks and goes, Oh, woe is me.

And the Lord says, Why don't you just step out from underneath the effect of the curse? I have a sin offering for you, available for you. Would you come and receive it? Oh, no.

[ 45 : 11 ] It's just too much for me. My punishment's greater than I can bear. Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth, and from thy face shall I be hid.

He did not. He didn't drive him out. But it wasn't, it wasn't God's choice to do that. God had a place for him. God had a way for Cain to come out from under the curse.

And instead, this is Cain's choice. But sin leads to distance. That was it. Huh. Yes. Disillusionment, distance, and death. There we go. But this distance that Cain was now experiencing, the physical distance that he was separating himself from God, happened because he distanced his heart back in verse 7, when the Lord said, If you do well, he chose not to.

So death came after distance, where you didn't actually see the outworking of the distance in the heart until the outworking of sin happened, that he killed his brother.

But the distance was there when he removed himself from the place of God's word. And I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth, and it shall come to pass that everyone that finds me shall slay me.

[ 46 : 23 ] And the Lord said unto him, Therefore, whosoever slays Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the Lord set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him.

And Cain, he went out by his own choice from the presence of the Lord. And he dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden. Nod means wandering.

Cain went to where he was most comfortable. He could no longer abide the presence of the Lord. Sin does not abide the presence of the Lord. And so we move to the place we're most comfortable in. If we respond to the Lord and to his word, then all of a sudden there's this desire to draw near to him.

Where Cain, he allowed himself to be hid. And like we said, we either let God hide us from sin or sin hides us from God. So what was Cain's focus?

Where was his focus? You see, our focus determines our worship. And our worship determines our relationships, the type of relationships we will have. Jesus said, where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

[ 47 : 36 ] So if you want to change your heart and the place where your heart is, like, oh, my heart's so wrapped up in this world. Well, remove your treasure from the world. Right? Cain, his treasure was in the world.

Abel spent his life and his time doing those things that enhanced and promoted his relationship with God. Those are the activities he was about. Doesn't mean we don't work. Doesn't mean we're not in the world.

We're not doing things. It's just, where is your focus? The focus is in this world and the focus is on the thing that's cursed. And God says, I've called you out of this world. In the parable of the thorns, or the parable of the sower, I'm sorry, there's four types of soil that the seed lands on.

Lands in the path, which represents the hard heart and the enemy comes and takes it. It lands among the stones, which represents the heart that is, there's no root there.

The word springs up quick, but as soon as persecution comes in, as soon as there's any type of pushback to the word, it dies. And then there's the good soil, obviously, which is the heart that's ready to receive the word and it springs forth to good fruit.

[ 48 : 45 ] And then there's the thorns, and they are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life and they bring forth no fruit to perfection. And so the seed grows up, the wheat grows up with the thorns and the thorns choke it out so that there's no longer any fruit being born.

And it's the same with us. If our focus is not on those things that are going to enhance our walk with the Lord and our relationship with Him, then the things of this world will choke it out. So what are we supposed to do?

We seek Him. We put Him first. There's another idea that I didn't really bring out. When God gives Seth to Eve, and Eve then says that she has gotten a man from the Lord to replace Abel.

Specifically, Abel. A seed, singular. And it's almost like she's recognizing that the promise of the serpent head crusher was through Abel.

And Seth is replacing that because Cain has forsaken his birthright. And when God says to Cain, if you do well, you should be accepted, the idea there is, Cain, the birthright's not being taken from you of the firstborn. It's yours if you want it.

[ 49 : 57 ] But Cain rejected it just like Esau did. And then it went to Abel. And Abel was the one whose heart was after the Lord, just as like Jacob will be. We have the same opportunity.

If we seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, then we have the blessing that all these things will be added. All the things Cain was so afraid of, right, that were going to be taken from him, all through this, God said, they're still there, Cain.

They're yours to be had. You can have them. But where's your focus? Turn back to me. Psalm 116, 8 and 9 says, For you have delivered my soul from death, my eyes from tears, and my feet from falling.

I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living. That's what Cain did not do. That's what we can do. Abel did, and what did it cost him? His life.

It's going to cost us our life too. No, probably not going to be beat to death by our brother. But if any man come after me, he must take up his cross daily and follow me.

[ 50 : 56 ] We have to die to self. But if we do, we have the wonderful experience where God says, I've delivered your soul from death. I've delivered your eyes from tears and your feet from falling, walk before me in the land of the living.

Not in the land of Nod, but in the land of the living. So the blood of Abel cried, justice must be satisfied. Bring vengeance. But the blood of Jesus cries, justice has been satisfied.

He brings mercy. He brings mercy. So for us, we have a much better sacrifice than that of Abel. We don't bring lambs and we don't bring that sacrifice and saying, God, would you accept this? Well, cover my sin. We also don't bring our own efforts. And we still don't. In Christ, we can't bring our own efforts. It's not by might nor by power, but by my spirit, says the Lord. As Paul says, when he's praying about that thorn in the flesh, and the Lord said, hey, my grace is sufficient for you, for my strength is made perfect in weakness.

And Paul said, well, then I'll glory in tribulations and trials because weakness, our weakness, allows God to display his strength. So, but you are come to Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel.

[ 52 : 18 ] See that you refuse not him that speaks. For if they escaped not him who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape if we turn away from him that speaks from heaven.

Cain had a voice speaking to him on earth and a voice from heaven. When Cain came to worship and God spoke to him and said, Cain, you know, I'm meeting with you. I'm speaking with you. And he returned away from that one. He had a voice on earth and it was Abel's and he silenced it. What voice are we going to hear? Man, all through Genesis so far, well, we haven't got that far.

Through chapter four, half of chapter four, it's voice after voice. You have God's voice creating. God's voice speaking to man. The enemy's voice. Eve's voice to Adam. Adam's response. And now you have another voice here.

Cain has an opportunity to respond to the voice that's speaking to him. We do too because we have Jesus. We have Jesus who has gone, he's gone the way of Abel. The word of God cost Abel his life and it did for Jesus too.

[ 53 : 17 ] Jesus came according to God's word. It cost him his life. Sin will always cause death, but he gave us his life in return. Today, where are we at?

Where am I at in relationships? Which voice am I listening to? The voice that says, I have to make myself relevant in this relationship. I need to be validated. I need to be justified.

Or the voice that says, you know, I'll die in humility and sacrifice. I'll serve you. Now, you can't be responsible for the other side of the relationship. Only on your side.

But you do that part and let God take care of the rest. Are we in God's presence? Are we finding ourselves being pulled away from his presence because we're letting sin in our life and it's causing that separation?

Are we like Abel? Man, I want to be like Abel. Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things will be added unto you. That's what I want. You know, there is a tendency to fill our lives, even as believers, with things of this world, the knowledge of this world, the things that are happening in this world that can choke out.

[ 54 : 30 ] Because we're just, you know, in the process of purchasing this home. Man, I find I'm really excited about it. But I can spend too much time planning and thinking and even on something good that I realize the Lord, if the Lord speaks to me and be like, that's not what I want to focus.

Focus on me. I will add. What is he going to add? Well, in Matthew 6, before he says, Matthew 6, 33, he says, take no anxious thought for tomorrow, what you shall eat, what you shall drink, what you shall wear.

Isn't it interesting that he doesn't say where you shall live? Guess what Adam and Eve had to worry about? What they shall eat, what they shall drink, and what they're going to wear. They didn't have to worry about where they're going to live. So right from the garden, it's the same.

But we have this opportunity now in Jesus to come boldly under the throne of grace. Speaks better things than that of Abel, better things than his sacrifice. So don't refuse. Don't turn away from that voice of grace.

As we close in song, it's our opportunity to respond to the Lord, our opportunity to speak back to him the things he's spoken to us, to say, yes, Lord. Cain had an opportunity.

[ 55 : 31 ] He had actually three chances because that last chance where he went out from the presence of the Lord. He didn't have to do that. And so today, we have the opportunity as well. And if you've not made your peace through the blood of the lamb that was sacrificed, and you're still trying by your own efforts, give it up.

Give it up before you become disillusioned, distance, and it leads to death. Jesus, we love you because, Lord, you, you are in creation, Lord, before the foundation of the world, planning out each and every life individually.

And, Lord, I think you are so excited over every new birth, Lord, that comes into this world, every baby. You're so excited over every man, woman, and child because you know the potential, Lord. You loved Cain. You were so excited when he came into the world, the firstborn baby of creation. There'd never been another one. How excited you were. And, Lord, how your heart broke when he turned away from you again and again and again.

And how your heart breaks, Lord, when we who have named the name of Christ and are filled with the Spirit of God pull away from the presence of God.

[ 56 : 52 ] So, Lord, I pray that as we just sit and in your presence, Lord, and take in just this worship, Lord, and the thoughts you've given us, that we would speak back to you, that we would be doers of the word, not hearers only, and say, yes, Jesus, I'm going to respond to you, to the voice that speaks from heaven.

It's a voice of grace. In Jesus' name, amen.