

Last time in our study of Genesis we saw the Depravity of Cain, son of Adam and Eve. Now we continue with the Confrontation of Cain because of his terrible deed, starting in 4.9.

A quote from the theologian and apologist Francis Schaeffer about the first three chapters of the book of Genesis reminds us of the essence:

‘Take away the first three chapters of Genesis, and you cannot maintain a true Christian position nor give Christianity’s answers.’
—Francis Schaeffer

And now chapter 4 which builds one more step from what chapter 3 gives us. This is in the section of the book that is leading up to the Flood, so I think God is showing us why the Genesis Flood was necessary: we will see the progress of sin and the corrupting effects of sin. Now in chapter 4 we see the progress of sin so we can imagine how much more it had progressed a few centuries later when there is a flood and we see that God takes drastic action to *preserve that that He loves*; the Flood is a story of salvation as well.

I. The Primeval History	1:1-11:26
A. The History of the Creation	1:1-2:3
B. The Early History of Mankind	2:4-3:24
C. Early History of Civilization	4.1-9.29
1. Decline of Civilization	4.1-6.8
a. Cainite Line	4.1-24
1) Depravity of Cain	4.1-15
a) Children’s background	4.1-2
b) Contrasting Offerings	4.3-5

We have already begun a comparison of chapters 3 and 4 which follow from Eve’s sin and Adam’s rebellion, two individual sins but all sin is against *God* who intervenes and takes the initiative to confront and bring them to awareness of their sin in order for them to repent and receive the salvation that we saw at the end of chapter 3—a picture with skins covering sin, requiring the death of an animal, brought by God Himself.

We have all the elements of salvation in those 2-3 verses. Faith is seen in Adam’s naming his wife Eve which means *life*. This is an indication that he believed Genesis 3.15: it will be through the seed of the woman that salvation comes, that the problem of evil is resolved—also that the skins represent the animals that were the substitute sacrifice and they also represent *imputation*, the putting on of righteousness. These elements are developed in the rest of the Bible.

In contrast, the fruit of the ground is also involved; that is where Cain gets his sacrifice—out of the fruit of the ground. An application: I believe that in the Christian walk we are never static, we don’t stand still. We are either influenced by the corrupting effects of sin which makes us regress in the Christian life *or* we are *growing*, the only way being in Christ Himself.

We are going to see the progress of sin—it does not remain idle either—with its corrupting effect seen in Genesis 3 and 4. Eve was deceived into sin, but now we see that Cain *premeditates* his murder. The *decline* of civilization begins in chapter 4 and continues in the Cainite line.

The sin is against God, of course, but now it is against fellow man as well, inflicted upon even a relative, a brother. Again God confronts and not only this, but *counsels* him which we did not see in the confrontation of Adam and Eve. Now skins are the focus; they *cover* sin—offerings in Scripture are designed to restore fellowship as a result of ongoing sin of believers.

We are still in primeval history, but have progressed beyond the early history of creation and mankind and now we see the development of civilization in the descendants of sons of Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel; later on there will be a 3rd son, Seth, in the narrative of the flood, ending in chapter 9.

We have already done a comparison of Cain and Abel:

Cain	vs	Abel
> 1st born		2nd born
> Optimistic		Pessimistic
> Farmer		Shepherd
> Unacceptable		Acceptable
> Anger		Worshipper
> Murderer		Prophet (Jesus)
> Seed of Satan		Seed of Woman

Eve's response to the birth of Cain: she was optimistic thinking that perhaps he was the one predicted in 3.15, that promised seed and Messianic personage that would deal with the issue of evil. But by the birth of the 2nd son, she names him *vanity*, probably seeing the emptiness and vanity of man's efforts and abilities.

Then we saw the contrast of the offerings: God rejects Cain's offering, 2 major reasons being 1- probably not the better offering (book of Hebrew) and probably a better one would be like what Abel brought (shed blood), 2- the spiritual states of the individuals, Abel brought his offering *by faith*; we will see the character of Cain more. Both the attitude and the offering are the issues. When we bring offerings—such as service—to the Lord, if it is not by faith, then it is in the flesh and basically is not lasting. So the service we bring or offering, etc, the offering is important but so is the heart attitude.

Cain responded to God in anger—and became the first murderer, and we could even say that he is the seed of Satan.

Nowhere in Scripture is there any indication that Cain was ever a believer. So he would be the first unbeliever.

On the other hand: Abel the 2nd born was given a more pessimistic name, had the occupation of shepherd. His sacrifice was acceptable and so was his character. He was the first martyr. He is also described as a prophet by Jesus; He lists prophets saying 'from Abel to Zechariah'. So Jesus believed in the early narratives of the book of Genesis. Rather than the seed of the Satan, 3.15, he was a seed of the woman—not the one from which came the Messiah.

That brings us to counsel and response:

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4.8 Cain told Abel his brother. And it came about when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.

The first murderer is the opposite of the predicted Messiah with life and the solution to evil; he actually expands on the evil that was already present. So, very much a contrast.

We have already started to elaborate on Cain's sin:

Cain's Sin

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- Refused to:
1. Worship Properly
 2. Heed Counsel
 3. Love his Brother

He refused to worship properly which includes the right attitude and right sacrifice. He also rejected the counsel that God gave him, rejecting the word of God. He then fails in relationships: fails to love his brother, murdering him in hatred. (On the Sermon on the Mount, what does Jesus equate with anger? Murder in your heart. It is the end product of hatred.)

Corruption of Sin

- 3:6 - Forbidden fruit
- 3.12-13 - Blame shifting
- 4.3-5 - Worship perversion
- 4.5 - Unjustified anger
- 4.8 - Premeditated murder

This is a list of the downward spiral of sin, beginning with Eve and the forbidden fruit. One bite seems like one 'tiny, little sin', but that progresses even among Adam and Eve to shifting blame, Adam blames Eve and God, and Eve blames the serpent.

In chapter 4 we see a perversion in worship, 3-5; then unjustified anger—there is no reason for it. God wanted repentance, but it led instead to premeditated murder.

We drew applications from chapter 4:

Implications

1. Effects of Fall are Passed on
2. Corrupting effects of Sin

Sin is passed on through generations; you can't break that cycle of sin. We feel the effects of it today.

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 - c) Counsel and Response 4.6-8
 - d) Confrontation with God 4.9-10

This brings us to the passage for today: 4.9-10. Another confrontation with God.

4.9 Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?"
And he said, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?"

Then the LORD, this being the personal, intimate, Yahweh, the God that interacts with man. God asked rhetorical questions first, but now it is very direct, "Where is Abel your brother?" Does God not know? Is He wondering? Hardly. Another rhetorical question, probably to elicit a positive response. But God knew even before he answers:

4.9 Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?"
And he said, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?"

Cain says, I do not know. Is there any progress there? Sin deadens, affects the mind, and here we see that Cain's theology is totally wrong, forgetting God's omniscience. This is the first blatant lie in the Bible, except for the one of Satan at the beginning of chapter 3.

Then Cain retorts with a question back to God: Am I my brother's keeper? In fact he *should* be! He is the older of the two,

but very arrogant in his response to God. Rather than repentance, remorse or seeking restoration, he further alienates himself from God. So we start a list of notes:

Notes

1. Confrontation - 2nd 4.9
The first one was with Adam and Eve.

Corruption of Sin

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- 4.9 - Disregard for others
Blatant lying

And, we add to the Corruption of Sin his complete disregard for others and blatant lying.

4.10 He said, “What have you done?” The voice of your brother’s blood is crying to Me from the ground.

He [God] said, “What have you done?” Does God not know? Another rhetorical question to bring out and further question getting to what Cain had done. God wants confession and repentance, reinforcing it:

4.10 He said, “What have you done? The voice of your brother’s blood is crying to Me from the ground.

The voice of your brother’s blood is crying to Me from the ground. This is author’s use of the figure of speech of personification: as if the ground were a person, with feelings and emotions crying out. And a reference to Leviticus later on: the

life is in the blood and it is poured out on the ground. Then ‘the voice’ of the blood. A picture of the emotions and feelings *we* would have, as if Abel had those feelings but now his blood is spilt on the ground. The personification emphasizes the severity of the life being gone. Until now they had seen very little of the losing of life.

Notes

1. Confrontation - 2nd 4.9
2. Blood - innocent killed by wicked 4.10
3. Cry out - personification

The first bloodshed, taking a life (except for the animals); and the crying out is personification.

Implications

1. Effects of Fall Passed on
2. Corrupting effects of Sin
3. God’s grace always available

Another implication: God’s grace. Even at the beginning of the conversation God is trying to elicit repentance and confession or at least admission of sin. But the Grace is always there—and it always precedes judgment. There will be judgment as well.

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- d) Confrontation with God 4.9-10
- e) Condenación de Caín 4.11-15

The last part of the section is the condemnation of Cain. Another contrast: instead of salvation, like Adam and Eve experience, now we have *condemnation*, verses 11-15.

4.11 “Now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother’s blood from your hand.

This is the 3rd appearance of the word ‘cursed’. The Lord said the ground was cursed, Genesis 3. And the serpent was cursed, being what Satan was using. Revelation 19.9 identifies Satan as the serpent. Here, it is the first time that a human is cursed.

Notes

- 1. Confrontation - 2nd 4.9
- 2. Blood - innocent killed by wicked 4.10
- 3. Cry out - personification
- 4. Curse - 1st of man 4.11

4.11 “Now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother’s blood from your hand.

Now the personification of the ground: has opened its mouth. Clearly premeditated murder.

Verse 12: the *condemnation* will involve the main area of work/main calling and purpose....

4.12 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.”

...It involves his work as a farmer. That ground will no longer yield its strength to you. There will be limiting of the tasks that he has taken on for an occupation. Certain punishment.

4.12 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.”

you will be a vagrant and a wanderer on the earth. It will affect his relationships and particularly his family. Probably also his safety, acceptance and fellowship, lack of personal satisfaction. Separation from family and others as he moves from place to place, purposelessness.

4.13 Cain said to the LORD, “My punishment is too great to bear!

No repentance or confession, just whining. My punishment is too great to bear. Almost accusing God: not fair, you are too harsh and mean!

4.14 “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.”

Behold, You have driven me this day from the face of the ground. The whining continues. He does acknowledge that God is the one that has driven him, but rather than recognizing that it is actually grace. God could have taken his *life*! We will see in chapter 9 that when the image of God is destroyed, capital punishment is merited. But here God has given him opportunities to repent and confess.

You have driven me this day from the face of the ground. Notice the repetition of *ground* here. It was important, his livelihood and his means of fulfillment.

4.14 “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.”

and from Your face I will be hidden. Notice *I* will be hidden from your face. He is hiding, having turned his back on God, again blaming God for turning his back on him! Here: a play on words: the *face* of the ground (an anthropomorphism), and now God’s *face*.

4.14 “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.”

He admits that he will be a vagrant and a wanderer on the earth. And we can add to our list of the corruption of sin:

Corruption of Sin

- 3:6 - Forbidden fruit
- 3.12-13 - Blame shifting
- 4.3-5 - Worship perversion
- 4.5 - Unjustified anger
- 4.8 - Premeditated murder
- 4.9 - Disregard for others
Blatant lying
- 4.13-14 Whining

‘Whining’ is on the list with ‘premeditated murder’!

4.14 “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.”

and whoever finds me will kill me. So now he has fears—maybe even unjustified fears. He had killed his brother, so maybe someone would kill him.

Notes

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|---|---------------------------|------|
| 1. Confrontation - | 2nd | 4.9 |
| 2. Blood - | innocent killed by wicked | 4.10 |
| 3. Cry out - | personification | |
| 4. Curse - | 1st of man | 4.11 |
| 5. Severity of punishment | | 4.14 |
| loss of profession, fellowship, stability, security | | |

So we add to our list of Notes: the severity of punishment which Cain recognizes, repeating it and even whining about it. He has lost his profession, fellowship, stability, security. But there is still grace: as long as he is alive he has opportunity to repent and restore a relationship with God. All of these losses should bring him to his knees and bring him to a point of confession. We should view hardships from having wandered from God as opportunity to come back to Him.

Cain’s Sin

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|-------------|----------------------|
| Refused to: | 1. Worship Properly |
| | 2. Heed Counsel |
| | 3. Love his Brother |
| | 4. Confess Sin |
| | 5. Accept Punishment |

So we add to Cain’s sin: he failed to confess sin and to accept the punishment. All these are characteristics of unbelievers.

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- 4.13-14 Whining
- 4.14 No repentance —>

1John 3.12 *not as Cain, who was of the evil one and slew his brother. And for what reason did he slay him? Because his deeds were evil, and his brother's were righteous.*

There is no evidence of salvation in John's commentary. No confession or repentance. In fact, he was of the evil one, so he was of the seed of Satan. And he killed his brother because he was an evil person.

Jude is describing false teachers, apostates and compares them with Cain.

Jude 11 Woe to them! For they have gone the way of Cain, and for pay they have rushed headlong into the error of Balaam, and perished in the rebellion of Korah.

He compares them to three groups of sinners: one, the way of Cain = separated from God, unwilling to repent, failure to worship, unjustified anger, self centeredness, disregard for others, lying, whining, grumbling.

4.15 So the LORD said to him, "Therefore whoever kills Cain, vengeance will be taken on him sevenfold." And the LORD appointed a sign for Cain, so that no one finding him would slay him.

4.15 So the LORD said to him, "Therefore whoever kills Cain, vengeance will be taken on him sevenfold." And the LORD appointed a sign for Cain, so that no one finding him would slay him.

That's grace; that is, He is identifying him for the purpose of his not being killed. There has been a lot of confusion over the word 'sign'. The Hebrew word *owth* is usually translated *sign*. It gives him protection in hope of his repenting some day. So rather than execution God bestows further grace.

So another implication: not only is grace always available but God's judgment cannot be avoided. There is always grace, even judgment, and even for the believer there is discipline.

There is no standing still - we are either growing in Christ or falling backwards in sin! Sin will have its corrupting effects unless we are constantly counteracting the sin that so plagues us.