

# GENESIS 4:1-16

## LESSON: THE FIRST MURDER — October 21, 2018

### INTRODUCTION:

Adam called his wife Eve, for she was the mother of all living. Because of their sin, the LORD God made coats of skins to cover them of their nakedness and shame. He showed mercy which was needed to continue God's purpose for man. God now says that man had become one of us. The knowledge man attained was in disobedience to God. And thereby having this knowledge of good and evil, he could not go further to eat from the tree of life, lest he live forever in his fallen state. God made the choice to send man from the Garden and till the ground from whence he came. So He drove man out of the Garden of Eden, and placed Cherubims at the east of the entrance, with a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep them from the tree of life (3:20-24).

### LESSON: I. A DEVELOPING PROBLEM GENESIS 4:1-5

**4:1 And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the Lord.** After being driven out of the Garden, Adam and Eve are in another place, a different environment. This chapter begins with Adam knowing his wife. And in this sense this means that Adam had been sexually intimate with Eve. This would only be a brief record of Adam and Eve after leaving paradise. This begins the family of Adam and Eve. The birth of Adam and Eve did not occur in the same way, but their children's birth came through conception. The human race was to be reproduced through the process of a woman's ability to be impregnated and conceive a child. The egg of the woman is fertilized by the sperm of the man. Eve announced in joy and relief that she *has gotten a man from the Lord*. She thought she carried the promised seed. They named him Cain. "**Cain**" in Hebrew means to acquire, get, or possess. Thereby, this was a happy moment, for she expected this child to be the seed, the Savior who would restore them to perfection, and make it possible for them to re-enter the Garden of Eden, their paradise. You can just tell by reading the verse that knowing what his name meant, and knowing that she was given a man child from the Lord, he would bruise Satan's head. This was the one!

**4:2 And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.** Well, Cain was not the one because they weren't back in paradise. And Adam and Eve are literally being fruitful and multiplying, for she bares her second child, another son. They called his name "**Abel**" which meant vanity, breath, temporary, meaningless, or empty. Well, this does not sound joyful anymore, but a little disillusioned that no change to their circumstances

# PITWM VERSE BY VERSE

had taken place. A lot had to have happened from the time of being driven out of paradise and naming names and knowing what they meant, I assume that Adam is still putting his gift to use in naming what's put before him. As the writer Moses describes this, we see that Cain the first born was a farmer, a tiller of the ground. And Abel, the second born is a herdsman, a keeper of sheep. What these two boys knew how to do, they evidently learned from their father, for they were honorable professions that contributed to meeting the needs of the family and society. Nothing was provided for them. They had to work the ground to provide crops. They had to shepherd the animals to provide clothing from the elements of the environment

**4:3 And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord.** As we go further in the process of time an offering was brought to the Lord. It must have been a very special place, a very special altar that they sought God and faithfully worshipped Him. God still seemed to commune with Adam, for they knew to bring an offering, and Adam still seems to be instructing his sons. So, Cain brought his gift from the *"fruit of the ground."* However, it didn't say first fruit of the ground.

**4:4 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:—**And Abel also brought his gift from the firstlings of his flock and of the fat. Now, God respected, meaning accepted Abel's offering. Scripture says *"firstlings of his flock"* meaning choicest and best of the flock of his offering to the Lord. God wants our best. Can we see Adam explaining to his sons of the ordeal of he and his wife's sin and what the LORD God had done for them? , how an innocent substitute had to sacrificially die in order to clothe their shame and guilt? , Then and only then could man approach God, for sin causes death. Hebrew 11:4 says *"By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice...by which he obtained witness that he was righteous."* This is of critical importance: it was the offering that made man either acceptable or unacceptable to God

**4:5 But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.** But, on the other hand God didn't respect Cain nor his offering. This didn't set well with Cain for he became very angry and his facial expression fell, meaning the anger was expressed in his face. Can you see the first born getting angry because they liked the brother's offering rather than his? They liked the man better than him? It was a put-down. Or was it about true worship or false worship? So we see a problem developing. So, we can say that it is the offering that made the man either acceptable or unacceptable to God. You can't go to God any kind of way.

- Did Cain believe that it was another way to approach and worship God other than what his father might have told him?
- Did Cain think that giving God the fruit of the ground that was cursed was a much better way to God?
- Did Cain think that doing it his own way; his own approach; by his own works; his own mind and ideas would be better?

# PITWM VERSE BY VERSE

No person can earn, win, or merit salvation. No person can approach God through his own works. *What can wash away my sins—Nothing but the blood of Jesus. What can make me whole again—Nothing but the blood of Jesus.* It's "not through works lest any man should boast" that we can be saved Eph.2:9. God has never accepted any person's offering—Old Testament or New Testament—before Christ or after Christ apart from the shedding of blood. The blood of a spotless lamb pictured the coming Savior and His death. The blood of Christ Himself had to be shed for all persons through all the generations of human history. Only God knew Cain's heart.

## II. A FATEFUL RECKONING GENESIS 4:6-12

**4:6 And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wrath? and why is thy countenance fallen?—** God asks Cain why is he so angry and why is his expression changed? Just as He asked his father Adam, Where are you? , as if God don't know when sin is lurking. He couldn't play the blame game as his father did. This was Cain's time to repent and do it the right way.

**4:7 If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.** This is the first time the word **sin** is mentioned in the Bible. I know in chapter 3 "*The LORD God said to the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed.*" The word **sin** was never used for Adam nor Eve. This was another first and this was the time to make another choice because God is giving Cain another chance. God is stating the obvious to stir Cain to think about right and wrong worship; about the right and wrong approach to God; about the right and wrong offering to secure God's approval. Whenever God says **IF....** Either you do well and you hold up your head, you'll be accepted meaning do what you're supposed to do in the right way. And when what you don't do well, meaning you stay in that condition, then sin lies at the door to come in to master you instead of you mastering it because that's sin's desire.

**4:8 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.** Then Cain goes and has a conversation with his brother Abel, and after a time while in the field, Cain rose up, attacked and killed his brother Abel. This is the first murder in the Bible—taking a life by the shedding of human blood. Cain lured Abel into the field with an ulterior motive.

- Cain had been angry, very angry with God and we also see with his brother — *Angry because of rejection.*
- God had warned Cain that sin was crouching at his door — *Festering anger consumed him.*
- Cain is now deceiving Abel — *Disguising anger with deception.*

Adam and Eve's disobedience brought sin into the human race and into the world. They might have thought their sin (eating a harmless piece of fruit wasn't very bad, but notice how quickly their sinful nature developed in their son Cain. Simple disobedience suddenly degenerated into outright murder. Adam and Eve acted only against God, but Cain acted against both God and his brother.

# PITWM VERSE BY VERSE

Now, the ungodly seed was now on earth ready to spread. A small sin has a way of growing out of control. Cain was the first man who became angry; allowed it to fester; disguised it with deception, then let sin consume him to turn his actions to murder. We must not be part of the ungodly seed, a follower of that old serpent called the Devil (Rev.12:9).

**4:9 And the Lord said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper?—** Three significant things happened:

1. God questioned Cain. **Where is Abel thy brother?** Cain thought he could deceive God by saying he didn't know where his brother was when God asked. As if God didn't know. But God was giving him a chance to confess and repent of his sin.
2. Cain denied responsibility by also saying **Am I my brother's keeper?** Cain absolutely refused to take responsibility and continued to rebel against God by lying; claiming to be ignorant, and innocent with sarcasm. And thereby blinding his heart and mind against God more and more, not wanting to care about his brother, sinking to the depths of selfishness.
  - **Am I my brother's keeper?** simply means taking care of, looking after, loving, watching over, knowing where he is, and knowing the condition, welfare of your brother.

**4:10 And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.**

3. God revealed an undeniable truth: sin cannot be hid. **What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.** That meant Abel wanted justice executed. He had been murdered; his blood had been spilt upon the ground. Consequently, his blood cried for justice to be executed against the sin done against him. Note, God not only saw the sin of Cain, but He also heard the cry of Abel for justice. His blood still cries out for all the injustices against people; all the injustices to be corrected and rectified.

**4:11 And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand;—** God had cursed the ground in 3:17; the serpent in 3:14, and now Cain. God said *"thy brother's blood crieth...from the ground"* (4:10). Now, He says *"now art thou cursed from the earth."* There was no way to get around it, the ground was talking. The ground had opened its mouth and his brother's blood fell to the ground; in between the crevices, and the earth accused him when it received Abel's blood by Cain's hand.

**4:12 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.** The result of Cain's sin was twofold:

1. The ground would yield no productivity when tilled by Cain. He was to constantly experience difficulty in his labor.
2. Cain would be a fugitive and a vagabond throughout the earth. He was to always be a restless soul, a wanderer upon earth.

In essence he became the symbol of the unregenerate man with no peace or rest. The word for

# PITWM VERSE BY VERSE

vagabond is related to the word "*Nod*" (v.16) where he was to eventually dwell. He would be a harmless wanderer, banished from permanency and consigned to seeking out a living in whatever manner he could.

## III. A PRESSING CONCERN GENESIS 4:13-16

**4:13 And Cain said unto the Lord, My punishment is greater than I can bear.** This is Cain's reaction of the judgment. He reacts by complaining.

1. He said *his punishment is greater than he can bear*. This is not the response of a repentant soul. It's the complaint of a hardened heart against God when he says his punishment is too great, too severe, unfair, or abusive.

**4:14 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 every one that findeth me shall slay me.** Cain is still complaining.

2. *You have driven me out this day from the face of the earth;*— cut off from the fruitfulness of the earth; doomed to struggle with difficulty,
3. *and from thy face shall I be hid*—and cut off from God's presence, God's care, and blessings.
4. *and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth* — cut off from society; never be acceptable or have a permanent resting place.
5. *every one that findeth me shall slay me* — other men might seek justice and not mercy; wanting to kill him.

He is accusing God of being unfair and too severe.

**4:15 And the Lord said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the Lord set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him.** Though totally undeserving, Cain did receive mercy from the LORD God who hated the sin, but loved the sinner.

1. **First**, God decreed that vengeance was not to be executed upon Cain. If anyone dared, then a sevenfold vengeance would fall upon the head of the avenger. The idea is that of a divine curse seven times worse than what Cain suffered.
2. **Second**, the Lord set a mark upon Cain to protect him; some special sign to assure Cain that no one would kill him. Vengeance must be left up to God.

**4:16 And Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden.** This shows how the ungodly line branched out. Cain chose to walk away from the presence of God. He left and dwelt in another country; in the land of Nod on the east of Eden in order to live like he wanted. This was his choice.

## SUMMARY:

# PITWM VERSE BY VERSE

After being driven out of the Garden, Adam and Eve are in a different environment and began to have a family. She conceived, and bare Cain, and then Abel. Cain, the first born was a farmer, a tiller of the ground. And Abel, the second born was a herdsman, a keeper of sheep. So, Cain brought his gift from the fruit of the ground and Abel brought his gift from the firstlings of his flock and of the fat as offerings unto the Lord. The Lord accepted Abel's and rejected Cain and his gift. Cain became very angry and his countenance fell. A problem began to develop (4:1-5).

God asked why was he like that? God basically said that if he did well, then he would be rewarded, but if not, sin lies at the door waiting to come in to master him. Cain struggled with this and talked to his brother Abel in the field, attacked him, and then slew him. The offering didn't work out, and now this? The Lord came looking for Cain asking him where was his brother Abel. Cain claimed to not know, and then said, Am I my brother's keeper? Instead of killing an animal, he kills his brother. He's gone too far. This is a critical time. And now Cain is being called into account for his actions. God begins to question him further, what have you done? because his brother's blood cries from the ground? God tells him that there's a curse from the earth when it opened up its mouth to receive Abel's blood. The ground would yield no productivity when tilled by Cain. He would be a fugitive and a vagabond throughout the earth (4:6-12).

Cain began to complain unto the Lord; he had a pressing concern that his punishment was greater than he could bear. It was unfair that he had been driven out of his environment, and even out of the presence of the Lord; that he was going to be a fugitive and have no where to hid because when people see him they would try to kill him. So, the Lord makes it clear that no one is to touch him, for if they do, a sevenfold vengeance would fall upon them, for the Lord set a mark upon Cain to protect him. Cain chose to walk away from the presence of God. He left and dwelt in another country called Nod on the east of Eden in order to live like he wanted (4:13-16).