

Genesis 4

The Rebellion of Humankind Is Infectious.

The Biblical worldview teaches that as a result of Adam's fall, every human being, is a sinner by birth and a sinner by choice. This runs counter to the view that man is essentially good. At Ronald Reagan's grave there is well-known quote engraved on the memorial.

"I know in my heart that man is good. That what is right will always eventually triumph. And there's purpose and worth to each and every life." - Ronald Reagan

Though I agree with the second and third sentence. I do not agree, nor does the Bible agree with the first. From a human point of view people can act good and do good things- and we should try to see the good in all people within that context, but from God's point of view and by the standards of His holiness, we all have a sin nature that corrupts every part of our being. One that can only be dealt with through a power outside ourselves.

Humankind is sinful. Romans 3:9-18, 5:12-14. Mark 10:17-18.

The story of the first two sons of Adam and Eve are a vivid account of man's sinful state. Of how deep the depravity goes within the first generation. This depravity sets forth a spiritual tension between those want to serve God and obey Him and those who do not. All throughout the story of the Bible- even to this very day, we see this tension, we will experience this tension. In this world those in rebellion against God persecute those who are reconciled to Him.

Genesis 4:1-2

We read that Adam and Eve have two sons. One is a shepherd, and one worked the soil. Obviously, nothing wrong with either of these occupations- highly valued and necessary- the foundations of survival- requiring cooperation between them we could assume.

Offerings to the Lord. Genesis 4:3-4

We don't know how long after the fall of Adam and Eve this occurs- the boys are adults, but they had learned from their parents that they were to worship God by offering to him sacrificial gifts- this is seen throughout the Bible!

Worship of God was and is to be an integral part of human existence. Romans 1:18-23.

Though not much is given here, this could be an early form of the *Day of Atonement* the Israelites observed under the directions of Leviticus 16. (see companion study helps). Jesus, and His sacrificial work put an end to the need for sacrifice of sins. (John 1:29)

The Lord looked with favor on Abel's sacrifice but not with favor on Cain's. This was because of the type of sacrifice and Cain's attitude. "The blood must come first before any offering is acceptable". – Donald Grey Barnhouse.

Cain's offering was not acceptable because it was not a blood offering.

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Sin is active within us. We cannot come to God by any means we like- we can only come through the sacrifice of blood. We must then do what is right in God's eyes, not our own. Knowledge of Evil does not in itself bring victory over it. We must obey.

The First Murder. Genesis 4:8

Quite simply, Abel was a man of God- Cain was not. Cain's offering was out of ritual, obligation- not out of devotion. He hated His brother. He killed his brother. In essence, I believe Cain was saying to God through his actions, "You want a blood sacrifice, I'll give you a blood sacrifice".

This persecution of God's people continues to this day. There is a hatred for God and his people that is the disposition of all unregenerate humanity. Abel's righteousness is verified in Hebrews 11:4.

God Judges Cain Genesis 4:9-13

Cain is arrogant, mouthy, lacks reverence for God. God was aware of what happened to Abel. Cain's judgement from God is linked to his crime. It would seem the murder was committed on Cain's land. The ground which received the blood, would now be cursed no matter where Cain went. The ground was not cursed for everyone, but for Cain himself. God would never bless Cain's efforts to grow produce or anything else. God Blesses only those who honor and obey Him.

Haggai 1:1-11.

This prophecy was to Israel, but God judges Gentile nations as well- and he brings hardships on individuals. Our world is filled with restless wonderers.

Genesis 4:13-16. Cain, because of the judgement throws a pity party! No remorse over the death of his brother, He is only thinking of himself. No reason to focus so much on the mark- something saved his life out of God's mercy. Don't miss this, "So Cain went out of the presence of the LORD." This is a spiritual departure- a final turning of the back on God. "Nod" means wanderer.

God in his mercy allows Cain to be blessed with a wife and children.

Genesis 4:17-24

Cain, because the ground has been cursed not doubt, builds a city. Perhaps the first city. It is also an attempt to prove he is not a wanderer. Yet his wandering is not necessarily geographical, it is internal.

We read also of the beginning of the arts in this passage. Is it not true that the big cities are generally where you will find the exaltation of the arts, for the sake of the arts? For the unbeliever they provide fulfillment and meaning and relief- at least temporarily.

Lamech follows in Cain's footsteps. He even writes poetry celebrate his murders- mocking God.

Genesis 4:25-26

God blesses Adam and Eve with another Son- Seth. The line of Seth is the one that Scripture follows- not the firstborn Cain. For he has turned his back on God.