

The First Murder

Genesis 4:1-26

- I. THE BIRTH OF TWO BOYS (Genesis 4:1-2)
 - A. The Different Births in Scripture
 1. There are four (4) different kinds of births of man. (1) The Dust birth—Adam was created out of the dust of the ground. (2) The Rib birth—Eve was made from a rib of Adam. (3) The Virgin birth—Christ was born of a virgin. (4) The Natural birth—Cain was the first to come by natural birth which is the way all people have been born since, except for Christ. You could also add a fifth; (5) The Spiritual birth—Those who accept Christ as their saviour are born again.
 2. Two Lines of People
 - a. From Adam and Eve came two different lines.
 - b. The godly (faithful) line and the ungodly (unbelieving) line of people.
 - c. Cain began an ungodly line of people.
 - (1) Of the sixteen (16) times that Cain’s name is mentioned in this chapter, he’s only mentioned or spoken of only three more times in the Bible (Hebrews 11:4; 1 John 3:12; Jude v. 1).
 - B. The Birth of Cain (Genesis 4:1)
 1. Eve’s comment
 - a. *“I have gotten a man from the LORD.”*
 - b. This was likely a comment of faith on the part of Eve in the promise of God given to her and Adam after the fall that the seed of the woman would bruise the head of the serpent (Genesis 3:15).
 - c. Cain certainly did not turn out to be that seed, but Eve thought at birth (and hoped) that he was.
 - (1) This reminds us that our timing and our ways are not God’s (Isaiah 55:8)
 - (2) It is also important to note that the seed could have come through Cain if he had only not had slew Abel. Note: Her hope did not waiver as she would say something similar concerning Seth, and the seed would come through Seth eventually (Genesis 4:25; Luke 3:38).
 - C. The Birth of Abel (Genesis 4:2)
 1. Eve’s second son
 2. Abel’s character was vastly different from that of his brother Cain’s, as we will note shortly.
 - a. A person’s heart condition may remain hidden for a time, but it will eventually come out during times of trouble and hardships.
 - b. How we deal with trouble is an outward show of what is inside of us.
 - (1) The heart is deceitful (Jeremiah 17:9)

- (2) Whosoever trusteth in his own heart is a fool (Proverbs 28:26)
- (3) Out of the heart proceeds all kinds of sins (Matthew 15:19)
- D. The Career of the Two Boys
 - 1. Cain was a tiller of the ground (farmer).
 - 2. Abel was a keeper of sheep (sheep herder).
 - a. Both professions were noble.
 - b. It wasn't the profession that was the problem, but the heart of the man.
 - (1) Some may think that Cain had an inferior job to that of Abel.
 - (2) However, this is not the case.
 - (3) In fact, Cain's job is the first one mentioned in scripture. (Genesis 2:5, 15)

II. THE BURNT OFFERINGS OF CAIN AND ABEL (Genesis 4:3-5)

- A. The Bringing of the Offerings (Genesis 4:3-4)
 - 1. Cain brought of the fruit of the ground (the fruit of his labours). (v. 3)
 - 2. Abel brought of the firstlings of his flock. (v. 4)
- B. The Three-Fold Contrast of the Offerings Brought (Genesis 4:3-4)
 - 1. One of Faith—(Hebrews 11:4) Hebrews 11:4 tells us that Abel brought his offering by faith, which says that Cain did not offer by faith. Bringing an offering by faith, says Abel was following the instructions of God for the offering. Cain did not obey God's instructions regarding the offering. Cain was not trying to please God, but Abel was.
 - 2. Of the Finest—Abel's offering was "*of the firstlings of his flock and the fat thereof*" (Genesis 4:4) which indicated that Abel brought the best, the finest. Nothing is said of Cain's offering that would indicate it being the best. When we depart from God's way, we will not give God our best.
 - 3. Of the flock—"*Cain brought of the fruit of the ground*" (Genesis 4:3). The command was for an animal sacrifice (Genesis 3:21). Especially emphasized in the animal sacrifice is the blood atonement (Leviticus 17:11). One of the first things an apostate attacks is the necessity of the blood in salvation. But "*without shedding of blood is no remission*" (Hebrews 9:22). "*Being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.*" (Romans 5:9)
- C. The Acceptance of the Offerings (Genesis 4:4-5)
 - 1. The respect of the offerings
 - a. Although we are not specifically told here, God usually showed his pleasure (respect) for an offering by sending fire down from heaven to consume it. This likely happened with Abel's offering but not to Cain's.
 - b. Abel's offering was consumed, while Cain's offering was not. The respect was therefore evident to both Abel and Cain. There was nothing hidden about the rejection of Cain. (Luke 8:17; 12:2-3; Eccl. 12:14)
 - 2. The condemnation of the offering
 - a. Both Cain and the offering were rejected.
 - b. We are identified with our offering.

- (1) When we receive Christ, we are accepted in Him.
 - (2) Cain was not accepted, as he was trying to offer something in “his own way.”
 - (3) You may be accepted by everyone else, but if God does not accept you, you are under Divine condemnation. (John 3:17-21)
3. The wrath over the offerings (Genesis 4:5)
- a. “*Cain was very wrath, and his countenance fell*” (v. 5)
 - b. No repentance on the part of Cain.
 - c. Cain instead went into a rage over his offering.
 - d. Many people in churches today do the same thing.
 - (1) Instead of repenting of the sins that the preacher has preached against, they go into a rage against the preacher.
- D. The Offerors Contrasted (Genesis 4:5)
1. Here we find that Cain and Abel were not only separated by interests and occupations, but also in their spiritual lives. This can often happen in families and is one of the most difficult things to deal with in families.
 2. Three kinds of peoples found in scripture—
 - a. In reference to Joseph and his brethren (Genesis 43:32), in Genesis 43:32 we find three categories of people—all of whom were unable to eat (fellowship) with the other.
 - (1) The Egyptians—who are a picture of the lost.
 - (2) The brothers of Joseph—who are a picture of believers who are out of fellowship with God. They had sold Joseph into slavery but had never repented of their deed.
 - (3) Joseph—a picture of the believer in right fellowship with God.
 - b. The need for right fellowship
 - (1) The believer who is right with God cannot fully fellowship with the believer who is in rebellion. However, when Joseph’s brothers confess their sin against him and repent, they are able to enjoy fellowship again with him. There is a threefold division found in scripture. Consider the following titles found in 1 Corinthians:
 - (a) The natural man— (1 Corinthians 2:14) The lost man.
 - (b) The carnal man— (1 Corinthians 3:1, 3, 4) The carnal believer.
 - (c) The spiritual man— (1 Corinthians 2:13, 15; 3:1) The believer in right fellowship with God.