

GENESIS 4

Powellhust Men's Study, 02 February 2023

New International Version

Learning objectives

1. Identify several 'first events'.
2. Understand what makes offerings acceptable.
3. Recognize spiritual safety and danger.
4. Distinguish karma from justice.
5. Situate Genesis 4 in human history.
6. Call upon the Name of the LORD as Jesus.

Adam's and Eve's first children

¹ Adam made love to his wife Eve, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Cain. She said, "With the help of the LORD I have brought forth a man."² Later she gave birth to his brother Abel.

Adam: Hebrew Conj + Subj + perfect-tense-verb = new narrative. No clear time sequence.

Made love: Hebrew, 'knew'.

With ... Lord: Hebrew, 'I have obtained a man, ('eth') the LORD'. (Unusual grammar.)

Cain's and Abel's first offerings

Now Abel kept flocks, and Cain worked the soil.³ In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the LORD.⁴ And Abel also brought an offering—fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock.

Offering: Gift to show homage. Both fruit and meat were acceptable food offerings.

Flocks and soil: God had commanded rule over livestock and to till the soil.

Yahweh's response to their offerings

The LORD looked with favor on Abel and his offering,⁵ but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor. So, Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast.

Query: Was it his offering that made Abel acceptable? Or the man that made his offering so?

By faith Abel brought God a better offering than Cain did. By faith he was commended as righteous, when God spoke well of his offerings. Heb. 11:4

Primitive emotion and primitive divine law

⁶ Then the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast?⁷ If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it."

Cassuto: 'This is one of the most difficult and obscure Biblical sentences.

Crouching: In Akkadian, *rbš* can mean **1** a kind of demon, or **2** a king's (abusive) agent.

Genesis 4:7

הֲלוֹא אִם-תֵּיטִיב שְׂאֵת וְאִם לֹא תֵיטִיב לִפְתַּח
 at-the-door you-do-well not and-if to-lift-up you-do-well if ?-not
 חַטָּאת רַבָּץ וְאֵלֶיךָ תִּשׁוּקָתוֹ וְאַתָּה תִּמְשָׁל-בּוֹ
 over-him you-are-to-rule but-you desire-of-him and-to-you crouching sin

Exegesis

?Will not If thou doest-well, [then] to-lift (infinite, face?); but if not thou-doeest-well, [then] at-the-door (is?) sin (fem. noun), a-crouching (masculine participle) (demon?). And unto thee (is) his-longing, but thou-shalt-rule in-it (masc. pron.)

The first murder

⁸ Now Cain said to his brother Abel, "Let's go out to the field." While they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him. ⁹ Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?" "I don't know," he replied. "Am I my brother's keeper?"

"Let's ... field": Comes from the Septuagint; it is not in the Hebrew text.
 What would motivate one to murder someone harmless?
 How does one transgression usually lead to another?

Modern psychology of evil

		PERSONALITY TYPE				
		Open	Conscientious	Extrovert	Agreeable	Neurotic
NEGATIVITY TYPE	Psychopathic					
	Narcissistic					
	Machiavellian					
	Sadistic					

Yahweh curses Cain

¹⁰ The LORD said, "What have you done? Listen! Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground. ¹¹ Now you are under a curse and driven from the ground, which opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. ¹² When you work the ground, it will no longer yield its crops for you. You will be a restless wanderer on the earth."

How to keep crimes hidden?
 How do karma and justice differ?

Cain pleads with Yahweh

¹³ Cain said to the LORD, "My punishment is more than I can bear. ¹⁴ Today you are driving me from the land, and I will be hidden from your presence; I will be a restless wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me." ¹⁵ But the LORD said to him, "Not so; anyone who kills Cain will suffer vengeance seven times over. " Then the LORD put a mark on Cain so that no one who found him would kill him.

What does God think about vengeance?

Who was alive to find Cain?

Biblical history of human habitation

¹⁶ So Cain went out from the LORD's presence and lived in the land of Nod, east of Eden... ¹⁷ Cain was then building a city... ¹⁹ Lamech married two women... ²⁰ Those who live in tents and raise livestock... All who play stringed instruments and pipes... ²² Who forged all kinds of tools out of bronze and iron.

Human societies: Cities? Polygamy? Tents? Livestock? Music?

Metallurgy: When was the bronze age? The iron age?

Secular history of human habitation

- 1 Prehistory (c. 3.3 million years ago – c. 3000 BCE)
- 2 Ancient history (c. 3000 BCE – c. 500 CE)
- 3 Post-classical history (c. 500 CE – c. 1500 CE)
- 4 Early modern period (c. 1500 CE – c. 1800 CE)
- 5 Late modern period (c. 1800 CE – present)

Bronze age (3300 - 1200 BCE); Iron age (1200-1000 BCE)

Primitive faith

¹⁶ So Cain went out from the LORD's presence... ²⁶ At that time people began [*~proclaimed / profaned?*] to call on the name of the LORD [*Yahweh*].

Abraham ... built an altar to the LORD and called on the name of the LORD. Genesis 12:8; 13:4; 21 :33; 26:25

The LORD, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob — has sent me to you.

Exodus 3:15

Everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved. Joel 2:32; Acts 2:21; Romans 10:13

Believe in the Lord Jesus

Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved — you and your household." Acts 16:31

I have declared to both Jews and Greeks that they must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus. Acts 20:21

If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. Romans 10:9