"The Way of CAIN"

(Cain: Defiance toward God)

Genesis 4:1-24

11/16/97

Introduction: v.1-2

**** Cain tried to fight God and ended up losing!***

I. Cain defied God's <u>WORSHIP</u> *by replacing it* (v.3-5)

II. Cain defied God's <u>WORD</u> *by ignoring it* (v.6-7)

A. Cain disregarded God's <u>opportunity to repent</u> (v.7a)

B. Cain disregarded God's <u>warning about sin</u> (v.7b)

III. Cain defied God's <u>MAN</u> *by killing him* (v.8)

IV. Cain defied God's <u>TRUTH</u> *by denying it* (v.9-10)

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VI. Cain's "seed" continues his legacy of defiance against God (v.18-24)

A. In defiance against <u>monogamy</u>, Lamech marries <u>two wives</u> (v.19)

B. In defiance against <u>spirituality</u>, Lamech's children live purely <u>secular, worldly</u> lives (v.20-22)

C. In defiance against <u>life</u>, Lamech commits <u>murder and boasts</u> about it (v.23-24)

Conclusion: The "seed" of Seth, replaces Abel (v.25-26)

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One reason why God originally made men and women one in marriage was that there might be a "godly seed" (Mal. 2:15).

Here we see the good seed (Abel) contrasted with the bad seed (Cain); later, Seth will be a replacement for the murdered Abel (Gen. 4:25).

There is an interested parallel between Cain and Abel and Esau and Jacob (Gen. 25:24-27).

CAIN & ESAU	ABEL & JACOB
First Born	Second Born
Occupation: Farmer/Hunter	Occupation: Shepherds
Unrighteous	Righteous

In this chapter, God shows a contrast of brothers. This contrast of brothers is a teaching picture of the broader contrast to be unfolded throughout the rest of the Bible: of believer and non-believer, righteous and unrighteous, saint and sinner, elect and non-elect, wheat and tares.

Nothing good is ever said of Cain. When describing the ungodly, who reject the grace of God through Christ, Jude depicts them with these words: "Woe unto them! For they have gone in the way of Cain" (Jude 11).

Even today, when we speak of someone involved in misbehavior or mischief, we speak of them as "raising Cain."

One word seems to summarize Cain: defiance.

He is an unbeliever who challenges God and God's ways at every opportunity.

v. 1

"Knew" - A euphemism for sexual relations. The term "know" is used because the sexual union is the most intimate knowledge one person can have of another. This is one reason why sexual relationships are restricted to the marriage relationship. Such close knowledge should not be shared with anyone else other than one's spouse. To indulge in such immorality is to surely produce jealousies and many marital problems.

"A man from the Lord" - Eve recognizes that her first-born son was a gift from God.

Children come from God; He is the giver of life:

--Conception is an act of God (Ruth 4:13)

--He opens the womb (Gen. 29:31)

--He forms the child (Ps. 139:13-16; Jer. 1:3; Ps. 94:9)

--Children are a gift from God (Ps. 127:3)

v. 2

"Abel" - (*Hebhel*) His name means "breath." Certainly the days of his breath on earth would be few. Life is short (like a breath (Whereas ye know not what *shall be* on the morrow. For what *is* your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. (James 4:14 AV)

Abel's name could also mean "vanity"; again, hinting at the brevity of life (Remember how short my time is: wherefore hast thou made all men in vain? (Psalms 89:47 AV)

Behold, thou hast made my days *as* an handbreadth; and mine age *is* as nothing before thee: verily every man at his best state *is* altogether vanity. Selah. (Psalms 39:5 AV)

"Abel" - A shepherd

"Cain" - a farmer

Both livestock and agriculture are essential occupations.

** Cain tried to fight God and ended up losing!*

I. Cain defied God's <u>WORSHIP</u> *by replacing it* (v.3-5)

v. 3
"Of the fruit of the ground" - A bloodless offering was acceptable to God (Lev. 2).

By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh. (Hebrews 11:4 AV)

'A more excellent sacrifice" - A far better sacrifice; although Abel offered a blood sacrifice and Cain a grain sacrifice, it wasn't the type of sacrifice (blood vs. grain) that gave it its worth; rather, it was the <u>quality</u> of the sacrifice that made Abel's "excellent."

v. 3-4
Note the contrast:

"Cain brought of the fruit of the ground."

"Abel. . . brought of the <u>firstlings</u> of his flock and of the <u>fat thereof</u>." (the best and biggest of the flock).

v. 4
"Firstlings" - the firstborn'; from *bakar* meaning the first to burst the womb; the firstfruit.

"The <u>fat</u>" - *cheleb* - the figurative use means "the richest, the choice part." The only other time this word is used in Genesis, it is used in the sense of "the best" - "Ye shall eat of the <u>fat</u> of the land" (Gen. 45:18 - i.e. the best of Egypt).

To be acceptable, an offering should be:

1) The <u>first fruits</u> (the first of the flock [Ex. 13:12; 34:19] or harvest [Neh. 10:35; Prov. 3:9])

2) Offered in <u>faith</u> (Heb. 11:4)

3) Our <u>best</u> offering (Ex. 12:5)

4) From a life of <u>obedience</u> (I Sam. 15:22)

Do we really give of our best to the Master? (Malachi 1:6-8, 13-14 - ¶ A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a father, where is mine honour? and if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the LORD of hosts unto you, O priests, that despise my name. And ye say, Wherein have we despised thy name?

7 Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar; and ye say, Wherein have we polluted thee? In that ye say, The table of the LORD is contemptible.

8 And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil? offer it now unto thy governor; will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith the LORD of hosts.
Ye said also, Behold, what a weariness is it! and ye have snuffed at it, saith the LORD of hosts; and ye brought that which was torn, and the lame, and the sick; thus ye brought an offering: should I accept this of your hand? saith the LORD.
14 But cursed be the deceiver, which hath in his flock a male, and voweth, and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing: for I am a great King, saith the LORD of hosts, and my name is dreadful among the heathen.

"Respect" - To have high regard for; lit. to gaze at. Abel and his offering caught God's attention; when inspected, it passed and pleased God.

"Respect unto <u>Abel</u> and to his <u>offering</u>" - Both the <u>giver</u> and the <u>gift</u> pleased God.

The giver, because of his <u>heart</u> (of faith, love and sacrifice), and the gift because of its <u>quality</u>.

Abel brought the <u>best</u> he had, with the <u>purest</u> of <u>motives</u>.

v. 4b-5a
In both cases, the person is mentioned before the offering; perhaps indicating that the attitude of the offeror is even more important than the offering as far as God is concerned.

v. 5a
How did God display his attitude toward the two offerings?

Some suggest:

1. Fire fell and consumed Abel's offering but not Cain's

2. Or Abel's flock flourished but Cain's crops withered

3. Or the Lord simply spoke

4. Or they knew inwardly (Ross, p. 157)

v. 5
"Cain was very wroth" - He got hot with anger; his blood pressure went up as he inwardly burned with heated displeasure.

"His countenance fell" - His face looked down with fury and resentment. The angry man can never keep his chin up; there is no smile, no brightness, but a sad, miserable appearance.

Cain is forever an example of the person who seeks to worship his own way, not God's way. He approaches God on his own terms, rather than on God's terms.

II. Cain defied God's <u>WORD</u> *by ignoring it* (v.6-7)

v. 6
God not only saw Cain's outer appearance (his fallen countenance) but his inner heart attitude (his wrath). God sees all and knows all.

He does not question Cain because He is ignorant of the reason but to awaken Cain as to his sinful attitude.

A. Cain disregarded God's <u>opportunity to repent</u> (v.7a)

Rather than getting angry that others did right, why not get angry that you did wrong, and so something about it! Do right! God will accept your righteousness!

Cain had a choice; an opportunity to repent. Instead, he (like so many) would choose to strike out at others who did right.

To elevate self, so many people seek to destroy others.

How do you react when you see yourself passed over and another blessed?

B. Cain disregarded God's <u>warning about sin</u> (v.7b)

'Sin lieth at the door" - Sin is personified as a vicious animal crouched (*rabats*) at the door ready to pounce on Cain.

"Unto thee shall be his desire" - Sin desires to <u>control</u> you (the same idea of "control" must be the interpretation of the curse in Gen. 3:16).

Sin has one desire! It is to control the one who submits to it. When you choose a sin, you don't just choose an act, you choose a <u>master</u> (Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? (Romans 6:16 AV)

"Thou shalt rule over him" - "You must master it" (NASV); you must dominate sin or be dominated by it. We are all a victor over it or a victim of it.

Cain, like so many of today, will reject the wisdom of God's Word and unfortunately will bear the consequences.

III. Cain defied God's MAN *by killing him* (v.8)

"Cain talked with Abel" - Cain invited Abel to a secluded location where he could fulfill his hideous, premeditated crime.

"Cain rose up against Abel his brother" - Imagine that! He killed his own brother! His own flesh and blood! The one who shared the same womb he did; ate at the same table; grew up in the same home etc.

Note: Man's nature was just as wicked then as it is today.

To be capable of murdering your own brother reflects a heart that is capable of doing any wickedness.

People today are not more wicked than in Cain's day. Since the Fall, we all share the same Adamic nature; it is just being manifested more in these last days (cp. II Tim. 3:1-5).

Abel was the first martyr and the first person of the human race to die.

Why did Cain murder Abel? Answer:

1. He was not a child of God

& 2. He was jealous of his brother's righteousness

Not as Cain, *who* was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous. (1 John 3:12 AV)

"Cain, who was of that wicked one" - Cain belonged to Satan; he was, in his spiritual life, a child of the devil. He was a non-believer, as evident by his inferior offering, attitude of hatred, and his murder of his brother.

"Slew"- a violent murder (the word was used for butchering animals).

John describes the underlying motive behind Cain's murder of Abel as being bitter envy. He was jealous over the fact that God had accepted Abel and his offering but rejected Cain and his. Rather than doing right so that his offering would be accepted, he let bitterness brew in his heart, which led to cold-blooded murder.

Cain resented Abel's righteousness.

"Cain was the prototype of the world, which manifests today the ugly qualities he first displayed. The "world" is Cain's posterity." (John Stott, I John, p. 140).

No believer should be shocked or amazed when the lost (motivated by envy and jealousy) express hatred toward him. Jesus said, "If they hated me, they will hate you."

There is not that “family bond” between believer and non-believer. Therefore, there is not that “family dedication.”

Many new believers entertain the mistaken notion: “Now that I am saved, a new man, no longer a drunkard, drug addict, prostitute, thief, etc., everybody should like me.” Not true! They probably liked you better the old way. Back then you were not an irritating source of conviction to them. Your life did not pose a threat to their ungodliness. You had no light to rebuke their darkness.

Jesus called Abel “<u>righteous</u>” (Mt. 23:35).

Blessed *are* they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 5:10 AV)

Two basic reasons why those who live righteously would be opposed:

a. Righteousness is a <u>rebuke</u> to unrighteousness

The reason people would persecute the righteous is because their righteousness is a rebuke to their unrighteousness.

Doing good is a rebuke to their doing bad.
Holiness is a rebuke to impurity.
Honesty is a rebuke to lying, fraud, and theft
Light is a rebuke to darkness.

Lost men, in an effort to extinguish the light that exposes their darkness, strike out at the light.

Do you ever wonder why when you seek to help some people, they get angry? EX: Acts 7)

It is because you have struck a tender nerve. You have hit a sore spot; you have opened a closet; you have exposed a secret. You have uncovered the truth; often the truth hurts.

Righteousness by its very nature is confrontational; it cuts across the grain of the world.

Godliness will generate antagonism, hot emotions, and hostility from the world. "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (Jn. 16:33)

EX: Savanarola (MacArthur, Matthew, p. 221)

b. Satan hates righteousness

We have an adversary (I Pet. 5:8) who wants to keep men blind to the truth (II Cor. 4:4), so he incites lost men (who are at his disposal) to stir up opposition to the truth in order to turn men away from the truth (EX: Elymas the Sorcerer - Acts 13:8, 10) (EX: The masters who exploited a demon-possessed girl - Acts 16:19-20) (EX: The unbelieving Jews - Acts 17:5) (EX: The Ephesian craftsmen - Acts 19:27-29)

Persecution is an earmark of Godly living (II Tim. 3:12 - "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.")

It is an inevitable "gift" (Phil. 1:29 - "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake")

Satan has always sought to energize his co-workers to destroy God's people:

--Pharaoh toward Israel
--Haman toward Mordechai
--Nebuchadnezzar toward Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego
--Herod toward Jesus

IV. Cain defied God's TRUTH *by denying it* (v.9-10)

v. 9
"I know not" - Cain lies to cover up his crime. Remember, one sin will always lead to another!

"Am I my brother's keeper?" - a sarcastic way of saying: Am I responsible to look after my brother? Do I tend him as a shepherd does his flock?

The steps to crime:

1. Failure to be right with God

2. Inner rage

3. The plot (plan); pre-meditated scheme

4. The criminal act

5. The cover-up (lies to conceal the sin

v. 10
"Blood crieth" - the life of the flesh is in the blood (Lev. 17:11). When shed, God personifies the blood as having a voice that screams out for retribution.

Due to the blood shed in our country, this land must be screaming out for justice (EX: the blood of aborted babies) (So ye shall not pollute the land wherein ye *are*: for blood it defileth the land: and the land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it. (Numbers 35:33 AV)

"Unto Me" - It is <u>to God</u> that the blood cries out for retribution.

While Abel's blood cried out for vengeance against Cain, Christ's blood cries out for mercy and grace (And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than *that of* Abel. (Hebrews 12:24 AV)

V. Cain defied God's <u>PUNISHMENT</u> *by protesting it* (v11-17)

v. 12
Since Abel's blood went into the ground, the ground would now give farmer Cain an extremely difficult time.

"The way of transgressors is hard" (Prov. 13:15).

Life is rough for the unrepentant sinner. Problems at every turn. One trouble after another.

v. 13
Rather than sorrowing over his sin, Cain only sorrows over the results of his sin. His only remorse concerns the consequences of his sin.

- Many are not sad over their stealing, but sad that they got caught.
  - Many others are not sad over their sexual immorality, but over the AIDS virus aquired.

v. 14
"From thy face shall I be hid" - The worse thing about sin is that it separates us from God (But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid *his* face from you, that he will not hear. (Isaiah 59:2 AV)

"A fugitive and a vagabond" - A wanderer up and down the land; to be removed from his family and roam the earth (sin destroys family ties).

How many have left home, only to wander America, hitch-hiking from town to town, lost souls like the prodigal son, with no place to call home.

"Everyone that findeth me" - An indication that other children and relatives of Adam and Eve were scattered throughout the land. This answers the question, "Where did Cain get his wife?"

Just because God focuses on Cain and Abel does not mean that they were the only offspring that existed at the time.

v. 15
God mercifully would protect Cain from being killed.

In the spiritual realm, God is able to put an invisible mark (sign) on a person to provide protection for them (Ezek. 9:4-5; Rev. 7:3ff).

God had not yet ordained government, nor had He instituted capitol punishment for murdered. This would be legislated after the flood (Gen. 9:6).

v. 16
"The land of Nod" - the Hebrew word Nod (*nowd*) is related to the word *nuwd*, which is translated "vagabond" (v. 12, 14). Nod means land of <u>wandering</u>.

The <u>murder</u> led to a <u>lie</u>, and then to a <u>penalty</u> of separating Cain from God's presence. Sin now was <u>ruling</u> over Cain.

v. 17
Cain's wife was obviously a relative of his. Either a sister, niece or great niece.

For 930 years Adam and Eve could have children, and their children had children, and they rapidly replenished the earth.

It was not a violation against God's law to marry a next of kin relative until Moses' day (Lev. 18:7-17).

In Cain's day (being close to the creation of mankind), there was not yet a genetic decay involving mutant genes which would make the marriage of relatives dangerous as it is today.

In further defiance against God's punishment that he should be a roving vagabond, Cain <u>builds a city</u>.

"He builded a city" - the first recorded city. Cain's attempt to build security in this life. This city would be a permanent settlement where Cain would settle down with the material resources which could be produced in a metropolitan setting. He would name the city after his son "Enoch" which means "dedicated."
(Note: this Enoch is <u>not</u> the same man who walked with God - Gen. 5:22. That Enoch was of Seth's line).

VI. Cain's "seed" continues his legacy of defiance against God (v.18-24)

A. In defiance against <u>monogamy</u>, Lamech marries <u>two wives</u> (v.19)

"Two wives" - The first recorded polygamy. An open defiance to God's establishment of monogamy (Gen. 2:24).

"Adah . . . Zillah" - Lamach had wives from A to Z!

"Adah" - means adornment

"Zillah" - means shade or the tingling of the ear (jewelry)

B. In defiance against <u>spirituality</u>, Lamech's children live purely <u>secular, worldly</u> lives (v.20-22)

v. 20

"the society described here is a society away from God. . . the story is about the family of the fugitive that attempts to evade the effects of the curse by ingenuity and enterprise. Their prosperity is great, but it is an empty prosperity apart from God" (Ross, p. 166)

v. 20-22

It is not what is said about Lamech's children's occupations that is sinful, but what is not said. None of them sought God! They were just secular, worldly-minded, career-absorbed, unregenerate people.

"Jabal" - means stream which glides away.

"Jubal" - trumpet

"Tubal-Cain" - Tubal= the world of confusion

"Tubal Cain" - worldly possession (Hitchcock).

"Naamah" - pleasure

C. In defiance against life, Lamech commits murder and boasts about it (v.23-24)

Lamech apparently murdered two people:

1) A man for wounding him

2) A young man - lit. a boy; a youth; perhaps a teenager who had bruised Lamech somehow.

v. 24

Lamech is filled with proud boasting. He views himself as better than his great grandfather Cain.

"If Cain was avenged seven-fold, I will be 77-fold!"

What a legacy Cain left behind!

ILLUS: The Jukes Family - "There has been careful search into the history of one criminal family known as the Jukes, and it is conspicuous as a long record of pauperism and profligacy, imbecility and insanity, prostitution and drunkenness. A total of 1,200 descendants have been traced of this prolific family tree. Some 400 of these were physically self-wrecked, 310 professional paupers, 130 convicted criminals, 60 habitual thieves and pick-pockets, and 7 murderers; while out of the whole 1,200 only 20 ever learned a trade, and of these half of them owed it to prison discipline." (Paul Lee Tan, Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations, p. 961).

Conclusion: The "seed" of Seth, replaces Abel (v.25-26)

Verses 25-26 are a fitting contrast to the corrupted line of Cain.

The motif God unfolds in Gen. 4 - 6 is this:

Gen. 4 - Bad Seed: Cain and his lineage

Gen. 5 - Good Seed: Seth and his lineage

Gen. 6:1-2 - The intermarriage of the good and bad seed and terrible resultant consequences, culminating in the flood.