

GENESIS 4

Satan Wins Cain

¹ When Adam had sex with his wife Eve, she conceived and gave birth to Cain.ⁱ Then she said, “I have gotten a man from Yahweh Yeshua.”ⁱⁱ

² She gave birth again to Abel,ⁱⁱⁱ his brother. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

³ In the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering^{iv} to Yahweh from^v his harvest from the ground. ⁴ Abel also brought the firstlings of his flock and its fat. Now Yahweh was pleased with Abel and his covenant^{vi} offering,^{vii} ⁵ But Yahweh was not pleased with Cain and his offering.^{viii} So Cain became very^{ix} angry and looked discouraged.

⁶ Then Yahweh said to Cain, “Why are you angry? Why do you look so discouraged? ⁷ If you do what is right, then I will accept^x you. If you don’t do what is right, then sin^{xi} is crouching at the door. It wants to control you, but you must rule over it.”^{xii}

⁸ Now Cain talked with his brother^{xiii} Abel. Later, when they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and savagely murdered^{xiv} him.

⁹ Then Yahweh said to Cain, “Where is your brother Abel?”

And he said, “I don’t know. Am I my brother’s keeper?”

¹⁰ Then Yahweh^{xv} said, “What have you done? The voice of your brother’s blood cries to Me from the ground. ¹¹ Therefore, you are now under a curse from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother’s blood from your hand. ¹² When you farm the ground, it will not give its full bounty. You will be a fugitive and a vagabond^{xvi} on the earth.”

¹³ Then Cain said to Yahweh, “My punishment is greater than I can bear. ¹⁴ Look! Today You have driven me out away from this place on the earth. I will no longer see Your presence. I will be a fugitive and a vagabond^{xvii} on the earth. It will come to pass that someone will meet me and violently murder me.”

¹⁵ So Yahweh said to him, “Therefore, I will take sevenfold vengeance^{xviii} on whoever murders Cain.”

Then Yahweh set a mark^{xix} on Cain so that anyone who met him would not kill him. ¹⁶ Then Cain went out from the presence of Yahweh and lived in the land of Nod.^{xx} This was east of Eden.^{xxi}

¹⁷ When Cain had sex with his wife, she conceived and gave birth to Enoch.^{xxii} Then Cain built a city and called the name of the city “Enoch,” after the name of his son. ¹⁸ Then Irada was born to Enoch. Irada was the father of Mehujael. Mehujael was the father of Methusael. Methusael was the father of Lamech.^{xxiii}

¹⁹ Now Lamech had two wives. The name of one was Adah. The name of the other was Zillah. ²⁰ Adah gave birth to Jabal. He was the father of those who live in tents and have cattle. ²¹ His brother’s name was Jubal.^{xxiv} He was the father of all who play the harp and organ. ²² Zillah gave birth to Tubal Cain. He made all kinds of bronze and iron tools. Naamah was Tubal Cain’s sister.

²³ One day Lamech said to his wives, Adah and Zillah, “Hear my voice you wives of Lamech. Listen to what I will say. For I have slain a man just for wounding me, and a young man for hitting me. ²⁴ If Elohim punishes the one who kills Cain 7 times, then truly Elohim will punish^{xxv} the one who kills Lamech 77 times.”^{xxvi}

²⁵ Then Adam had sex with his wife again and she gave birth to a son. She called his name “Seth.”^{xxvii} For she thought, “Elohim has ‘given me’ another child instead of Abel, whom Cain violently murdered.”

²⁶ And a son was also born to Seth. He called his name Enos. People began cursing^{xxviii} the name of Yahweh at that time.

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- i Cain means to acquire or get. From Eve’s view, Cain was the Promised Seed of Gen 3:15. She is right to hope for that!
- ii The Hebrew is אֶלֶף־תָּוֹ (Aleph-Tav). A maqqeph joins the **Aleph-Tav** with “Yahweh.” It unmistakably points to Jesus. Reasonable options are “Yeshua, Yahweh” or “Yahweh Jesus.” See the article “The **Aleph-Tav**” especially as it discusses Strong’s reference H854.
- iii Abel means feeder or breath.
- iv We will understand this better after we go through the Levitical Whole Burnt and grain offerings. The Whole Burnt Offering is a blood offering that represents the totality of what Jesus paid for us and the complete removal of sin. Only after that can one bring a Grain Offering expressing devotion to God. In technical theological terms, justification must come before sanctification. Justification stands on the merits of the Jesus alone. Sanctification is impossible without justification.
- Cain’s offering was wrong for several reasons. It was not a blood sacrifice. It came from the cursed ground. It was the result of his own good works. It puts sanctification before justification. It made our good works the basis on which we stand before God. It is a sneaky way of denying the total sufficiency of what Jesus did for us.
- v How did Abel know to bring a sacrifice for sins? This was long before God gave Israel the Torah. Jesus must have told them about this when He slaughtered some animals to make clothing for them (Gen 3:21).
- vi The Hebrew word בְּרִית (*b^e-reet*) refers to a solemn, binding agreement, often initiated by God. *B^e-reet* recalls the ancient covenant ceremonies where animals were cut as a sign of the seriousness of the commitment. *B^e-reet* forms the covenantal foundation of the biblical relationship between God and humanity. “The core of the biblical teaching about the relationship between God and humans and among humans rests on *b^e-reet*, the covenantal foundation, and *hesed*, the dynamic that makes God’s new covenant work.” To prevent *b^e-reet* from becoming a mere legal contract, *hesed* — God’s loyal love — acts as the moral force that sustains and enlivens it.”
- Daniel J. Elazar, “HaBrit V’HaHesed: Foundations of the Jewish System,” Jerusalem Center of Public Affairs;
<http://www.jcpa.org/dje/articles2/britvhesed.htm>.
- vii Abel didn’t bring a sheep just because he was a shepherd. Abel knew that only a blood sacrifice would please God. Abel’s offering was a blood sacrifice. The innocent lamb was his substitute. The lamb took the penalty for Abel’s sin. Abel took the symbolic righteousness of the lamb. The lamb was not righteous. It merely pointed to Jesus who is the source of all righteousness. Righteousness (justification) with God was imputed to him because of his faith (NOT by the obedience of faith). His works proved his faith. His works did not produce faith, earn righteousness before God, or preserve eternal life. His works only counted for the process of sanctification before God. See Heb 10:14.
- viii Cain’s offering had no blood. He brought something that he grew from the cursed ground. There was no transfer of sin to the offering. No imputation of righteousness comes from the cursed ground and human effort. Cain was trusting in his own good works.
- ix The Hebrew is דָּאָר. The root means vehemently. Synonyms include very, greatly, exceedingly, fervently, passionately, violently, intensely, much, mightily, and vigorously.
- x The Hebrew is אֶלֶף־תָּוֹ. This is a Shin-**Aleph-Tav**. This word by itself has no red underline because it is not the 2-letter **Aleph-Tav**. It speaks of something rising up to God. That something would have spiritual significance (good or bad) to God. See the article “The **Aleph-Tav**.”
- xi The Hebrew root אֶלֶף־תָּוֹ (*hat-ta-ath*) means sin and sin offering. Synonyms include sinful, sinner, punishment for sin, and purification of sins. A transgression is crossing the line. Sin is missing the target. Iniquity is something twisted. As a theological word-picture, the Het (ת) suggest enclosure or a boundary, picturing separation or misalignment. Tet (ט) conveys something inward or hidden, reflecting the internal nature of sin. The **Aleph-Tav** (אָ) is a picture of Jesus. Together, the word picture portrays sin as an inward corruption and separation from God. At the same time, it points toward the divinely appointed act (Jesus) that marks, resolves, and completes the matter.
- xii This is the same construct as in Genesis 3:16.
- xiii About his talk with God.

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- xiv The Hebrew root **הרג** means kill or slay. There are at least six other Hebrew verbs that relate to killing. But this is the only verb that carries the idea of a savage, violent killing. This matches the devil's mindset. Jesus said the devil was a murderer (**ἄνθρωποκτόνος** = humanity killer) from the beginning (John 8:44). The devil, in a continuous violent rage, wants to kill all of humanity so that he can thwart God's Gen 3:15 declaration of war.
- xv The Hebrew does not have Yahweh. The pronoun comes from the previous verse.
- xvi The Hebrew root **נוד** is a verb expressing a range of emotional and physical responses to include: disappear, mourn, sorrow, show sympathy, or wander — all involving movement or dislocation.
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- xviii The Hebrew is **נקם**. The root means grudge. Synonyms include vengeance, avenge, revenge, resentment, punishment, antipathy, bitterness, envy, rancor, and retaliate.
- xix The Hebrew is **נֹד**. This is an **Aleph-Vav-Tav**. This word by itself has no red underline because it is not the 2-letter **Aleph-Tav**. The Vav is a symbol of a tent peg. It nails something down. Its basic meaning is a sign of God's covenant actions with humanity. This translation routinely translates this 3-letter word in terms of a sign of God's covenant. See the article "The **Aleph-Tav**."
- xx The word "Nod" means "wandering."
- xxi Towards Babylon.
- xxii Enoch means "dedicated."
- xxiii Lamech walked in pride, murder, and rebellion. He was the first polygamist. His sons walked in his generational iniquity.
- xxiv The Hebrew root **נִדָּן** means stream. It is the same Hebrew word from which we get the word "trumpet." We get musical instruments through a defiled bloodline that is in spiritual warfare against the Seed of the Woman (Jesus Gen 3:15).
- xxv The Hebrew is **נקם**. The root means grudge. Synonyms include vengeance, avenge, revenge, resentment, punishment, antipathy, bitterness, envy, rancor, and retaliate.
- xxvi There is a chance that Lamech accidentally killed Cain. See Meagan Sauter, "What Happened to Cain in the Bible?" *Biblical Archaeology Society*, Aug 15, 2023.
- xxvii Seth means compensation, tumult, or appointed.
- xxviii The NRSVA uses "At that time people began to invoke the name of Yahweh." But invoke in what way? The idea of praising God dominates most translations. However, the ISV translates this as "At that time, profaning the name of Yahweh began." The Targum of Onkelos agrees: "Then men desisted from praying in the name of Yahweh." The Targum of Jonathan also agrees, "That was the generation in whose days they began to err, and to make themselves idols, and surnamed their idols by the name of the Word of Yahweh." There is a real possibility that this was the beginning of the spiritual decline that culminated in the Genesis 6 judgment on humanity.