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 given birth[ii] to a man — Yahveh Yeshua."[iii]

2 Then she gave birth to Abel,[iv] his brother. Now Abel[v] 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[vi] to Yahveh from[vii] his harvest from the ground. **4** But Abel brought the firstlings of his flock and its fat. Now Yahveh was pleased with Abel and his offering,[viii] **5** But Yahveh was not pleased with Cain and his offering.[ix] So Cain became very[x] angry and looked discouraged.

6 Then Yahveh said to Cain, "Why are you angry? Why do you look so discouraged? **7** If you do what is right, I will accept[xi] you. If you don't do what is right, sin[xii] is crouching at the door. It wants to control you, but you must rule over it."[xiii]

8 Now Cain talked with his brother[xiv] Abel. Later, when they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and savagely murdered[xv] him.

9 Then Yahveh said to Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?"

And he said, "I don't know. Am I my brother's keeper?"

10 Then Yahveh[xvi] 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[xvii] on the earth."

13 Then Cain said to Yahveh, "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 be near You. I will be a fugitive and a vagabond[xviii] on the earth. It will come to pass that someone will meet me and violently murder me."

15 So Yahveh said to him, "Therefore, I will take sevenfold vengeance[xix] on whoever murders Cain."

Then Yahveh put a mark[xx] on Cain so that anyone who met him would not kill him. **16** Then Cain went out from the presence of Yahveh and lived in the land of Nod.[xxi] This was east of Eden.[xxii]

17 When Cain had sex with his wife, she conceived and gave birth to Enoch.[xxiii] Then Cain built a city and called the name of the city "Enoch," after the name of his son. **18** Then Enoch was the father of Irad. Irad was the father of Mehujael. Mehujael was the father of Methusael. Methusael was the father of Lamech.[xxiv]

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.[xxv] He was the father of all who play the stringed and wind instruments.[xxvi] **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[xxvii] the one who kills Lamech 77 times."[xxviii]

25 Then Adam had sex with his wife again and she gave birth to a son. She called his name "Seth."[xxix] For she thought, "Elohim has 'given me' another seed[xxx] instead of Abel, whom Cain violently murdered."

26 Seth also fathered a son. He called his name Enos. People began cursing[xxxi] the name of Yahveh at that time.

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i Cain means to acquire or get. From Eve's point of view, Cain was the Promised Seed of Gen 3:15. She is right to hope for that!

ii The Hebrew קָנִיתִי אִישׁ אֶת־יְהוָה means "I / have created / a man / Yahveh." The Hebrew קָנָה (*kaw-nawh*) means acquire, buy, create, get, or possess. The text contains no Hebrew word meaning "with the help of" or "by." Those phrases are interpretive additions by translators attempting to clarify the statement. A more literal reading allows the possibility that Eve believed the child himself was the promised deliverer. In light of the promise about the woman's seed in Gen 3:15, Eve may have thought she had given birth to the Promised Seed.

iii The Hebrew is אֶת־יְהוָה. A maqqeph joins the **Aleph**-**Tav** with "Yahveh." It unmistakably points to Jesus (See footnote to Rev 1:8). Reasonable options are "Yeshua, Yahveh" or "Yahveh Jesus." Eve thought Cain was the Promised Seed who would redeem them. See the article "The **Aleph**-**Tav**" especially as it discusses Strong's reference H854.

iv Abel means feeder or breath.

v The Hebrew is אֶת־הֶבֶל. A maqqeph joins the **Aleph**-**Tav** with "Abel." It unmistakably points to Jesus (See footnote to Rev 1:8). Reasonable options are "Yahveh's Abel" or "Abel belongs to Jesus."

vi 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.

vii 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).

viii 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.

ix 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.

x The Hebrew מְאֹד (*m^{e}-od*) means vehemently. Synonyms include very, greatly, exceedingly, fervently, passionately, violently, intensely, much, mightily, and vigorously.

xi The Hebrew שְׂאֵת 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**."

xii The Hebrew חַטָּאת (*chaht-taw-awt*) 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 (ח) suggests an enclosure or a boundary, picturing separation or misalignment. Tet (ט) conveys something inward or hidden, reflecting the internal nature of sin. The **Aleph**-**Tav** (אֶת) 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.

xiii This is the same construct as in Genesis 3:16.

xiv About his talk with God.

[xv] The Hebrew 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 (ἀνθρωποκτόνος = humanity killer) from the beginning (John 8:44). The devil is in a continuous violent rage. He wants to kill all of humanity so that he can thwart God's Gen 3:15 declaration of war.

[xvi] The Hebrew does not have Yahveh. The pronoun comes from the previous verse.

[xvii] The Hebrew נוּד expresses 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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[xix] The Hebrew נָקַם means grudge. Synonyms include vengeance, avenge, revenge, resentment, punishment, antipathy, bitterness, envy, rancor, and retaliation.

[xx] The Hebrew **אוֹת** 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 renders this 3-letter word in terms of a sign of God's covenant. See the article "The **Aleph**-**Tav**."

[xxi] The word "Nod" means "wandering."

[xxii] Towards Babylon. The Watchers (the fallen angels) could easily guess what Cain was thinking. It would easy for them to turn him and his descendants against God.

[xxiii] The Hebrew וַתֵּלֶד אֶת־חֲנוֹךְ means "she gave birth to Enoch." A maqqeph joins the **Aleph**-**Tav** with "Enoch." Enoch means "dedicated." Yahveh has His hand upon this Enoch. The whole line of Cain was not morally corrupt or cursed. In Gen 5:19-21, we will see another Enoch from the line of Seth.

[xxiv] Lamech walked in pride, murder, and rebellion. He was the first polygamist. His sons walked in his generational iniquity.

[xxv] The Hebrew יוּבָל 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).

[xxvi] The Hebrew עוּגָב refers to a wind instrument such as a flute.

[xxvii] The Hebrew נָקַם means grudge. Synonyms include vengeance, avenge, revenge, resentment, punishment, antipathy, bitterness, envy, rancor, and retaliation.

[xxviii] 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.

[xxix] Seth means compensation, tumult, or appointed.

[xxx] The Hebrew זֶרַע (*zeh-rah*) literally means "seed." It is singular in form but can refer either to a single descendant or to many offspring, children, or descendants. Other Hebrew words for "child" include יֶלֶד (*yeh-lehd*, a young child or infant), בֵּן (*beyn*, a son or child in general), בַּת (*baht*, a daughter), and תּוֹלֶדֶת (*to-ley-deht,* a descendant or offspring). Here, the use of זֶרַע (*zeh-rah*) highlights Eve's focus on the promised seed of the woman (Gen 3:15). She may have viewed Seth as the next possible "Promised Seed." The translations that use "child," or "offspring," or "son" totally miss what she was thinking. Although she was mistaken about Seth, her thinking shows a remarkable degree of theological insight. She was on the right track.

[xxxi] The Hebrew קָרָא (*kaw-raw*) means to call out, proclaim. The NRSVA uses "At that time people began to invoke the name of Yahveh." 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 Yahveh began." The Targum of Onkelos agrees: "Then men desisted from praying in the name of Yahveh." 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 Yahveh." There is a real possibility that this was the beginning of the spiritual decline that culminated in the Genesis 6 judgment on humanity.