

Sermon Discussion

9 January 2022

Read Genesis 4:1-16

Dig Deeper

Beginning in chapter 4, we see the spread of sin from Adam's family to the larger society that his descendants produced. Not only did sin affect everyone, but people became increasingly more wicked as time passed.

Cain means "**acquisition**" or "**possess.**" This not only an expression of Eve's acknowledgment towards God's help, but a foreshadowing of Cain's desires. Abel, from the Hebrew *hebel*, means "**breath, vapor, exhalation, or what ascends.**" As things turned out, his life was short, like a vapor. Abel also means "*meadow*" elsewhere.

In v. 11-12, Cain's punishment consisted of his being banished from God's presence and unable to enjoy his family's company and the fruitfulness of a settled life. He would have to wander from place to place seeking food rather than living a sedentary life.

"To be driven away from the land" (v. 14) is to have all relationships, particularly with the family, broken. Note again that sin results in broken relationships and alienation, and alienation from God leads to fear of other people (see Job 15:20-25). God in grace allowed Cain and his family to continue to live under His care, but apparently without salvation.

"Nod" (v. 16) means "**wandering,**" so the very name of the place where he lived also reminded Cain of his sentence (v. 12).

1. Go back to Genesis 3:15. Explain the promise God made and why it is important. What do you think Eve was thinking about Cain when she described him "a man" coming "with the help of the LORD"?
2. Why did the LORD regard Abel's offering but not Cain's? Was it the quality of the men or the quality of the offering that mattered, and how do you know?
3. How would you answer this question from a new believer: "I guess I'm glad to know why God favoured Abel's offering over Cain's, but what does that have to do with my life today?"
4. Does the phrase, "sin is crouching at the door" mean that sin is trying to get into or get out of Cain (see Mark 7:21-23; James 1:13-15)?
5. How must Cain "rule over" sin, and what does it look like for him to "do well?" How do you, in your daily life, "do well" and "rule over sin" that is "crouching at the door?"

Application & Prayer

- Be intentional this week to ask God to give you discernment about the motivations of your worship and service. Are they your “first fruits” of time, money, and gifts?
- Take time to assess what sin may be “crouching at your door.” Write out words of confession to God. Then, write down practical next steps to let God bring about change in your life.
- Reflect on the implications of Genesis 4:1-16 for your own life today. Consider what you have learned that might lead you to praise God, repent of sin, and trust in His gracious promises.