

Lessons From Cain

I Jn. 3:10-18

Background

- Genesis begins with God's creation of the material world in six days. (Gen. 1:1-31; Ex. 20:10-11)
- Adam and Eve supernaturally created by God, are placed in Eden where they have fellowship with him. (Gen. 2:8-9; 15-17)
- Satan, temptation and sin enter in chapter 3, and they are driven out of the garden.
- Gen. 3:15 → "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

- ***Verses 1-2 → First children: birth, names, occupations.***
 - Adam and Eve created miraculously – all others have entered the world by natural procreation.
 - Cain → “acquired of the Lord” – a tiller of the soil. (3:23)
 - Abel → “breath, vanity” – a shepherd. (4:2)
 - The brothers have the same parents, honorable work, the same environment, yet made choices that led them in opposite paths in their relationship with God.

- ***Verses 3-5 → Their offerings -- God's response.***
 - God gave instructions; had not left without revelation. (Heb. 11:4; Rom. 10:17)
 - In the process of time – designated time.
 - Cain's offering → some of the fruit of the ground.
 - Abel's offering → firstling of the flock and the fattest; i.e. The first and the fattest.
 - The attitude indicated by this offering: Cain: What can I do and get by? Abel: I'm bringing to God the best ; not what is leftover and won't be missed. (Mal. 1:6-14)

- **Verses 3-5 → Their offerings -- God's response.**
 - Looks on Abel with approval. The heart and the gift are right. (Jn. 4:24; Rom. 6:16-18)
 - Does not have respect to Cain or his offering. Approves of neither the man nor the gift. Cain has the wrong attitude toward God and that is reflected in the nature of his gift.
 - ***Cain's response to God's disapproval:*** A crisis in the life of Cain.
 - Cain becomes very angry -- “it burned him up”.
 - His wrath can be seen in his face..

- ***Verses 6-7 → God's admonitions and warnings to Cain:***
 - Do not make this thing worse. You can choose to do good or not (evil).
 - **God's questions:**
 - Why are you angry? Why has your gaze fallen?
 - He is angry and resentful over God's view of his gifts -- in contrast with his brother Abel's.
 - If you do well, shall you not be accepted? With love and longsuffering, God gives Cain a chance to repent, reset his relationship with Him.
 - When confronted by the word of God, some repent, some resent.

- ***Verses 6-7 → God's admonition and warning to Cain:***
 - If thou doest not well...
 - Sin lieth (is crouching – NET) at the door. Sin is personified as a wild beast lurking at the door of the heart of Cain.
 - Unto thee shall be his desire – His desire is to dominate you.
 - Thou shalt rule over him. Here is the course to take. You must subdue sin, not be conquered by it.
 - Cain's response: Deafening, stubborn, ominous silence.

→Verse 8 → The slaughter of Abel. Talked with his brother Abel. “Cain said to his brother Abel, “Let us go out to the field.” (NET)

◆ Raised up and slew him.

- 8 Cain spoke to Abel his brother. And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him. (Gen. 4:8)
- We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous. (1 Jn. 3:12 -- ESV)

→ Verses 9-12 → God's Interrogation and punishment.

- ◆ Where is Abel, your brother? What have you done?
- ◆ The dishonest, heartless response of Cain -- I know not: Am I my brother's keeper? (the one guarding)
- ◆ God knows.
- ◆ Sin is no longer crouching at the door of Cain's heart. It has full possession.
- ◆ The curse on Cain: driven from the cultivatable ground; a vagabond in the earth.

Lessons From Cain...

- ***The necessity of God approved worship.***
 - ◆ (Jn. 4:24; Matt. 15:7-9; Rev. 4:8-11)
- **The grace, mercy and longsuffering nature of God.**
 - ◆ (Gen. 4:6-7; II Pet. 3:9; Ezek. 18:23; Rom. 5:6-8)
- ***I am my brother's keeper.***
 - ◆ (Jn. 1:40-41; Gal. 5:13-14; Js. 2:5-17; Gal. 6:1-2; Js. 5:19-20)

→ The danger of giving Satan a foothold -- allowing sinful attitudes to take root in our hearts.

- ◆ Anger. (Eph. 4:27)
- ◆ Bitterness. (Eph. 4:21)
- ◆ Envy. (Gen. 37:11)
- ◆ Lust. (II Tim. 2:2)
- ◆ Covetousness. (Jn. 12:6; I Tim. 6:7-10)
- ◆ Stubbornness. (Matt. 7:21)