

"Envy and Gratitude"

Genesis 4.1-16

EXPECTING A BABY / always a time of great hope and anticipation
HIGH HOPES FOR THIS FIRST BABY TO BE BORN ON PLANET EARTH
FIRST PERSON WITH A BELLY BUTTON WAS COMING

NEVER BEFORE BEEN A PREGNANCY – wonder increased each new day
Counted Each Month and Week with Joyful Expectancy

“Sons are a heritage from the LORD, children a reward from him.” Psa 127:3

PASSAGE OF SCRIPTURE RECORDS – birth of two children

1. Two Gifts from God 2. Two Gifts for God 3. One Goes Out From God

1. Two Gifts from God

a. Anticipation Gen 4:1 "With the help of the LORD I have brought forth a man."

LIT. “Here he is, the deliverer from the Lord!”

BELIEVED HIM TO BE THE FULFILLMENT OF

Gen 3:15 I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel."

SOON CAIN APPEARED TO BE MORE LIKE “offspring of the serpent”

NO ONE HAD TO TEACH HIM TO DISOBEY – sinful by nature from birth
WONDER WHERE CHILDREN – YOUNG ONES – GET BAD IDEAS??
Not Sinner because we Sin / SIN BECAUSE WE ARE SINNERS

DID NOT HOLD SMALL DELIVERER / HELD IN THEIR ARMS MURDERER
History of Human Struggle – WRITTEN IN BLOOD – Was Begun

b. Exasperation BABYHOOD WAS NOT ALL IT WAS HOPED FOR

Genesis 4:2 Later she gave birth to his brother Abel.

ABEL means “Vanity” / Meaningless – “Enough Already” – Not Again!!

FELT LIKE THE PREACHER in Ecclesiastes

"Meaningless! Meaningless! Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless."

HAD BEEN DISAPPOINTED ENOUGH / FELT REALITY of JUDGMENT

3:16 "I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing; with pain you will give birth

WONDERED IF CAIN WAS NOT HE SEED OF THE SERPENT
WHO TAUGHT HIM TO DO ALL THOSE BAD THINGS

NO MORE SERPENT TO REPRESENT EVIL - EVIL IS WITHIN HEARTS

2. Two Gifts for God

Genesis 4:2 Now Abel kept flocks, and Cain worked the soil.

MANY THINGS WE DO NOT KNOW ABOUT THIS SITUATION

SOCIOLOGISTS SEE BEGINNING of STRUGGLE btwn Farmers and Herdsmen
EARLIEST DIVISION OF LABOR AND ECONOMICS

Bible focuses on their Spiritual Standing / Gifts they give to God

a. Reception THE ONE WHOM MAN DESPISES GOD RECEIVES

4:4 Abel brought fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock.

The LORD looked with favor on Abel and his offering,

PERHAPS God Sent Fire from Heaven to Consume Offering // Elijah on Mt. Carmel

REASONS FOR THIS ACCEPTANCE??

1) Faith 4:7 If you do what is right, will you not be accepted?

Romans 10:17 faith comes from hearing the message

ABEL HAD EARS to HEAR WHAT GOD REQUIRED / Attentive to Word of God

ABEL A HERO OF FAITH Hebrews 11:4 By faith Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain did. By faith he was commended as a righteous man, when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith he still speaks, even though he is dead.

2) Blood – God had performed the FIRST SACRIFICE / in Crime Scene of Eden

3:21 The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them

PRINCIPLE FOUND THROUGHOUT THE SCRIPTURES

Hebrews 9:22 without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.

Genesis 8:20 Noah built an altar to the LORD...he sacrificed burnt offerings

Genesis 8:21 The LORD smelled the pleasing aroma

ABEL CAME TO GOD as He Instructed / THROUGH BLOOD AND BY FAITH

b. Rejection of Cain's Offering // Surprising? Unfair?

1) Beautiful OFFERING

4:3 Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the LORD.

CONTRAST WITH THE GROTESQUE, SICKENING OFFERING OF ABEL
ISN'T GOD THE AUTHOR OF ALL BEAUTY

CHURCH I PASTORED IN HAWAII – Beautiful Flowers in Sanctuary every Week
BULLETIN: FLOWERS GIVEN "to the glory of God" by the So & So Family
THAT WAS A GOOD THING / Act of Devotion / Sacrifice of Time and Money

SPECIAL MUSIC Church / "Musical Offering" / Good Thing / Inspiration
"God gave me this song, IF YOU DO NOT LIKE IT, BLAME HIM!"

SERMON – Offering to God / Product of Time and Study
To Pastor at Door "Thanks for Sermon" RESPONSE "Don't thank me, thank God!"
COMEBACK "It was not THAT good!"

Man looks at the outward appearance but the LORD looks at the heart." 1 Sam 16:7
GOD HAS X-RAY VISION / Sees from the Inside Out

FOR SOME THE BEAUTIFUL OFFERING MAY ONLY BE
"a form of godliness, but they deny its power" 2 Tim 3.5

JAMES BOICE "Many good, religious people want to be received by God because of their beautiful offerings. But God rejects them and their godless worship. There is no blood, no Christ, and hence no true Christianity, however beautiful their service might be. On the other hand, if one comes first through faith in Christ and His shed blood, then he can present all the beautiful things he is capable of finding or creating. And God will be pleased by this, because the person does not trust these things for salvation but rather is offering them to God just because he loves Him and wants to show affection. It is only on the basis of the sacrifice of Christ that one can come."

2) Wicked Intentionally Chose Word for its Sting / Offering Worst Possible Result

PEOPLE DO THINGS FOR GOD / PERHAPS WELL MEANING / GO TO HELL
Walk on Hot Coals / Swallow Glass / Even Nailed to Crosses
NO LIMIT TO THEIR MISGUIDED DEVOTION

4:5 but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor.
So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast.

THURSDAY – Wife & Son got Airplane / flew to Hawaii / Envious / RETURNING
SOME PEOPLE WOULD DO ANYTHING TO GET TO HAWAII
Crawl on their Knees to Airport / Roll around Naked in Snow or Melted Mud
SING SONGS / PREACH / PRAY / OTHER ACTS OF DEVOTIONS

Keepers of the Airplanes / DIM VIEW OF ALL THOSE THINGS
THERE IS ONLY ONE THING THEY ACCEPT / Slip of Paper called a Ticket
No Ticket / No Hawaii – No Exceptions – ONLY ACCEPTABLE MEANS

GOD HAS A SIMILAR PLAN – One Way of Acceptance / Exclusive Demand

REPEATED AND DISPLAYED from Genesis to Revelation / Deut 30.11-19
MOSES “Now what I am commanding you today is not too difficult for you or beyond your reach. It is not up in heaven, so that you have to ask, “Who will ascend into heaven to get it and proclaim it to us so that we may obey it?” Nor is it beyond the sea so that you have to ask, “Who will cross the sea to get it and proclaim it to us so that we may obey it?” No, the word is very near you; it is in your mouth and in your hearts so that you may obey it. See, I set before you today life and prosperity, death and destruction...Now choose life, so that you and your children may live”

SO NO MATTER HOW BEAUTIFUL OUR OFFERING / No Faith, No Blood
Isaiah 64:6 all our righteous acts are like filthy rags

Hebrews 11:4 By faith Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain did.
By faith ABEL was commended as a righteous man

1 John 3:12 Do not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own actions were evil and his brother's were righteous.

IT MAY BE WELL MEANING - SACRIFICIAL - EXPENSIVE
IF PROMOTES ANY OTHER WAY TO GOD EXCEPT CHRIST IT IS WICKED
BECAUSE IT WILL LEAD THEM TO HELL

c. Election ROOT OF ISSUE OF THIS ACCEPTANCE AND REJECTION

MANY QUESTION GOD'S FAIRNESS ON THIS POINT

1) Person GOD WANTS YOU AND NOT JUST YOUR OFFERING

4:4,5 The LORD looked with favor on Abel and his offering,
but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor.

NOTICE THE ORDER / GOD SEES THE PERSON, THEN THE OFFERING
GOD LOOKS TO THE HEART OF THE GIVER FIRST

1 Samuel 15:22 Samuel replied (TO SAUL): "Does the LORD delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the voice of the LORD? To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams.

2) GOD HAS A PLAN BOTH Brothers BORN in SIN - NO CLAIM on GRACE

WHY WOULD GOD ARBITRARILY RECEIVE ABEL AND REJECT CAIN??

PAUL TELLS US THE POTTER HAS FULL RIGHTS OVER THE CLAY

Romans 9:10-25 Rebekah's children had one and the same father, our father Isaac. {11} Yet, before the twins were born or had done anything good or bad--in order that God's purpose in election might stand: {12} not by works but by him who calls--he was told, "The older will serve the younger." {13} Just as it is written: "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated."... Therefore God has mercy on whom he wants to have mercy, and he hardens whom he wants to harden.

JESUS TEACHES THIS SAME SOVEREIGN PREROGATIVE OF GOD

Matthew 11:27 "All things been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

GOD'S KINGLY SCEPTRE OF GRACE IS EXTENDED TO ALL WHO COME

John 6:37 All that the Father gives me will come to me,
and whoever comes to me I will never drive away.

IF YOU WANT TO COME TO GOD – Peshalsta! Peshalsta! Come! Come Now!

3. One Goes Out From God

a. Warning God did not Accept Cain's Offering / But He still Seeks for Cain

1. God sees the REAL CAIN / No Matter his Condition / NOTHING TO HIDE

2. Cain NO REASON TO BE ANGRY / Fault was NOT OUTSIDE HIMSELF

4.6 God to Cain "Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast?"

NEEDED to make Confession of POGO "We have met the enemy, and he is us!"
ONLY HAD HIMSELF TO BLAME FOR HIS TROUBLES

3. God Reminds him – RIGHT COURSE OF ACTION

4.7 "If you do right, will you not be accepted?"

NOT LACK OF KNOWLEDGE – LACK OF FAITH, HUMILITY, OBEDIENCE
No need to be a Rocket Scientist to know God and His Will for us

4. CAIN FLIRTED WITH DISASTER BY REFUSING TO REPENT

4.7 "But if you do not do what is right, sin in crouching at your door;
it desires to have you, but you must master it"

"When an evil spirit comes out of a man, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it. {44} Then it says, 'I will return to the house I left.' When it arrives, it finds the house unoccupied, swept clean and put in order. {45} Then it goes and takes with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that man is worse than the first." Matthew 12:43-45

IF WE are to MASTER SIN / MUST be MASTERED by Him who MASTERED Sin
ONE WHO CRUSHED SERPENT'S HEAD / WE MUST BE THE MASTER'S

b. Slaying MURDER ONE / Premeditated / CALCULATED, COLD-BLOODED

4.8 Now Cain said to his brother Abel, "Let's go out to the field."

And while they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him.

ALMOST NOBODY SAW THIS SECRET ACT / EXCEPT GOD

Psalms 116:15 Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints.

JESUS SAW “the blood of righteous Abel” Matthew 23:35

FIRST DEATH ON THE EARTH / BROTHERLY MURDER

c. Lying SEE THE GROWTH OF SIN ON THE EARTH

ADAM PLAYED THE BLAME GAME

3:12 "The woman you put here with me--she gave me some fruit

CAIN FIRST LIE IN BIBLE / and First Human Question / Both directed to God

4.9 God to Cain “Where is your brother Abel?” LIE “I don’t know”

HE LIED TO GOD BEFORE WHOM ALL SECRETS WILL BE UNCOVERED

QUESTION “Am I my brother’s keeper?” / QUESTION WORSE THAN THE LIE

REVEALS COMPLETE INDIFFERENCE to SIN, TO LIFE, TO GOD – Hard Heart
DOG EAT DOG WORLD / EVERY MAN FOR HIMSELF

MAN LYING ON SIDEWALK / JUST ANOTHER DRUNK

WOMAN SCREAMING IN NEXT APT / JUST ANOTHER BEATING

ELDERLY BEGGAR IN FRONT OF STORE / JUST ANOTHER NUISANCE

“Am I my brother’s keeper?” / Cain’s Obvious Answer “OF COURSE NOT”

JUDE SAYS “Woe to them! They have taken the way of Cain” 1:11

d. Cursing NO ONE CAN INJURE his BROTHER w/out WOUNDING HIMSELF

4.10 “What have you done? Listen! Your brother’s blood cries out to me from the ground. Now you are under a curse and driven from the ground, which opened its mouth to receive your brother’s blood from your hand. When you work the ground, it will not yield its crops for you. You will be a restless wanderer on the earth”

ELOQUENT VOICE OF ABEL’S BLOOD / HIS BLOOD was GOD’S PROPERTY
GOD HEARS SILENT SCREAM OF AN ABORTED BABY

Psalms 9:12

For he who avenges blood remembers; he does not ignore the cry of the afflicted.

e. Complaining NO LONGER AT PEACE IN THIS WORLD

COULD NOT SING WITH CONFIDENCE "This is My Father's World"

Eph 2:12 separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world.

4.13,14 Cain says to God "My punishment is more than I can bear. Today you are driving me from the land, and I will be hidden from your presence; I will be a restless wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me."

TRAGIC WORDS – hidden from presence of God / source of all goodness, joy, light

WE ARE SOCIETY OF RESTLESS WANDERERS – going from thrill to thrill

Next Great Movie to See / Video game to Play / Vacation to Take / ALL EMPTY!!

JOHN CALVIN "There is no peace for men, unless they acquiesce in the providence of God, and are persuaded that their lives are the objects of his care...they can only enjoy any of his benefits when they regard themselves as placed in the world under God's government"

AUGUSTINE "the heart of man is restless until it finds its rest in God"

f. Protecting GOD WILL RESTRAIN VENGEANCE / CONTROL EVIL

4.15,16 But the Lord said to him, "Not so; if anyone kills Cain, he will suffer vengeance seven times over." Then the Lord put a mark on Cain so that no one who found him would kill him"

MARK – same word used 2 place in Genesis for "Sign" of the Covenant
Only SPECULATE –Red Spot on Forehead like Gorbachev –God's PROTECTION
(Interesting Cross Reference – Ezekiel 9)

POINT – God will not Allow Vengeance to Get out of Hand
BEGINNING OF GOVERNMENT / Purpose: Restrain Evil / Control Sinful Man

CAIN COULD HAVE BEEN JUSTLY EXECUTED

Genesis 9:6 "Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made man.

CONTEMPORARY QUESTION OF THE DEATH PENALTY

SCRIPTURE ALLOWS IT

Numbers 35:16 “the murderer shall be put to death”

18 CRIMES IN THE LAW OF MOSES WERE WORTHY OF DEATH

BUT SCRIPTURE DOES NOT DEMAND IT

Example of Cain – Premeditated, Calculated Murder – No Death Penalty Imposed

GOD IS CONCERNED ABOUT THE SOULS both Victim and Victimizer

LIST of BIBLE HEROES includes MURDERERS = MOSES / DAVID / PAUL

PAUL THE MURDERER WROTE

1 Timothy 1:15 Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners--of whom I am the worst. But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his unlimited patience as an example for those who would believe on him and receive eternal life.

PREACHED AT PRISON CHURCH IN HAWAII / Awesome Worship, Reality

All the Prison Church ELDERS were MURDERERS / not sure if prerequisite?

Way of Cain was Hard / DONALD GREY BARNHOUSE

“He started with human reason as opposed to divine revelation; he continued in human willfulness instead of divine will; he chose human pride to divine humility; he sank to human hatred instead of rising to divine love; he presented human excuses instead of seeking divine grace; he went into wandering instead of seeking to return; he ended in human loneliness instead of divine fellowship”

Heb 11.4 “And by faith Abel still speaks, even though he is dead”

BLOOD OF ABEL STILL SPEAKS a better word / Type of the Saving Blood of X
DIED AND ROSE AGAIN / Mercy for Sinners, even Murders / Gift of Salvation

HOLY COMMUNION – OFFERING to God / Like Cain or Abel?

Receive by Faith – Christ died for your sins and rose again?

Religious Exercise you Perform to Earn Good Standing with God?