

The Way of Cain

1Jo 3:12 Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.

Jude 11 Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core.

Introduction:

1. It would be impossible to know how many murders have been committed throughout history.
 - a. According to the FBI, in the U.S. alone, there were 17,034 murders in one year - That is approximately 46 each day.
 - b. History's first murder is recorded in Ge 4:8.
 - c. The victim was Abel. His murderer was his own brother Cain.
 - d. The first person born into the world eventually became the first murderer in the world
2. From childhood we have been familiar with the story of Cain and Abel.
3. There are a couple of expressions in the NT that describe Cain

1Jo 3:12 Not as Cain, *who* was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.

 - a. John tells us that Cain "was of that wicked one."
 - b. The deeds of Cain only revealed that he was of the devil.
 - c. In Ge 3 you see the presence of the devil and in Ge 4 you see a person of the devil. As we would say, Cain was a lost man, and his lostness is revealed in his actions.
4. The second revealing statement in the NT is found in Jude 11

- a. I draw your attention to the words “the way of Cain.”
 - b. The word “way” literally describes a road or highway.
 - c. It is speaking of the route that Cain took in his life.
5. The “way of Cain” is the way of the world, the flesh, and the devil.
- a. It is the route that all lost people take in their lives
 - b. To get better acquainted with Cain let’s look at the direction that he took in his life. First, we see that the “way of Cain” is:

I. THE WAY OF REJECTION

- Ge 4 begins with the birth of Cain.
1 And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD.
- His birth is followed by the birth of his brother in vs 2
Ge 4:2 And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.
- They were brothers who were different.
 - Abel became a shepherd and Cain became a farmer
 - Over time each boy developed his own interests and chose his own course in life.
 - In time, their differences would be magnified, especially their spiritual differences.
- The Bible says in Ge 4:3-4a
3 And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. 4 And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof...
 - “In process of time” - at the proper time
 - Both men approached the Lord on the right day
- It is in the offerings they brought that we see a major difference in these brothers.

A. The Offerings That Were Delivered

1. Both brothers brought an offering.
 - a) *Being a farmer, Cain's offering was "of the fruit of the ground."*
 - b) *As a shepherd, Abel's offering was "of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof."*
2. Adam and Eve had taught the brothers that God was to be worshipped, what kind of offering God expected, where to take it and when to make the offering.
 - a) *Cain and Abel knew that there was a right way to approach God and a wrong way*
 - b) *Cain had no excuse. He knew that he was to bring a blood offering, not the fruit of the ground*
 - c) *His parents explained that they had sinned and innocent animals died to provide skins to cover their nakedness*

B. The Offering That Was Denied

4b ... And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: 5 But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.

1. Not only were these brothers different in the offerings they brought to God, but the Lord's response to each of these brothers was different.
2. God looked at Abel's offering with approval.
 - a) *Note carefully that God approved both Abel and his offering*
 - b) *Because Abel brought a blood offering God was pleased with Abel and the offering*
 - c) *Since Cain brought the wrong offering to the Lord, God did not have respect for Cain or his offering.*
3. Warren Wiersbe said that perhaps God sent fire down from heaven and devoured the sacrifice of Abel, thus showing His approval
4. The "way of Cain" is a way of rejection.

- a) *God rejected Cain's offering because Cain didn't bring a blood offering*
- b) *Cain's heart was not right with God and he refused to bring the proper offering to God*

*Mt 15:8 This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with **their** lips; but their heart is far from me.*

- c) *One can be religious and have a form of godliness but have never experienced his saving power.*
 - (1) Cain was religious!
 - (2) He brought an offering to God.
 - (3) He went to the right place at the right time
 - (4) A person can be a church member, be baptized, hold a position in the church, and give weekly, but yet never know God's saving grace.

5. Heb 11:4

4 By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh.

- a) *Abel's offering was an expression of his faith in God.*
 - b) *Abel's offering was "a more excellent sacrifice than Cain."*
 - c) *He offered an offering that expressed his faith in God and how as a sinner he needed a Saviour.*
 - d) *Cain in his offering was acknowledging that there was a God in heaven.*
 - e) *Abel's offering was acknowledging that he needed to be redeemed to have a relationship with God.*
6. The "way of Cain" is the way of religion.
- a) *The way of Abel is the way of redemption.*
 - b) *The way of religion is a way of rejection.*

7. Though Abel is dead, he still speaks

- a) *He speaks of how God only accepts sinners on the basis of His Son who gave His life for the sins of the elect*
- b) *God only approves those who are sinners who have by faith come to Him through the blood of Christ*
- c) *Cain speaks of how God rejects those who are not right with Him because they come some way other than by the blood*

The Way of Rejection....

II. THE WAY OF REBELLION

Ge 4:5 But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wrath, and his countenance fell.

- The word “wrath” means that he was burning with rage and anger.
- With whom was he angry? Was he angry with God or Abel? Obviously it was both as we will see as we look closer at the events that followed.
- The murder of his brother was more than an explosion of anger. It was a manifestation of a heart of rebellion.
- Matthew Henry said, “In all ages there have been two sorts of worshippers, such as Cain and Abel; namely, proud, hardened despisers of the gospel method of salvation, who attempt to please God in ways of their own devising; and humble believers, who draw near to him in the way he has revealed. Cain indulged malignant anger against Abel. He harboured an evil spirit of discontent and rebellion against God.”
- His rebellion revealed that he was of “the wicked one.” It was rebellion in the face of mercy.

A. The Mercy He Received - vs 6-7a

6 And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wrath? and why is thy countenance fallen? 7 If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and

if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee *shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.*

1. God was not asking for information. He already knew the cause of Cain's anger and his fallen countenance.
2. When God asks men a question, it is not for information, but revelation. He was seeking confession from Cain.
3. Vs 7a reveals God's mercy extended to Cain.
 - a) *If you would just do what is right, then you would be accepted*
 - b) *Approach God according to His requirements and be accepted*
4. Vs 7b "and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door."
 - a) *God is saying here that if one is not right with God, then one can get right with God*
 - b) *Some believe that God brought a sin-offering right to the doorstep of Cain*
 - c) *Cain could go over to Abel's house and trade some produce for a lamb that he could offer*
5. Vs 7c - "And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt be ruler over him."
 - a) *God was declaring to Cain that he had no reason to be angry with his brother.*
 - b) *Cain, as the oldest, would ever be Abel's superior and Abel would be submissive unto him.*
 - c) *God was saying to Cain that his real problem was not with Abel, but with Him!*

B. The Mercy He Rejected - vs 8

8 And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.

1. Here is evidence that Cain rejected God's mercy

2. Cain's heart was not right with God and he was not about to ask Abel for a lamb
3. That he was of the wicked one was never more evidenced than when he slew his brother Abel.
4. The heart of Cain's anger was God's rejection of his offering. His killing of Abel was an act of anger and rebellion toward God.
5. He not only rejected the way of salvation but also the God who provided the way.
6. There are many attacks against Christians today but those attacks are really a manifestation of rebellion against God.
7. Cain killed Abel because he rebelled against God. This world hates Christianity because it lives in rebellion to God.
8. They walk in the "way of Cain," a way of rebellion.

The Way of Rejection.... Rebellion....

III. THE WAY OF RETRIBUTION

- Pr 13:15 says that "the way of transgressors is hard."
- Cain is a good example that the way of the transgressor is hard.
- God is merciful but when men spurn His mercy God is left with no choice but to act in judgment.
- The "way of Cain" is ultimately a way of retribution.
- In the rest of the story of Cain we see that he would live:

A. A Barren Life - vs 9-12

1. Again, God was not seeking information but a confession.
9 And the LORD said unto Cain, Where *is* Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: *Am* I my brother's keeper? 10 And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.

- a) *He knew exactly what Cain had done.*
- b) *He was merely calling for Cain to acknowledge what he had done.*
2. Then God declared that the rest of Cain's life would be a barren life.
11 And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand; 12 When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth.
 - a) *Cain's skill was as a farmer and being able to reap things from the ground.*
 - b) *Yet, God said from now on the ground would not produce for him.*
 - c) *He stained the ground with his brother's blood and now, from the ground, he would no longer reap the blessings he had enjoyed.*
 - d) *He would never again enjoy the fruits of his labors.*
 - e) *Since he could no longer be a farmer, he would be a fugitive and vagabond.*
 - f) *He would be a wanderer for the rest of his life, having to move from place to place to sustain his life.*
 - g) *Cain would never again know the security and settled life he had known in the past.*
 - h) *He would live the remaining days of his life restless and wandering, never knowing any measure of the contentment he had known in the past.*
3. Cain would live a life filled with fear and guilt.
13 And Cain said unto the LORD, My punishment is greater than I can bear. 14 Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me.
 - a) *He would live worrying about someone avenging the death of Abel.*

- b) *There would never be a peaceful moment in his remaining days.*
 - c) *The way of rebellion results in a barren life.*
 - d) *Those without God are only existing, but never living.*
- Furthermore, the retribution includes:*

B. A Banished Life - vs 16

16 And Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden.

1. Some of the saddest words in the Bible are found here
2. His godless life resulted in a God abandoned life.
3. The ultimate judgment for not being right with God is a God abandoned and God forsaken life.
4. The great awfulness of life without God is that ultimately it leads an eternity abandoned by God.
5. The awfulness of hell is not the fire, but the lack of God's presence.
6. In time Cain would have a son that he named Enoch and would build a city that he would name after his son
 - a) *Some might say that he eventually seemed to do well, but then you have to remember that all he built would ultimately be destroyed by the flood.*
 - b) *All he did was in vain for it was all done without the Lord.*

Conclusion

1. There are two ways that a person can take in his life.
 - a. There is the way of Cain and there is the way of Abel.
 - b. One is the way that leads to God and the other the way that leads away from God.
 - c. The way of Cain is the way of rejection, rebellion, and retribution
 - d. The way of Abel approaches God through the blood of Jesus
2. There is only one way to worship God and that is God's way

- a. Jesus is not just a good way to heaven
- b. He's not even just the best way to heaven
- c. He's the only way to heaven.

Joh 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

Ac 4:12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

3. Several years ago in Oshawa, Ontario, Canada, George and Vera Bajenksi's lives were changed forever. February 16, 1989. A very normal Thursday morning. The phone rang at 9:15 a.m. "There had been an accident..." It involved their son Ben.

As they approached the intersection of Adelaide and Simcoe Streets near the high school, they could see the flashing lights of the police cars and ambulance units. Vera noticed a photographer and followed the direction of his camera lens to the largest pool of blood she had ever seen. All she could say was, "George, Ben went home-home to be with his Heavenly Father!"

Her first reaction was to jump out of the car, somehow collect the blood and put it back into her son. "That blood, for me, at that moment, became the most precious thing in the world because it was life. It was life-giving blood and it belonged in my son, my only son, the one I loved so much." The road was dirty and the blood just didn't belong there.

George noticed that cars were driving right through the intersection-right through the blood. His heart was smitten. He wanted to cover the blood with his coat and cry, "You will not drive over the blood of my son!" Then Vera understood for the first time in her life, one of God's greatest and most beautiful truths...why blood? Because it was the strongest language God could have used. It was the most precious thing He could give-the highest price He could pay. Through God's amazing love we

were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ (1 Peter 1:18-19). May we never treat lightly nor trample underfoot the blood of God's Son.

4. Which way have you taken?