

Through the Bible - Genesis 4-5

by Chuck Smith

The sermon explores the biblical account of Cain and Abel, highlighting the importance of faith, confession, and forgiveness in our relationship with God.

Scripture: Genesis 4:1

Topics: "Faith", "Confession of Sin"

Description

Chuck Smith discusses Genesis chapters 4 and 5, focusing on the story of Cain and Abel, emphasizing the importance of faith in offerings to God. He explains that Cain's offering was rejected not due to its nature but because it lacked faith, while Abel's was accepted because it was offered in faith. Smith highlights God's desire for confession and acknowledgment of sin, as seen in God's questioning of Cain after Abel's murder. He also touches on the genealogies of Adam's descendants, noting the significance of the line leading to Abraham and ultimately to Christ. The sermon concludes with reflections on the nature of sin, responsibility, and the importance of faith in our relationship with God.

Transcript

Lets turn to Genesis Chapter four.

Adam and Eve have been expelled from the Garden of Eden because of their disobedience to God.

And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the Lord (Gen 4:1).

Now there are always people who are ready to make up theories concerning how certain things happened or what certain things were. But let me say wherever the Bible is silent it is best that we be silent. I'm not really interested in conjecturing on the scriptures. But there are those who teach that Eve's sin with the serpent was that Eve had copulation with the serpent, according to many people's theory, and Cain is the product of that relationship. And so actually Cain was a descendent of men after Satan, and then Abel was, you know, the relationship between Adam and Eve, but the scripture does not support that at all. Very clearly here in Chapter four, Adam knew Eve his wife and that's just a way of saying that they had an intimate relationship and she conceived and bare Cain. That's the plain obvious teaching of the scriptures; and thus, I count it fantasy the theory that men have devised.

Now when Cain was born, you remember that God promised that the seed of the woman would bruise the serpent's head, and Eve thought that God was fulfilling the promise through Cain. She thought that this is the fulfillment and so she said, "I have gotten a man child from the Lord". In other words, this is the one that God has promised that is going to bruise the serpent's head. She was mistaken. Cain was no doubt a disappointment.

And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of the sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. And in the process of time, it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground, an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering. But unto Cain and his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell (Gen 4:2-5).

Now why is it that God accepted Abel's sacrifice and did not accept Cain's sacrifice? There are those who say it was because Cain offered the works of his hand, whereas Abel offered a blood sacrifice unto God; and thus, was Abel's accepted while Cain's was rejected. That sounds very plausible. But it is interesting that later on when God established the sacrifices in the book of Leviticus, they did have what was called in your King James, "meat offering", but it is really the meal offering and they did offer the grain, the meal pressed into flour little cakes. They were a legitimate offering unto the Lord in sacrifice.

So it isn't really one is of a crop nature and the other is a blood sacrifice. In Hebrews, we are told that by faith Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, so the problem with Cain was that his was not of faith, whereas Abel's sacrifice was one of faith. That's the basic difference: one believing God and trusting God, the other not believing. Thus all of the sacrifices you may make without faith are worthless. The faith was the quality that made Abel's sacrifice acceptable unto God. And that is the New Testament commentary on the Old Testament and quite often the very best and most valuable commentary you can find for the Old Testament is the New Testament itself, for there are many interesting insights given to us in the New Testament of the Old Testament scriptures. And so this is one where in Hebrews we find the difference between the two sacrifices, one was offered in faith and thus was accepted.

Now the Lord said unto Cain, Why are you angry? Why is your countenance fallen? (Gen 4:6)

In other words, Cain was obviously angry that his was not accepted. Now by what virtue they knew that his was not accepted, the scripture doesn't say. But they no doubt had in those days a very intimate type of communication with God. Because here is God speaking to Cain and saying, "Why do you look so angry? Why is your face fallen?" And God is now giving to Cain a second chance. He's said,

If you do well, shalt thou not be accepted? (Gen 4:7)

In other words, if you're doing the right thing, I'll accept you. He's encouraging him to the right kind of action now. If you do well, will you not be accepted?

And if you don't do well, then sin lieth at your door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him (Gen 4:7).

And so the Lord speaks of the sin at the door of Cain. And God said, you know, get things right. Offer again. If you're doing the right thing, it will be accepted.

But Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, after they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him. And the Lord said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he

said, I don't know: Am I my brother's keeper? And he said, What have you done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground. And now thou art cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand (Gen 4:8-11);

Now because God is questioning, it doesn't mean that God doesn't know. God knows all things, but He still asks questions. Not for his information, but the questions of God are to open us up. Perhaps even to a confession here. You see when Cain tried to pass it off with a lie; God knew exactly what was going on. He said, "Where is your brother?" God knew exactly where his brother was. He wanted an acknowledgment from Cain of what he had done.

Because if we acknowledge our sins, if we confess our sins, than we give God a basis to forgive our sin. The Bible says that he who seeks to cover his sins shall not prosper, but whoever confesses his sins shall be forgiven. So God is asking not because He didn't know where Abel was, He knew exactly what was going on. He wanted a confession out of Cain, in order that He might have a basis to grant forgiveness and pardons. For if we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

But man seems to have a difficult time confessing his sin, his guilt. In Proverbs it says there is a generation that is pure in their own eyes but the truth is far from them. How often we seek to justify the things that we have done. Rather than just saying those three hardest words to utter in the English language. "I was wrong." Oh, how hard that is to say. Because you see, I'm never wrong, really. It's just if this had not had happened, and that had not had happened, I wouldn't have done it. "The woman that thou has given me to be my wife", you know, there's always some reason, there's always some excuse. It's never really me. Why is it that we always want to find fault or blame with some ulterior cause, rather than just accepting the blame and the responsibility ourselves?

If I cut my finger with a knife, it's because the kids have the music on too loud in the other room. So I go storming in and say, "Turn that music down!" you know and holding my finger. It really is that I was just careless. And I shouldn't have been trying to carve it that way. You see there's always some reason or some outside fault. Man seems to basically be that way. Trying to cast the blame onto something else, but God is always zeroing in, wanting that confession, because until I confess my sin, God really can't righteously forgive me my sin. And so when God is questioning, it's not for God's information purposes, but it's to give man that opportunity to confess, in order that God might have the opportunity to grant the forgiveness.

"Where's your brother?" "I don't know. Am I my brother's keeper?" And He said, "What have you done?" You see the questions are to elicit the confession from Cain. And then God goes ahead and declares what he has done. "Your brother's blood is crying from the ground. And now thou art cursed from the earth, which has opened her mouth to receive your brother's blood from thy hand.

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. And Cain said unto the Lord, My punishment is greater than I can bear (Gen 4:12-13).

Really his punishment was very mild for the crime that he had committed.

Behold, thou hast driven me 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 everyone that findeth me shall

slay me. And the Lord said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the Lord set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him. And Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden. And Cain knew his wife; and she conceived, and bare Enoch: and he builded a city, and called the name of the city, after the name of his son, Enoch (Gen 4:14-17).

Now, herein, of course, creates a big problem for a lot of people. Where did Cain get his wife? I think this is one of the most oft asked Bible questions. The genealogical records that are given to us in the Bible are not at all complete. The Lord is interested really in only one genealogical line. And that is the line that comes from Abraham, through David to Christ.

None of the rest of them are really important. Some of the families are followed for a little while just to give you sort of a brief historic background to show you areas of the world that were populated by certain people, descendents of certain people. But they will only trace other lines for just a short way, it cuts off, and the basic line that we are going to follow is the line that will lead from Adam to Abraham, from Abraham to David, and from David to Jesus Christ. After Jesus Christ, genealogical records are of no value. We don't need them anymore. The only value of holding or maintaining a genealogical record is to bring it down to Jesus Christ, so that when He is born it will be proved that God fulfilled his promise to David and to Abraham, that through thy seed shall the nations of the world be blessed.

And so Adam and Eve had sons and daughters that aren't even listed, their names aren't even given. As we get into the fifth chapter and we find a genealogical chart, it names just one son because we're only following one line, as it will bring us ultimately to Abraham. They had many other children, it says they had sons and daughters, but we're only interested in one family line, the one that will bring us to Abraham. We're not interested in all of the sons and daughters that they may have had.

Now at the time that Cain killed his brother Abel, they were probably a hundred and twenty years old at this point. And by this time there were no doubt many other brothers and sisters, children of Adam and Eve, who no doubt had their children, who had their children. He could have married a cousin; he could have married a niece on down the line. There are many possibilities. The Bible doesn't trace and isn't interested in tracing all the families of men, just the one line to bring us to Abraham in order that we might come to Christ. And so, he could have married a sister.

In the beginning there would have been a much purer strain. There could have been intermarriage between brother and sister without a genetic foul up which would exist today in close inner marriage because of the whole scheme of things that has deteriorated down through the years. You're not nearly as healthy as was Cain and Abel and their brothers and sisters. At a hundred and twenty years, they were just starting. I'll never get that far. But they lived to be nine hundred years old, nine hundred and thirty, nine sixty and so forth. And so there was a much purer strain at the beginning. He could have easily married a sister, there's really no problem with Cain finding a wife and marrying her.

Now for a moment we're going to follow Cain's descendents, but there is no sense of carrying them out very far because his descendents were all destroyed in the flood. And so you'll start out with a new race after Noah. But we'll follow them for just a moment here in Chapter five, we'll trace them for a little way.

Cain knew his wife and she conceived and bare Enoch and Cain built a city and named it after Enoch.

And unto Enoch was born Irad; and Irad begat Mehujael: and Mehujael begat Methushael: and Methushael begat Lamech. And Lamech took unto him two wives: the name of the one was Adah, the name of the other Zillah. And Adah bare Jabal: he was the father of such who dwell in tents, and of such who have cattle. And his brother's name was Jubal: he was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ (Gen 4:18-21).

So we see the early development of instruments.

And Zillah, bare Tubalcain, an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron (Gen 4:22):

So really it is interesting that iron appeared in an anti-delugian age. Before the flood they had already begun to use iron, so they had developed certain smelting methods. Now, it is interesting that even till the time of David, Israel had not advanced to an Iron Age. Many of their enemies would come in with iron chariots and Israel was always at a great disadvantage. It wasn't really until about the time of Solomon that they really began to smelt copper and come into a use of metals. But Israel was slow in the development of metals. But here in an anti-delugian age, they were using brass and iron, which of course is very interesting.

And the name of his sister was Naamah. And Lamech said unto his wives, Adah and Zillah, Hear my voice; ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech: for I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt (Gen 4:22-23).

Or I have a young man who was seeking to wound me, trying to hurt me, I have killed him. It was a thing of self-defense.

If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold (Gen 4:24).

And so Lamech told his wives a young man was trying to hurt me, he was seeking to wound me, I killed him and if Cain is going to be avenged seven times, I ought to be avenged seventy times seven. Interesting figure because I heard that again some place. When Peter said to the Lord "how often shall I forgive a brother's trespass, till seven times?" The Lord said, "not seven times. Seventy times seven" (Matthew 18:22).

And Adam knew his wife again; and she bare a son (Gen 4:25),

Now this is after the killing of Abel, but they no doubt had other many children in the meantime. And she bare a son,

and called his name Seth [which means "appointed"]: For God, said she, hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew (Gen 4:25).

So originally it would have been perhaps that through Abel it would have come, but now God has appointed another seed, Seth. And from Seth of course, we will follow down to Abraham.

And to Seth, to him also there was born a son; and he called his name Enos; and then men began to call upon the name of Jehovah [or Yahweh] (Gen 4:26).

Chapter 5

Now chapter five,

This is the book of the generations of Adam. [And as you read these generations of Adam and as it lists them for us] In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created. And Adam lived one hundred and twenty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth (Gen 5:1-3).

So you see Adam was a hundred and twenty years when Seth was born so that means Cain was probably in his late hundred teens. And when he killed his brother that would have given him opportunity for him to marry a ninety-year old sister. It would be no problem there at all.

And the days of Adam after he had begotten Seth were eight hundred years; and he begat sons and daughters. And the days of Adam that he lived were nine hundred and thirty years and he died (Gen 5:4-5).

Prior to the flood, man's life expectancy was much greater. They lived almost for a millennium. Methuselah came the closest, nine hundred and sixty nine years. But it would seem that the earth was protected by this moisture blanket prior to the flood and that the climactic conditions of the earth were vastly altered from what they are today. It's easy and interesting to conjecture what a great moisture blanket around the earth would do, as far as the earth's temperatures, in an equalizing of the earth's temperatures, as well as the way that the earth would be watered, with its great moisture blanket and also the protection that it would afford to cosmic radiation. We know that just a little ozone gas in the strata sphere filters out much of the ultraviolet rays of the sun. If that ozone blanket, which, of course stretches out for several miles, if it were all compressed it would only be three millimeters thick. So there is not much ozone out there protecting you and really sustaining your life forces here upon the earth.

Now we do know that at one time the earth did have a much milder climate. Of course, there is also that constant decreasing of the electromagnetic field around the earth. If the electromagnetic field has been decreasing at a constant rate since the time of Adam, the electromagnetic field would have caused the temperature of the earth, the mean temperature of the whole earth, to be much warmer than it is now.

In fact, if the decrease of the electromagnetic field, as has been measured for the last hundred and thirty six, seven years, if that is true, a constant factor, and has been for six thousand years, it would have made a vast difference in the shielding of the earth from cosmic radiation because much of the cosmic radiation is reflected or bounces off of the electromagnetic field. And also it would create a heat, but if you would take it back as much as twenty-five thousand years, the electromagnetic field around the earth would have been so strong that the earth temperatures would be about two hundred degrees Fahrenheit. If you would take it back fifty thousand years, the electromagnetic field would be so strong around the earth that the earth's temperatures would be so high that the earth would be in a molten state.

So, the scientists who believe in evolution had to do some fast thinking. They say that figures don't lie, but liars sure can figure. And they had to figure something out for this one. And so they have come up with a very interesting theory. That every five thousand years or so, by some mystical magic way, hocus pocus dominocus, the electromagnetic field gets recharged. Now they don't know how. But just every five thousand years or so the thing gets recharged, new burst of energy and then it starts declining again. It's interesting to watch them as they try to make the facts fit their theory. And sometimes they really do some real dishonest juggling.

Now as we go through these genealogies here in the fifth chapter, if you'll take a pencil and paper some time and figure it out, you'll find some interesting things. Number one, that Noah's father lived at the same time that Adam was still living. So Noah wasn't that far removed from Adam. His father was still alive while Adam was alive upon the earth. Another interesting thing is that Methuselah died in the year of the flood. Which makes it very possible that Methuselah himself was destroyed in the flood. In the genealogical records there is one exception to the whole thing and he died, and he died, and he died, until we get down to Enoch. And it says,

and he was not; for God took him (Gen 5:24).

And so Enoch breaks the chain. Enoch was a man of faith. He lived only three hundred and some years walking with God, and Enoch walked with God, a man of faith. "And he was not, for God took him." Again we have an interesting commentary on Enoch in the New Testament book of Hebrews. "By faith Enoch walked with God and he was not for God took him" (Hebrews 11:5). But before God took him he had this testimony that he pleased God. What a glorious testimony! May that be the testimony of each of our lives that we pleased God.

God said concerning His Son at His baptism, "this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased". Jesus said, "I do always those things that please the Father". In Revelation, we are told that God has created all things and for his pleasure they are and were created. That includes you. But then Hebrews goes on to tell us, "for without faith it is impossible to please God". So we please God by our trusting Him. God is pleased when you put your trust and you commit yourself to Him.

And so through Chapter five you can work things out if you like, but now here is an interesting thing you see. Where did all of these records come from that Moses got together when he wrote this book? Writing was invented very early in the history. Prior to the writing, it came by verbal tradition. Adam no doubt told his sons, his grandsons, his great grandsons, his great, great grandsons, his great, great, great grandsons. He lived a long time. He had an opportunity to tell them.

And for a hundred years Lamech could have sat on Adam's knee, but he probably would have only done it for a few years, but at any rate, he could have sat at Adam's feet while Adam rehearsed for him the whole experience of the garden. You see he could have heard it directly from Adam. And then he told his son, Noah, who also shares it with his son Shem, and Shem was still alive when Abraham was born. So in reality, you have a link between Adam and Lamech, crossover link, Lamech then telling his son Noah, and Noah sharing with his son Shem and Shem sharing with Abraham.

Now it is true that there are other records of the flood in Babylon, Egypt, India, other accounts of creation. Most of them are gross types of exaggerated accounts. Some of them are very parallel to the biblical account. Some of them appearing in historic documents that some of the scholars say anti-date the Bible. But does it disprove the Bible because the Indians have an account of the flood and the Inca Indians have an account of the flood and the Babylonians have an account of the flood and the Egyptians have an account of the flood? Does that disprove the Bible? No.

What does it prove? It proves the common origin of man. The stories being modified, changed and amplified in many cases as they were spread through words of mouth and went to different areas, after the tower of Babel when men were scattered abroad upon the earth. But the common origin of man would then have a creation story in each of the ethnic groups. It doesn't at all disprove the biblical account, but only substantiates and proves the common origin of man. Though the skeptics would like to twist the

evidence to make it show that Moses was perhaps copying the Babylonian account or whatever, which is very farfetched because if you compare the account you will find that Moses in his writing of the account, it is far different from the Babylonian, which is a very exaggerated account indeed. So if you want to look at chapter five and look at their ages and figure out who was living when, who was living and so forth, you'll find it interesting, but I don't get too excited over genealogical records.

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