Studies in Genesis - 08

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CHAPTER IV

"THE WAY OF CAIN” AND “A MORE EXCELLENT SACRIFICE”

In the third chapter of Genesis we have the record of the fall of man; in chapter four, the story of the results of the fall, the beginning of the reaping of the awful harvest of sin. In chapter three, we saw Adam and Eve disobeying God and falling into Satan’s wily snares; in chapter four we read the sequel to that dark picture, and see something of the far-reaching results of the fall. We see the first child of our first parents rebelling against God and murdering his own brother.

It is a tragic story, with deep and searching lessons for every child of Adam. But there is also a bright side to the picture, a shadow of the cross of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. This is the very heart of our lesson today; and it centers around the two offerings which the first two sons of Adam “brought . . . unto the Lord.”

“The way of Cain” is still the way by which millions still living in our own generation attempt to approach God—a self-righteous, rebellious, self-willed way, without the shedding of “the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul” (Lev. 17:11). But thank God! There are always those who approach Him by “a more excellent sacrifice,” by “the way of the cross” of “the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29).

CAIN AND ABEL

Thus Cain and Abel represent all the human race: The ungodly and the godly; the vain ritualist and the true seeker after God; the religious, but unregenerate man and the spiritual, born again soul; the rebellious, disobedient, impenitent sinner and the humble, obedient, penitent sinner saved by the grace of God.
Cain was self-righteous; Abel was declared righteous by the Lord Himself. Cain gave way to anger, jealousy, murder, lies; he even persisted in ignoring God’s pleading for “a more excellent sacrifice”; whereas Abel, long ago at home with the Lord, has, through the ages, been preaching a powerful sermon, pointing the lost to the cross of Jesus Christ, our Lord; for by his offering, “he being dead yet speaketh” (Heb. 11:4).

Cain, refusing God’s salvation by faith in a coming Saviour, heard the curse “from the earth” pronounced upon him, “went out from the presence of the Lord,” and established a godless civilization. “By faith” in the promised Redeemer, “the seed of woman” of Gen. 3:15, “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” (Heb. 11:4). “By faith” he believed in “the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel” (Heb. 12:24); he believed in the shed blood of the Saviour who was to come.

In every generation, since the fall of man, God has saved sinners by faith in the Lamb of Calvary. Abel looked forward to the cross of Jesus, and was born again; we look back to His cross and are born again. The Christ of prophecy is the Christ of history—“the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever” (Heb. 13:8). “And without shedding of blood is no remission” of sin (Heb. 9:22).

We can not emphasize too much this, the heart of our lesson today; for Satan is ever seeking to blind men’s eyes to this fundamental truth, lulling the lost sinner into a false sense of security, as he tries to get to heaven by the works of his own hands.

And now let us turn to this fourth chapter of Genesis to note the details of this tragic, yet wonderful story, with its ray of hope shining through the clouds of sin and sorrow and unbelief.

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

The Revised Version renders the last clause of this verse,
"I have gotten a man with the help of Jehovah." Thus Eve expressed her gratitude to God.

In our former lessons we have seen that Adam and Eve must surely have put their faith in the promised Redeemer, who was to be born of the virgin—"the seed of woman." They seem to have manifested this faith when they received the "coats of skins," provided by the Lord as a substitute for their own efforts to hide their shame with fig-leaf aprons. They seem also to have manifested this faith when they evidently taught Abel and, later, Seth how to approach God with an acceptable offering, even the shedding of blood. And here, without any doubt, Eve showed that she was a woman of faith in acknowledging "the help of Jehovah."

"And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground" (verse 2).

ABEL—A TYPE OF CHRIST

Abel, the shepherd, is a type of Christ, "the good shepherd" who gave His own life "for the sheep" (John 10:11). For no fault of his own, Abel was the object of his brother's envy and hatred, even as our Lord was "hated ... without a cause" (John 15:25) by His own brethren "according to the flesh." When He was on earth, our Lord Jesus spoke of "righteous Abel" (Matt. 23:35), made righteous "by faith" in The Righteous One who was to come, whose "blood of sprinkling" washed away the sins of this second son of Adam. But that Righteous One, even Jesus, was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens" (Heb. 7:26) because He was the sinless Son of God.

CAIN—"A TILLER OF THE GROUND"

What a contrast between these two first sons of Adam! "Cain was a tiller of the ground." And although the ground was under the curse, yet he presumed to present from it "an offering unto the Lord."

Had God not said to Adam, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake ... Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee" (Gen. 3:17, 18)? Little wonder God said to Cain,
after he had killed Abel, “The voice of thy brother’s blood crieth unto me from the ground. And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother’s blood from thy hand; when thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength” (verses 10-12).

Moreover, Cain knew, as well as Abel, that God required the animal sacrifice, which pointed on to the coming Lamb of Calvary. But Cain was utterly lacking in faith.

**The God-Given Way to Worship**

As we examine this Scripture text carefully, we find that God had taught Adam and Eve much about worship. It seems plain that He told them *where* and *when*, as well as *how* to enter into His holy presence:

1. **An Appointed Place of Worship.** The Jamieson-Fausset-Brown “Commentary on the Old and New Testaments” tells us that Gen. 3:24 should be translated, in part, as follows: “And he (God) dwelt between the cherubim at the East of the Garden of Eden, and a fierce fire or shekinah unfolding itself to preserve the way of the tree of life.” Then the commentators add this explanation: “This was the mode of worship now established to show God’s anger at sin, and teach the mediation of a promised Saviour, as the way of life, as well as of access to God. They were the same figures as were afterwards in the tabernacle and temple; and now, as then, God said, ‘I will commune with thee . . . from between the cherubim’ (Exodus 25:22).”

The cherubim “seem to be the special guardians of God’s majesty, the vindicators of God’s broken law,” wrote the late Reverend James M. Gray, D.D. “The flaming sword,” he added, “has been translated by ‘Shekinah’—the pillar of cloud and fire, in which Jehovah appeared to His people, Israel. In this connection, it will be remembered that this Shekinah Glory dwelt between the two cherubim, of gold above the mercy seat in the Holy of Holies, thus teaching the same lesson which God evidently taught in the Garden of Eden.

Arthur W. Pink, in his “Gleanings in Genesis,” adds this thought: The very fact that Cain and Abel “brought” their
offerings “unto the Lord” suggests “some particular place,” to which they “brought” them; and that, when “Cain went out from the presence of the Lord,” he evidently returned no more to that appointed place of worship.

What more appropriate place could there have been than the place where the Shekinah Glory appeared? The burning bush, from which God talked with Moses; the pillar of cloud and fire which led Israel from Egypt to Canaan; “the glory of the Lord” which filled the tabernacle and the temple—these were manifestations of God, dwelling among His people, before He came in the person of His “only begotten Son,” even Jesus. Therefore it seems both likely and in accordance with all Old Testament Scripture that Adam and Eve and Cain and Abel “brought” their offerings “unto the Lord” at such an appointed place, where the Shekinah Glory dwelt between the cherubim.

Moreover, to quote again from Jamieson-Fausset-Brown, the words “had respect to” in verse 4—“The Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering”—these three words “had respect to” signify in the original Hebrew “to look at any thing with a keen, earnest glance,” which has been translated, “to kindle into a fire.” Therefore, “the Divine approval of Abel’s offering was shown in its being consumed by fire.”

Since “unto Cain and his offering he (the Lord) had not respect,” his offering, like that of the prophets of Baal (I Kings 18:25-39), was not consumed by fire, according to this interpretation of the text.

And again, the Old Testament teaching bears out this explanation of the case in point. Abraham’s offering and that of the parents of Samson are other similar illustrations of occasions when fire sent by the Lord miraculously consumed the sacrifice. (See Gen. 15:17; Judges 13:20.)

When the tabernacle was erected in the wilderness, the Shekinah Glory resting above the mercy seat between the cherubim was the manifestation of God’s presence in the midst of His people. Already they had broken His holy law in worshipping the golden calf. These two tables of stone were kept in the ark of the covenant, the covering of which was the mercy seat. Once a year, on the Day of Atonement,
Aaron, the high priest, entered that Holy of Holies to confess the sins of all Israel. As he talked with the Lord, the cherubim of gold reminded him of God's holiness, which must be protected and vindicated. But in his hands Aaron took the blood from off the altar of burnt-offering; this blood he sprinkled upon the mercy seat; and the mercy seat hid from view the broken law. Moreover, the cherubim of gold were looking down upon the sprinkled blood. Therefore, Aaron could stand before the Shekinah Glory, and commune with God "from between the cherubim."

My friend, the Lord Jesus came to keep God's holy law for us; and on the basis of His sprinkled blood we have access into the Holy of Holies, even heaven itself. His judgment throne has become the "throne of grace" for all who will believe in His atoning blood.

No longer need we go to a specially appointed place to worship Him; for He has come to fulfil all the Old Testament shadows and types. Wherever we are, as we walk the streets, as we sit in the office, as we cook or sweep or sew, our hearts may look up into the face of our holy God, unafraid and unashamed. Why? Because we are trusting in "the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel," even the precious blood of the holy Son of God.


"And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord" (verse 3).

The Hebrew for "in process of time" is "at the end of days"; and once again we quote the same commentary, which adds, "probably the Sabbath." We offer this thought here only as a suggestion; but it does seem to imply that God had definitely taught His fallen creatures the need for regular, systematic, repeated times of worship.

How glad we are that we may call upon Him at any time, every day! And yet we ever need to remember also His admonition not to forsake "the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is" (Heb. 10:25). We need the Christian fellowship of public worship; and the world needs the testimony of our lives in such an example.
3. An Appointed Way to Worship. It is hardly necessary to say more just here about the God-given way to worship—"by faith" in the cleansing blood of the Lamb of God; for this is the very theme of our lesson from this fourth chapter of Genesis.

The Epistle to the Hebrews makes the message so very plain, that all the Old Testament sacrifices were but object-lessons, demonstrations of the faith of redeemed souls in the Saviour who was to come. Thus Job was a priest in his own house (Job 1:5). Abel brought "the firstling of his flock and of the fat thereof." "Noah builded an altar unto the Lord... and offered burnt-offerings on the altar" (Gen. 8:20). Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Aaron—all the believers in Israel—offered hundreds of thousands of sacrifices unto God.

Now "the blood of bulls and of goats" can never take away sin. But faith in the blood of Christ can and does redeem the sinner, for all eternity.

My unsaved friend, have you knelt at the "altar," which is the cross of Jesus (Heb. 13:10), there to confess your sin and claim His cleansing blood as an atonement for your soul? You will never be redeemed with "silver and gold," "but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter 1:18, 19).

Being religious will not save you. Cain was religious. He brought an offering "unto the Lord." The Mohammedan is religious; he prays. Being moral and respectable will not save you. Cain perhaps prided himself upon "the fruit of the ground," the work of his own hands. It is "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Titus 3:5).

Modernism so-called is not modern by any means. It is as ancient as Cain; yea, it is as ancient as Satan, who ever seeks to turn men away from the cross of our Lord and Saviour. Cain presented unto the Lord a bloodless offering. Men today, "false shepherds," "wolves in sheep's clothing," blasphemously say that they will have nothing to do with a "slaughter-house religion." "They have gone in the way of Cain" (Jude 11). And as "Cain went out from the presence
of the Lord,” a wanderer upon the face of the earth, “a fugitive and a vagabond,” even so God says of all such, “These are . . . raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever” (Jude 12, 13).

Cain’s offering was rejected by the Lord, but Abel’s was accepted. Abel himself was “accepted in the beloved” Son of God, whom he saw “by faith” as “the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29; compare Eph. 1:6).

God has made very plain the way of salvation; and nowhere in all the Old Testament has He spoken more plainly than in His rejection of Cain’s bloodless offering and in His acceptance of Abel’s “more excellent sacrifice.” He spoke plainly when by the blood He destroyed the godless civilization established by Cain; and when He placed Abel in the list of the heroes and heroines of faith, set forth in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews.

In order to fix these all-important truths in our minds, let us summarize them in an outline of contrasts; this may be of special help to Bible teachers who have the use of the blackboard:

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**GOD’S PLEADING IGNORED BY WRATHFUL CAIN**

Now let us read verses 5–7 from the Revised Version, noting God’s pleading with disobedient Cain to repent and obey:

“But unto Cain and his offering he (God) had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. And Jehovah said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shall it not be lifted up, and if thou doest not well, sin
coucheth at the door; and unto thee shall be its desire; 
but do thou rule over it."

Thus did God plead with Cain, admonishing him, offering him even yet a chance to repent and bring the accepted sacrifice. God was saying something like this to Cain: "You need not be angry, Cain. Your countenance need not fall. If you bring the blood-sacrifice by faith, your countenance will be lifted up. But if not, sin, like a wild beast, croucheth at your door, ready to spring upon you and devour you. But 'do thou rule over it.' Obey My commandment; put your faith in the promised Redeemer, 'the seed of woman,' and be saved." But angry Cain would not hearken unto the gracious pleading of the Lord.

According to another interpretation of the question in verse 7, the Authorized Version renders it, "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?" Or, as the margin reads, "Shalt thou not have the excellency?" Bible students have held that these words refer to the birthright of the "first-born in patriarchal times," with all its "high privileges and authority."

Accordingly, God was even yet offering this position of honor and blessing to Cain, if only he would bring the required sacrifice. But Cain, rebellious and unrepentant, jealous of his younger brother, who was to receive this blessing, hated him and killed him.

Again, the words "sin coucheth at the door," may also be rendered, "the sin-offering coucheth at the door;" for the same Hebrew word is used both for "sin" and "sin-offering." Thus God was saying to Cain, in effect: "The sin-offering is at hand. Bring it, by faith, and be redeemed, 'accepted in the beloved' Saviour who is to come."

According to both interpretations of this verse, God's pleading with Cain was unmistakably clear and definite. But Cain was a rebel and an unbeliever. And he became a murderer!

**The Beginning of Death**

"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" (verse 8).
Someone asked this week what Adam gained by the fall. And our answer was that Adam gained nothing, but lost everything by the fall. With Cain a murderer of his own brother, we see Adam and Eve standing outside the gate, put out of Eden. Their two sons, Cain and Abel, are there; and Abel is lying dead, dead by the hand of his brother. Adam and Eve stand outside the gate; beside them is this boy dead; and the other boy, a murderer!

How the words of the Lord must have burned in their hearts as they remembered what He had said to them about the forbidden fruit, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die"! Here was the beginning of death, the death of their own son, at the hands of his own brother—all because of their own disobedience. What remorse they must have felt! What sorrow for sin!

No, my friend; Adam gained nothing and lost everything by the fall. "By man came death." Reckon up the sorrow that has come to the world through sin, and then find out what Adam gained. Adam lost everything God had for him. Adam was a sinner and had to die.

However, somebody asks, "But didn’t God immediately bring in salvation? And isn’t salvation so much more than was ever lost by the fall?" Yes, but it was not the fall that brought it. It is not the fall that wrought salvation. The fact that the fall of man into sin is God’s opportunity for grace does not make the fall to have any gain in it. Man had nothing to do with salvation; he has no glory in salvation, except to glory in the fact that God, when sin did come, had grace for the occasion. So praise God for grace! Thank Him that, though the human race fell into sin, into the very depths of sin, and lost everything by the fall, yet God in His grace wrought salvation for us. When a child is born into the world, remember, it is born to sin and death. Only the grace of God can save that child. Oh, that God would make us more earnest than we are, that early the children may learn God’s salvation!

Man has nothing left. He is heir to sin; he is heir to death. But God came in and immediately gave the promise of a Redeemer. Yet the fact that God had grace for the occasion
does not teach in any wise that the fall was "an upward fall." Adam was in a position of utmost misery, standing beside his boy, lying in his own blood, and slain by the hand of his brother. You may ask Adam what he gained by the fall, and Adam will tell you that he has nothing left. But God comes in and begins immediately the great work of salvation.

"AM I MY BROTHER’S KEEPER?"

"And the Lord said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my brother’s keeper?"

Thus Cain added falsehood to murder, and refused to accept the responsibility for his crime. But Cain could not lie to God. Why he attempted it can be explained only by the fact that the heart of fallen man is "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked" (Jer. 17:9). Moreover, Cain was his "brother’s keeper" in a very real sense.

My Christian friend, you and I are our brother’s keeper. God has entrusted to us the message of salvation, which alone will save the millions in heathen darkness from the "death" which is "the wages of sin"—eternal separation from God. Do we care? Or do we vainly seek to rebel against our responsibility, saying, with Cain, "Am I my brother’s keeper?" God forbid that we should be indifferent to the never-dying souls of the unsaved millions of the world!

"CURSED . . . A FUGITIVE AND A VAGABOND"

Cain paid dearly for his crime; and for all the endless ages his lost soul will be in eternal darkness, "without Christ . . . having no hope." Listen to the pronouncement of God’s righteous judgment upon him:

"What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother’s blood crieth unto me from the ground. And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy 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" (verses 10-12).
“Cursed from the earth,” which had received his brother’s blood, Cain became a fugitive and a wanderer. He “dwelt in the land of Nod” (verse 16); and “the land of Nod” means “the land of wandering.”

What fear must fill the fugitive’s heart! And Cain knew that fear; for he said to the Lord, “Every one that findeth me shall slay me.” Therefore, “The Lord set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him” (verse 15). Or, as the Revised Version expresses it, “Jehovah appointed a sign for Cain, lest any finding him should smite him.”

It has been suggested that this “sign” was “not any visible mark or brand on his forehead, but some sign or token of assurance that his life would be preserved. This sign is thought by the best writers to have been a wild ferocity of aspect, that rendered him an object of universal horror and avoidance” (Jamieson-Fausset-Brown).

Dr. James M. Gray added the thought that the “mark” “may have been set upon Cain, lest by his death the populating of the world would have been arrested at a time when it was almost uninhabited.”

In any case, Cain realized, at least to some extent, the awful penalty of his sin; for he said to the Lord, “My punishment is greater than I can bear.” The margin of the Revised Version renders it, “Mine iniquity is greater than can be forgiven.” Cain realized that he was “cursed from the ground,” that he would be hidden from the “face” of God, “a fugitive and a vagabond”—fearful, restless; wandering, ever wandering. But Cain showed no sign of repentance or sorrow for sin.

“And Cain went out from the presence of the Lord,” no more to return to the place of the altar, no more to appear before the Shekinah Glory, no more to heed the voice of the seeking Saviour who was to come unto the world to die for sinners, no more to listen to the pleading voice of the Lord.

Dear unsaved friend, do not follow in “the way of Cain.” Listen to the pleading of the Holy Spirit, as He calls to your restless soul: “Come unto me . . . and I will give you rest” (Matt. 11:28-30). “Come now, and let us reason
together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isa. 1:18).

Turn, my friends, from "the way of Cain"; and put your faith in "the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel," the blood of the sinless Saviour, which alone can make you fit for the holy presence of a righteous God.

A GODLESS CIVILIZATION

"And Cain went out from the presence of the Lord," and established a godless civilization.

"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" (verse 17).

Now there are always skeptics in the world who mockingly raise the question, "Where did Cain get his wife?" But in so doing, they only show their ignorance, as well as their unbelief; for the careful Bible student knows that, after Seth was born, Adam lived eight hundred years, "and he begat sons and daughters" (Gen. 5:4). Now eight hundred years is a long time! Adam and Eve doubtless had many sons and daughters. And Cain married one of his sisters. Such a thing is contrary to God's will now; but He permitted it then, in order to propagate the human race. This fact needs only to be mentioned in passing, for the believer takes God at His word.

"And Cain ... builded a city." Because of his crime, no longer prospered when he tilled the ground, he set his hand to the development of a godless civilization.

Let no one suppose that it was lacking in worldly achievement. Doubtless there was much in it to glorify man—not God. The ravages of sin—and time—had not yet demoralized the mind of man to the degraded levels of paganism. Man's spirit, soul, and body, fresh from the hands of the Creator, before sin marred all, must have been beautiful! True, Cain had turned his back upon God; but he still had marvelous powers of mind and body.

We find some of his descendants dwelling "in tents,"

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having "cattle" (verse 20). Others were among "all such as handle the harps and organ" (verse 21); there were skilled musicians in Cain's civilization. And yet others were artisans, working in "brass and iron" (verse 22); for Tubal-Cain was "the forger of every cutting instrument of brass and iron" (Revised Version). "The cutting instruments speak of husbandry and agriculture, but also alas! of war and murder" (Dr. James M. Gray).

Yes, the civilization established by Cain may well have accomplished much to the glory of man; but it was godless. The very names of the people began to show their true state; for "Adah," we are told, means "pleasure" or "adornment"; "Zillah," to "hide"; "Lamech," "conqueror," or "wild man." (See note, Scofield Reference Bible.)

"And Lamech took unto him two wives" (verse 19). This was the beginning of polygamy, one of the terrible fruits of sin.

Then came more crime; for Lamech killed a man in self-defense, "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 for wounding me,
And a young man for bruising me:
If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold,
Truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold."

Thus the Revised Version (verses 23, 24) renders this poetic statement of "boasting and revenge," applying the beautiful art of poetic expression to that which speaks of sin and death.

Without God, an evil, rebellious, self-willed people could only seek to beautify the world by building cities and developing a material civilization. How different the story of Abraham, who dwelt in tents "with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God!" (See Heb. 11:9, 10).

The story is told of John Wesley, that he was taken to a very beautiful estate in England, and shown such broad
lawns and shrubbery and flowers, beauty as man can hardly conceive. Wesley didn’t even have his own home. For about fifty years he had just travelled and preached in his journeys, covering all the British Isles, seldom staying more than two or three days in any place. He was shown over these broad estates; and when he had seen all, he said: “I love these things; I love flowers; I love trees; I love broad lawns. But,” he added, “there is another life.” That is, Wesley had said, “I can let these things go here, because there is something better to come.”

My friend, all that is godless in civilization, as we have it today, was founded by Cain. And the reason for godless pleasure, the reason for worldly amusement, the reason for earthly beauty that leaves God out, the reason for beautifying this old, sinful world without the help of God, is that Cain, and succeeding generations that have followed in his steps, have gone out “from the presence of the Lord.”

The Godly Line Restored Through Seth

Thank God! He never leaves Himself without a witness in the world! And it was so in the days of Adam. He gave to our first parents another son, to take the place of godly Abel. Eve “called his name Seth: For God, said she, hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew. And to Seth . . . also there was born a son. . . Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord” (verses 25, 26).

Seth means “appointed.” He was appointed by God as the one, through whom Enoch and Noah—and “the seed of woman,” even the virgin-born Son of God—should come. And ever since the days of Cain and Seth, there have been the ungodly and the godly, the rebels against the Lord and His obedient children, heirs of the promised salvation in the only Saviour of sinners. For Seth followed in the steps of “righteous Abel,” and called upon “the name of the Lord.”

And now, in retrospect, let us contrast once more these two sons of Adam, about which our lesson today has had to do—Cain and Abel. These outline facts are fundamental to any Scriptural presentation of these searching truths:
1. Religious, but unregenerate ___________ Spiritual; born again.
2. Disobedient ______________________ Obedient.
4. "Cain was very wroth" ____________ "Righteous Abel." (Matt. 23:35; Heb. 11:4).
   Cain ignored God's pleading.
   Cain killed his brother.
   Cain lied to God.
   Cain rebelled against responsibility.
5. "Cursed" ____________________________ "He obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts" (Heb. 11:4).
6. Cain— _____________________________ Abel, by his offering, "being dead yet speaketh" (Heb. 11:4).
   Impenitent
   "A fugitive and a vagabond"
7. "Cain went out from the presence of the Lord" ___________ Abel—"present with the Lord" (II Cor. 5:8).
8. The father of a godless civilization. A hero of faith (Heb. 11:4).
   Polygamy, murder, rebellion—
   ending in the flood
9. A lost soul _________________________ A redeemed soul.

"THE WAY OF CAIN" AND "THE WAY OF THE CROSS"

Which way will you take, my unsaved friend? "The way of Cain?" Or, "the way of the cross?" "The way of Cain" leads to sin and sorrow and remorse. It leads to hopelessness and despair and eternity without God. But "the way of the cross" of Calvary's Lamb leads on to glory, even heaven itself, where the One who shed His precious blood for sinners ever lives in all His beauty. "The way of Cain" leads away from His presence; but "the way of the cross leads Home"!

"Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). And beholding, be made righteous, by His grace, for ever and ever!