



Genesis 4 is about anger and murder. It introduces a principle, where God asks all people to be responsible for the life of their brothers.

We will note that God does not accept an offering from us on our terms, it has to be on God's terms. God was not happy with the grain offering of Cain. He accepted the sacrificial death of Abel's firstborn flock (sheep, goat or cow).

Cain in refusing, like Abel, to offer a sheep, goat or cow sinned against God. He sinned even more by killing Abel.

Some today have a problem with animal sacrifice, but in the context all animal life was made, sustained and given to humans by God. In addition the example was set by God himself in Eden (see [previous](#)).

## Genesis 4

(1) And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain<sup>1</sup>, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD.

(2) And she again bare his brother Abel<sup>2</sup>. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

(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<sup>3</sup>. 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 angry, and his countenance fell<sup>4</sup>.

(6) And the LORD said unto Cain, Why are thou angry? and why is thy countenance fallen?

(7) If thou do well, shall thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lies at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shall rule over him<sup>5</sup>.

(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.

(9) And the LORD said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper?<sup>6</sup>

(10) And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood cries unto me from the ground<sup>7</sup>.

(11) And now art thou cursed from the earth, which has opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand;

(12) When thou till the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shall thou be in the earth.

(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 finds me shall slay me.

(15) And the LORD said unto him, Therefore whosoever slays Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the LORD set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him.

(16) And Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and dwelt in the land of Nod,

on the east of Eden.

(17) And Cain knew his wife; and she conceived, and bare Enoch: and he built a city, and called the name of the city, after the name of his son, Enoch.

(18) And unto Enoch was born Irad: and Irad begat Mehujael: and Mehujael begat Methusael: and Methusael begat Lamech.

(19) And Lamech took unto him two wives: the name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other Zillah.

(20) And Adah bare Jabal: he was the father of such as dwell in tents, and of such as have cattle.

(21) And his brother's name was Jubal: he was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ.

(22) And Zillah, she also bare Tubalcain, an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron: and the sister of Tubalcain was Naamah.

(23) 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.

(24) If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold<sup>8</sup>.

(25) And Adam knew his wife again; and she bare a son, and called his name Seth<sup>9</sup>: For God, said she, has appointed me another seed<sup>10</sup> instead of Abel, whom Cain slew.

(26) And to Seth, to him also there was born a son; and he called his name Enos: then began men to call by the name of the LORD<sup>11</sup>.

(King James Version updated with reference to the Hebrew text)

1 Something fixed firmly, a lance or a spear

2 Hebrew 'Hebel' meaning emptiness, vanity or transitory.

3 The Hebrew word means also 'best'

4 The anger had elements of wounded pride

5 Some translations imply the rule offered was over the brother Abel, which would have been true as Cain was the eldest, and would then have been the leader in serving God. Others think the rule would be over sin.

6 Guardian, protector and preserver.

7 Hebrew implies it is from out of the ground. Even though buried God knew where Abel was.

8 The law protecting Cain meant that murder was not a crime resulting in capital punishment.

9 Seth mean appointed, or set in place.

10 The word is 'seed' as in the seed of plants not 'son'. The 'seed' was the appointed person that would 'bruise the head of the serpent', or destroy the power of the serpent's lie.

11 They self titled themselves by the name of God. At this time there were enough sons of Cain, that the sons of Seth decided to call themselves the 'sons of God', to differentiate themselves from the others and in doing they identified themselves by the name of God. Genesis 6:4