

Genesis 4 & 5

- **The offerings**

- Both were legitimate offerings and are authorized under the Pentateuch system – Cain’s is a type of grain offering, while Abel’s is a type of peace offering. So far things look okay.
 - The original audience, who received the first five books of the Bible, would have recognized both kinds of sacrifices as authorized by God and valid: the offering of the first born (Deut. 15:19-23) and the produce offering (Lev. 2; Duet. 26:2)
- Though notice while there is no “contrast” in terms of the offerings being valid, there is a “distinction”, namely, in Abel’s case two expressions are used – *of the firstlings...and of their fat portions* – where Cain’s offering is simply stated as *of the fruit of the ground*. Cassuto comments, “Apparently the Bible wished to convey that whilst Abel was concerned to choose the finest thing in his possession, Cain was indifferent. In other words: Abel endeavored to perform his religious duty ideally, whereas Cain was content to merely to discharge this duty.”
- This may be the beginning of an indication that what is in view is a matter of the heart.
- As the narrative unfolds Cain refuses God’s patient offers of help.
 - God’s mercy is once again demonstrated in His line of questions. Notice God never condemns right away. How gentle and patient is He?
- The NT commentary:
 - Hebrews 11:4 –
 - By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice, which God commended as Righteous
 - 1 John 3:12 –
 - We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother’s righteous.

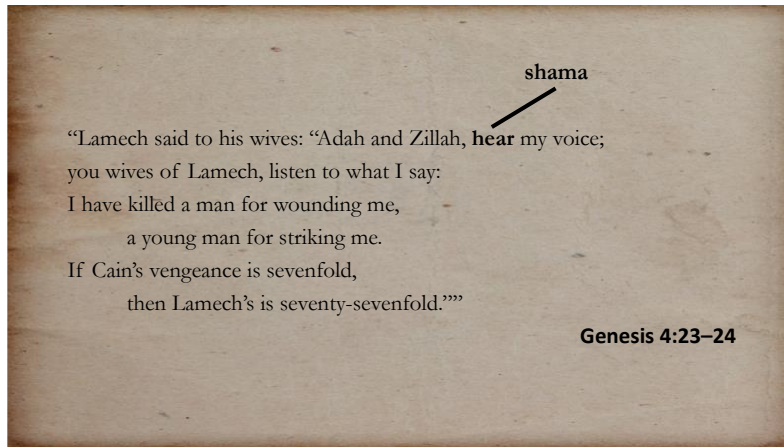
- As the narrative unfolds we become to discover that the two men were morally distinct prior to offering the sacrifices.
- What is God teaching the original audience – those who were rescued out of Egypt and now being given the sacrificial system as recorded in Leviticus before entering the promised land?
 - Proper use of sacrifice.
 - It is not about mere external acts. Never has been; Never will be. God cares about the heart, the mind and a creature's internal posture towards Him.
 - A common failing of the people of Israel was their perversion of sacrifice: supposing that the mere external act of making it, apart from the worshiper's internal disposition of faith – was enough to buy God's favor. This is evident in the warnings given to Israel:
 - Is 1:11-17
 - Jer. 6:19-20
 - Jer. 7:21-23
 - Mic. 6:6-8
 - Amos 4:1-5
 - Amos 5:18-24
 - Hosea 6:4-6
 - 1 Samuel 15:22-23
 - Ps. 40:6
 - Ps. 50:8-15; 51:16-19
 - Prov. 14:9
- What does it mean for us?
 - Worship is not about mere external acts. Never has been, never will be. We can't fool him by going through the motions. God cares about the heart and the mind – what is your internal posture towards Him?
- **Questions that God asks Cain?**
 - We should consider these questions as God's invitation to Cain to reflect on his heart and his actions and to accept the offer of help.
 - God further shows His mercy in His gentle justice – He is merciful with the sentence He pronounces on Cain. Makes him a fugitive instead of

executing him on the spot – justice – but gentle justice – and he will be frustrated working the ground (v.12) but this frustration could lead to repentance if Cain would only receive it. (Collins, Gen. 1-4, 213)

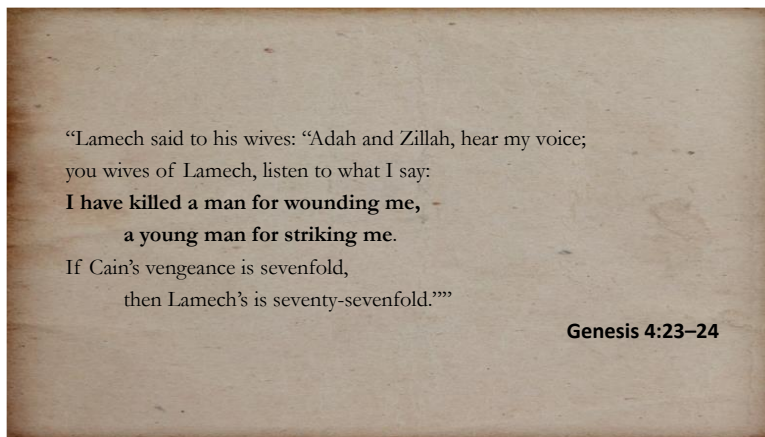
- **Where did Cain’s wife come from?**
 - Some have supposed some sort of pre-Adamite hominids in order to harmonize Genesis and Paleontology, such as David Livingstone.
 - The common reply is that the wife is a daughter of Adam and Eve, whose birth is not mentioned but left for us to infer. This reply makes good sense of the text – note how Genesis 5:4 mentions “other sons and daughters”- as well as of the literary technique of the author, who tends to laconic in style. (Collins, Gen. 1-4, 200)
- **What of the similar names in Cain’s and Seth’s genealogies?**
 - Enoch and Lamech are identical; Methushael and Methuselah are close.
 - Both lists give us more information about Enoch and Lamech than they do the other members. The likely purpose is contrast – The Enoch and Lamech from Seth exhibit piety, while those in Cain’s line do not. (Collins, Gen. 1-4, 201)
 - The line of Cain is, in fact, showing themselves to be offspring of the Serpent (cf. Gen. 3:15)!
- **Genesis 4:20-21**
 - Cassuto points out when 4:20-21 refers to a man as the father of those who practice a craft, it can have the sense that he was the “teacher and founder of the customs, practices and ways of life of a given class”. Hence it is legitimate to suppose that this means that these men were pioneers in the skills that developed into what the audience would have known as established crafts.
 - **Image Bearing Retained**
 - “We should note in passing that Cain and his offspring, even without living in connection to God, nevertheless are human, in the image of God: they develop such important skills as city building (Gen. 4:17), managing livestock (v.20), playing musical instruments (v.21), and forging tools from metal (v.22). Even further, Lamech displays a rhetorical flair in his song (vv.23-24); its artistry is as beautiful as its content is repulsive. Again, this is tragic: these capacities can do great good if directed to God-

centered ends and great evil if used for selfish ends.” (Collins, Gen. 1-4, 212)

- In other words, despite the fall, man is still the image of God. This is confirmed in Genesis 9:6. That image, however, is terribly damaged and distorted. Or as Francis Shaeffer said with respect to image bearing after the fall, we are all “glorious ruins.” There is a remnant in humanity of the glorious beauty that once was, and yet we are ruined and marred. What does this mean?
 - Culture making is still a good thing and part of what it means to be human in the image of God.
 - But because of our fallenness, even though we still have dominion, we can exercise it poorly so that what we do can have devastating effects on others and culture.
 - The city was a good thing in Genesis 4. But then the “naming” of the city after Cain’s own line demonstrates perverse ends, further supported by Lamech’s taking of multiple wives and tyrannical justice which follows in Genesis 4:23-24.
 - We create culture and then it turns back in on us and shapes us. What sort of culture are we creating today?
- **Genesis 4:23-24**
 - “Lamech said to his wives: “Adah and Zillah, hear my voice; you wives of Lamech, listen to what I say: I have killed a man for wounding me, a young man for striking me. If Cain’s revenge is sevenfold, then Lamech’s is seventy-sevenfold.””
 - This is not good!!
 - NOTES:
 - Lamech has “wives”?
 - What of God’s design in Genesis 2 of *one* man and *one* woman, not man and multiple women? This is a blatant rebellion against God’s good created order.
 - Notice the use of the word: *hear (shama)* my voice!



- It should be God's voice that Lamech is encouraging his wives to listen to, not his own!
- And notice Lamech's administration of justice



- He boasts of killing a man in return for having been struck. Hardly a fair or righteous administration of justice.
- Lamech then says, "If Cain's revenge is sevenfold – then Lamech's is seventy-sevenfold"
 - In other words, he is more competent than God in seeking vengeance. And he takes the sword (see note on Gen. 4:22 below) – the symbol of God's mercy in the garden – the instrument which henceforth is at the disposal of the state to maintain justice – an instrument of authority given by God for good – and insultingly boasts and waves it in God's face in an act of tyrannical rule.

- As the leader of this city, presumably this functions as the city charter – which is where all humanistic endeavors apart from an underlying God-based reality will eventually lead – tyranny and oppression.
- **Note on Genesis 4:22 – Tubal-Cain – “forger of all instruments of bronze and iron”**
 - “forger” – *to whet, to sharpen*
 - Lamech’s son Tubal-Cain was the forger of all instruments of bronze and iron. Could mean merely to sharpen a plowshare – but only biblical use in that context is in 1 Samuel 13:20 where the Israelites are sharpening their plows into weapons for lack of swords.
 - Predominant use is that of sharpening a sword. Psalm 7:12 (Hb.13) - “If a man does not repent, God will *whet* his sword; he has bent and readied his bow;”
 - What is he “forging”? A sword!