

The Way of Cain and Abel

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The Book of Genesis covers almost 40% of human history. Roughly 2500 years in one book. Therefore, the perspective of Genesis is a big picture overview of that period of time. In the beginning of Genesis, the world was a far different world than we see today. The weather was totally different; most likely due to the fact that then, the earth's axis was not tilted towards the sun as it is now, which resulted in more moderate, less severe, less extreme weather patterns. When the earth was created and Adam and Eve were created, there was absolutely no pollution of any kind—none whatsoever. As a result of that, humans lived far longer. In Genesis 5, recounts the ages of those that lived that that time. Today, people when reading the Bible or hearing about that, they scoff at the idea that humans lived to be hundreds of years old. It's understandable because that's not what we see today and that's not what we've seen in recent recorded history. It's interesting that humans in their arrogance assume that what we have now, has always been and therefore this is a fairy tale in Genesis.

With that thought in mind let's go to 2 Peter 3:3 where Peter talks about that; about the arrogance of humans and the fact that people think what is today has always been. He also talks about the last days which applies to us.

2 Peter 3:3 *Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts ... (KJV)*

One of the ways they scoff is to deny God the Father, the Creator and to deny the truth of the Bible.

4) And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? (KJV)

You Christians say that God is going to come or Christ is going to come—it hasn't happened.

4 continued) ... for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. (KJV)

It's human nature that whatever you see today you just assume that's it's always been, going back to the creation of the earth. That syndrome is called uniformitarianism—it's one of the spelling words I can remember in college that you had to learn how to spell. It means, what is today will be tomorrow, what is today has always been.

Our forefathers who are listed in Genesis 5, lived to be a great age. You might want to turn there and place a marker there, we'll be reading Genesis 4, 5 and 6 as we introduce the sermon today. In Genesis 5, our forefathers had their first sons between the ages of 60 and 130. The youngest recorded age at which a first sone was born was

Mahalaleel and he was 65 years old; that's in verse 15 of Genesis 5. The same was true for Enoch in verse 21. Having your first child at 65—or at least your first son.

On the other hand, Jared was 162 years of age, that's in verse 18 when he had his first son. Methuselah, the oldest one of all, was 187 in verse 25 when he had his first son. The indications are that it took people a very, very long time to mature. On our average, three to four times of what we experience today. In other words, in that world, a person was in his teens up until he reached 60-80 years of age. Think about that; you were really in the prime of your teens when you were 60, 70, 80 years old. The fact is, if you look at the oldest fossils that remain—the remains of these fossils from this time—they actually prove this. Those fossils have extreme wearing of the teeth but with no characteristic decay that we find today. Just use over time. We all have what's called sutures or seams in the plates of our skull. You can look at a skull and see those, they look like cracks but they are seams in the plates of the skull. In these ancient bones, those sutures or seams have been obliterated. They have ossified over just due to the age of that skull—hundreds of years.

There is every indication of these fossils that there is a slow formation—it's called ossification—of the long bones. In other words, before they reached maturity, it took sometimes 100 years, 150 years, for these long bones just to grow to full maturity. The inevitable conclusion of that for somebody who believes in God and doesn't have an agenda going into it is that earliest man matured very slowly and they attained a great length of life, which is confirmed by Genesis. That's what Genesis declares. Such characteristics of modern skeletal frames are completely absent—those characteristics do not exist in recent mankind.

Let me quote from a book, The Meeting Place of Geology and History by Sir William Dawson, on page 62 and 63. He says:

These ancient men did attain great age, is determined by the fact that their remains are usually found with fragmentary skeletons of youths and babies, not exhibiting these characteristics.

So these ancient bones are all mixed in with in the same level of strata with bones of younger human beings. This proves that they lived contemporaneously and yet these ancient bones exhibited the characteristics that have just been described.

Josephus in his book, *Antiquities*, lists eleven ancient writers in his day and he says all of them:

...relate that the ancients lived nearly 1000 years.

It's going to be interesting to see that that will probably occur during the millennium. We will get back to the climate and the times and the lack of pollution of those days. These scientific findings do not prove that man evolved but rather they substantiate the truth in the Bible. That men in ancient times, unlike today, experienced centuries of physical

life. So keep that thought in mind as we address the subject today of having a book—the first book in the Bible—that covers 40% of human history, 2500 years.

When you look at the book of Genesis, it's interesting that it covers that broad of a time frame, that broad of an expanse of history and yet there is one chapter that looks and covers and deals with two men. Think about that. If it covers two men and a whole chapter is devoted to two men, it must be very important to Yehovah; to God our Father.

That's the account of Genesis 4 of Cain and Abel. So the title of the sermon today is:

The Way of Cain and Abel

We're going to look at that today and see what we can learn from it.

The first point:

1. Let's look at the story of these two men.

Let's turn to Genesis 4:1 and you probably want to place a marker in this area of scripture because we'll be going back and forth.

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

Most modern translations translate that last phrase of hers, I have gotten a man with the help of Yehovah. She is, at this point, probably thankful that mankind would continue on earth, that a child had never been born before. This is a way of God reproducing human beings on the face of the earth and she was the first mother in that regard. She chose the name Cain and Brown, Driver and Briggs Commentary says that it means, acquire. Meaning, I have acquired a son from Yehovah. In the beginning of verse 2, notice this.

2) And she again bare his brother Abel. (KJV)

Based on the wording of this, some commentators speculate that Cain and Abel were twins. Because later on and throughout the chronology of the Old Testament, the acts of conceiving and bringing forth are mentioned for each child. That so and so conceived and brought forth a child and conceived and brought forth another child. But here it's not referenced to each child. Here, it's said that she conceived and brought forth Abel but it didn't say she conceived and brought forth Cain but it says she again bore Abel his brother. Indicating possibly that Cain was the first born of twins. We don't know for that a certainty but it's a possibility.

2 continued) ... And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. (KJV)

Adam was originally a gardener and then Abel is a shepherd and Cain is an agriculturalist or we would say a farmer today. These are the three primitive employments; gardener, shepherd and farmer.

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.* (KJV)

Let's stop for a minute and ask the question, how did these two men come to the point that they would even make an offering? How did that work? We're going to see that they both had a personal relationship with Yehovah. Otherwise, why would they make an offering to God Almighty? If they didn't have some kind of relationship, some kind of communication with Yehovah. We know Yehovah spoke to Adam and Eve and we're going to see that Yehovah spoke to Cain.

4 continued) ... *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.* (KJV)

Let me read verse 4 and 5 from the NLT.

4) *While Abel brought several choice lambs from the best of his flock, Yehovah accepted Abel and his offering*

5) *But He did not accept Cain and his offering and this made Cain very angry and dejected.* (NLT)

Cain was not happy.

6) *And the LORD said unto Cain, [God Almighty is talking directly to Cain.] Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?* (KJV)

Tell me why. Verse 7 I'll read out of the NIV.

7) *If you do what is right, will you not be accepted?* (NIV)

The fact that he wasn't accepted indicates the fact that Cain was doing something wrong.

7 continued) ... *But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it.*" (NIV)

You must overcome it—the sin that lies at your door. We see that the Father is encouraging Cain to conquer his wrong desires, his wrong thoughts, his wrong motives. We have to stop and ask, if Cain is dejected and angry, where does that come from? What is the source of those desires, that anger? The answer of course is, the Serpent

does not take a day off. He got to Adam and Eve, he deceived there so do we think naively that the Serpent is going to wash his hands and walk away and say, I've decided them, they no longer have access to the Tree of Life so my job is done. No, that isn't that case. We see that Satan is going right after their firstborn son.

Verse 8, reading out of the New Living Translation.

8) One day Cain suggested to his brother, "Let's go out into the fields." And while they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother, Abel, and killed him. (NLT)

The wording suggests going out into a field and then an attack occurred and a murder occurred that this was a premeditated murder; it was thought out in advance. Again, where did that desire come from? Where did that thought process come from? We'll find out later because the Bible plainly tells us.

9) And the LORD said unto Cain, "Where is Abel thy brother?" And he said, "I know not: [We see Cain is lying to the Almighty; Cain knows but he has the audacity to lie to the Yehovah] Am I my brother's keeper?" (KJV)

That's a disrespectful answer if I ever saw or heard one. He's asking God a question in a disrespectful way. So that tells you a little about Cain's attitude.

Verse 10 out of the NIV.

10) The Lord said, "What have you done? Listen! Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground."

11) -Now you are under a curse ... (NIV)

We find out here that as far back as Cain that the blessings and the cursing's have been constantly in effect and they affected the nation of Israel as we know but they are in effect at this time also.

11 continued) ... and driven from the ground, which opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. (NIV)

We don't know how he killed his brother but obviously blood was drawn. It could have been a club or a knife, we just don't know. Verse 12, this is part of his punishment.

12) "When you work the ground, it will no longer yield its crops for you. You will be a restless wanderer on the earth."

13) Cain said to the Lord, "My punishment is more than I can bear. (NIV)

He focused on himself, not on his brother's death or what it might have done to his mom and dad, but that this is too much on me.

14) *You have banished me from the land and from your presence [that's an important point to remember]; you have made me a homeless wanderer. Anyone who finds me will kill me!"*

15) *The Lord replied, No, for I will give a sevenfold punishment to anyone who kills you." Then the Lord put a mark on Cain to warn anyone who might try to kill him. (NLT)*

Of course there has been great speculation over the centuries over what this mark of Cain might be. Let me just quote from one commentary, Jameson, Faucet and Brown, it says:

It 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 has been thought, by the best writers, to have been a wild ferocity of aspect that rendered him an object of universal horror and avoidance.

We don't know, some day we are going to find out for sure what that mark was. Going on in verse 16.

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

The Hebrew for Nod means vagrancy or homelessness. So here we have our first homeless person. He is wandering around in the area of Nod. That is to the east of Eden—where the Garden of Eden is, it's to the east. You remember that after Adam and Eve had sinned, what did the Father do? He put cherubim with a flaming sword east of Eden, so those cherubim with a flaming sword are in between Nod where Cain is and where the Garden of Eden is. We see that these cherubim with a flaming sword prevented anyone from coming back into the Garden of Eden and that's a type of permanent removal. We know the permanent removal is the lake of fire. Cain during his physical life was permanently removed from that area. Going on in verse 25 of the NIV.

25) *Adam made love to his wife again, and she gave birth to a son and named him Seth, saying, God has granted me another child in place of Abel, since Cain killed him." (NIV)*

The Hebrew word for Seth means substituted so Seth is a substitution for his dead brother Abel. At this point, a crucial thing happens because Adam's line now divides. It's divided between Cain on the one hand and Seth on the other, who replaced Abel. From this point forth there are two distinct groups because there are two distinct paths that these groups will generally take which remains true to this very day.

We have to remember that Cain and Abel are our ancestors. In one way or another we are related to both of them and obviously to Adam and Eve. They are our forefathers so to speak. The Bible as well as history record that the world follows and has followed the

way of Cain. While the way of Abel and Seth has been followed by a comparatively few number of people, relative of the way of Cain. The way of Cain versus the way of Abel is not a blood issue or a genetic issue or an inherited characteristic issue, rather, as we're going to see, it's a matter of choice. Do we choose to follow the way of Cain or do we choose to follow the way of Abel?

So that's the background on the story. The second thing we want to do is;

2. Look and examine—look at these two different paths and two different ways—and examine them for a minute.

First, let's look at the way of Cain. Let's go to the New Testament and see what Jude has to say about Cain. It's interesting, there is a bit of information in the New Testament about Cain and about his path and his way. Jude verse 3. Right before Revelation; the half-brother of Jesus Christ. Jude is telling them why he is writing to them.

Jude 1:3 *Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. (KJV)*

Indicating that there were some that were straying from that.

4) For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God [that is the Father, that is Jehovah], and our Lord Jesus Christ. (KJV)

We see that at the time this was written there was an issue with those that would deny the Father and deny His Son. First part of verse 11.

11) Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain ... (KJV)

Those who deny the Father and deny the Son. This tells us that down through history there have been those from the time of Cain, who have followed the way of Cain, it was occurring at the time when Jude wrote these words and it is occurring in our day also. It tells us that there are people that will emulate the way of Cain. What is the way of Cain? What does the Bible say about that? Let's go to 1 John 3:12. This tells us directly who Cain followed and what his way is.

1 John 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, [Cain's works were evil] and his brother's righteous. (KJV)*

Cain could not abide with that and since he was of the wicked one, the wicked one did not want to abide with that. The wicked one inspired Cain with the thoughts, the

motives, the ideas, to murder his brother. The fact is, the way of Cain is the story of mankind. Mankind has given in to the provocations of Satan, the serpent and as Cain removed himself from the presence of God, so has Satan inspired mankind to remove themselves from the presence of God to the point that the way of Cain led to the flood; led to the flood being necessary. Let's go to Genesis 6 and we'll begin in verse 5 and see that this is about 1500-1700 years down the road that we see the results, the fruits, of the way of Cain. Genesis 6:5 out of the NIV.

Genesis 6:5 *The Lord saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time.* (NIV)

Think about that—mankind had gotten to the point of Adam and Eve being loved and instructed and talked to by God Almighty to the point where every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time. We're getting to that point today on this earth.

6) *The Lord regretted that he had made human beings on the earth, and his heart was deeply troubled.*

7) *So the Lord said, I will wipe from the face of the earth the human race I have created—and with them the animals, the birds and the creatures that move along the ground—for I regret that I have made them.*" (NIV)

Sad state of affairs indeed. With that in mind let's go to 1 John 2:16 because this describes the state of mankind then and describes it at the time that John the apostle wrote it and describes mankind today. John is talking about the world and we know the world is Satan's world.

1 John 2:16 *For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life [which all apply to Cain as he murdered his brother and planned to murder his brother], is not of the Father, but is of the world.* (KJV)

Selfishness, greed and competition; we see that today. Nothing happens today in this world without selfishness, greed and competition. That was right there—selfishness, greed and competition—between Cain and his brother and that led to the murder of his brother. So we see that the way of Cain is actually the way of Satan.

Let's contrast the way of Cain, the way of Satan with the way of Abel. Let's go to Hebrews 11 and read the beginning of verse 4. We have just read that Abel was righteous.

Hebrews 11:4 *By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, [Yehovah accepted it, He rejected Cain's sacrifice] by which he obtained witness that he was righteous ...* (KJV)

The New Testament, in hindsight, looking back over the millennia, declares that Abel was righteous. After Abel's murder, then came a descendant to carry on that righteous way. Let's go back now to Genesis 4:25. We see that Seth was--as his name implies--a substitute for his brother Abel; his dead brother Abel.

Genesis 4:25 *And Adam knew his wife again; and she bare a son, and called his name Seth: For God, said she, hath appointed me another seed 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 upon the name of the LORD. (KJV)*

So Seth's descendants, we are told here, is a line of those who looked to Yehovah, who knew His name and who called upon His name, who kept His way alive—God's way of life alive, our Father's way of life alive—in an increasingly evil world that ultimately had to be destroyed. In Genesis 5, let's take a quick look at Seth's descendants. There was Enos in verse 6, Canaan in verse 9, Mahalalel in verse 12, Jerod in verse 15 (that's the fourth), the fifth is Enoch, verse 18, the sixth is Methuselah, verse 21, number seven is Lamech, verse 25 and the eighth is Noah. Let's look at Genesis 5:28, I'll read this out of the NLT.

Genesis 5:28 *When Lamech was 182 years old, he became the father of a son. (NLT)*

Can you imagine? 182 years old; there is a Lamech also in chapter 4, this is not the same Lamech.

29) *Lamech named his son Noah, for he said, May he bring us relief from our work and the painful labor of farming this ground that the Lord has cursed.” (NLT)*

So there was some hope for Noah, that he would be some kind of savior. The Hebrew for Noah, you find it in the King James margin says, rest or comfort. Going on in verse 30.

30) *After the birth of Noah, Lamech lived another 595 years, and he had other sons and daughters. ³¹Lamech lived 777 years, and then he died.*

31) *Lamech lived 777 years, and then he died. (NLT)*

Can you imagine?

32) *After Noah was 500 years old, he became the father of Shem, Ham, and Japheth. (NLT)*

Then in chapter 6 in verse 8, we're told something that is extremely important.

Genesis 6:8 *But Noah found favor with the Lord. (KJV)*

Why did he find grace? Because he was a righteous man; how would that be otherwise? Let's go back now to 2 Peter 2:5 and see what Peter had to say about Noah. We read in Genesis 5 that Noah was the eighth descendant, not counting Seth but down from Seth, he was the eighth descendant.

2 Peter 2:5 *And spared not [referring to God the Father] the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, [the Greek literally means one of eight; Noah was one of eight] a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; (KJV)*

The Greek for “preacher”, Help’s Word Study says this:

It means a herald, a town crier, proclaiming critical news for the public.

This is an indication that Noah, during his life, while he was building the Ark—obviously you don’t build a boat that big without creating a lot of attention and he undoubtedly told them why he was building this Ark and who instructed him to build it and what was going to happen when the Ark was ready. Of course, back then as is today, everyone scoffed at him. Noah was indeed the eighth after Seth, as we’ve seen in Genesis 5. The point is, the descendants of Seth preached and taught our Father’s way of righteousness. It wasn’t the popular way; it wasn’t the majority way but it was a fact.

As we finish this second point, I want you to think about this concept. We know that Yehovah appeared to Adam and Eve and we have seen that Abel was righteous in Hebrews 11:4, so for Abel to be righteous, he must have known Yehovah, he must have been directly taught by God Almighty Himself. The Father spoke to Cain, He must have also spoke to Abel and instructed him, otherwise why would they offer an offering in the first place.

With that in mind, let’s go to 1 John 3:7. We’re talking about these two paths—two different ways.

1 John 3:7 *Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, [that applies to Abel] even as he is righteous. (KJV)*

So Abel followed his Father in his Father’s footsteps of righteousness.

8) He that committeth sin is of the devil; [we know Cain is from the evil one, we read that] for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. (KJV)

Going to verse 10.

10) In this the children of God are manifest ... (KJV)

They are made apparent, it's easy to see the children of God.

10 continued) ... *and the children of the devil: [it's easy to distinguish the two, these two paths] whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother. (KJV)*

Much less murders his brother.

11) *For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. (KJV)*

That message was proclaimed in the Old Testament.

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. (KJV)*

Two paths, two ways of living, right here before us and it's a choice. Think about this: Abel and his descendants, down to Noah, taught Yehovah's way, that is obvious. Then, Noah had sons (and I'm summarizing greatly) from Shem to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, then to Moses and Joshua and Caleb, to the judges, to Samuel, to David, to Solomon, to the righteous kings, to the prophets and culminating with the disciples. What is the common denominator with all of these people, from Abel to Noah to Shem to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob all the way down to the disciples? We know one common denominator is they have God's Spirit. David said, take not your Spirit from me—we know that. The other common denominator is that all of those were directly taught in some form or fashion by Yehovah. Down through the millennia, Yehovah appeared to them in some form or fashion, spoke to them in some form or fashion, they were taught directly by Yehovah or in the case of the disciples, they were taught directly by his son. The eleven—Judas was dead, Matthias in Acts 1, drew the lot and he replaced Judas—then Paul during his conversion in Acts 9, all of those were taught directly by Jesus Christ. They were taught the way that began with Abel. So we see from Abel all the way down thorough the disciples, that group in one way or another was taught directly by God the Father or His Son.

Since that time—since Acts 9, after Christ appeared to Paul—the fact is, the rest of us have not directly heard the Father or the Son. We haven't had visions; we haven't had a voice in our head or anything like that. You remember when Christ appeared to the disciples after He was resurrected and accepted by the Father on wave sheaf Sunday, let's go to John 20 and see that. Christ appeared to Mary and said, don't touch Me, I haven't yet ascended and then later that day He appeared to the disciples. Thomas was not there and then after that, in John 20:29, He appeared again to the disciples and Thomas was there. Notice what Jesus said to Thomas because you remember Thomas said, unless I put my hand in His side and see Him, I'm not going to believe. Well, Jesus appeared and gave him the opportunity to do just that.

John 20:29 *Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: [but notice what He said] blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed. (KJV)*

From Acts 9 on, that's referring to us; after Christ appeared to Paul, from that point forth, all the rest of us down through the centuries believe without seeing. In other words, we walk by faith and not by sight. 2 Corinthians 5:7 mentions that. From Abel to the disciples, we see that all were taught directly by the Father and His Son. These accounts are recorded for a reason and for a purpose. As I said, why one chapter of Genesis, to two men. Let's go to Romans 15:4 and see why they are recorded for us today. They are recorded for our benefit, for our use, for our help, for our encouragement, to know that we can get through things, we can overcome all manner of problems and trials and troubles and tribulation.

Romans 15:4 *For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, [so we can learn through these examples] that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope. (KJV)*

When we see the way of Cain and then compare that to the way of Abel and we look at those differences, we can learn from that and we can have hope because if we follow the way of Abel, we do indeed have hope and it's comforting to us. Go to 1 Corinthians 10:6; we're breaking into an account where Paul is recounting the Exodus and looking back on those who were involved in the Exodus and obviously, they sinned a great deal during their wanderings.

1 Corinthians 10:6 *Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. (KJV)*

So winding out this second point of looking at these two ways, Genesis tells us that starting with Cain and Abel and then Seth who replaced Abel, there are two distinct ways of life, two distinct paths—the way of Cain and the way of Abel.

The third point and we'll spend the rest of our time in this, asking the question:

3. What might our Father want us to learn from these two men?

What are the lessons? We could think of dozens and dozens of course but we're going to look at three in the time remaining. The first—A if you like to outline—this is a huge lesson.

3A. We can never underestimate the reality and power of Satan.

We cannot underestimate that. There is a consistent, evil power that is arrayed against anyone who tries to follow Yehovah. That power, that consistent power is there to turn us from our Father, to separate us from Him through sin. Satan understands the following principle; let's go to Isaiah 59:1—Satan knows this. This is the underlying,

bedrock principle about what he does and how he goes about it. Make no mistake, Satan is far smarter than we are as humans and he understands this principle.

Isaiah 59:1 *Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; [He can save whoever He wants to] neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: [He can hear all.] (KJV)*

Verse 2 comes the big “but”.

2) But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear. (KJV)

So the principle is, if Satan can get us to sin, then that will separate us from the Father and he will have a foothold to work his way in our life. Satan did not rest after deceiving Adam and Eve; he went right to work on Cain. It began with a thought and it ended it with premeditated murder.

Let's look at a scripture that tells us who the author of murder is so we are unambiguous about this—we are very clear about this. Let's go to John 8:44; the context is Christ is speaking to the Jews but we learn about Satan with Christ saying what He says to the Jews. Who is the author of murder?

John 8:44 *Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, [the very beginning, he had murder in his heart and if he could have killed Yehovah, if he could have killed the Son of God, he would have] and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. (KJV)*

Cain was the first human murderer. Think about that. The first son was a murdered and the second was the first murder victim and since that time, how many billions have been murdered. How many countless billions? And it's all from the power of Satan. Look at what Satan has done down through the millennia. Therefore, because this, we have to understand that Satan plants thoughts and emotions and pictures in our head and he does so as the prince of the power of the air.

That was mentioned in a sermon a while back but let's read it again, Ephesians 2:2—we should meditate on this scripture and spend time thinking about this process of how Satan communicates his thoughts, his motives, his urges, into the minds of human beings.

Ephesians 2:2 *Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, [and we all have, we all did] according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: (KJV)*

It worked at the time of Paul, it works in the time of us and it worked during the time of Cain.

3) Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. (KJV)

Satan plants evil thoughts and evil emotions. It's interesting when Pacific began teaching the truth about God and Christ two years ago, we had brethren that changed within a matter of days or weeks from happy, thankful, content brothers and sisters to angry, bitter, accusing brothers and sisters. You have to ask the question, who is behind the power of that change? Who causes that change? Who provokes that change? If we let him, Satan can play us like a puppet on a string. He could just take us anywhere he wants, if we allow it; if we are not vigilant and are not on guard. Ending this first point—A—we must be constantly aware of the power and presence of Satan.

The second point—B.

3B. We must immediately reject anything that is ungodly.

Something on a television set, something in a computer or something in our mind—thoughts, emotions, urges. Cain obviously did not do that. Like his parents, Cain listened to the serpent, listened to what the serpent had to say and let those emotions and thoughts—whatever Satan put in his mind—he let them percolate. We know what Satan said to his parents; God doesn't mean what He says, you won't die—and he planted similar thoughts and similar notions and urges into Cain and he provoked Cain to lead his brother out into a field and provoked Cain to murder his very own brother.

Today, what Satan does is plant thoughts, emotions, mental pictures, into our minds. He plants doubts about God—sometimes during a trial, we can have doubts about God. "He doesn't have time for me, He's too busy to listen to my prayers, He won't rescue me, He doesn't love me." Guess where those thoughts come from? Satan also plants feelings of apathy and indifference. For example, when people begin teaching who the Father and who the Son really are, sometimes Satan planted apathy and indifference; what difference does it make? There was a great sermon at the Feast about what difference does it make. Satan plants those thoughts and feelings. "I don't have to know who God and Christ are, I'm just here to obey; I don't have to worry about that." Where do those thoughts come from?

Satan plants thoughts and emotions of doubts and suspicions between a husband and a wife, between brothers and sisters in God's church, between friends. How many times have we heard, "I know their heart, I know what they meant"? We've probably all thought that to ourselves. "I know what they're really up to." Where do those thoughts come from? We have to be increasingly self-aware of what's going through our minds. I can't tell you the number of times I have just been sailing along, feeling good, not a problem in the world and five minutes later, I wake up and I'm angry—I'm ticked. I don't

know what about but the feeling is just there. You have to jerk the reins up and ask where is this coming from? I better get on my knees and ask my Father to rebuke that.

The point is, if these thoughts and emotions and pictures are not rejected and they are allowed to stew and percolate in our minds, they will lead to sin, which leads to separation from the Almighty, which ultimately ends in death. That is a lesson in Cain; immediately reject anything not from Yehovah, be it small or be it great.

The fourth lesson we can learn—this is something that as we get older and near the end of the age, is apropos:

4. Abel died serving Yehovah.

Think about that—he gave up his life. Probably didn't do it willingly but he gave up his life. Let's got Hebrews 11:4. The New Testament has a good bit about Cain and Abel and about these two paths; particularly Hebrews 11.

Hebrews 11:4 *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.* (KJV)

You see, Abel is speaking to us today by his example. His example was dedicating himself to God Almighty and he paid the price with his life and that speaks to us today. Let's stay in Hebrews but go down to verse 32.

32) And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets:

33) Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,

34) Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

35) Women received their dead raised to life again [the record of those who followed God]: [notice the other side of this] and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection:

36) And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment:

37) They were stoned, they were sawn asunder ... (KJV)

Can you imagine being laid out on a plank and sawed in two?

37 continued) ... were tempted [the King James says, the Greek means tested or proven of who they are going to put first], were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented;

38) *(Of whom the world was not worthy [of these Godly people, righteous people:] they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.*

39) *And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: (KJV)*

They don't have it yet.

40) *God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect. (KJV)*

Abel was the one—one of the one's—who paid the ultimate price, serving His Master, serving His Father, serving the One who lives forever. Let's go to Luke 14:25. Luke 14 is a chapter that is covered in baptismal counseling. I'm going to read this out of the New Living Translation. The subject is counting the cost. We are told prior to baptism that this is something we should consider, meditate on, fast on and pray about—counting the cost.

Luke 14:25 *A large crowd was following Jesus. He turned around and said to them,*

26) *If you want to be my disciple, you must, by comparison, hate everyone else—your father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even your own life. Otherwise, you cannot be my disciple. (NLT)*

Abel set us an example to follow; he gave his life for the worship of the God he loved. Now let's go to James 1:27; this is an obligation that we have. If we are going to follow God Almighty, this is an obligation that we must fulfill. I'm going to read this out of the New International Version.

James 1:27 *Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this [red flags go up, pay attention]: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world. (NIV)*

The NLT says, "refuse to let the world corrupt us." We live in Satan's world; it is all around us, in our homes with the press of a button. You can bring in the evillest stuff imaginable. You think Satan designed it that way? To pollute this world? We cannot let that happen. We have to remain unpolluted from the world. If we allow that to come in, we give Satan a foothold in our life. Satan got a foothold with Cain and look at the result; we cannot allow that to happen.

We don't know what the future holds for each one of us. We don't know what's going to happen immediately in our various societies around the world but the lesson of Abel teaches us that we must be willing to sacrifice everything to the service of our Father. What is the reward of that sacrifice? Willing to give up this physical life to serve our Father? The book of Hebrews tells us that righteous Abel is asleep, waiting to receive his reward and if that's what it takes from each of us, we would follow in Abel's

footsteps. Follow in Christ's footsteps. That was promised to Abel and he is awaiting that reward. The fact is, the reward is so much greater than the sacrifice. No matter how awful or painful it might be.

Let's summarize now. We've seen from one book that covers forty percent of human history, from that book we've taken one chapter and looked at the lives of two men. From examining these two lives, we've seen two ways, two paths, that arise from these two different men. Frankly, those paths are symbolized by the two trees in the garden. The way of Cain we found out is the way of Satan. The way of Cain is the way of the world, the way of the Satan, the popular way, the broad path. We've seen that the way of Abel, which is the way of Yehovah is the way of righteousness, it is the narrow path, it is the difficult path and it is followed by only a few that have yielded to the Father down through the millennia.

Let's go to Matthew 7:13; this is why Christ said what He did at this point. I'll read this out of the New King James. Christ is addressing these two ways—the way of Cain and the way of Abel.

Matthew 7:13 *Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it.*

14) *Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.* (NKJV)

It is a choice we all have to make. It's not about blood, it's not about genetics, it's not about DNA, it's about a choice. Do we follow the way of Cain or do we follow the way of Abel? Let's read a final scripture that reveals the end of each way. That's in 2 Thessalonians 1:3, which describes the end of each of these two different ways. I'll read this out of the New King James.

2 Thessalonians 1:3 *We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is fitting, because your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all abounds toward each other ...* (NKJV)

What a wonderful thing.

4) *so that we ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure ...* (NKJV)

They were going through the difficult path, the narrow path. It's difficult, there's trials and troubles and tribulations in that path.

5) *which is manifest evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, [by going through all this] for which you also suffer;* (NKJV)

The path to the Kingdom of God is not a greased slide that we just slide in with no effort at all with no persecution, no tribulation, no strife, no difficulties.

6) *since it is a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you ... (NKJV)*

They will get their end results alright.

7) *and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels ... (NKJV)*

That is the ultimate rest.

8) *in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God ... (NKJV)*

We have stressed over and over, we must come to know God. Christ is going to take vengeance on those who do not know God.

8 continued) *... and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

9) *These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power ... (NKJV)*

Permanent separation as the angel east of the Garden of Eden prevented any kind of further coming back to that garden. This is permanent destruction from the presence of the Father and the Son.

10) *when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed. (NKJV)*

As we go forward into an unknown future, let's always keep in mind these two paths. One is the way of Satan, one is the way of Yehovah and let us always adhere to the narrow, the difficult path of the way of Yehovah, because the reward is great indeed.