

Genesis 4

I thought we'd look today at some very early history. It's important we understand that this story of Cain and Abel was real history. A lot of people today suggest that the early chapters of Genesis are just myths. The events didn't really happen. They're just another fantasy Creation story, the kind every ancient civilisation had. We're far more enlightened now. We now know everything started from a big bang billions of years ago. I suggest that's far more of a fantasy Creation story than just taking the plain words of Scripture.

Another thing that puts a lot of people off taking these early passages of Genesis seriously, is the length of time people lived. In chapter 5, we see that Adam lived until he was 930, Seth, his son lived until he was 912, and so on. And people think that's silly, because we don't live that long today. We see people today living to 70 or 80 years old, and we assume it's always been like that. But we don't actually know.

Scientists are always speculating about things they can never possibly measure. They only measure what they can see now, and extrapolate backwards in time to produce their theories. In time, they observe white moths changing into black moths, and conclude that, given enough time, fish can change into men. But that just doesn't follow. They don't know. None of us knows. If we're going to know anything about times long ago, it has to be revealed to us by God Himself. And that's exactly what He's done in the Bible.

There've always been people who scoff at the Bible's account of things:

2 Peter 3:3-4

"there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation."

该知道在末世必有好讥诮的人，随从自己的私欲出来讥诮说，主要降临的应许在哪里呢？因为从列祖睡了以来，万物与起初创造的时候仍是一样。

The first two humans, Adam and Eve, were created by God and given a commandment:

Genesis 2:17

"But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

只是分别善恶树上的果子，你不可吃，因为你吃的日子必定死

They ate of the tree and broke the commandment. So why didn't God strike them dead immediately? Well, He did. They died spiritually, straight after eating the fruit. They suddenly no longer had the communion with God they had before. But their physical death was delayed for many centuries, because God was gracious to them. And He's gracious to every one of us as well.

Whether we realise it or not, we're in the same condition. We're all born dead spiritually. Naturally, we don't know any other way. We don't know God. We don't want to know God. We're born with no higher thought than to live for ourselves and our own desires. And, we're given 70 or 80 years of life in this world before we die physically too. Every second on this earth is a gift from God. And we ought to be thankful to Him for everything we have been given.

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

有一日，那人和他妻子夏娃同房。夏娃就怀孕，生了该隐（就是得的意思），便说，耶和华使我得了一个男子。

2 And she again bare his brother Abel.

又生了该隐的兄弟亚伯。

So, Adam and Eve start to fulfil God's original commandment to "*be fruitful and multiply*," and they had two sons, Cain, the firstborn, and Abel. They did have daughters as well, but the inheritance goes down the male line, so that's all that's recorded. We know that by v.17 Cain had a wife. Where did she come from? She could only have been Adam and Eve's daughter or possibly Abel's daughter (but I don't think so). There was nobody else around.

It's not until the Law came in Moses' day, 2,500 years later, that we're now forbidden to marry our immediate relatives. Even Abraham married his half-sister, which would have been disallowed by Moses' law. In those early days, it was lawful to marry close relatives. That's another thing that maybe puts people off taking the early chapters of Genesis seriously.

And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

亚伯是牧羊的，该隐是种地的。

Both Abel and Cain worked. They earned a living. They didn't just sit at home scrounging off their parents. They went out and worked. It's God's plan for us all to be busy, to do something useful with our lives, as much as we're able.

Neither Cain nor Abel's occupations were sinful. Both were quite legitimate things to do for a living. Cain followed his father's occupation, tilling the ground. And Abel kept sheep. But what actually was the purpose of keeping sheep? Before the flood, which was 1500 years later, all men were vegans:

Genesis 1:29

"And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat."

神说，看哪，我将遍地上一切结种子的菜蔬和一切树上所结有核的果子，全赐给你们作食物。

It was only after the flood that God allowed men to eat animal flesh:

Genesis 9:3

“Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things.”

凡活着的动物，都可以作你们的食物。这一切我都赐给你们，如同菜蔬一样。

Abel couldn't have been keeping sheep for food. Not even milk. There's no mention of milk as food before the flood. And there was no need for wool either. Not so long ago, Adam and Eve were running about naked. The outside temperature must have been warm enough to allow that. They didn't need woolen clothes for warmth. They were only covered after the fall, to hide their shame. Only after the flood did we begin to have extremes of temperature:

Genesis 8:22

“While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.”

地还存留的时候，稼穡，寒暑，冬夏，昼夜就永不停息了。

So, meat, milk and wool, before the flood, were pretty useless commodities. That's what Cain must have been thinking to himself. Cain must have thought how practical and useful he'd been, producing food, and continuing his father's family business. Abel, on the other hand, was rearing sheep, which, to Cain, were good for nothing. Why was Abel rearing sheep? Was he stupid? There's only one other thing that sheep would have been useful for. Sacrifice.

Cain and Abel would both have learned from their parents the need for the shedding of blood to take away sin. It's hinted at when God covered Adam and Eve with skins. That presupposes the killing of animals:

Genesis 3:21

“Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them.”

耶和华神为亚当和他妻子用皮子作衣服给他们穿。

God could've made grass skirts to cover them. He could've accepted the aprons of fig leaves they'd made themselves. But He didn't. He slew animals, to show them the need for sacrifice. And that's an important principle we need to understand. *“Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin.”*

3 And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD.

有一日，该隐拿地里的出产为供物献给耶和华。

4 And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof.

亚伯也将他羊群中头生的和羊的脂油献上。

Cain knew that God required an offering. His parents taught him that. But, rather than bringing a blood sacrifice, he offered some of the fruit of the ground he'd produced. He was proud of his crops. He wanted to boast to God how he'd been far more useful than Abel. You can tell by this that he didn't take God seriously. He didn't even bother taking the first-fruits, or the best of his crops. He just grabbed any old handful of the fruit of the ground and offered it. But Abel brought the first and the best of his sheep for his offering to God. And we should put God first in our lives too:

Matthew 6:33

“But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”

你们要先求他的国和他的义。这些东西都要加给你们了。

And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering:

耶和华看中了亚伯和他的供物，

5 But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect.

只是看中该隐和他的供物。

To Cain's surprise, it was Abel's offering which God accepted, and not his own.

And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.

该隐就大大地发怒，变了脸色。

So Cain got angry. But he'd got no excuse. He'd been taught from his parents the need for a blood sacrifice to take away sin. What he should've done is sold the best of his crops to Abel in return for a sheep to offer to the Lord. That's what Abel was in the business of providing. But in his heart, Cain thought religion was a waste of time. He only acknowledged God's existence to please his parents. But then God came and actually spoke to him:

6 And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?

耶和华对该隐说，你为什么发怒呢？你为什么变了脸色呢？

7 If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.

你若行得好，岂不蒙悦纳，你若行得不好，罪就伏在门前。它必恋慕你，你却要制伏它。

The Lord didn't punish Cain at this point. He simply gave Cain a warning about sin. If he would flee from sin and do well, he would still be accepted. But if he gave in to sin, then it would end up having dominion over him. Just by God giving him a warning is an act of grace. There was still hope for him.

That's a warning to us today. We're all sinners by nature, spiritually dead. Sin is always lying at our door. It's so easy for us to give in to sin. It's pleasant to our senses. It's easy just to live our lives for our own sinful pleasures. We can't see God, so why bother with Him? Yet, even though we're in such a desperate state, God still offers hope. But it involves repentance and following Him.

Before Adam and Eve fell, they'd had a close relationship with God. But now, that intimacy had been lost. God had forgiven their sin, he'd provided a sacrifice, but their relationship would never be the same as before. Now, they no longer had such direct access to Him. Now, they could only come before God through the sacrifices. Cain had never known a relationship with God at all. The only time God did speak to him was to tell him off. So all he saw of his parent's religion, was an outward ritual. And he thought it a waste of time.

Cain was the next generation down from Adam. Today, we're now three or four generations removed from a generation that at least went to church, and had heard about the things of God. Today, when people think of "church," the only thing they see is the outward ritual, and it means nothing to them. How many of the younger generation today know about anything about true religion? About God? About the Bible? About Jesus Christ? There's a tremendous need today to wake people up to spiritual things, to introduce the Bible to them, to tell them of Jesus Christ and how He can change them.

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.

该隐与他兄弟亚伯说话，二人正在田间。该隐起来打他兄弟亚伯，把他杀了。

Cain didn't heed the Lord's warning. He gave in to his sinful nature. Sin had the final dominion over him, and he killed his brother.

9 And the LORD said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper?

耶和华对该隐说，你兄弟亚伯在哪里？他说，我不知道，我岂是看守我兄弟的吗？

Did Cain really think that killing his brother would solve all his problems, and that God wouldn't know what he'd done? Yet so many people in the world today behave in exactly the same way. They openly commit sin and carry on doing it, and think that by behaving that way, they've defeated God in some way. But one day, there's going to be judgment:

Matthew 12:36

“every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.”

凡人所说的闲话，当审判的日子，必要句句供出来。

2 Corinthians 5:10

“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.”

因为我们众人，必要在基督台前显露出来，叫各人按着本身所行的，或善或恶受报。

10 And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.

耶和華說，你作了什么事呢？你兄弟的血，有声音从地里向我哀告。

God knew full well what Cain had done. And so this time Cain does get punished. After the flood, God brought in the death penalty for murder:

Genesis 9:6

“Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man.”

凡流人血的，他的血也必被人所流。因为神造人是照自己的形像造的。

But God, still in His mercy, doesn't punish Cain by death, but something else:

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

地开了口，从你手里接受你兄弟的血。现在你必从这地受咒诅

12 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.

你种地，地不再给你效力。你必流离飘荡在地上。

Cain was given a curse that stopped him from making his living. There was already a curse on the ground from Adam's sin, and now it was made even worse for Cain. Wherever and whenever Cain tried to plant anything in future, God made sure the ground wouldn't produce. He'd lost his livelihood and was destined to be a fugitive and a vagabond, a wanderer, for the rest of his life.

13 And Cain said unto the LORD, My punishment is greater than I can bear.

该隐对耶和华说，我的刑罚太重，过于我所能当的。

And even though the punishment was so merciful, Cain continued to complain at God. He'd been so attached to his work in this world, that when it was taken away, he couldn't cope any more. It's a God-given thing to earn a living, and we should do our work well. But if ever it becomes so important to us that we can't live without it, we've given it too high a priority.

We ought to have far more concern for our spiritual welfare than our earthly one. We're only here for a short time. Getting ready for eternity, making ourselves right with God, is far more important than a few years of prosperity here. But Cain doesn't recognise that, and carries on complaining:

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 findeth me shall slay me.

你如今赶逐我离开这地，以致不见你面。我必流离飘荡在地上，凡遇见我的必杀我。

He complains that he'll be killed. Well, he should have thought of that before he killed Abel. He did something to someone else, and then complains when he realises that same thing could happen to himself.

Matthew 7:12

"Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets."

所以无论何事，你们愿意人怎样待你们，你们也要怎样待人。因为这就是律法和先知的道理。

15 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.

耶和华对他说，凡杀该隐的，必遭报七倍。耶和华就给该隐立一个记号，免得人遇见他就杀他。

God put a mark on Cain to deter anyone from killing him. We don't quite know what this mark was exactly, but wherever he went, people would know that if they killed him, sevenfold vengeance would be taken out upon them.

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

于是该隐离开耶和华的面，去住在伊甸东边挪得之地。

And what did Cain do? Did he cry for mercy? Did he ask for forgiveness? God would still have been merciful to him even then, if he'd done so. But no. He walked away. He *“went out from the presence of the Lord.”*

Where was the presence of the Lord? It was where the sacrifices were, where the worship of God was practised by Adam and Eve. Cain made a conscious decision to leave his family, said goodbye to their religion, and went, with his wife, as far away as he could from any mention of God, to the land of Nod.

Cain was the firstborn son of Adam and Eve. He would have received the birthright, and all its privileges. But he turned his back on everything and walked away, to live his own life, his own way, as far as possible from God.

That was his own choice, but the saddest thing of all is that by moving so far away, not one of his future descendants would ever get to know about God. His children would be born many miles away from any mention of the Lord. None of Cain's descendants ever believed, and eventually they all perished in the flood, and Cain's line died out completely.

In verses 17-24 we've got a brief description of what happened to Cain and his family in Nod.

17 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.

该隐与妻子同房，他妻子就怀孕，生了以诺。该隐建造了一座城，就按着他儿子的名，将那城叫作以诺。

Not being able to work on the land, Cain built a city instead. Without God, without religion, what do men do? Get together. Form communities. Support each other. Encourage each other everything's all right, there's no God, and they're all in control of their own destiny. Men are doing this today. Cofi Anan said, *“When we all get together, we are the ultimate power.”*

And the city was named after Enoch, who was Cain's firstborn son. Men try to build a name for themselves. They name cities, buildings, businesses after themselves. Trying to make themselves remembered long after they're gone. That's not the Christian way. We shouldn't exalt self. The Christian way is the way of self-abasement. The only one who should be exalted in our lives is God.

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

以诺生以拿。以拿生米户雅利。米户雅利生玛土撒利。玛土撒利生拉麦。

Five generations pass. And see what happens when men walk away from God:

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

拉麦娶了两个妻，一个名叫亚大，一个名叫洗拉。

People end up making their own rules, their own morality. God had said:

Genesis 2:24

“Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.”

因此，人要离开父母与妻子连合，二人成为一体。

But the men of the city of Enoch, after five generations of living there, decided to change the rules. They redefined marriage. The further generations get away from any godly influence in their lives, this sort of thing will happen.

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

亚大生雅八。雅八就是住帐棚，牧养牲畜之人的祖师。

Jabal’s family, the sixth generation from Cain, became cattle ranchers. What’s the point keeping cattle? In Cain’s society, they wouldn’t even have been used for sacrifice. Well, maybe leather would have been useful, but now they’ve shaken off God’s prohibitions, maybe they had started eating meat.

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

雅八的兄弟名叫犹八。他是一切弹琴吹箫之人的祖师。

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

洗拉又生了土八该隐。他是打造各样铜铁利器的（或作是铜匠铁匠的祖师）。土八该隐的妹子是拿玛。

Other sons of Lamech became musicians and metalworkers. These were all legitimate occupations. It doesn’t say they were opening betting shops. They probably were, but there was still something in their consciences that made them think it good to have a veneer of morality in their society. They learned practical skills and taught them to their children. They filled their lives with worldly knowledge. They kept themselves busy, to stop themselves thinking about eternal things, to forget God as best they could. But where are they now? What did it all achieve? All forgotten. All swept away in the flood.

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.

拉麦对他两个妻子说，亚大，洗拉，听我的声音。拉麦的妻子，细听我的话语，壮年人伤我，我把他杀了。少年人损我，我把他害了。（或作我杀壮士却伤自己，我害幼童却损本身）

24 If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold.

若杀该隐，遭报七倍。杀拉麦，必遭报七十七倍。

Not content with having two wives, Lamech also became a murderer. He killed someone, and boasted about it to his wives, mocking God's judgment on Cain. That's interesting. That society had all tried its best, for five generations, to get away from God, to block God out of their memories completely. But God still had a witness among them, in the mark that He'd put on Cain. It's impossible to get away from God altogether.

And in the last two verses, we see what happened, in contrast to Cain, with the rest of his family.

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.

亚当又与妻子同房，她就生了一个儿子，起名叫塞特，意思说，神另给我立了一个儿子代替亚伯，因为该隐杀了他。

Seth had been born to Eve to replace Cain as the firstborn. It's through this line that eventually Christ would be born many generations later.

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.

塞特也生了一个儿子，起名叫以挪士。那时候，人才求告耶和華的名。

Seth's firstborn was Enos, and we've got a very interesting phrase here: "Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord." That implies nobody had done that before. But they had the sacrifices. When Cain had left them, it was said he "went out from the presence of the Lord." What does it mean that only in the days of Enos, "then began men to call upon the name of the LORD"?

We're told in chapter 5, that Adam had Seth when he was 130 years old, and Seth had Enos when he was 105 years old. So for at least 235 years, we're told here that, although they had "the presence of the Lord" in the animal sacrifices and the outward worship of God, nobody had truly "called on the name of the Lord" in their hearts. Only in Enos's day did they start doing so.

God had shown to Adam and Eve something about true religion. He'd showed them the need for a blood sacrifice to take away sin. But they also knew that the animal sacrifices were only ever a picture:

Hebrews 10:4

"it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins."

因为公牛和山羊的血，断不能除罪。

The sacrifices were only pictures to teach that true religion is spiritual. It's invisible, we can't see it. The sacrifices were where *"the presence of the Lord"* was. But apart from Adam, Eve and Abel, for at least 235 years, nobody else had *"called on the name of the Lord"* for themselves.

Just going to church isn't enough. Church is where we can say *"the presence of the Lord"* is today. It's good to go to church, that's where God is worshipped, and that's where we learn about the Lord and His ways, week by week.

But each one of us needs to know God personally for ourselves. We need individually to call on His name. To repent of our sins. To acknowledge our sinful nature before Him, and ask Him, cry to Him, to change us from what we are, and make us new creatures. We need to put our trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, whose blood sacrifice is the one that truly does atone for sin. Only then can we live lives pleasing to God, and in the end, be saved from our sins.

Romans 10:13

"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

因为凡求告主名的，就必得救。

For 235 years, nobody had done that. After Abel's death, Adam had Eve and Eve had Adam, and they were the only true believers in the world, desperately trying to teach their children about true religion through the sacrifices, and failing. Only in the days of Enos, did some people finally understand, and begin to realise their need, and call on the Lord for themselves. We haven't got that long. We're not going to live that long. We know not what a day may bring forth. Let's all make sure that we *"call on the name of the Lord"* now, and not give Him rest until He's established His kingdom in our hearts.

Isaiah 55:6,7

"Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

恶人当离弃自己的道路。不义的人当除掉自己的意念，归向耶和华，耶和华就必怜恤他，当归向我们的神，因为神必广行赦免。