

Timeline of Truth

Then What?: A Timeline of Genesis 4, the First Murder (Genesis 4:3-16)

<p>³ And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the LORD.</p>	<p>(3) Cain Offered to God <u>Garden Food</u> Cain approached God on his own terms, not God’s terms.</p>
<p>⁴ Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat.</p>	<p>(4a) Abel Offered to God a <u>Lamb</u> Abel brought the first & best of his flock for a blood sacrifice, on God’s terms.</p>
<p>And the LORD respected Abel and his offering,</p>	<p>(4b) God Accepted <u>Abel</u> and His Offering</p>
<p>⁵ but He did not respect Cain and his offering</p>	<p>(5a) God Did Not Accept <u>Cain</u> and His Offering Somehow (Was it audibly? Did God did not consume the offering with fire?) Cain was immediately aware of God’s rejection of him and his offering, and God’s acceptance of Abel and his offering. We know that God talked directly to Cain before and after the murder (audibly).</p>
<p>And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.</p>	<p>(5b) Cain Becomes <u>Angry</u> Cain responded, not with a correction of his attitude and offering, but with anger. This seems to be rooted in rebellion and a heart of sin which refused to approach God on God’s terms. 1 John 3:12 not as Cain <i>who</i> was of the wicked one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his works were evil and his brother's righteous.</p>
<p>⁶ So the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen?" ⁷ "If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire <i>is</i> for you, but you should rule over it."</p>	<p>(6-7) God <u>Confronts Cain</u> God was audibly talking to Cain (and others?) during this time. God always seems to have given at least some "input" (revelation) throughout history. At the very least, creation (Rom 1; Psalm 14) God addresses Cain’s sin (regarding the offering, or just sin in general?). It seems that God was speaking of a choice, and a lifestyle (doing what Abel did in heart and action)</p>
<p>⁸ Now 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 killed him.</p>	<p>(8) Cain <u>Kills Abel</u> Instead of heeding God’s admonition to overcome sin, he rejects God and sins even further, murdering Abel, who by his actions spoke for God. (Luke 11:49-51 – Abel is grouped with the prophets) An unchecked sinful heart can lead even to murder!</p>
<p>⁹ Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where <i>is</i> Abel your brother?" He said, "I do not know. <i>Am</i> I my brother's keeper?"</p>	<p>(9) God <u>Questions Cain – Where?</u> Somewhat like God’s question to Adam. Cain responds with a now well-known question. (By the way, the answer is "yes," and Cain knew exactly where Abel was.) Are we trying to deflect our sin by asking questions?</p>
<p>¹⁰ And He said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood cries out to Me from the ground.</p>	<p>(10) God <u>Questions Cain – What?</u> Somewhat like God’s question to Adam. "What" addresses the offense, not the reason / excuse for doing it (which doesn’t matter – sin is sin). Lots of discussion about the possible meaning of this verse. Cain was a keeper of the ground. Did he react by offering Abel as a sacrifice to it? Was he offering a blood sacrifice his own way? (You want a blood sacrifice? Here’s a blood sacrifice!)</p>

<p>11 "So now you <i>are</i> cursed from the earth, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand.</p> <p>12 "When you till the ground, it shall no longer yield its strength to you. A fugitive and a vagabond you shall be on the earth."</p>	<p>(11-12) <u>God Punishes Cain</u></p> <p>No death penalty had been imposed yet. God does curse Cain, making the rest of Cain's life miserable as a punishment for his murderous actions.</p> <p>God's punishment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God curses Cain "from the earth," in connection to where Cain had placed the body of his brother. God diminishes the ground's ability to yield. It would apparently take much more work to get food from the ground (what Cain made his living doing). • God drives Cain out as a fugitive (cf. v. 14; running from others who may want to now kill him), and a vagabond (one without a permanent home). It also is clear (v. 14) that Cain would no longer have any direct access to God because of this.
<p>13 And Cain said to the LORD, "My punishment <i>is</i> greater than I can bear!</p> <p>14 "Surely You have driven me out this day from the face of the ground; I shall be hidden from Your face; I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond on the earth, and it will happen <i>that</i> anyone who finds me will kill me."</p>	<p>(13-14) <u>Cain Complains to God</u></p> <p>Cain has the audacity to complain about his lot (after having killed Abel). Our sinful hearts are self-focused and selfish to the end.</p> <p>Cain was worried about someone killing <i>him</i>.</p>
<p>15 And the LORD said to him, "Therefore, whoever kills Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold." And the LORD set a mark on Cain, lest anyone finding him should kill him.</p>	<p>(15) <u>God Shows Cain Grace / Protects Cain</u></p> <p>God shows mercy to Cain by providing a mark of protection.</p>
<p>16 Then Cain went out from the presence of the LORD and dwelt in the land of Nod on the east of Eden.</p>	<p>(16) <u>Cain Is Expelled from God's Presence</u></p> <p>Cain leaves "the presence of the LORD." No more direct interaction with God after this for Cain. (cf. v. 14 "I shall be hidden from Your face")</p>

Righteous vs. Unrighteous: Underlying Lessons from Cain and Able

Here is the premise for my summary points being focused as they are:

Matthew 23:35 "that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar.

Abel is seen as a righteous person (by faith and by his righteous works) who is classified as "righteous" by Matthew. He is the first in a list of all the "righteous" people in the OT that were murdered for being righteous by those who were unrighteous and enemies of God.

Another parallel passage even categorizes Abel as a **prophet**. He is listed as the first prophet to be murdered in the Old Testament. (Zechariah was the last prophet murdered in the Old Testament:

Luke 11:49-51 ⁴⁹ "Therefore the wisdom of God also said, 'I will send them prophets and apostles, and *some* of them they will kill and persecute,' ⁵⁰ "that the blood of all the prophets which was shed from the foundation of the world may be required of this generation, ⁵¹ "from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah who perished between the altar and the temple. Yes, I say to you, it shall be required of this generation.

As believers, we represent God to those who reject Him. That is our mission, our job. God clearly indicates that we will be treated wrongly for this, in word, in physical abuse, and even by murder.

Think of this. God could have divinely prevented Abel's murder. Instead, he let Abel's works speak for themselves, and even though God graciously warned Cain of the dangers of yielding to sin, God let him choose. Yet God used Abel's righteous works to confront Cain before the murder, and after the murder. ***God cares about unsaved people, and uses our believing words and works, even when the unsaved people (the enemies of God) reject Him!***

Ultimately, we obey God, and God uses us to reach others or even to condemn others (in contrasting types of works).

A simple theme could be: ***God Uses Our Good Works***

1. ***People Who Love God & Who Hate God Live Alongside Each Other***

- Cain, "who was of the wicked one" and Abel, who was righteous.
- Those that love the world, and those that don't. (1 John 2:15-17)
- Those that fear God and those that don't.
- Those that believe on Jesus and those that don't. (John 3:18)

John 3:16-18 – For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. He who believes in Him is **not condemned**; but he who does not believe is **condemned** already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

John 15:18-21 – If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before [it hated] you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also. But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me.

James 4:4 – Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

2. ***People Who Love God Will Be Treated Badly by Those Who Hate God***

Philippians 1:27-30 – Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel, and not in any way terrified by your adversaries, which is to them a proof of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that from God. For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake, having the same conflict which you saw in me and now hear [is] in me.

1 John 3:11-13 – For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another, not as Cain [who] was of the wicked one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his works were evil and his brothers righteous. Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you.

3. God Wants Us to Let Our Words and Works Speak for Him, No Matter What

Matthew 5:10-12 – Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great [is] your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Matthew 5:43-45 - You have heard that it was said, You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy. But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

Romans 12:14 – Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.

1 Peter 2:20-24 – For what credit [is it] if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this [is] commendable before God. For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth; who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed [Himself] to Him who judges righteously; who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness by whose stripes you were healed.

4. God Will Work in the Lives of Those That Hate Him through Our Words and Works

Matthew 5:13-16 – You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all [who are] in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

Ephesians 2:10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Titus 3:8 – This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable to men.

Titus 3:14 – And let our [people] also learn to maintain good works, to [meet] urgent needs, that they may not be unfruitful.