



Magnolia Bible Church Men's Group - Creation Series

Lesson #3 (Genesis 4 – Cain and Abel) | Thursday, February 23, 2017

The principal aim of this series is to explore what the Bible has to say about Creation and the early history of mankind up to the Tower of Babel. The first eleven chapters of Genesis define for us what God's Word has to say about the early days of man. For many people this portion of the Bible is nothing more than fables, while for others it is the inspired Word of God that clearly establishes the origin of man, civilization, and the universe. As Christians, it is important to know what we believe and be able to clearly communicate to others the basis of our beliefs. The world needs well-read, articulate Christians who are confident in their beliefs built on a strong, Biblical foundation.

Listed below is the basic outline for our Creation Series, along with the schedule for each lesson.

Topic	Location in Genesis	Planned Date
Introduction	N/A	February 2
Six days of Creation	Genesis 1 – 2	February 9
The Fall	Genesis 3	February 16
Cain and Abel	Genesis 4	February 23
Genealogy (Adam to Noah)	Genesis 5	March 2
Wickedness of Man	Genesis 6:1-8	March 9
Noah and the Flood	Genesis 6 – 8	March 23 (*)
God's Covenant with Noah / Sons of Noah	Genesis 9	March 30
Table of Nations	Genesis 10	April 6
Tower of Babel	Genesis 11:1-9	April 13

* Spring Break is scheduled for March 13-17; there will not be a lesson on Thursday, March 16.

After reading last week's lesson in Genesis 3 related to The Fall, one might be inclined to think things couldn't get any worse. Well, this week in Genesis 4 we find out they do! As a matter of fact what we'll find in this series is that things continue to get worse and worse, both in terms of man's relationship with God and man's relationship to others. In Genesis 4 we read that after Adam and Eve were banned from the Garden of Eden they started to have children; Cain was born first and then Abel. Although we are not told the names of all of Adam and Eve's children other than Cain, Abel, and Seth, we read in Genesis 5:4: *After Seth was born, Adam lived 800 years and had other sons and daughters.* Their having many children allowed for the earth to be heavily populated in a very short period of time.

In studying Genesis 4 the following divisions can be made.

- a. Genesis 4:1-7 The lives of Cain and Abel
- b. Genesis 4:8-15 Cain kills Abel and God's associated judgment
- c. Genesis 4:19-24 The line of Cain and vocations
- d. Genesis 4:25-26 The line of Seth and men calling on God

Like many of you I have read the story of Cain and Abel many times. As I have gotten older I have become acutely aware of the incredible danger we see in the life of Cain, especially his irreverent view towards God. Two major observations made in studying Cain's life in this passage are addressed in the following sections.

- **Cain's failure to put forth his best and subsequent "pouting".** In Genesis 4 we read that unlike Abel who brought the best of his flocks, Cain did not bring the best of his produce as an offering to the Lord. In verses 6 and 7 we read some very powerful words from God:

⁶Then the Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? ⁷If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? 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."

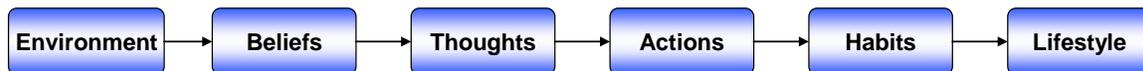
When you and I do not deal with sin in our lives, it will **take over**. We read about this in Romans when Paul said that God gave mankind over to their shameful acts. As Believers we are not immune from sin and temptation; however, through the Holy Spirit we have the power to overcome sin.

- **Cain's insolent attitude towards God after killing Abel.** In response to God's questioning Cain regarding the whereabouts of Abel, Cain's response in verse 9 was, "I don't know," he replied. "Am I my brother's keeper?" This response wreaks of arrogance, disrespect, haughtiness, and irreverence! Within one generation man had gone from walking alongside God to showing complete disrespect towards Him. As you and I look at our own lives, how would God characterize our respect towards Him? *Our answer probably lies more in what we do, rather than what we say.*

Questions & Deep Thoughts

1. Previously, in studying Genesis 3 we discussed the **Sin Progression Chart** shown below. God's words to Cain in Genesis 4:7 (*But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must master it*) are equally appropriate for us today. What is it about sin that makes it so enticing and enveloping (i.e., takes over our lives)?

The Sin Progression (James 1:12-18)



2. What did Cain's response to God tell us about him? What do we see in common between Adam and Eve's response at The Fall and what we observe with Cain after he murders Abel?
3. God obviously had to deal with Cain's sin.
 - a. Identify the differences between **grace** and **mercy**.
 - b. What options existed for God in terms of His response to Cain's sin in murdering Abel?
 - c. What was God's response and what does it tell us about His grace?