

because Moses has been closely associated with these documents by virtue of his leadership of the Israelite people in their move from slaves to nation. These documents have also been labeled the Law of Moses as well.

Although Moses certainly had a lot to do with the materials found in these documents, several indicators inside them suggest that at least in their present form they came into existence much later than the lifetime of Moses himself. References such as to the Canaanites being in the land 'at that time' (Gen. 12:6) suggesting that 'now' they were no longer in that land, as well as Moses' own death narrated in Deut. 34 which is obviously narrated from another person's perspective rather than Moses' -- all these and many more began suggesting to Bible students -- both Jewish and Christian -- as early as the middle ages that the compositional history is more complex than simply assigning it to Moses would allow.

Beginning in the late 1500s Christian scholars began probing the origins intensely in light of the emerging emphasis on study of history, especially ancient history, in western culture. This intense analysis led to the development of the viewpoint that the Pentateuch emerged in its present form in the period from the late exile to the post-exilic era during the fifth and fourth centuries B.C.E. Numerous sources of material were utilized in the composing of these five OT documents, leading to the most commonly adopted view of the J, E, D, P sources as being dominate. This, of course, doesn't deny that much of the source material goes back to Moses himself, but does demonstrate that the book we know as Genesis owes its present form to editors who lived and worked many centuries after the stories themselves took place. Their intent was to carefully preserve the story of 'beginnings,' beginnings of both humanity in general and of the Israelite people in particular. For that we can give thanks to God who providentially guided this process through to its culmination in this first document of our Bible.

Internal History. The time and place markers inside Gen. 4:1-16 are somewhat limited, and are regional in nature.

Regarding the time markers, the duration of the

b. Literary

Genre. The literary nature of our passage has several layers. At the broadest level it is a part of the Primeval History that comprises Genesis 1-11. This material focuses on a universal view dealing with the origins of humanity. The narrative moves

episode covers enough time for the birth of two sons to Adam and Eve. And they have time to grow up into manhood. Gen. 4:17 assumes that Cain is married by the end of the episode, although who his wife was and where she came from are not indicated. A natural assumption is that other people existed by this point in time, although the text doesn't directly address how this could have been possible. When the narrative comes back to Adam and the birth of a third son, Seth, in vv. 25-26, the impression is left that they had only three boys. But in 5:4, the text indicates that Adam and Eve "had other sons and daughters" who are unnamed. According to the text (cf. 5:5), Adam lived 930 years before dying.

Regarding the place markers, the unstated location is where Adam and Eve settled when they were driven from the Garden by God (cf. Gen. 3:24¹). When they left Eden, they settled somewhere in the region, apparently to the east of the garden. But the precise location is not mentioned, and thus is unknown.

The more significant place markers in the passage have to do with the ground (v. 2, 10, 11, 12, 14) and the field (v. 8). Cain as a "tiller of the ground" had a close connection to it, and thus his punishment at the end was based on God turning the ground fruitless from his efforts. The field was intended as a place of no habitation where violent actions would go unnoticed, but the ground became the witness against Cain by crying out over Abel's spilled blood on it (cf. 10).

The only place marker with some geographical specification comes at the end where Cain settled "in the land of Nod, east of Eden" (v. 16). But even here the reference is ambiguous, since the Hebrew word translated Nod literally means "Wandering." Of some possible importance is that this statement signals an eastward migration of humans which is not completed until Gen. 11:2 with the settlement of people in the land of Shinar, in the region of ancient Babylon.

¹He drove out the man; and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim, and a sword flaming and turning to guard the way to the tree of life.

from the creation of the world to the tower of Babel dispersion of humanity. To be sure, this is intended to lay the foundation for the Patriarchal History (chaps. 12-50) that establishes the basis for the Israelite people in bondage in Egypt needing the deliverance

Our passage represents an episodic narrative depicting the first human murder. The duration of the narrative is not very long and the focus is on the act of Cain's murder of Abel and the repercussions this brought upon Cain once he was confronted with his crime by God.

2”The ‘Yahwist’; one of the hypothetical sources of the Pentateuch according to the Documentary Hypothesis, dated around the 10th century BCE and distinguished by its use of Tetragrammaton (YHWH) as name for God as well as its folkloristic character and anthropomorphic descriptions of the divine.” quoted from A.Y. Reed at <http://www.annettereed.com/RS-2VV3/handout1.pdf> (cited 09/29/08).

- 2:4b-9 Creation of the “Human”
- 2:10-14 The Four Rivers
- 2:15-17 The Command
- 2:18-24 Creation of woman
- 2:25-37 The sin of Adam and Eve
- 3:8-24 Consequences of Sin

4:17-26 The Cainite genealogy
5:1-32 The genealogy of Adam

10:1—11:27 The Nations of the World

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τὸν Καὶν λίαν καὶ
 συνέπεσεν τῷ προσώπῳ
 καὶ εἶπεν κύριος
 ὁ θεὸς τῷ Καὶν ἵνα
 τί περίλυπος ἐγένου
 καὶ ἵνα τί συνέπεσεν
 τὸ πρόσωπόν σου ὅτι
 εἰς ὁρθῶς προσενέγκῃς
 ὁρθῶς δὲ μὴ διέλῃς
 ἡμαρτες ἡσύχασον πρὸς
 σὲ ἢ ἀποστροφὴ αὐτοῦ
 καὶ σὺ ἄρξεις αὐτοῦ

became very angry and
 his countenance fell.

6 Then the LORD
 said to Cain, “Why are
 you angry? And why
 has your countenance
 fallen? 7 If you do well,
 will not *your counte-*
nance be lifted up? And
 if you do not do well, sin
 is crouching at the door;
 and its desire is for you,
 but you must master it.”

countenance fell.

6 The Lord said to
 Cain, “Why are you an-
 gry, and why has your
 countenance fallen? 7
 If you do well, will you
 not be accepted? And if
 you do not do well, sin
 is lurking at the door;
 its desire is for you, but
 you must master it.”

jected.

6 “Why are you
 so angry?” the LORD
 asked him. “Why do
 you look so dejected? 7
 You will be accepted if
 you respond in the right
 way. But if you refuse to
 respond correctly, then
 watch out! Sin is wait-
 ing to attack and destroy
 you, and you must sub-
 due it.”

Notes:

In this first segment, two emphases can be found. The bringing of an offering by the two men with God’s response is found in vv. 1-5, and then God’s questioning of Cain over his anger at being rejected, vv. 6-7. A climax is reached in God’s declaration in verse seven.

The Offerings, vv. 1-5. The first two verses echo other sections, particularly the phrase “the man knew his wife,” as is reflected in 4.1, 17, 25. Wenham (*Word Biblical Commentary*, Logos Systems) notes:

Each section opens similarly “Man/Cain/Adam knew his wife. She conceived, gave birth to ... and she said (called) ...,” v 1; cf. vv 17, 25. These parallel formulas show that the Cainite genealogy (vv 17–24) is a continuation of the genealogy begun in 4:1–2, while the subtle switch from **הָאָדָם** with the article “man” in v 1 to **אָדָם** without it, “Adam,” in v 26 prepares the way for the genealogy in chap. 5, which also uses the anarthrous form “Adam.”

The depiction of sexual union between Adam and Eve presents a translation dilemma to modern Bible translators, as is noted by Reyburn and Frey (*UBS Translator’s Handbook*, Logos Systems):

In translation it is important to select a term or expression for sex between spouses that can be read in public and in a mixed group without feelings of embarrassment, shock, or amusement. This may require the use of an inoffensive expression that only indirectly refers to the sexual act. For example, ³FRCL says “from



her union with Adam,” ⁴SPCL “The man joined himself with his wife,” ⁵GECL “Adam slept with his wife.” Other expressions used are “to sit on the bed together,” “to cover themselves,” or “to lie down together.” Some languages will find it more natural to refer to the couple “living together,” with the child being born as a matter of course; for example, “Adam stayed with his wife, until the woman became pregnant.”

In the history of interpretation considerable debate has surfaced over whether Cain was conceived before his parents left the Garden of Eden, or whether they began having sexual relations after being driven out of the garden. The significance of this debate revolves around the issue of whether sexual activity even between a husband and a wife is a part of the fall or not. Note the summation of the early church father discussion by Louth and Conti (*Ancient Christian Commentary on the Scriptures*, Logos Systems):

While Chrysostom argues that there was no talk in Scripture of coitus until after the banishment

³FRCL French common language version

⁴SPCL SPANISH COMMON LANGUAGE VERSION

⁵GECL GERMAN COMMON LANGUAGE VERSION

from paradise, Augustine argues in principle for sufficient grace for honorable nuptial union even in paradise (see Gen 1:28). The birth of Cain is a consequence of Adam's fall, which led him to lose his spiritual wisdom and to acquire a worldly knowledge (SYMEON THE NEW THEOLOGIAN).

But in light of the earlier declaration in 1:27-28⁶ such a view is hardly sustainable.

The challenge to the biblical scholar in these first two verses revolves around some incredibly complex and obscure uses of Hebrew words and constructions in the original language text. Consequently some caution needs to be used in exegeting the precise wording of the sentences. Wenham (*WBC*, Logos Systems) highlights some of these issues:

"Cain ... I have gained a man." This translation aims to draw attention to the assonance in the Hebrew between "Cain"/*qayin* and "I have gained"/*qānītī*. Other key phrases in the story also seem to make phonetic allusions to the name Cain—"Cain arose" *וַיַּקְם קַיִן*, v 8 (cf. *yqm/qyn*); "... Cain will be punished/avenged sevenfold," *וַיִּתֶּבֶשׂ סִקֵּי קַיִן* v 15; and similarly, v 24). Echoes of Cain's name reverberate through this story, just as in other passages names of the leading characters are often alluded to in the narratives about them (cf. Adam in chap. 2; Abram in chap. 12, etc.; Strus, *Nomen-Omen*, 172–74).

The etymology of Cain's name offered in the text is "poetic," as there is no intrinsic connection between *וַיַּקְם* and *הִנֵּק*. In this respect it resembles the etymologies of Seth, 4:25; Noah, 5:29; Levi, 29:34; Judah, 29:35, etc. (Strus, *Nomen-Omen*, 65–67). The historical etymology of Cain is obscure. It has often been explained as "smith," or "metalworker" on the basis of Arabic *qaynun* and Aramaic *הַאֲנִיק* (cf. "Qenan," Gen 5:12–14). In support of this



derivation, v 22, which speaks of Tubal-Cain as the father of metalworkers, and 2 Sam 21:16, where the Hebrew word *וִיֵק* means "a lance," i.e., "something worked in metal," are appealed to. Arguing in a slightly different direction, Cassuto thinks the proper name "Cain" must mean "something worked, i.e., a creature." But really, as Westermann says, there is too little information to be sure about the original meaning of the name.

וְהוּא תֵא שִׂיא יְתִינֵק "I have gained a man with the LORD's help." "Every word of this little sentence is difficult" (von Rad, 103). First, there is the problem of the meaning of *הִנֵּק* "gain." Then, it is peculiar to call a baby boy "a man." Finally, the last phrase, *וְהוּא תֵא*, is very strange. Is *תֵא* the definite object marker? In that case we ought to translate "I have acquired a man the LORD." Or is it a preposition that normally means "with," as our translation assumes?

הִנֵּק means "acquire, buy" (e.g., 25:10; 33:19) more commonly than "to create" (e.g., 14:19, 22). Given the preoccupation of Gen 1–3 with creation, the rarer meaning would seem more appropriate here. However, the existence of second-millennium names such as *itti-ili ašāmšu* ("I bought him from God") gives the edge to the other translation as it also explains

⁶NRSV: 27 So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. 28 God blessed them, and God said to them, "*Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth* and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth."

the problematic preposition **אִתּוֹ**, though **מֵאִתּוֹ** “from” would have been more idiomatic Hebrew (R. Borger, *VT* 9 [1959] 85–86). Nevertheless, connections with the earlier story cannot be eliminated. **אִישׁ** “man” is used nowhere else to describe a baby boy. Its use here is most probably to be explained as an allusion to 2:23, “from a man she was taken.” Building on this and other links with the preceding narratives and on the interpretation of **הָנָה** as “create,” Cassuto and Westermann interpret Eve’s remark as a shout of triumph at putting herself on a par with Yahweh as creator: “I have created a man equally with the LORD.” Westermann admits, though, that if this was Eve’s meaning, she should have said “as [**כִּי**] the LORD.” On the other hand, it is also unparalleled for **אִתּוֹ** to mean “with the help of.” So some have suggested repointing it **אֵלָיו** “sign of” and translating “I have gained a man the sign of the LORD,” (e.g., P. A. H. de Boer, *NedTT*, 31 [1942] 197–212). Some read it as the object marker and translate “I have gained a man, the LORD,” i.e., Cain is the son of God promised in 3:15 (so Luther and early Lutheran exegetes [T. Gallus, *Die “Frau” in Gen 3:15*, 31–32]). Yet the majority of commentators have argued that since it is a regular feature of the promises to the patriarchs that God will be with them, implicitly to help them, it is justified here to translate **אִתּוֹ** “with the help of” (cf. 21:20; 26:3, 24; 28:15; 31:3; 39:2).

For these reasons it seems more likely that Eve meant “I have gained a man with the LORD’s help” than “I have created a man as the LORD (has done).” Nevertheless there is an ambiguity about her expression which may suggest that she coyly compared her achievement with Yahweh’s greater works and hoped that he would be with her son.

The identification of the career orientation of Abel and Cain poses some challenges as well. Abel was a shepherd and Cain a farmer. No particular stigma



is generally attached to either of these vocations in our world. But in the ancient world things were often different. Some try to see this often negative attitude toward farmers such as Cain was as a basis for the differing approaches that God took toward the two brothers. But the text itself doesn’t indicate that what they did for a living as grown adults played any role in how God treated them, as Reyburn and Frey (*UBS Handbook*, Logos Systems) note:

Although the different occupations are given, the narrative that follows does not focus on the conflict of occupations between crop-farmer and herder. The conflict concerns the sacrifices and the attitudes of the persons who present them..

The heart of this segment is found in vv. 3-5 where both brothers present an offering to God with one being accepted and the other rejected:

In the course of time Cain brought to the Lord an offering of the fruit of the ground, and Abel for his part brought of the firstlings of his flock, their fat portions. And the Lord had regard for Abel and his offering, but for Cain and his offering he had no regard.

Somewhat surprising is that these two brother made sacrifice to God. Nothing in the text leading up to this prepares the readers to expect such worship of God. Perhaps it does imply a certain level of training by their parents, Adam and Eve.

God’s differing responses to the two offerings is what puzzles most commentators. Reyburn and Frey (*UBS Handbook*, Logos Systems) provide a helpful but not overly technical summation:

And the Lord had regard for Abel and his offering: had regard for translates Hebrew “to look at,” which in this context is “to look at

⁷*NedTT Netherlands theologische tijdschrift*

with favor” or “to look favorably on.” TEV says “was pleased with,” and FRCL “The Lord accepted favorably Abel and his offering.” This clause may also be translated, for example, “Abel and his gift pleased the Lord” or “The Lord was pleased with Abel and the gift he had given him.” One translation says idiomatically “The Lord desired Abel and his gift, but he didn’t want Cain” In order to avoid repeating the words for gift or giving too many times, another translation has “The Lord was glad with Abel’s behavior, but he was not glad with Cain’s.”

But for Cain and his offering he had no regard: but marks a strong contrast between God’s acceptance of Abel and his rejection of Cain. TEV makes the contrast effective with “but he rejected Cain.” **He** [the Lord] **had no regard** is the same verb as used in verse 4. Interpreters offer many reasons why God may have rejected Cain’s offering; however, the narrator is silent on this matter.

Much of the interpretive history has centered on why God responded as He did. Was there something wrong with Cain’s offering? Was Abel’s animal sacrifice automatically acceptable? Did Cain possess an evil heart and this was what made his offering unacceptable to God? Reyburn and Frey correctly observe that the biblical narrator makes no attempt to answer this question of why. Some New Testament writers reflect typical later Jewish understandings of this issue, as is seen in the following passages:

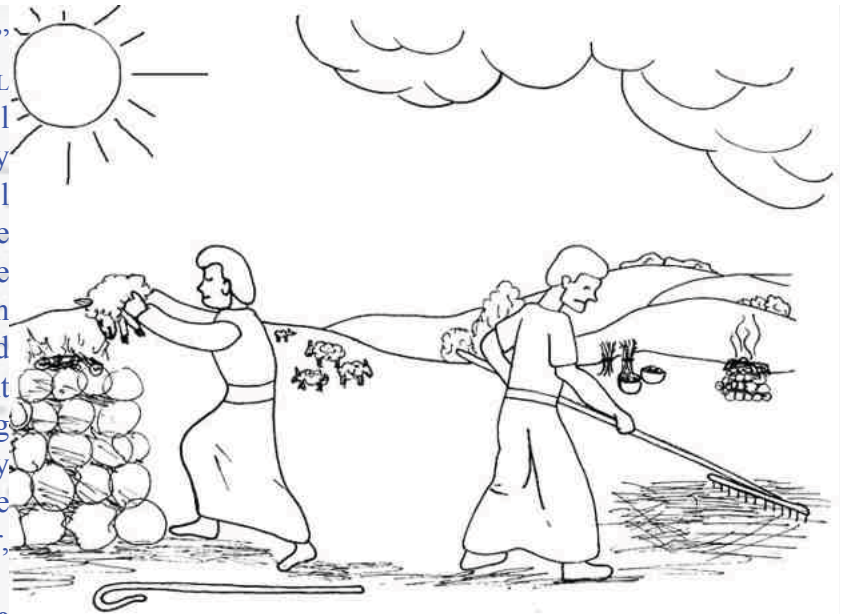
Matthew 23:34-36:

34 Therefore I send you prophets, sages, and scribes, some of whom you will kill and crucify, and some you will flog in your synagogues and pursue from town to town, 35 so that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed on earth, from **the blood of righteous Abel** to the blood of Zechariah son of Barachiah, whom you murdered between the sanctuary and the altar. 36 Truly I tell you, all this will come upon this generation.

Here Abel is assumed to have been righteous before God, and thus his killing shed righteous blood.

Hebrews 11:4:

By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain’s. Through this he received approval as righteous, God himself giving approval to his gifts; he died, but through his faith he still speaks.



1 John 3:12:

We must not be like **Cain who was from the evil one and murdered his brother**. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother’s righteous.

Differing views are reflected here, with one focusing on Abel as being righteous, or on Cain as being evil. No indication of why is suggested apart from the emphasis in Hebrews on Abel’s faith. But the Genesis narrator does not speculate at this point and in so doing underscores the sovereignty of God in choosing to accept and to reject.

Wenham (WBC, Logos Systems) summarizes modern probings into the why issue:

Why Cain’s offering should have been rejected while Abel’s was accepted has occasioned much perplexity. At least five different types of explanation have been offered. (1) God prefers shepherds to gardeners (Gunkel). This seems improbable in the light of 2:15 where Adam was appointed to till the soil. (2) Animal sacrifice is more acceptable than vegetable offerings (Skinner, Jacob). While blood sacrifices were obviously regarded as more valuable, every stratum of the law recognizes the propriety and necessity of grain offerings as well. (3) God’s motives are inscrutable: his preference for Abel’s sacrifice reflects the mystery of divine election (von Rad, Vawter, Golka, and apparently Westermann). Clearly the preference for Abel does anticipate a frequent pattern in Genesis of the choice of the younger brother (cf. Jacob/Esau, Isaac/Ishmael, etc.), but this type of explanation should only be resorted to if the text gives no other motives for divine action. (4) Inspired by Heb. 11:4, “By faith Abel offered to

God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain,” some commentators (e.g., Calvin, Dillmann, Driver, König) suggest that it was the differing motives of the two brothers, known only to God, that accounts for their different treatment. (5) The commonest view among commentators, ancient and modern, is that it was the different approach to worship that counted and that this was reflected in the quality of their gifts. Whereas Cain offered simply “some produce of the land,” Abel offered the choicest animals from his flock, “firstlings” and “their fat portions.” The sacrificial law underlines frequently that only perfect, unblemished animals may be offered in sacrifice (Lev 1:3; 22:20–22, etc.). “I will not offer burnt offerings to the LORD ... that cost me nothing” (2 Sam 24:24). Since this is the first account of sacrifice in the OT we might well expect an allusion to this fundamental principle in this story.

Although we don't know with certainty why God accepted Abel's offering and rejected that of Cain, we can know that God won't accept just anything that we throw up to Him.

Cain's anger, vv. 6-7. The narrative quickly moves beyond God's reaction to the two offerings to focus on Cain's reaction of anger at having his offering rejected:

So Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.

Reyburn and Frey (*UBS Handbook*) note:

So Cain was very angry: So translates the usual Hebrew connective, which here marks a consequence. **Angry** translates a word whose verb form means to burn. In English it is similar to saying “he became inflamed with anger.” The reason for Cain's heated reaction was that God rejected him and his offering. Cain is apparently envious of his brother's acceptance, but the story does not reveal how Cain knew about that. Many languages have figurative expressions for being angry. For example, “So Cain's insides burned,” “So Cain became hot,” or “Therefore Cain's innermost boiled up.”

And his countenance fell: **countenance** means “face.” The whole expression is an idiom meaning “he put on a sad face” or “he took on an ugly look.” TEV has “he scowled in anger.” Idioms similar to the Hebrew are quite common in other languages; examples of their use here are “his face changed [its appearance]” or “his face became bad.”

Then God rebukes Cain for his reaction:

The Lord said to Cain, “Why are you angry, and why has your countenance fallen? If you do well, will you



not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is lurking at the door; its desire is for you, but you must master it.”

On this statement, Wenham (WBC) observes:

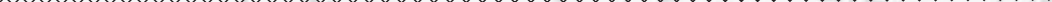
“The most obscure verse in Genesis” (Procksch). Because of its grammatical improprieties and its unusual terminology, commentators are forced to choose between emendation and positing a rare meaning for **קָיַם** “crouching.” To compound the problems, other words are of uncertain meaning.

Reyburn and Frey (*UBS Handbook*) also note the same thing:

This verse is difficult to interpret, as can be seen by comparing different translations. The questions in verse show that the Lord does not approve of Cain's reaction, and so he goes on to advise Cain what he should do.

But the general thrust of the two rhetorical questions pointed at Cain is reasonably clear. If he does what is proper, acceptance comes. And if not, then something is very wrong down inside Cain. And he needs to come to grips with that.

What can we learn from these verses that applies to us today? Some possibilities may include the following. 1) When we come to worship God



NLT

8 Later Cain suggested to his brother, Abel, "Let's go out into the fields." And while they were there, Cain attacked and killed his brother.

9 Afterward the LORD asked Cain, "Where is your brother? Where is Abel?" "I don't know!" Cain retorted. "Am I supposed to keep track of him wherever he goes?" 10 But the LORD said, "What have you done? Listen – your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground! 11 You are hereby banished from the ground you have defiled with your brother's blood. 12 No longer will it yield abundant crops for you, no matter how hard you work! From now on you will be a homeless fugitive on the earth, constantly wandering from place to place."

13 Cain said to the Lord, "My punishment is greater than I can bear! 14 Today you have driven me away from the soil, and I shall be hidden from your face; I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth, and anyone who meets me may kill me." 15

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ὁ θεός οὐχ οὕτως πᾶς ὁ ἀποκτείνας Καὶν ἐπταὶ ἐκδικούμενα παραλύσει καὶ ἔθετο κύριος ὁ θεὸς σημεῖον τῷ Καὶν τοῦ μὴ ἀνελεῖν αὐτὸν πάντα τὸν εὐρίσκοντα αὐτόν

¹⁶ἔξῃλθεν δὲ Καὶν ἀπὸ προσώπου τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ὥκησεν ἐν γῇ Ναιδ κατέναντι Εδεμ

whoever kills Cain, vengeance will be taken on him sevenfold.” And the LORD appointed a sign for Cain, so that no one finding him would slay him.

16 Then Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

Then the Lord said to him, “Not so! Whoever kills Cain will suffer a sevenfold vengeance.” And the Lord put a mark on Cain, so that no one who came upon him would kill him.

16 Then Cain went away from the presence of the Lord, and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

replied, “They will not kill you, for I will give seven times your punishment to anyone who does.” Then the LORD put a mark on Cain to warn anyone who might try to kill him.

16 So Cain left the LORD’s presence and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

Notes:

Had the story ended at verse seven, we would not have been so troubled. But the first part of this narrative leads up to the more serious action by Cain, the killing of his brother.

Translating this part of the text poses special challenges to Bible translators that Reyburn and Frey (*UBS Handbook*) note. And these are helpful to us as we try to make sense of the text as well.

A new episode in the story begins here, which translators will often need to mark in a way that is appropriate in their own languages. And in order to translate the text naturally, a clear picture of the action will be required, with certain details that the text itself does not provide or which are unclear in the text as we have it. What was it that Cain said to Abel? Was he already planning to murder Abel when he spoke to him? How long was it between

the time of the conversation and when they went away from the settlement? Where in fact did they go? How long was it from when they got there until Cain murdered his brother? Where was Cain when the Lord spoke to him? And how long was that after the murder? These details may not all have to be incorporated in the story; but many or all of them will have a bearing on the way the story is told.



The thought flow here moves along definite lines. 1) the murderous action of Cain, v. 8; 2) God’s confrontation of Cain, vv. 9-12; 3) Cain’s protest of too harsh a punishment, vv. 13-15; 4) Cain’s migration eastward from Eden, v. 16.

1) The murderous action of Cain, v. 8. With God’s rebuke “ringing in his ears” Cain ignores the council given him to go the opposite direction. He takes Abel out into the field where there was less protection⁸ for Abel and then kills him. Instead of

⁸cf. Deut. 22:25-27. “25 But if the man meets the engaged

mastering the sinful urge, as God had admonished, Cain allowed the urge to master him.

One important note. The direct discourse statement, “Let us go out into the field,” is not present in the original Hebrew text, but has been added by several ancient versions. Reyburn and Frey (USB Handbook) call attention to this with translation proposals:

“**Let us go out to the field**”: these words are found in some ancient versions but not in the Hebrew text. See footnotes of RSV and TEV. Many interpreters believe that something similar to these words must have dropped out of the Hebrew text. ⁹HOTP is of the opinion that the ancient versions attempt to change or modify the words of the Hebrew text. Accordingly HOTP suggests this clause be translated “Cain talked to Abel his brother, and it happened that ...,” or “When Cain had talked to Abel his brother, it happened ...,” and that the words “Let us go out to the field” be placed in a footnote. This suggestion is in line with ¹⁰KJV, “And Cain talked with his brother Abel: and it came to pass, when they were in the field ...” It is also possible, and may be clearer, to follow RSV and TEV, including the footnote.

Most translators will realize that the decision taken about what Cain said to Abel will have a strong influence on the story line of the narrative in this verse as a whole. If we decide to follow the ancient versions, as RSV, TEV, and others do, most readers will understand that Cain had already determined to kill his brother, and that this was the beginning of his plan to do it. The words of Cain tell us straight out that the brothers went away from where other people were, and then, either immediately or after a period of time, Cain killed his (unsuspecting) brother.

If we decide to follow the advice of HOTP, however, and reject the words put in Cain’s mouth

woman in the open country, and the man seizes her and lies with her, then only the man who lay with her shall die. 26 You shall do nothing to the young woman; the young woman has not committed an offense punishable by death, because this case is like that of someone who attacks and murders a neighbor. 27 Since he found her in the open country, the engaged woman may have cried for help, but there was no one to rescue her. “

⁹HOTP Hebrew Old Testament Text Project

¹⁰KJV KING JAMES VERSION

by the ancient versions, we must still try to guess what it was that Cain said to his brother. And in some languages we may even have to put this into words.

Exactly how Cain killed his brother is not given, and for the biblical narrator it wasn’t important to his story. Wenham (WBC) calls attention to the harshness implicit in the Hebrew verb here:

“Cain rose up”: note the assonance in Hebrew, *wayyāqom qayin*. “Killed him” גרה is used particularly of ruthless violence by private persons, BDB, 247; cf. H. F. Fuhs, *TDOT* 3:447–57.

2) God’s confrontation of Cain, vv. 9-12. God then confronts Cain with his action with echoes of His earlier confrontation of Adam and Eve (cf. 2:9-19).¹¹ Cain thought that by killing him in an isolated place he could escape notice, but God reminded him, “Your brother’s blood is crying out to me from the ground!” The very ground that Cain tilled now became a witness against him. Then God pronounces His punishment of Cain with the declaration:

And now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother’s blood from your hand. When you till the ground, it will no longer yield to you its strength; you will be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth.

Cain’s source of livelihood would now become his punishment. Thus God went straight to the heart of how to punish Cain most severely without executing him: cut off his livelihood and make him a fugitive the rest of his life.

3) Cain’s protest of too harsh a punishment, vv 13-15. When Cain hears his punishment, he quickly protests that it’s too harsh for him to survive under. Knowing he has lost the protection of God, he now worries that someone will come along and kill him.:

My punishment is greater than I can bear! Today you have driven me away from the soil, and I shall be hidden from your face; I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth, and anyone who meets me may kill me.

The text assumes that other people are present in the region where Cain is living, but provides no explanation of how they got there.

¹¹Cf. Wenham (WBC): “The divine interrogation of Cain and the subsequent pronouncement of curses resemble the similar treatment of Adam. (Cf. 4:9//3:9; 4:10//3:13; 4:11//3:14, 17; 4:12//3:17–19). Many of the key words of chap. 3 reappear here too: עדי “know,” רמש “guard,” רורא “cursed,” המדא “land,” שרג “drive” (cf. Hauser, *JETS* 12 [1980] 297–305).”

God then responds, not by lessening Cain's punishment, but by giving him a mark of protection:

Then the Lord said to him, "Not so! Whoever kills Cain will suffer a sevenfold vengeance." And the Lord put a mark on Cain, so that no one who came upon him would kill him.

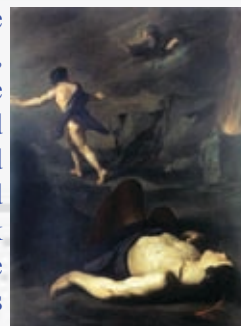
The promise of sevenfold vengeance is explained by Wenham (WBC) this way:

"Sevenfold." This could mean that Cain's killer and six of his relatives will die, but this seems unlikely with God as its agent. Another suggestion first made in Tg. Onq. (and taken up by Rashi, Ibn Ezra) is that it means to the seventh generation from Adam (i.e., Lamech; cf. v 24) or the seventh from Cain, i.e., Tubal-Cain and the flood (Jacob, hesitantly). Most probably it is a poetic turn of speech meaning full divine retribution; cf. Ps 12:7[6]; 79:12; Prov 6:31. Seven is of course a sacred number frequently used in OT rituals.

What was this mark? Some kind of tattoo? Wenham (WBC) summarizes the interpretive history here:

The nature of Cain's sign or mark has been the subject of endless inconclusive speculation (cf. Westermann's excursus, 1:312–14, and R. Mellinkoff, *The Mark of Cain*). Signs (cf. F. J. Helfmeyer, *TDOT* 1:167–88) are typically given to men to assure them of God's goodwill toward them and take a variety of forms (e.g., rainbow, circumcision, a fulfilled prophecy or miracle: 9:12; 17:11; Exod 3:12; Isa 7:11), so various suggestions have been made along these lines to identify the sign given to Cain. In this case the sign deters would-be attackers, and this has led the majority of writers to conclude that the mark of Cain must be something about him that shows he has divine protection, e.g., a tattoo, special hairstyle, or the like. *Ber Rab.* 22:12 ingeniously combines both ideas of the meaning of "sign" by suggesting that the sign for Cain was a dog which accompanied him on his wanderings: the dog served to reassure Cain of God's protection and scared off any assailants! But for this idea there is as little proof as for any of the other suggestions. The simplest suggestion is that of P. A. H. de Boer (*NedTT* 31 [1942] 210) that the sign for Cain is simply his name (*qayin*), which sounds somewhat like *yuqqam* "shall be punished"; cf. *Notes* on v 1. His very name hints at the promise of divine retribution on his attackers. It could be objected that quite a different explanation of the name Cain has already been given at his birth, but renaming or reinterpreting an existing name is a regular feature of Hebrew narrative (17:5, 15). Nevertheless, the text here gives barely a hint that this was the writer's

intention. So the precise nature of the sign remains uncertain, but its function is clear. As the clothing given to Adam and Eve after the fall (3:21) served to remind them of their sin and God's mercy, so does the mark placed on Cain: "As a protective device against potential enemies it may stay death; in that sense, the anticipated punishment is softened. But at the same time it serves as a constant reminder of Cain's banishment, his isolation from other people" (Coats, 65).



Thus Cain spent the rest of his life being reminded of what he had done to his brother, and of the divine punishment meted out as a consequence.

4) Cain's migration eastward from Eden, v. 16.

Cain's punishment begins with a twofold thrust: a) he leaves the presence of the Lord, which has been his protection and blessing up to this point. And b) he settles in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

Wenham (WBC) notes:

The story that began with the attempt by Cain and Abel to draw near to God through sacrifice ends in Cain's "leaving the LORD's presence" and living "east of Eden," presumably even farther from the garden of "delight" from which his parents had been expelled. Like the account of the fall (chap. 3), this story concludes by underlining the truth that sin separates man from God and that God's judgments are carried out. Cain lives in a land whose very name (נֹד *nod* means "wandering") reminds him of the divine sentence that he would become a "wandering vagrant." It is uncertain where the Hebrews located this land, but that is immaterial to the story and its interpretation.

What can we learn here? Sin is a powerful presence in the human heart and can propel us into crimes of passion that are unthinkable. Once unleashed by Cain's parents, its festering presence invaded the first family and took the life of a son and brother. It drove a son away from his parents for the remainder of his -- and their -- life, thus severing a family into. It brought down the wrath of God in severe punishment.

Thus we must never ever treat sin casually or flippantly! We are playing with a deadly poison that can and will destroy us, if given a chance. But the cure for sin is Calvary and the atoning death of the Son of God. Only in Him is there forgiveness and the spiritual power to overcome sin's deadly force!

LXX

¹Ἀδὰμ δὲ ἔγνω Ἐυαν τὴν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ καὶ συλλαβοῦσα ἔτεκεν τὸν Καὶν καὶ εἶπεν ἑκτησάμην ἄνθρωπον διὰ τοῦ θεοῦ ²καὶ προσέθηκεν τεκεῖν τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ τὸν Ἀβελ καὶ ἐγένετο Ἀβελ ποιμὴν προβάτων Καὶν δὲ ἦν ἐργαζόμενος τὴν γῆν

³καὶ ἐγένετο μεθ' ἡμέρας ἡνεγκεν Καὶν ἀπὸ τῶν καρπῶν τῆς γῆς θυσίαν τῷ κυρίῳ ⁴καὶ Ἀβελ ἡνεγκεν καὶ αὐτὸς ἀπὸ τῶν πρωτοτόκων τῶν προβάτων αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν στεάτων αὐτῶν καὶ ἐπείδεν ὁ θεὸς ἐπὶ Ἀβελ καὶ ἐπὶ τοῖς δώροις αὐτοῦ ⁵ἐπὶ δὲ Καὶν καὶ ἐπὶ ταῖς θυσίαις αὐτοῦ οὐ προσέσχεν καὶ ἐλύπησεν τὸν Καὶν λίαν καὶ συνέπεσεν τῷ προσώπῳ

⁶καὶ εἶπεν κύριος ὁ θεὸς τῷ Καὶν ἵνα τί περίλυπος ἐγένου καὶ ἵνα τί συνέπεσεν τὸ πρόσωπόν σου ⁷οὐκ ἔαν ὀρθῶς προσενέγκῃς ὀρθῶς δὲ μὴ διέλης ἡμαρτες ἡσύχασον πρὸς σὲ ἡ ἀποστροφή αὐτοῦ καὶ σὺ ἄρξεις αὐτοῦ

⁸καὶ εἶπεν Καὶν πρὸς Ἀβελ τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ διέλθωμεν εἰς τὸ πεδῖον καὶ ἐγένετο ἐν τῷ εἶναι αὐτοὺς ἐν τῷ πεδίῳ καὶ ἀνέστη Καὶν ἐπὶ Ἀβελ τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀπέκτεινεν αὐτόν

⁹καὶ εἶπεν ὁ θεὸς πρὸς Καὶν ποῦ ἐστὶν Ἀβελ ὁ ἀδελφός σου ὁ δὲ εἶπεν οὐ γινώσκω μὴ φύλαξ τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ μου

NASB

1 Now the man had relations with his wife Eve, and she conceived and gave birth to Cain, and she said, "I have gotten a manchild with *the help of the LORD.*" 2 Again, she gave birth to his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of flocks, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

3 So it came about in the course of time that Cain brought an offering to the LORD of the fruit of the ground. 4 Abel, on his part also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions. And the LORD had regard for Abel and for his offering; 5 but for Cain and for his offering He had no regard. So Cain became very angry and his countenance fell.

6 Then the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? 7 If you do well, will not *your countenance* be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it."

8 Cain told Abel his brother. And it came about when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.

9 Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" And he said, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?" 10 He said, "What have you done?"

NRSV

1 Now the man knew his wife Eve, and she conceived and bore Cain, saying, "I have produced a man with the help of the Lord." 2 Next she bore his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, and Cain a tiller of the ground.

3 In the course of time Cain brought to the Lord an offering of the fruit of the ground, 4 and Abel for his part brought of the firstlings of his flock, their fat portions. And the Lord had regard for Abel and his offering, 5 but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.

6 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 is lurking at the door; its desire is for you, but you must master it."

8 Cain said to his brother Abel, "Let us go out to the field." And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel, and killed him.

9 Then the Lord said to Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?" He said, "I do not know; am I my brother's keeper?" 10 And the Lord said, "What have you done?"

NLT

1 Now Adam slept with his wife, Eve, and she became pregnant. When the time came, she gave birth to Cain, and she said, "With the LORD's help, I have brought forth a man!" 2 Later she gave birth to a second son and named him Abel. When they grew up, Abel became a shepherd, while Cain was a farmer.

3 At harvesttime Cain brought to the LORD a gift of his farm produce, 4 while Abel brought several choice lambs from the best of his flock. The LORD accepted Abel and his offering, 5 but he did not accept Cain and his offering. This made Cain very angry and dejected.

6 "Why are you so angry?" the LORD asked him. "Why do you look so dejected? 7 You will be accepted if you respond in the right way. But if you refuse to respond correctly, then watch out! Sin is waiting to attack and destroy you, and you must subdue it."

8 Later Cain suggested to his brother, Abel, "Let's go out into the fields." And while they were there, Cain attacked and killed his brother.

9 Afterward the LORD asked Cain, "Where is your brother? Where is Abel?" "I don't know!" Cain retorted. "Am I supposed to keep track of him wherever

εἰμι ἐγώ ¹⁰καὶ εἶπεν ὁ
θεός τί ἐποίησας φωνή
αἵματος τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ σου
βοᾷ πρὸς με ἐκ τῆς γῆς
¹¹καὶ νῦν ἐπικατάρματος
σὺ ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς ἣ ἔχανεν
τὸ στόμα αὐτῆς δέξασθαι
τὸ αἷμα τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ
σου ἐκ τῆς χειρός σου
¹²ὅτι ἐργᾷ τὴν γῆν καὶ
οὐ προσθήσει τὴν ἰσχὺν
αὐτῆς δοῦναί σοι στένων
καὶ τρέμων ἔση ἐπὶ τῆς
γῆς

¹³καὶ εἶπεν Καὶν πρὸς
τὸν κύριον μείζων ἡ αἰτία
μου τοῦ ἀφεθῆναι με ¹⁴εἰ
ἐκβάλλεις με σήμερον ἀπὸ
προσώπου τῆς γῆς καὶ
ἀπὸ τοῦ προσώπου σου
κρυβήσομαι καὶ ἔσομαι
στένων καὶ τρέμων ἐπὶ
τῆς γῆς καὶ ἔσται πᾶς ὁ
εὐρίσκων με ἀποκτενεῖ με
¹⁵καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ κύριος
ὁ θεός οὐχ οὕτως πᾶς ὁ
ἀποκτείνας Καὶν ἑπτὰ
ἐκδικούμενα παραλύσει
καὶ ἔθετο κύριος ὁ θεὸς
σημεῖον τῷ Καὶν τοῦ μὴ
ἀνελεῖν αὐτὸν πάντα τὸν
εὐρίσκοντα αὐτόν

¹⁶ἔξῃλθεν δὲ Καὶν
ἀπὸ προσώπου τοῦ θεοῦ
καὶ ὤκησεν ἐν γῇ Ναιδ
κατέναντι Εδεμ

The voice of your brother's blood is crying to Me from the ground. 11 Now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. 12 When you cultivate the ground, it will no longer yield its strength to you; you will be a vagrant and a wanderer on the earth."

13 Cain said to the LORD, "My punishment is too great to bear! 14 Behold, You have driven me this day from the face of the ground; and from Your face I will be hidden, and I will be a vagrant and a wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me." 15 So the LORD said to him, "Therefore whoever kills Cain, vengeance will be taken on him sevenfold." And the LORD appointed a sign for Cain, so that no one finding him would slay him.

16 Then Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

Listen; your brother's blood is crying out to me from the ground! 11 And now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. 12 When you till the ground, it will no longer yield to you its strength; you will be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth."

13 Cain said to the Lord, "My punishment is greater than I can bear! 14 Today you have driven me away from the soil, and I shall be hidden from your face; I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth, and anyone who meets me may kill me." 15 Then the Lord said to him, "Not so! Whoever kills Cain will suffer a sevenfold vengeance." And the Lord put a mark on Cain, so that no one who came upon him would kill him.

16 Then Cain went away from the presence of the Lord, and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

he goes?" 10 But the LORD said, "What have you done? Listen – your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground! 11 You are hereby banished from the ground you have defiled with your brother's blood. 12 No longer will it yield abundant crops for you, no matter how hard you work! From now on you will be a homeless fugitive on the earth, constantly wandering from place to place."

13 Cain replied to the LORD, "My punishment is too great for me to bear! 14 You have banished me from my land and from your presence; you have made me a wandering fugitive. All who see me will try to kill me!" 15 The LORD replied, "They will not kill you, for I will give seven times your punishment to anyone who does." Then the LORD put a mark on Cain to warn anyone who might try to kill him.

16 So Cain left the LORD's presence and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

Genesis 4:1-16

^{LXT} Genesis 4:1 Αδαμ δὲ ἔγνω Εὐαν τὴν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ καὶ συλλαβοῦσα ἔτεκεν τὸν Καὶν καὶ εἶπεν ἑκτησάμην ἄνθρωπον διὰ τοῦ θεοῦ ² καὶ προσέθηκεν τεκεῖν τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ τὸν Ἀβελ καὶ ἐγένετο Ἀβελ ποιμὴν προβάτων Καὶν δὲ ἦν ἐργαζόμενος τὴν γῆν ³ καὶ ἐγένετο μεθ' ἡμέρας ἤνεγκεν Καὶν ἀπὸ τῶν καρπῶν τῆς γῆς θυσίαν τῷ κυρίῳ ⁴ καὶ Ἀβελ ἤνεγκεν καὶ αὐτὸς ἀπὸ τῶν πρωτοτόκων τῶν προβάτων αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν στεάτων αὐτῶν καὶ ἐπέιδεν ὁ θεὸς ἐπὶ Ἀβελ καὶ ἐπὶ τοῖς δώροις αὐτοῦ ⁵ ἐπὶ δὲ Καὶν καὶ ἐπὶ ταῖς θυσίαις αὐτοῦ οὐ προσέσχεεν καὶ ἐλύπησεν τὸν Καὶν λίαν καὶ συνέπεσεν τῷ προσώπῳ ⁶ καὶ εἶπεν κύριος ὁ θεὸς τῷ Καὶν ἵνα τί περίλυπος ἐγένου καὶ ἵνα τί συνέπεσεν τὸ πρόσωπόν σου ⁷ οὐκ ἔαν ὀρθῶς προσενέγκῃς ὀρθῶς δὲ μὴ διέλης ἡμαρτες ἡσύχασον πρὸς σὲ ἢ ἀποστροφή αὐτοῦ καὶ σὺ ἄρξεις αὐτοῦ ⁸ καὶ εἶπεν Καὶν πρὸς Ἀβελ τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ διέλθωμεν εἰς τὸ πεδῖον καὶ ἐγένετο ἐν τῷ εἶναι αὐτοὺς ἐν τῷ πεδίῳ καὶ ἀνέστη Καὶν ἐπὶ Ἀβελ τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀπέκτεινεν αὐτόν ⁹ καὶ εἶπεν ὁ θεὸς πρὸς Καὶν ποῦ ἐστὶν Ἀβελ ὁ ἀδελφός σου ὁ δὲ εἶπεν οὐ γινώσκω μὴ φύλαξ τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ μου εἰμι ἐγώ ¹⁰ καὶ εἶπεν ὁ θεός τί ἐποίησας φωνὴ αἵματος τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ σου βοᾷ πρὸς με ἐκ τῆς γῆς ¹¹ καὶ νῦν ἐπικατάρατος σὺ ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς ἣ ἔχανεν τὸ στόμα αὐτῆς δέξασθαι τὸ αἷμα τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ σου ἐκ τῆς χειρός σου ¹² ὅτι ἐργᾷ τὴν γῆν καὶ οὐ προσθήσει τὴν ἰσχὺν αὐτῆς δοῦναί σοι στένων καὶ τρέμων ἔσῃ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ¹³ καὶ εἶπεν Καὶν πρὸς τὸν κύριον μείζων ἢ αἰτία μου τοῦ ἀφεθῆναι με ¹⁴ εἰ ἐκβάλλεις με σήμερον ἀπὸ προσώπου τῆς γῆς καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ προσώπου σου κρυβήσομαι καὶ ἔσομαι στένων καὶ τρέμων ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς καὶ ἔσται πᾶς ὁ εὐρίσκων με ἀποκτενεῖ με ¹⁵ καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ κύριος ὁ θεός οὐχ οὕτως πᾶς ὁ ἀποκτείνας Καὶν ἐπτα ἐκδικούμενα παραλύσει καὶ ἔθετο κύριος ὁ θεὸς σημεῖον τῷ Καὶν τοῦ μὴ ἀνελεῖν αὐτὸν πάντα τὸν εὐρίσκοντα αὐτόν ¹⁶ ἐξῆλθεν δὲ Καὶν ἀπὸ προσώπου τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ὤκησεν ἐν γῇ Ναιδ κατέναντι Εδεμ

Genesis 4:1-16

וְהָאָדָם יָדַע אֶת-חַוָּה אִשְׁתּוֹ וַתַּהַר וַתֵּלֶד ^{WTT} Genesis 4:1

אֶת-קַיִן וַתֹּאמֶר קַנִּיתִי אִישׁ אֶת-יְהוָה׃ וַתִּסְּף לָלֶדֶת

אֶת-אָחִיו אֶת-הָאֱבֶל וַיְהִי-הֶבֶל רֹעֵה צֹאן וְקַיִן הָיָה עֹבֵד

אֲדָמָה׃

³ וַיְהִי מִקֵּץ יָמִים וַיָּבֵא קַיִן מִפְּרִי הָאֲדָמָה מִנְחָה לַיהוָה׃

⁴ וְהֶבֶל הֵבִיא גַם-הוּא מִבְּכֹרוֹת צֹאנוֹ וּמִחֻלְבָּהֶן וַיִּשַׁע יְהוָה

אֶל-הֶבֶל וְאֶל-מִנְחָתוֹ׃

⁵ וְאֶל-קַיִן וְאֶל-מִנְחָתוֹ לֹא שָׁעָה וַיַּחַר לְקַיִן מְאֹד וַיִּפְּלוּ

פָּנָיו׃

⁶ וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-קַיִן לָמָּה חָרָה לָךְ וּלְמָּה נָפְלוּ פָנֶיךָ׃

⁷ הֲלוֹא אִם-תֵּיטִיב שְׂאֵת וְאִם לֹא תֵיטִיב לִפְתָּח חַטָּאת

רֹבֵץ וְאַלֶּיךָ תִּשְׁוָקָתוֹ וְאַתָּה תִּמְשָׁל-בּוֹ׃

⁸ וַיֹּאמֶר קַיִן אֶל-הֶבֶל אָחִיו וַיְהִי בְהִיּוֹתָם בַּשָּׂדֶה וַיִּקָּם קַיִן

אֶל-הֶבֶל אָחִיו וַיַּהַרְגֵהוּ׃

⁹ וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-קַיִן אֵי הֶבֶל אָחֶיךָ וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא יָדַעְתִּי

הֲשֹׁמֵר אָחִי אֲנִכִּי׃

10 וַיֹּאמֶר מֶה עָשִׂיתָ קוֹל דְּמִי אָחִיךָ צִעֲקִים אֵלַי מִן־הָאָדָמָה:

11 וַעֲתָה אָרְנֹר אֹתָהּ מִן־הָאָדָמָה אֲשֶׁר פָּצְתָהּ אֶת־פִּיהָ

לִקְחַת אֶת־דְּמִי אָחִיךָ מִיָּדְךָ:

12 כִּי תַעֲבֹד אֶת־הָאָדָמָה לֹא־תִסָּף תִּתְּכָהּ לָךְ נָע וְנָד

תִּהְיֶה בָאָרֶץ:

13 וַיֹּאמֶר קִין אֶל־יְהוָה גְּדוֹל עוֹנִי מִנְּשָׂא:

14 הֵן גִּרְשָׁתָּ אֹתִי הַיּוֹם מֵעַל פְּנֵי הָאָדָמָה וּמִפְּנֵיךָ אֶסְתָּר

וְהָיִיתִי נָע וְנָד בָּאָרֶץ וְהָיָה כָל־מֹצְאִי יִהְרָגֵנִי:

15 וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ יְהוָה לָכֵן כָּל־הֹרֵג קִין שִׁבְעָתַיִם יִקָּם וַיֵּשֶׁם

יְהוָה לְקִין אוֹת לְבִלְתִּי הַכּוֹת־אֹתוֹ כָּל־מֹצְאוֹ:

16 וַיֵּצֵא קִין מִלִּפְנֵי יְהוָה וַיֵּשֶׁב בָּאָרֶץ־נֹד קַדְמַת־עֵדֶן:

