The Way of Cain

PART I
Genesis 4:1-7

Main Thought The “way of Cain” (Jude 11) progressed from being a BROTHER (1-2a), WORKER (2b), and WORSHIPPER (3-7) to being a MURDERER (8-10), WANDERER (11-15), and BUILDER (16-24).

AS BROTHER (1-2a).

- Adam and Eve obeyed God’s command to be fruitful and multiply (1:28).
- Eve conceived and gave birth to Cain – meaning “acquire, get, possess.”
- Eve expresses her saving faith by acknowledging the help of the LORD (YAHWEH – his personal covenental name) who is the real giver of life (Acts 17:26-28).
- Abel (vapor, breath) came second – a major theme in Genesis (Ishmael/Isaac; Esau/Jacob; Reuben/Joseph; Manasseh/Ephraim). Sin fractures families. God honors second birth (Isa. 55:8-9; 1 Cor. 1:26-29) over first birth (primogeniture).
- “You must be born again” – your second birth (John 3:7).

AS WORKER (2b). Abel worked with animals (2:19-20) while Cain worked the soil (2:15). Both were fine professions.

AS WORSHIPPER (3-7).

- Both Cain and Abel bring offerings (tributes) as priests to the same God. The purpose was to show that they accepted God’s rule in their lives.
- There are three reasons why God accepted Abel and rejected Cain:
  1. Vegetation (fig leaves) was inadequate to cover their sin while animals garments (blood shed implied) were adequate (Heb. 9:22).
  2. Cain offered SOME while Abel offered the BEST (fat portions [Lev. 3:16]; firstfruits [Prov. 3:9]).
  3. Abel offered his in FAITH (Heb. 11:4) while Cain did not.

- Cain is an example of those (1) who have a FORM OF GODLINESS but deny its power (2 Tim. 3:5); (2) who come near to God but are far from Him (Isa. 29:13; Matt. 15:8). This IS THE WAY OF CAIN (Jude 11) — TOKENISM (WALTKE).
- Cain responds with anger resulting in a downcast face (Psa. 43:5).
- Cain tries in vain to hide his anger from an omniscient God (Psa. 139:1, 7).
- God lovingly engages (Luke 19:10) Cain with the question WHY in order to give him a chance to confess (1 John 1:9) just like he did with his parents and countless other sinners – David, Jonah, the prodigal son.
- God follows this question with advise – DO WHAT IS RIGHT. This implies that Cain knew what was right but did not do it (Rom. 2:15).
- Sin is always CROUCHING at our door seeking to devour us (1 Pet. 5:8).
- We however must have MASTERY over sin (Rom. 6:14; Eph. 4:26-27).