

# *Cain & Abel*

## **C A I N**

### **HIS NAME MEANING “ACQUIRED”**

After Eve followed her husband, Adam, and received the promise of God’s redemption, she brought forth their first son and named him Cain, which means “acquired” (Gen. 4:1a). She considered Cain the seed of woman promised by God, the one who would bruise the head of the serpent, which had poisoned them. Therefore, she declared, “I have acquired a man, Jehovah” (Gen. 4:1, lit.). In fact, Cain would not be the one to bruise the head of the old serpent; rather, he would be a follower of the old serpent. It was not until four thousand years later that the virgin Mary gave birth to a child whose name was called “the mighty God” (Isa.9:6). That child was Jehovah. He was the God-promised seed, the One who would bruise the head of the serpent, which had poisoned man. (Heb.2:14)

**Gen.4:1** And the man knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and gave birth to Cain and said, I have acquired a man, Jehovah. (compare with Gen.3:15)

**Isaiah 9:6** For a child is born to us, A son is given to us; And the government is upon His shoulder; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

**Heb.2:14** Since therefore the children have shared in blood and flesh, He also Himself in like manner partook of the same, that through death He might destroy him who has the might of death, that is, the devil,

### **KNOWING GOD, BUT REFUSING TO TAKE GOD’S WAY**

Adam and Eve certainly must have told their children how they had been created by God, how they had been charged by Him not to eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, how they had violated God’s prohibition, and how they were in fear and trembling as they awaited death. Adam and Eve must have told them also how God came in to preach the gospel by promising them that the seed of woman would bruise the head of the serpent, and how God had slain the sacrifices, which were their substitutes, and used the skins to make clothing to cover their nakedness that they could stand before God and have fellowship with Him. Therefore, Cain came to know God through his parents.

Although he knew God, he refused to take God’s way. In rendering service and worship to God, he did not act according to God’s revelation; he failed to present an offering with the shedding of blood according to God’s redemption. Rather, according to his own preference he presented the fruit of the ground (Gen. 4:3), the product of his own labor (Eph.2:8-9; 1Cor.3:11-12), as an offering without the shedding of blood (Heb.9:22). As a result, he was not accepted by God, he lost God, and he was driven away and went out of the presence of God (Gen. 4:5, 16). His descendants thus moved toward a godless culture (Gen. 4:17, 20-22). They murdered (Gen. 4:23-24) and practiced polygamy (Gen. 4:19). Eventually, they became altogether godless, they had nothing to do with God, and they were without hope and were altogether empty in the world.

**Gen.4:3,5** (3)And in the course of time Cain brought an offering to Jehovah from the fruit of the ground. (5) But for Cain and for his offering He had no regard. And Cain became very angry, and his countenance fell.

**Eph.2:8-9** For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this not of yourselves; *it is the gift of God*; Not of works that no one should boast.

**1Cor.3:11-12** For another foundation no one is able to lay besides that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. But if anyone builds upon the foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, grass, stubble

**Heb.9:22b** ...and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness

**Gen.4:16-17, 19-24** (16) And Cain went forth from the presence of Jehovah and dwelt in the land of Nod, east of Eden.(17) And Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and gave birth to Enoch; and he built a city and called the name of the city after the name of his son Enoch. (19) And Lamech took two wives for himself: The name of the first was Adah, and the name of the second Zillah. (20)And Adah gave birth to Jabal; he was the father of those who dwell in tents and raise cattle. (21) And his brother's name was Jubal; he was the father of all those who play the lyre and pipe. (22) And Zillah also gave birth to Tubal-cain, the forger of every cutting instrument of bronze and iron; and the sister of Tubal-cain was Naamah. (23) And Lamech said to his wives, Adah and Zillah, listen to my voice; O wives of Lamech, hearken to my speech; For I have slain a man for wounding me, Even a young man for striking me. (24) If Cain is avenged sevenfold, Then Lamech seventy-sevenfold.

## **CARING ONLY FOR HIS OWN EXISTENCE, NOT FOR GOD'S PURPOSE**

Cain was a server of the ground (Gen. 4:2b, lit.). To serve the ground is to earn a living, which is for the sustaining of one's own existence, not for God's purpose in His redemption. This indicates that although Cain knew God, he cared only for his own existence. He cared neither for God's purpose nor for God's satisfaction. Throughout the ages, all unbelievers have been toiling and laboring in order to earn a living. They diligently serve the earth, not God, and they care only for themselves, not for God or for God's economy.

**Gen.4:2b** ...And Abel was a tender of sheep, but Cain was a tiller (a server) of the ground.

## **BECOMING THE REPRESENTATIVE OF ALL THOSE WHO REFUSE TO TAKE GOD'S WAY OF REDEMPTION**

Cain served God religiously according to his own way and after his own will. He rejected the redemption by blood that was required and ordained by God, and according to the flesh he envied and murdered Abel, a faithful witness of God (Gen. 4:4-5, 8). Eventually, he was rejected by God. Therefore, Cain took the godless way, which is not the way of redemption ordained by God. Thus, the way of Cain became a model (Jude 11a), representing the way of death taken by all godless people throughout the ages, a way that is *out of* death, *in* death, and *unto* death.

**Gen.4:4-5,8** (4) And Abel also brought an offering from the firstlings of his flock, that is, from their fat portions. And Jehovah had regard for Abel and for his offering. (5) But for Cain and for his offering He had no regard. And Cain became very angry, and his countenance fell.

(8)And Cain said to Abel his brother, Let us go into the field. And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against Abel his brother and slew him.

**Jude 11a** Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain...

## **BECOMING THE REPRESENTATIVE OF ALL THOSE WHO MURDER BECAUSE OF RELIGIOUS JEALOUSY**

Cain is also the representative of all those who murder the real worshippers of God because of religious jealousy. This exactly corresponds to the word of the Lord Jesus in John 16:2: "An hour is coming when everyone who kills you will think that he is offering service to God." (Acts 7:58-8:3) History confirms that the apostate church has killed more genuine Christians than the Roman Empire. The apostate church alleged that the believers of Jesus were heretics. Thus, Revelation 17:6 says that the woman, the apostate church, was drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. All these historical facts are represented by Cain's murdering of his brother Abel. All such murderers are walking on the same pathway as Cain.

**Acts 7:58** And they threw *him* outside of the city and stoned *him*. And the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man called Saul.

**Acts 8:1,3** (1) And Saul approved of his killing. And there occurred in that day a great persecution against the church which was in Jerusalem; and all were scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. (3) But Saul was devastating the church, entering house after house; and dragging off men and women, he delivered *them* to prison.

**Acts 9:1-2** But Saul, still breathing threatening and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked for letters from him to Damascus for the synagogues, so that if he found any who were of the Way, both men and women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.

**Phil.3:6** As to zeal, persecuting the church; as to the righteousness which is in the law, become blameless.

**Rev.17:6** And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. And I marveled *with* great marvel when I saw her.

## **A B E L**

### **His Name Meaning "Vanity, Like a Breath"**

Eve gave birth again, to Cain's brother Abel (Gen. 4:2). *Abel* means "vanity, like a breath." This name may indicate that, because they were disappointed with their first child, Cain, Adam and Eve had the feeling and concept that the life of fallen man was vanity. Their second son, whom they begot and named Abel, must have inherited the same realization and feeling.

**Gen.4:2a** And again she gave birth to his brother Abel...

## Knowing God and Taking God's Way

In contrast to Cain, Abel not only knew God but also took God's way. According to God's foreordained redemption, he presented an offering of God's delight with the shedding of blood; that is, he offered the firstlings of the flock and the fat of the lambs. Thus, he was justified by God (Gen. 4:4; Heb. 11:4). In taking such a way of redemption, he believed in the God-ordained offerings according to God's revelation; he neither acted according to his preference nor trusted in his deeds or works. He knew that as a fallen sinner he could not cover or conceal his sinfulness with his own works and by his own behavior. He realized that he needed to present an offering with the shedding of blood for his redemption (Heb. 9:22) and for the satisfying of God's righteous requirement that he might be accepted by God and have fellowship with God. What Abel did corresponded exactly to the requirements of the Mosaic law, which was given later. This proves that the way of redemption that he took in worshipping God was according to God's divine revelation and not according to his concept.

**Gen.4:4** And Abel also brought an offering from the firstlings of his flock, that is, from their fat portions. And Jehovah had regard for Abel and for his offering.

**Heb.11:4** By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained the testimony that he was righteous, God testifying to his gifts; and through faith, though he has died, he still speaks.

**Heb.9:22** And almost all things are purified by blood according to the law, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.

1. What two categories of Adam's descendants do Cain and Abel as a pair represent?
2. Describe briefly how Cain knew God but refused to take God's way.
3. What category of people does Cain represent?
4. Describe briefly how Abel cared only for God's purpose and not for his own existence.
5. What category of people does Abel represent?