

THE POWER OF ANGER: CAIN & ABEL

FRACTURED (GENESIS, PART 2) · GENESIS 4:1-17; MATTHEW 5:21-26 · FEBRUARY 26, 2023 · PASTOR MATT ERICKSON

*“Now Cain said to his brother Abel, ‘Let’s go out to the field.’
While they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him.”
(Genesis 4:8)*

The Turn Toward the Next Generation (4:1-2)

- Cain: the firstborn, who works the soil, like Adam
- Abel: the second-born, who keeps flocks

The Brothers’ Offerings and Conflict (4:3-7)

- Two different offerings and two different responses from God
- The silence of Abel
- Cain’s response of anger and depression
- The warning of God

The Double Wrong of Cain (4:8-14)

- Cain intentionally murders his brother
- Cain pleads ignorance and non-responsibility
- God’s punishment upon Cain

God’s Grace Amidst Punishment (4:15-16)

- Grace in hearing Cain’s complaint (4:13-14)
- Grace in the promise of protection (4:15)
- Grace in the mark of Cain (4:15)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What makes you angry? What is one way you’ve found it helpful to deal with your anger?
2. This weekend we begin a new preaching series, “Fractured,” that corresponds with the

journey of Lent and also continues our walk through Genesis by looking at Genesis 4-11. This week we look at Genesis 4:1-16. Begin your study in prayer by asking God to speak to you through His Word, and then, whether you’re on your own or with a group, read that text aloud.

3. What are the similarities and differences between Cain and Abel as described in verses 1-2?
4. In verses 3-5, both Cain and Abel bring offerings to God. What are their offerings like?
5. There has been a lot of debate on why God looked with favor on Abel’s offering but not Cain’s offering. What do you think could be some of those reasons?
6. What, if any, light is shed on this by consulting the New Testament references to Cain in Hebrews 11:4; 1 John 3:12; or Jude 1:11?
7. How would you describe Cain’s response to God in verse 5?
8. God’s warning to Cain in verses 6-7 describes the power of sin and also the power of human choice against sin. What stands out to you about this word from God?
9. Cain intentionally murders his brother, Abel. When God encounters Cain after this, His questions echo those of Adam and Eve in Genesis 3. How does Cain respond? How is this different than Adam and Eve’s response to God’s confrontation of their sin in Genesis 3:9-13?
10. What is the nature of God’s curse upon Cain in verses 11-12?
11. How does Cain respond to God and what are the four aspects of his fears in verses 13-14?
12. How does God’s “mark” upon Cain speak to God’s grace upon him?
13. What is one thing God is revealing to you through this study? If you’re on your own, write that down, pray over it, and share it with someone this week. If you are with a small group, share your answers with one another before closing in prayer.

DIG DEEPER:

- Memorize Genesis 4:7
- Draw, ink, or paint the story of Cain and Abel from Genesis 4:1-16. As you do that, let God sift through your own heart in relation to sin, temptation, anger, and jealousy. What is God drawing to the surface as. When you finish, consider sharing your prayer reflections and/or artistry with a friend.
- Read one of the following:
 - Tremper Longman, *How to Read Genesis*
 - C. John Collins, *Reading Genesis Well: Navigating History, Poetry, Science, and Truth in Genesis 1-11*