



# LOCKINGCASTLECHURCH

Life Group Notes – 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2022

Origins: Genesis 4 Restless Wanderers

*Please visit the LCC website to listen to the talk or read the transcript if available.*

## **Genesis 4:1-16 Cain and Abel**

**4** Adam made love to his wife Eve, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Cain. She said, “With the help of the LORD I have brought forth a man.” <sup>2</sup> Later she gave birth to his brother Abel. Now Abel kept flocks, and Cain worked the soil. <sup>3</sup> In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the LORD. <sup>4</sup> And Abel also brought an offering—fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock. The LORD looked with favour on Abel and his offering, <sup>5</sup> but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favour. So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast. <sup>6</sup> Then the LORD said to Cain, “Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? <sup>7</sup> If 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.” <sup>8</sup> 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. <sup>9</sup> Then the LORD said to Cain, “Where is your brother Abel?” “I don’t know,” he replied. “Am I my brother’s keeper?” <sup>10</sup> The LORD said, “What have you done? Listen! Your brother’s blood cries out to me from the ground. <sup>11</sup> Now you are under a curse and driven from the ground, which opened its mouth to receive your brother’s blood from your hand. <sup>12</sup> When you work the ground, it will no longer yield its crops for you. You will be a restless wanderer on the earth.” <sup>13</sup> Cain said to the LORD, “My punishment is more than I can bear. <sup>14</sup> Today you are driving me from the land, and I will be hidden from your presence; I will be a restless wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me.” <sup>15</sup> But the LORD said to him, “Not so; anyone who kills Cain will suffer vengeance seven times over.” Then the LORD put a mark on Cain so that no one who found him would kill him. <sup>16</sup> So Cain went out from the LORD’s presence and lived in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

## **Comment**

It is quite shocking to realise that first death described in the Bible is a murder, and we are faced with two questions: Why did God accept Abel’s offering over Cain’s, and why did Cain then kill his brother? Although there is clearly reference to Abel bringing the ‘choice’ or best parts of his flock, instead of just ‘some of the crop’ that Cain offered, there may be other reasons too. Israel was a nation of shepherds and the Bible is full of references to shepherding eg. The Lord is my shepherd (Psalm 23); I am the Good Shepherd (John 10) and more. Sheep were offered as a sacrifice for sin, whereas we read in Genes 3:17-19 that the ground was cursed and so the fruits of the soil were somehow impure. Cain was angry at God, jealous of his brother, and offended that his offering was rejected. The reference to sin being like an animal ready to pounce is an excellent insight into the human condition. There has been much research on the brain and why humans react in the way they do. Many have concluded that there is an instinctive animal side to us which must be tamed. Instead of yielding to basic instincts (mentioned in Jude 10-11) or the ‘natural’ response of fight, flight or freeze, Cain was warned to master sin, to shut the door on it and to rule over it like humans were to rule over the world. But alas, he allowed evil to have its way, and he premeditated the murder of his brother without remorse or concern. So, in conclusion, giving our best to God, not allowing sin to rule over us and not letting the devil get a foothold (Eph 4:27) is a continual fight which we need the Holy Spirit’s help to win. Jesus wants us to be overcomers and we do this by being alert, and following Jesus’ way rather than our own.

## **Questions**

- 1) The murder paved the way for many other dysfunctional families throughout the Bible. Off the top of your head, can you name some other sibling rivalries or family disputes in scripture?
- 2) Why is jealousy so powerful?
- 3) The Bible presents people having a conversation with God in quite a matter-of-fact kind of way; how do you discern the voice of God? In what ways can we hear him?
- 4) Do you think God was quite lenient with Cain’s punishment? Why?
- 5) What other things can we learn and apply to our lives from this passage?