

TODAY'S READING: GENESIS 4-6

OVERVIEW:

The sacrifices of Cain and Abel; Cain murders Abel; genealogy from Adam to Noah*; the days of Noah; Noah's ark.

**Note: Through the 10 men listed in this genealogy, God actually outlines the entire course of human history! To learn more, go to our website under Selected Messages and listen to "Genealogical Gems," preached 12.14.03*

HIGHLIGHTS & INSIGHTS:

The physical and spiritual implications of the entrance of sin into the perfect environment into which man was placed were unbelievably devastating. The curse of sin that entered into the world in chapter 3 is already clearly manifest in chapter 4 as Cain murders his own brother.

Cain's is the religion of human works. He offers to God the fruit of his own labor. His offering recognized God as Creator, but it did not recognize Cain as a sinner. Abel's religion, however, is that of faith. His offering not only recognized God as Creator, but the fact of his own sinfulness. He recognized that the blood sacrifice of a lamb was necessary to atone for his sin (Heb. 9:22; 11:4).

Notice that God asks Cain a question in verse 9, giving him the opportunity to confess his sin. Rather than repent (v.16), Cain goes *"out from the presence of the Lord and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden."* (Note that every positive move in the Bible is always from east to west. Every negative move in the Bible is west to east.) "Nod" means "to stray" or "to wander." Even the land Cain chose speaks of his willful choice to refuse to confess his sin, his refusal to trust the blood of the lamb, and his refusal to move toward God.

Where did Cain get his wife? It's the age-old question. Obviously, Cain married one of his sisters. By the time he takes a wife, Adam and Eve have many descendants, and there has been given no Divine prohibition forbidding him from taking one of them to be his wife. The very idea of marrying a relative sounds strange and even repulsive to us, until we realize that though in a much larger sense, all of us are descendants of Noah, and all of us who are married have likewise married another descendant of Noah.

As God describes the sinful days of Noah in chapter 6, we find that there is not much difference between his time and ours. Jesus said in Matthew 24:37, *"But as the days of Noe (Noah) were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."* Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

CHRIST IS REVEALED:

Through Abel's BLOOD SACRIFICE – Gen. 4:4 (Heb. 9:19-22)

Through Abel's SACRIFICIAL LAMB – Gen. 4:4 (John 1:29; Heb. 11:4)

In METHUSELAH (meaning "the man of the sword") – Gen. 5:27 (John 1:1,14; Eph 6:17; Heb. 4:12; Rev. 19:15)