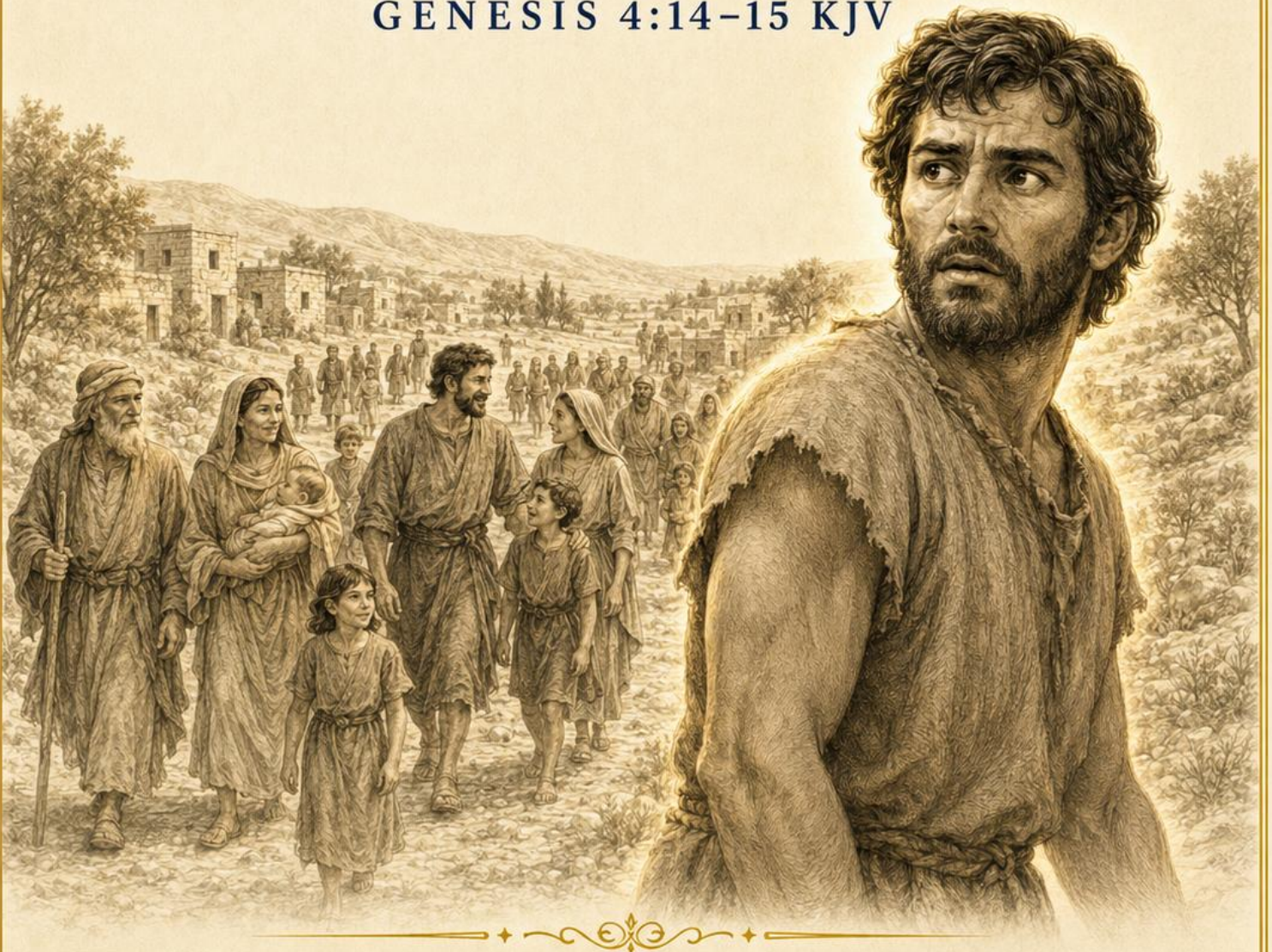


REASON TOGETHER CHURCH
REASON TOGETHER STUDIES

WHO WAS CAIN AFRAID OF?

GENESIS 4:14-15 KJV



DR. THOMAS W. HAWKSLEY

www.ReasonTogether.Church

Bring your questions. Open your Bible. Let's Reason Together the Word of God.

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SERMON TRANSCRIPT



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“And it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me.”

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Aloha.

Welcome to Reason Together Church.

Whether you have worshiped with us many times or whether this is your first time with us, I am grateful that you are here.

We are especially honored by our guests today.

We will never ask you to stand, introduce yourself or do anything that might embarrass you.

You are welcome to listen.

You are welcome to ask questions.

You are welcome to open your Bible and reason through the Word of God with us.

That is why we say, "Bring your questions. Open your Bible. Let's Reason Together the Word of God."

If this is your first time with us, there is a guest card available.

We ask only for your first name and email address so we can keep in touch.

We do not sell your information, and we do not use it to pressure you.

After the service, I hope you will join us in the Reason Together Cafe.

COFFEE reminds us that Christ Offers Forgiveness For Everyone Everywhere.

The coffee is free, and so are the refills on conversations.

If you have keiki with you, our Keiki Kids Center is available for them as well.

Before we begin the study, let me briefly mention giving.

There is a giving box in the back for members of Reason Together Church who want to give as the Lord leads them.

Our guests are never expected to give.

If you are a member of another church, we encourage you to give through your home church.

The Bible teaches that giving should be cheerful and never under compulsion.

Let us pray.

Heavenly Father, thank You for bringing us together today.

Thank You for every person in this room and every person joining this study from somewhere else.

Open our eyes to what Your Word actually says.

Keep us from confusing familiar pictures with the words of Scripture.

Give us humility when You have not revealed every detail.

Give us courage to ask difficult questions without being afraid of where an honest reading of the Bible will lead.

Help us distinguish between what Your Word states, what it permits and what people have merely imagined.

Most of all, show us Jesus Christ and the better word spoken by His blood.

In His name we pray, Amen.

Today we are considering a question that has been hiding in plain sight for thousands of years.

The public question is simple.

Who was Cain afraid of?

Most of us know the basic story.

Adam and Eve sinned and were driven from the Garden of Eden.

They had two sons named Cain and Abel.

Cain became a farmer.

Abel became a keeper of sheep.

Both men brought an offering to the Lord.

God accepted Abel and his offering.

God did not accept Cain and his offering.

Cain became angry.

God warned him that sin was crouching at the door.

Cain refused the warning.

He rose up against his brother in the field and killed him.

Then God confronted Cain.

Let us read Genesis chapter 4, beginning with verse 8.

"And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him."

"And the LORD said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother?"

"And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper?"

"And he said, What hast thou done?"

"The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground."

"And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand."

"When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength."

"A fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth."

"And Cain said unto the LORD, My punishment is greater than I can bear."

"Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth."

"And from thy face shall I be hid."

"And I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth."

"And it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me."

"And the LORD said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold."

"And the LORD set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him."

"And Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden."

"And Cain knew his wife; and she conceived, and bare Enoch."

"And he builded a city, and called the name of the city, after the name of his son, Enoch."

Now let us return to the question.

Who was Cain afraid of?

If Adam, Eve, Cain and Abel were the only people who existed, and Abel was now dead, whom did Cain expect to find him?

Was Cain afraid that Adam would kill him?

Were there brothers and sisters Genesis did not name?

Was Abel already married?

Were nieces and nephews alive?

Were there other people beyond Eden?

Or was Cain afraid of people who had not even been born yet?

Before answering, we need to recognize how easily our minds add details to the Bible.

Many of us picture Adam, Eve, Cain and Abel sitting almost alone outside Eden.

We picture one small farm, one flock of sheep and four people surrounded by an otherwise empty world.

Cain kills Abel, and suddenly Cain begins looking over his shoulder for a crowd that should not exist.

But that picture does not come from the words of Genesis.

It comes from the way the story has usually been illustrated.

It comes from the way a long history is compressed into a few verses.

Genesis tells us what we need to know.

It does not pause to name every child, every year or every movement of the family.

Genesis chapter 4 itself tells us that time passed.

Verse 3 begins, "And in process of time it came to pass."

The Hebrew expression is miqqets yamim.

It carries the sense of something happening after an indefinite period of days.

It does not tell us whether that period was months, years or longer.

But it tells us not to read the story as though Cain and Abel were born one day and brought their offerings the following morning.

Cain and Abel had established occupations.

Cain knew how to cultivate the ground and produce a harvest.

Abel knew how to care for sheep and select the firstlings of his flock.

Both were responsible for their own offerings.

Both were accountable for their own responses to God.

They were not infants.

They were not small children.

They were men living responsible lives.

The shortness of the account does not tell us the length of the events.

That is the first thing we must remember.

The second thing we must remember is even more important.

Cain is not the narrator of Genesis.

Cain is not giving us a census.

Cain is a guilty murderer speaking from fear.

His words prove that he was afraid.

They do not prove that he knew exactly how many people were alive.

They do not prove that someone was presently chasing him.

They do not prove that he had already met the people he feared.

They do not prove that those people belonged to another race.

Listen again to the sequence of Cain's words.

"Thou hast driven me out this day."

That is immediate.

"I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond."

That is his continuing condition.

"It shall come to pass."

That looks forward.

"That every one that findeth me shall slay me."

That describes what Cain expects might eventually happen.

The Hebrew word translated "it shall come to pass" is vehayah.

It means, "and it will be," "and it shall happen" or "and it will come about."

The expression does not automatically mean something in the distant future.

It can introduce a consequence that follows soon.

But here Cain is looking beyond "this day" into the life of wandering ahead of him.

Cain did not say, "They are coming to kill me."

Cain did not say, "There is a crowd waiting outside."

Cain effectively said, "As I wander, whoever eventually finds me may kill me."

The Hebrew expression translated "every one that findeth me" is kol-motze'i.

It means "whoever finds me" or "every finder of me."

It identifies no particular person.

It gives us no number.

It gives us no location.

It gives us no family tree.

It gives us no timetable.

Cain places everyone he might encounter into one frightening category.

They might kill me.

The Book of Proverbs later says, "The wicked flee when no man pursueth."

Guilt can make a person hear footsteps when no one is walking behind him.

Guilt can turn every stranger into a threat.

Guilt can make tomorrow frightening before tomorrow arrives.

Cain had become the first murderer, and now he imagined murder everywhere he looked.

He had introduced violence into his family, and now he expected violence from his family.

Cain's statement may tell us more about Cain's conscience than it tells us about the world's population.

At the same time, God treated the danger seriously.

God said, "Whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold."

Then God established a sign for Cain so that anyone finding him would not kill him.

God's response tells us that Cain could eventually face retaliation.

It does not tell us who the attacker would be.

It does not tell us the attacker was already alive.

It does not tell us that a large population already existed beyond Eden.

It establishes a potential danger and God's authority over that danger.

So who were the most likely people Cain feared?

The traditional answer is other members of Adam and Eve's family.

That answer remains the strongest Biblical explanation.

But we need to state it more carefully than it is sometimes stated.

Genesis 5:4 says of Adam, "And he begat sons and daughters."

That clearly establishes that Adam and Eve eventually had more children than Cain, Abel and Seth.

However, look carefully at the whole verse.

"And the days of Adam after he had begotten Seth were eight hundred years: and he begat sons and daughters."

The verse specifically describes the years after Seth was born.

It proves that Adam and Eve eventually had many children.

It does not directly prove that dozens of those children were already living when Abel died.

That is an important distinction.

We should never make a verse prove more than its words establish.

Cain's later wife demonstrates that a suitable female relative eventually existed if all humanity descended from Adam and Eve.

But Genesis does not tell us whether she was already alive when Cain killed Abel.

It does not tell us when Cain married her.

It does not tell us whether she traveled with him from the family region or joined him later.

That question deserves its own study.

For today, Genesis 5 assures us of a growing family, but it does not provide a head count on the day of Abel's murder.

It is possible that Adam and Eve already had unnamed sons and daughters.

The Bible regularly names the individuals necessary to the story without naming every child in a family.

It is also possible that Cain feared Adam himself.

A father who had just lost a righteous son would certainly have reason to confront the murderer.

It is possible that Cain feared brothers or sisters who already loved Abel.

It is possible that older children had begun families of their own.

All of that is possible.

None of it is stated.

The phrase we have been discussing points us toward another answer that may be even more important.

Cain could have feared the members of Adam's family who would be born in the future.

Cain knew the command God had given humanity.

"Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth."

He knew that Adam and Eve's family would not remain small.

He knew that children would be born.

He knew that children would grow into adults.

He knew that those adults would have children.

He knew Abel's story would be told.

He knew future generations might ask why Abel was gone and why Cain lived far away under a divine sign.

Cain may have expected to live for centuries.

Adam lived 930 years.

People born decades after Abel's death could grow up, hear what Cain had done and seek revenge.

Cain committed murder in a single day.

But he may have expected to spend centuries wondering when the consequences of that day would find him.

That possibility fits the words, "it shall come to pass."

It fits, "whoever finds me."

It fits the need for protection that would remain with Cain throughout his wandering.

It also explains why Cain did not need a large crowd to be standing nearby at that moment.

We should consider another possibility within Adam's family.

Some of Adam and Eve's descendants may already have moved beyond the immediate cultivated region near Eden.

The command was to multiply and fill the earth.

Genesis does not describe every movement of every child.

Cain's exile could have taken him into territory where relatives were already living or would later live.

They would not be a separate creation.

They would still be members of the expanding human family.

And what about Abel?

Was Abel married?

Did Abel have children?

The Bible does not say.

We should not invent a wife or children for him.

But we should also recognize that the Bible never says he was unmarried or childless.

If Abel had a wife or children, Cain's fear of vengeance would become even more understandable.

The Hebrew description of Abel's blood adds an interesting layer.

God said, "The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground."

The Hebrew word translated "blood" is grammatically plural.

It can be rendered "the bloods of thy brother."

In Hebrew, the plural can be an expression for violently shed blood or bloodguilt.

Some ancient Jewish interpreters saw another meaning as well.

They said Cain had not merely killed Abel.

He had killed all the descendants who might have come from Abel.

We cannot say the grammar proves that interpretation.

But it creates a haunting contrast.

Cain extinguished Abel's possible future family and then became afraid of the future family that would remain.

Now we need to consider the more controversial possibility.

Could other human beings have existed outside Eden?

Some interpreters distinguish between the creation of humanity in Genesis chapter 1 and the formation of Adam in Genesis chapter 2.

Genesis 1 says, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness."

Then it says, "So God created man in his own image."

It concludes, "Male and female created he them."

The Hebrew word adam can refer to a human being, humankind collectively, the man or Adam as an individual.

Genesis 1 can therefore speak of adam collectively as humanity.

Genesis 2 narrows the view and tells us that God formed the man from the dust of the ground and placed him in Eden.

Some readers propose that Genesis 1 describes a broader human population.

They then understand Genesis 2 as the special formation, selection or covenant calling of Adam within that population.

Under that interpretation, Eden was a special sacred region within a larger inhabited world.

Cain could then fear people outside Adam's immediate family.

That is an interesting proposal.

The Hebrew allows the word adam to describe humanity collectively.

But the Hebrew does not prove two separate creations.

Genesis 2 can naturally be understood as a closer account of the human creation already announced in Genesis 1.

We must also place the theory beside the rest of Scripture.

Genesis 3:20 calls Eve "the mother of all living."

Acts 17:26 says that God "hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth."

Romans 5 connects the entrance of sin and death with one man.

First Corinthians 15:45 calls Adam "the first man."

Those passages make the common ancestry of humanity through Adam and Eve the stronger Biblical reading.

We can examine the outside-Eden proposal fairly.

We should not ridicule the question.

But we should also not present a possibility as though God plainly revealed it.

Genesis never says that Cain encountered a separately created race.

Genesis never says that Adam was surrounded by biological humans who lacked the image of God.

Genesis never says Cain's wife came from another population.

Those are proposed solutions to a silence in the text.

They are not statements found in the text.

This is where ancient Mesopotamian writings become interesting.

They do not become Scripture.

They do not settle the question.

But they show us how other ancient peoples pictured the earliest world.

Some Sumerian compositions describe the gods fashioning what English translators call the "black-headed people."

That was a customary Sumerian expression for humanity.

It was not a Biblical racial category, and it should not be treated as one.

Those writings speak collectively about people multiplying, establishing cities and developing civilization.

The Sumerian King List describes kingship and cities before a great Flood.

It assigns extraordinary reign lengths to early kings.

The Sumerian composition commonly called Enki and Ninmah describes humans fashioned from clay and portrays people with different physical conditions being assigned places in society.

Another ancient work, Atrahasis, is Akkadian rather than strictly Sumerian.

It describes humanity being created collectively for labor.

Humanity multiplies until the growing population and its noise become part of the story leading toward a flood.

These texts are valuable comparative evidence.

They show that the people of ancient Mesopotamia remembered or imagined a populated and organized world before the Flood.

They do not mention Biblical Cain.

They do not mention Cain's fear.

They do not identify Cain's wife.

They do not say that another race lived outside Biblical Eden.

They do not give us a population that can simply be inserted into Genesis chapter 4.

And they certainly do not plainly say that extraterrestrial Anunnaki genetically engineered different human races.

That popular claim goes far beyond what the surviving texts say.

The Apkallu were remembered as ancient sages, sometimes represented in hybrid forms.

The Igigi and Anunnaki were categories of divine beings in Mesopotamian religion.

They were not ordinary races of humans whom Genesis identifies as Cain's neighbors.

We can learn from ancient writings without forcing them into the Bible.

We can compare them with Genesis without pretending that every similarity proves shared historical details.

The proper conclusion is modest.

Ancient Mesopotamian traditions pictured a populated antediluvian world.

They cannot tell us who Cain feared.

Now let us return to the Hebrew text, because Cain's punishment contains something deeper than a demographic puzzle.

God told Cain that he would be "a fugitive and a vagabond."

The Hebrew expression is na va-nad.

The paired words communicate restlessness, instability, displacement and wandering.

Cain had been a tiller of the ground.

His identity and livelihood were tied to the soil.

Now the ground would no longer yield its strength to him.

The Hebrew word translated "ground" is adamah.

Listen to the pattern.

Adam was formed from the adamah.

Cain worked the adamah.

Abel's blood entered the adamah.

The adamah cried out against Cain.

Cain was cursed from the adamah.

Cain was driven from the face of the adamah.

Cain tried to hide Abel in the ground, but the ground became the witness that testified against him.

Cain then said, "My punishment is greater than I can bear."

The Hebrew word translated "punishment" is avon.

That word can refer to iniquity, guilt, the consequence of iniquity or punishment.

Cain's words can therefore be heard in more than one way.

"My punishment is greater than I can bear."

Or possibly, "My guilt is too great to bear."

Was Cain beginning to feel the weight of what he had done?

Perhaps.

But notice what Cain actually discusses.

He speaks of losing the ground.

He speaks of being hidden from God's face.

He speaks of wandering.

He speaks of someone killing him.

He never mentions Abel by name.

He never says, "I have sinned against my brother."

He never asks God to forgive him.

He never expresses sorrow for his parents, who had now lost both sons in different ways.

Cain may have felt terrible guilt.

But the passage gives us more evidence of regret over consequences than repentance from sin.

There is a difference between being sorry for what sin has done to us and being sorry for what our sin has done to someone else.

That distinction reaches directly into our lives.

Sometimes we are sorry because trust has been lost.

Sometimes we are sorry because someone discovered what we did.

Sometimes we are sorry because there is a financial cost, a broken relationship or public embarrassment.

But repentance goes beyond regretting the consequences.

Repentance agrees with God about the sin.

Repentance turns from it.

Repentance seeks mercy without pretending that the harm did not matter.

One of the greatest ironies in the passage appears in Cain's question to God.

God asked, "Where is Abel thy brother?"

Cain lied.

"I know not."

Then Cain asked, "Am I my brother's keeper?"

The word translated "keeper" carries the idea of guarding, watching and protecting.

Abel had been a keeper of sheep.

Cain mocked the idea that he should have any responsibility for keeping his brother.

Then only a few verses later, Cain became terrified that no one would keep him.

The man who refused to protect his innocent brother pleaded for protection for himself.

And God protected him.

Cain would not keep Abel.

Yet God placed a protective sign over Cain.

Cain showed no mercy to Abel.

Yet God showed restraint and mercy toward Cain.

Cain asked, "Am I my brother's keeper?"

Then the man who refused to keep his brother discovered that he desperately needed God to keep him.

That does not mean God declared Cain innocent.

The sentence remained.

The ground remained closed to him.

The wandering remained.

The separation remained.

But God did not permit another human being to begin an uncontrolled cycle of retaliation.

The KJV says, "The LORD set a mark upon Cain."

The Hebrew word translated "mark" is oth.

It commonly means a sign, token or indication.

The Hebrew says God established a sign for Cain.

It never tells us what the sign looked like.

It does not say it was placed on Cain's forehead.

It does not say God changed Cain's skin.

It does not say the sign was inherited by his children.

It does not connect the sign with any nation, ethnicity or modern people group.

The mark of Cain has been horribly misused in history to support racial prejudice.

That abuse has no foundation in Genesis.

The only purpose Genesis gives for the sign is protection.

It was established "lest any finding him should kill him."

The sign may have been visible.

It may have been a miraculous warning.

It may have been a pledge communicated to the family.

It may have taken another form.

The Bible does not say.

We should be content to know what God tells us.

It was a sign of divine protection placed over a guilty man.

Why did God protect Cain rather than permit someone to execute him?

The later command concerning murder had not yet been given.

After the Flood, Genesis 9:6 says, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed."

In Genesis 4, God personally judged Cain.

But God did not authorize private vengeance.

The sign protected Cain from being killed.

It also protected the growing human family from beginning an endless blood feud.

One person kills Abel.

Another person kills Cain.

Someone else avenges Cain.

Another family retaliates.

Violence produces violence until nobody remembers where it began.

God placed a boundary around that cycle.

"Whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold."

Sevenfold suggests complete and severe divine repayment.

God was saying that Cain's life remained under God's authority.

No private avenger had permission to become judge, jury and executioner.

The irony is that Cain's descendants later corrupted this protection.

Near the end of Genesis chapter 4, Lamech speaks to his two wives.

He says, "I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt."

Then Lamech boasts, "If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold."

God's sevenfold warning was intended to restrain violence.

Lamech's seventy-sevenfold boast celebrated violence.

God said, in effect, "Do not take vengeance into your own hands."

Lamech said, in effect, "I will make my vengeance greater than anyone else's."

Human violence grew from one brother in a field to a culture that sang about revenge.

Later, Peter asked Jesus how often he should forgive his brother.

"Till seven times?"

Jesus answered, "I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven."

Lamech multiplied vengeance.

Jesus multiplied forgiveness.

Lamech boasted that an injury would be repaid beyond measure.

Jesus taught that mercy should extend beyond our desire to keep score.

That does not erase justice.

It removes personal revenge from the throne of our hearts.

Now look at what Cain did after receiving God's sign.

Genesis 4:16 says, "And Cain went out from the presence of the LORD."

Cain had just said, "From thy face shall I be hid."

The next verse describes that fear becoming reality.

His greatest loss was not his farm.

His greatest loss was not his security.

His greatest loss was not the respect of his family.

Cain went out from the presence of the Lord.

Yet Cain spent more time fearing the face of another murderer than grieving the loss of the face of God.

That, too, is what sin does.

We become afraid of what people may do while remaining strangely unconcerned about our relationship with God.

We worry about being exposed before people while forgetting that we already stand exposed before God.

Cain then dwelt in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

Nod is related to the Hebrew idea of wandering.

Cain settled in the land of wandering.

That is a contradiction written into his life.

God told him he would be restless.

Cain tried to settle down.

Then Genesis says Cain built a city.

The Hebrew construction can carry the ongoing sense that Cain "was building" a city.

We do not need to picture Cain completing a metropolis immediately after arriving.

An ancient city could be a small protected or walled settlement.

Cain could have worked on it over years as his descendants multiplied.

But why would a man sentenced to wandering begin building walls?

Perhaps because he was afraid.

God made Cain vulnerable.

Cain built protection.

God removed Cain's permanence.

Cain built a permanent settlement.

God sent Cain away from the family.

Cain named a city after his son so his own line would endure.

Cain tried to solve a spiritual sentence with a construction project.

Cain could build walls around his home, but he could not build peace within his heart.

People still do that.

We try to build enough money around our fear.

We try to build enough success around our insecurity.

We try to build enough distance around our guilt.

We try to build enough activity around the voice we do not want to hear.

But there is no wall high enough to silence a conscience that needs to be cleansed.

There is no city secure enough to replace the presence of God.

There is no human accomplishment strong enough to undo the harm of sin.

So let us answer the public question as plainly as Scripture allows.

Who was Cain afraid of?

The Bible does not name the individual.

The strongest explanation is that Cain feared Adam and Eve's expanding family.

Some relatives may already have been alive.

Genesis does not give us enough information to know.

More importantly, Cain knew that many relatives would be born during his long future.

Those generations could hear about Abel and seek vengeance.

Cain may also have feared relatives who had migrated or would migrate beyond the immediate Eden region.

The possibility of other humans outside Eden can be discussed.

The Hebrew word adam can describe humanity collectively.

Ancient Mesopotamian texts picture a populated early world.

But neither the Hebrew text nor the Sumerian texts establish a separately created race as Cain's feared population.

We do not need science fiction to answer the question.

We need to read the words carefully and leave room where God left silence.

Cain's fear was a family question.

It was a future question.

Most of all, it was a conscience question.

Cain knew that somewhere along the road ahead, the violence he had introduced into the world might come looking for him.

But the story does not end with Cain's fear.

Abel's blood cried from the ground.

God heard it.

Cain could hide Abel's body from human eyes, but he could not hide Abel's blood from God.

Hebrews 11:4 says of Abel, "He being dead yet speaketh."

Cain killed Abel's body but could not silence Abel's testimony.

Then Hebrews 12:24 turns our attention to Jesus.

It speaks of "the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel."

Abel's blood cried for justice.

Christ's blood declares that justice has been satisfied.

Abel's blood exposed the murderer.

Christ's blood can cleanse the murderer.

Abel's blood testified from the ground.

Christ's blood testifies from the cross and the empty tomb.

Cain feared being found.

Jesus said that He came to seek and to save that which was lost.

Cain attempted to hide behind distance and walls.

Jesus invites sinners to come into the light and receive forgiveness.

Perhaps you understand Cain's fear more than you would like to admit.

Perhaps there is something in your past that you fear will eventually find you.

Perhaps you have built a respectable life around a wound, a failure or a secret.

Perhaps you are more afraid of what people would think than you are concerned about being right with God.

Perhaps you regret consequences but have never truly repented of the sin.

The answer is not to wander farther.

The answer is not to build higher walls.

The answer is not to invent a story that makes the guilt disappear.

The answer is Jesus Christ.

The Bible says that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

The wages of sin is death.

But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Jesus lived the sinless life we could never live.

He died upon the cross in our place.

He shed His blood for our sin.

He was buried.

He rose again on the third day.

He offers forgiveness and eternal life to everyone who turns to Him in faith.

You do not need a protective sign that warns people away from you.

You need the saving blood that brings you near to God.

You do not need to spend the rest of your life wondering when your past will find you.
You can come honestly to the Savior who already knows everything and still invites you to come.

If you have never trusted Jesus Christ as your Savior, you can call upon Him today.

The words of a prayer cannot save you.

Only Jesus saves.

But you can express your repentance and faith to Him in prayer.

You may pray with me now.

Heavenly Father, I know that I am a sinner.

I know that I cannot hide my sin from You.

I believe that Jesus Christ died on the cross for my sins.

I believe that He was buried and rose again.

I turn from my sin and place my trust in Jesus Christ alone.

Please forgive me.

Please save me.

Give me the eternal life You have promised.

Help me follow You from this day forward.

In the name of Jesus Christ I pray, Amen.

If you prayed that prayer sincerely, please speak with me after the service.

I would be honored to open the Bible with you and help you understand what it means to begin following Jesus Christ.

Let us close in prayer.

Heavenly Father, thank You that Your Word is trustworthy even when it does not answer every question in the way our curiosity might prefer.

Thank You for allowing us to ask who Cain feared.

Thank You for showing us that the Bible contains more time, more people and more meaning than our familiar pictures sometimes allow us to see.

Keep us from turning possibilities into doctrines.

Keep us from dismissing questions simply because the answers require careful thought.

Guard us from sensational stories that distract from what You have revealed.

Teach us to distinguish between regret and repentance.

Teach us to care for our brothers and sisters rather than asking whether their lives are our concern.

Thank You for the mercy You showed even while judging Cain.

Thank You that You restrained vengeance and did not surrender the world to an endless cycle of retaliation.

Where guilt has made someone afraid, lead that person into honest confession.

Where anger has made someone desire revenge, teach that person to release judgment into Your hands.

Where someone has built walls around a burden, give that person courage to seek prayer, counsel and help.

Above all, thank You for the blood of Jesus Christ that speaks better things than the blood of Abel.

Thank You that justice and mercy meet at the cross.

Help us carry truth, humility and grace into every conversation this week.

In the name of Jesus Christ we pray, Amen.

Before we say aloha, remember that our prayer does not end the conversation.

Carry this question with you into the coming week.

When you hear someone ask where Cain found his wife or whom Cain feared, begin by asking what Genesis actually says.

Remember that Cain's frightened words are not a census.

Remember that "it shall come to pass" opens a long future in which Adam's family would continue to grow.

Remember that Genesis 5:4 proves Adam eventually had sons and daughters, but does not tell us how many were alive when Abel died.

Be willing to say, "The Bible does not tell us," when that is the honest answer.

That is not weakness.

That is respect for the Word of God.

This week, also consider Cain's question: "Am I my brother's keeper?"

Look for one person you can encourage, protect, help or simply listen to.

Do not wait until someone becomes a tragedy before deciding that his or her life matters.

If today's study raised a question, concern or burden for you, please remember that I am available throughout the week.

You do not need to wait until next Sunday.

You do not need to carry a difficult concern by yourself.

If you are struggling with guilt, anger, fear, grief or the desire for revenge, please allow me to pray with you and help you reason through the Word of God.

Please join us after the service at the Reason Together Cafe.

The coffee is free.

COFFEE reminds us that Christ Offers Forgiveness For Everyone Everywhere.

And there are always free refills on conversations.

Bring the question you did not have time to ask.

Bring the thought you are still working through.

Or simply give us the opportunity to know you better.

We would be honored to reason together with you, pray with you and walk with you through the coming week.

You can also find this study and other Reason Together Studies at www.ReasonTogether.Church.

Bring your questions.

Open your Bible.

Let's Reason Together the Word of God.

Aloha Nui Loa.

REASON TOGETHER CHURCH

REASON TOGETHER STUDIES

BIBLICAL COMMENTARY



WHO WAS CAIN AFRAID OF?

An Expository Commentary on Genesis 4:13-17 and Related Texts

Primary Text: Genesis 4:14-15 KJV

‘And it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me.’

Dr. Thomas W. Hawksley

Reason Together Church

www.ReasonTogether.Church

*Bring your questions. Open your Bible.
Let's Reason Together the Word of God.*

Introduction

Genesis 4 presents the first murder in Scripture and one of its most persistent reader questions. After Cain killed Abel and received God's sentence, he protested that 'every one that findeth me shall slay me.' The natural question follows immediately. If the named family consisted of Adam, Eve, Cain and Abel, whom did Cain expect to meet?

The difficulty is real, but it is enlarged by a familiar mental picture that compresses Genesis into a few hurried scenes. Adam and Eve leave Eden, Cain and Abel appear almost at once, the murder occurs and Cain departs as though only days have passed. Genesis does not supply that timetable. Cain and Abel are adult workers, the offerings come 'in process of time' and Seth is not born until Adam is 130 years old.

The text also speaks prospectively. Cain does not say that a particular person is presently approaching. He says, 'it shall come to pass.' His fear concerns the encounters that may occur as he wanders through the years ahead. Existing relatives are possible. Future relatives are certain under the command to multiply.

This commentary will therefore resist two opposite errors. It will not dismiss the question with a casual answer that claims more than Genesis states. It will also not turn Biblical silence into a hidden civilization, a separate human race or a science fiction account. The best interpretation must honor the Hebrew wording, the chronology, the wider canon and the theological purpose of the narrative.

1. The Narrative Setting

'And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.' Genesis 4:2
KJV

Cain and Abel enter the narrative as sons with established vocations. Abel keeps flocks and Cain cultivates the ground. These occupations require maturity, responsibility and the passage of time. The text is selective. It records the brothers who matter to the conflict without stating that no other children had been born.

Genesis 4:3 begins the offerings with the phrase 'in process of time.' The Hebrew *miqqets yamim* signals an interval or the course of days without defining its length. The narrative does not permit us to calculate Cain's age, but it does warn us against picturing the sacrifice and murder as immediate events after the expulsion from Eden.

The Lord regarded Abel and his offering, but did not regard Cain and his offering. The New Testament interprets Abel's offering through faith. Hebrews 11:4 says Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice 'by faith.' First John 3:12 identifies Cain's works as evil and his brother's as righteous. Genesis focuses upon the worshipers as well as the gifts.

God confronted Cain before the murder. Sin was pictured at the door and Cain was told that he must rule over it. Cain therefore did not act without warning. He invited Abel into the field, rose against his brother and killed him. The first human death recorded after the Fall came through deliberate violence within a family.

The Lord then asked, ‘Where is Abel thy brother?’ Cain answered, ‘I know not: Am I my brother's keeper?’ His reply combined falsehood with contempt. God answered that Abel's blood cried from the ground. Cain could hide the body from human sight, but he could not hide the blood from God.

2. Cain's Sentence and Complaint

‘And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand.’ Genesis 4:11 KJV

The sentence corresponds to Cain's crime and vocation. Cain worked the ground. The ground received Abel's blood. The ground would no longer yield its strength to Cain. His work, place and security were all affected by the violence committed upon his brother.

Cain was also sentenced to become ‘a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth.’ The paired Hebrew words *na va-nad* convey restlessness, wandering and instability. They intensify one another. Cain would no longer enjoy the settled relationship to the ground that had defined his labor.

‘My punishment is greater than I can bear.’ Genesis 4:13 KJV

The Hebrew noun *avon* can refer to iniquity, guilt or the consequence of wrongdoing. The KJV reads the line as punishment greater than Cain can bear. Other renderings hear, ‘My iniquity is greater than can be forgiven.’ The lexical range allows the interpreter to ask whether Cain is confessing guilt, protesting punishment or expressing both.

The following verse places the strongest emphasis upon consequences. Cain describes expulsion, separation, wandering and the possibility of being killed. Genesis does not record the kind of confession heard later from David: ‘I have sinned against the LORD.’ Fear of consequences can awaken a person to sin, but fear and repentance are not identical.

3. ‘It Shall Come to Pass’

‘And it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me.’ Genesis 4:14 KJV

Vehayah and the future course of events

The KJV phrase ‘it shall come to pass’ translates *vehayah*, a form of *hayah*, ‘to be’ or ‘to happen,’ joined to the conjunction. In this setting it introduces a resulting future circumstance. Many translations express the sense more compactly: ‘whoever finds me will kill me.’

The wording supports the reader's instinct that Cain is looking ahead. It does not, however, contain a built-in measurement of distance. The feared encounter could happen soon, repeatedly or after many years. The phrase opens Cain's future without placing a date upon the event.

The contrast inside Cain's speech is instructive. ‘Thou hast driven me out this day’ emphasizes the immediate sentence. ‘It shall come to pass’ then describes what Cain believes may occur under that sentence. Immediate exile produces continuing vulnerability.

Kol-motze'i: whoever encounters me

The expression translated 'every one that findeth me' is kol-motze'i. Kol can mean all, every or each. Motze'i comes from matsa, to find or encounter, and includes the object 'me.' The construction describes whoever encounters Cain. It does not identify a tribe, nation or crowd.

Cain is not taking a census. He is stating a generalized fear. A person who says, 'Everyone will hate me when this becomes known,' may be expressing vulnerability rather than reporting the present attitude of every individual. Cain's guilt makes each future encounter appear dangerous.

Yahargeni: shall slay me

The final verb comes from harag, to kill or slay, with Cain as the object. The language naturally describes intentional killing. Josephus later retold the danger as fear of wild beasts, but Genesis 4:15 answers Cain with a warning of vengeance upon the one who kills him. The canonical exchange most naturally concerns a morally responsible human attacker.

4. How Much Time Had Passed?

Seth provides the overlooked chronological boundary

Genesis 4:25 says Eve bore Seth because God had appointed her another seed 'instead of Abel, whom Cain slew.' Genesis 5:3 then states that Adam was 130 years old when Seth was born. On the ordinary narrative sequence, Abel's murder therefore occurred before Adam reached 130.

That is a boundary, not an exact date. Cain could have killed Abel decades earlier or not long before Seth's conception. The important observation is that Genesis allows far more time than many illustrations suggest. Cain and Abel could have lived as adult men for a substantial period before the murder.

Genesis 5:4 must be used carefully

'And the days of Adam after he had begotten Seth were eight hundred years: and he begat sons and daughters.' Genesis 5:4 KJV

Genesis 5:4 proves that Adam eventually fathered unnamed sons and daughters. Its explicit chronology places those births during the years after Seth. The verse therefore does not, by itself, prove that Cain already had numerous brothers and sisters on the day Abel died.

The verse also does not say that no unnamed child existed earlier. Genesis names Cain, Abel and Seth because they carry the theological and genealogical movement of the account. Biblical genealogies regularly telescope family history and omit people who are not required for the traced line.

A careful answer should preserve both observations. We should not use Genesis 5:4 as an exact population record before the murder. We should also not assume that only the named sons existed. The text leaves the number unknown.

Future generations remain the strongest chronological answer

Even if few relatives were alive at the moment of the murder, Cain faced a long future. Adam's family would continue to multiply. Brothers, sisters, nephews, nieces and later descendants could learn what happened to Abel and regard Cain as the murderer of their relative.

This is why the forward-looking wording matters. Cain's fear does not require a large crowd standing outside Eden. It requires only a growing family and sufficient time for future encounters. Genesis gives us both.

5. Cain's Wife and the City of Enoch

'And Cain knew his wife; and she conceived, and bare Enoch: and he builded a city.'
Genesis 4:17 KJV

The text introduces Cain's wife without narrating her birth or marriage. It does not say Cain arrived in Nod and found an unrelated woman there. She is already called 'his wife' when Cain knows her and she conceives. She may have accompanied him into exile.

Under the traditional reading of Adam and Eve as the first human pair, Cain's wife would have been a sister or another close relative. Genesis 3:20 calls Eve 'the mother of all living.' The later Mosaic law forbids close-kin marriages, but that law had not been issued in Genesis 4. Augustine and many later interpreters understood early close-relative marriage as a temporary necessity during humanity's first generations.

Cain's city also creates a false impression if readers picture a modern urban center. The Hebrew can be rendered 'he was building a city.' An ancient city could begin as a compact, protected settlement and grow as a household became a clan. Cain named it after his son Enoch, tying permanence and reputation to his family line.

The city supports future population growth but does not reveal the population on the murder day. Cain could build for descendants not yet born. The wording even allows continuing construction rather than the sudden completion of a metropolis.

A theological irony runs through the verse. God sentenced Cain to restless wandering, yet Cain attempted to establish a fixed place. He built walls against vulnerability and named a city to preserve a family name. Human construction could not reverse the spiritual sentence. Cain could build security around his household without building peace within his conscience.

6. Who Might Cain Have Feared?

Existing relatives

Adam and Eve may have had unnamed children before Seth. Cain could therefore have feared siblings or other relatives already alive. This is possible, but the number cannot be demonstrated from Genesis 5:4.

Future relatives

Cain could have feared generations not yet born. This explanation fits his forward-looking statement and avoids the need for a large existing population. Cain knew that the family would multiply and that Abel's blood would not be forgotten.

Existing and future family together

The strongest synthesis includes both. Some relatives may already have lived while many more would certainly be born. Keil and Delitzsch state the interpretation in essentially this form: relatives of Abel who were already in existence or yet to be born.

People outside Adam's recorded family

Some interpreters propose an existing population beyond Eden. The possibility arises from Cain's fear, his wife, his city and the collective range of the Hebrew word adam. Genesis narrates selectively, so the question is not illegitimate. Yet Genesis 4 never states a second creation and never identifies outsiders as Cain's feared people.

Wild animals

Josephus records a different ancient interpretation in which Cain fears wild beasts during his wandering. This shows that the question is not new. Nevertheless, the human vengeance described in God's response and the ordinary force of the exchange favor a human attacker.

The textually responsible answer

Scripture does not name the individual. Existing or future members of Adam and Eve's family best explain the available evidence. A sermon should state that conclusion with confidence appropriate to an inference, then plainly admit that the Bible does not give the attacker's name, age or relationship.

7. Did Other Humans Exist Outside Eden?

The Hebrew word adam can function as the personal name Adam or as a collective term for humankind. That range has led some readers to ask whether Genesis 2 focuses upon a representative or covenantal couple inside Eden while other human beings lived beyond the garden.

A possibility should be evaluated through the whole canon rather than through one unanswered question. Genesis 3:20 identifies Eve as the mother of all living. Genesis 5 traces human descent through Adam. Acts 17:26 says God 'hath made of one blood all nations of men.' Romans 5 builds the universal relation of sin and salvation upon Adam and Christ. First Corinthians 15:45 calls Adam 'the first man.'

These passages give common human ancestry substantial canonical weight. A co-Adamic or pre-Adamic population may be proposed as a model, but Genesis 4 does not require it. Any model must also explain how it relates to universal sin, the image of God and the Adam-Christ parallel without weakening the teaching of the New Testament.

The subject has also been corrupted by racial theories. Some have turned the mark of Cain into dark skin or a hereditary stigma upon a people group. Genesis says nothing of the kind. The sign protects Cain from being killed. It is not identified with skin color, ethnicity or race. Racialized mark-of-Cain teaching is not an interpretation to be balanced against others. It is a misuse of Scripture that must be rejected.

8. Sumerian and Akkadian Comparisons

Ancient Mesopotamian texts portray worlds populated by human communities, cities and rulers in primordial time. These materials are useful because they show what kinds of origin traditions circulated in the broader ancient Near East. They do not function as missing chapters of Genesis.

The Sumerian King List

The Sumerian King List names cities and kings before a great Flood, then resumes kingship afterward. Its pre-Flood reigns are extraordinarily long. The text demonstrates that Sumerian tradition pictured organized society and urban life in the earliest age.

The comparison is limited. The King List does not mention Adam, Eve, Cain, Abel, Eden or the mark. It cannot establish that its cities existed at the precise time of Genesis 4 or that their inhabitants were the people Cain feared.

Enki and Ninmah

The Sumerian composition Enki and Ninmah presents deities involved in human creation and the assignment of human fates or roles. Humanity appears collectively. Popular discussions sometimes use that collective picture to suggest a separate race outside Eden.

The text does not support that conclusion. Its polytheistic framework differs fundamentally from Genesis. Similar interest in human origins does not make the stories parts of one combined historical narrative.

The Flood Story and Atrahasis

The fragmentary Sumerian Flood Story associated with Ziusudra also assumes early cities, kingship and a populated world. Atrahasis describes the creation and multiplication of humanity followed by attempts to reduce the population through plague, famine and Flood.

Atrahasis is frequently called a Sumerian text in popular teaching, but the surviving epic is Akkadian. It draws upon Mesopotamian traditions and is properly part of the comparison, yet precision about its language and setting matters.

The proper use of comparison

The ancient texts show that early cities, long eras and collective populations were familiar in Mesopotamian origin traditions. They may help modern readers stop picturing Genesis as though nothing happened between its named events. They cannot identify Cain's feared people or prove ancient aliens, hybrid races or a separate creation.

Ancient texts widen the historical conversation. They do not fill Biblical silence with new revelation.

9. The Sign of Cain and the Restraint of Vengeance

‘And the LORD set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him.’ Genesis 4:15 KJV

The word translated ‘mark’ is oth, commonly a sign or token. Genesis does not describe its shape, location or appearance. The wording can be understood as God appointing a sign for Cain. The purpose is explicit: to prevent someone who encounters Cain from killing him.

God's protection does not reverse Cain's guilt. The ground remains resistant, exile remains and wandering remains. Mercy limits the consequence without declaring the murderer innocent. Cain lives under both judgment and protection.

The sevenfold warning keeps vengeance under divine authority. God does not invite a private avenger to decide Cain's sentence. Whoever kills Cain will answer severely to God. The passage begins a Biblical movement away from uncontrolled retaliation toward ordered justice.

Lamech later corrupts the warning. He boasts that if Cain is avenged sevenfold, Lamech will be avenged seventy and sevenfold. God's warning was intended to restrain violence. Lamech turns it into a celebration of personal power.

Jesus answers the culture of Lamech in Matthew 18. When Peter asks how often he should forgive his brother, Jesus answers, ‘Until seventy times seven.’ Lamech multiplies revenge. Jesus teaches His disciples to multiply forgiveness. Justice is not erased, but personal vengeance is removed from the throne of the heart.

10. The Deeper Meaning of Cain's Fear

The murderer imagines murder returning

Cain introduced intentional bloodshed into the human family and immediately feared that bloodshed would return to him. His fear is morally revealing. He understood that murder creates a claim for justice even though he had denied responsibility for Abel.

The brother who would not keep needed to be kept

Cain asked, ‘Am I my brother's keeper?’ He denied the obligation to protect Abel and then appealed for his own protection. The irony exposes the self-centeredness of sin. Cain rejected human responsibility when another life was at stake but recognized the value of protection when his own life was threatened.

Cain feared human faces more than the loss of God's face

Cain included the words ‘from thy face shall I be hid,’ yet his complaint builds toward fear of being killed. He appears more alarmed by what another person may do than by separation from

God's favorable presence. Sin often makes people fear public discovery more than divine judgment.

The city cannot cleanse guilt

Cain's later settlement, family line and cultural achievements do not remove Abel's blood from the ground. People still build money, status, distance and activity around burdens they do not want to face. Security can protect a schedule or reputation while leaving the conscience untouched.

There is no wall high enough to silence a conscience that needs to be cleansed.

11. Abel's Blood and the Blood of Christ

Abel's blood cries from the ground in Genesis 4:10. Hebrews 11:4 says Abel, being dead, still speaks through his faithful offering. The first murdered righteous man becomes a continuing witness that faith may be rejected by the world but is not forgotten by God.

Hebrews 12:24 turns from Abel to Jesus and speaks of 'the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.' Abel's blood cries for justice. Christ's blood declares that justice has been satisfied for those who come through Him.

Abel's blood exposes the murderer. Christ's blood can cleanse the murderer. Abel's blood rises from the ground as testimony against sin. Christ's blood was shed upon the cross as the atoning sacrifice for sin.

Cain feared being found. Jesus said that He came 'to seek and to save that which was lost.' The gospel does not remove guilt by inventing another population or explaining away the crime. It brings the guilty person honestly before the God who already knows and offers forgiveness through the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

12. Interpretive History

Augustine

In *The City of God*, Augustine uses the long early lifespans and unnamed sons and daughters to explain how substantial populations and cities could arise. He also argues that marriage among close relatives was necessary during the earliest generation and later became forbidden when the need no longer existed.

Calvin

John Calvin emphasizes Cain's loss of protection. Once Cain sees himself removed from God's favorable keeping, he expects injury from people. Calvin's interpretation draws attention away from arithmetic and toward providence. Human life is always more vulnerable than people imagine apart from God's preserving hand.

Matthew Henry

Matthew Henry treats Genesis 4 as the history of Adam's family and emphasizes Cain's concern with punishment. His approach became common in later preaching: unnamed siblings and descendants provide the ordinary explanation while Cain's spiritual condition supplies the deeper lesson.

Keil and Delitzsch

Keil and Delitzsch explicitly understand the feared avengers as relatives of Abel who were already living or would later be born. That two-part answer remains the most balanced synthesis of narrative omission and future wording.

Josephus

Josephus supplies the wild-beast interpretation. Its value lies mainly in showing the antiquity and variety of the discussion. Genesis itself still favors human vengeance.

13. Interpretive Guardrails

First, do not identify a particular attacker when Scripture does not. The strongest family-based answer is still an inference and should be labeled honestly.

Second, do not make 'it shall come to pass' mean 'centuries later' as a grammatical certainty. The wording is forward-looking without stating distance.

Third, do not quote Genesis 5:4 as though it directly numbers siblings before Abel's death. The verse explicitly speaks of Adam's children after Seth while leaving earlier unnamed births possible.

Fourth, do not calculate an exact early population. Cain's age, family size, birth intervals, marriage ages and mortality are unknown.

Fifth, do not say Cain found his wife in Nod. The verse introduces her as his wife and narrates conception, not discovery.

Sixth, do not make Cain's city a modern metropolis. A city could begin as a small settlement and be built over years.

Seventh, do not use Sumerian or Akkadian texts as additional Scripture. They supply comparison, not revelation, and they do not identify Cain's feared people.

Eighth, do not teach a separately created race as Biblical fact. The wider canon strongly emphasizes common ancestry through Adam.

Ninth, reject every attempt to identify the mark of Cain with skin color or ethnicity. The sign was protective and the text provides no racial description.

Finally, do not allow the curiosity question to eclipse guilt, justice, divine restraint and the gospel. Genesis 4 is more concerned with the spread of sin than with satisfying a modern census question.

14. Teaching the Study

The best opening states the difficulty plainly. Cain killed Abel, then said whoever found him would kill him. If the familiar picture contains only four people, who is ‘whoever’? Let the congregation feel the question before supplying explanations.

The most important chronological move is to place Genesis 4:25 beside Genesis 5:3. Abel died before Seth and Seth was born when Adam was 130. This does not produce Cain's age, but it breaks the assumption that the murder followed Eden almost immediately.

The Hebrew discussion should remain simple. ‘It shall come to pass’ looks forward but does not assign a date. ‘Every one that findeth me’ means whoever encounters Cain. Cain's words describe an open future, not a known crowd.

When discussing outside-Eden humans, acknowledge the question respectfully. Explain why the idea is possible to imagine, why neither Genesis nor Sumerian literature proves it and why the wider canon favors common ancestry. This approach honors curiosity without rewarding sensationalism.

The strongest recurring irony is that Cain refused to be his brother's keeper but needed God to keep him. The strongest pastoral turn is that Cain feared the face of another murderer more than the loss of the face of God.

The sermon should conclude with Hebrews 12:24. Abel's blood cries for justice. Christ's blood speaks better things because at the cross justice and mercy meet. The question that begins with ancient population ends with every listener's need for cleansing.

Conclusion

The Bible does not name the person Cain feared. The text allows years to have passed, permits unnamed relatives and explicitly anticipates a future in which Adam's family would continue to multiply. Existing or future family members provide the strongest explanation.

The phrase ‘it shall come to pass’ deserves attention because it opens the future rather than describing only an immediate threat. It does not prove that danger was distant, but it makes a large present population unnecessary. Cain feared what could happen anywhere along the road ahead.

Cain's wife and city fit the same pattern of narrative compression and future development. Neither proves a separate civilization outside Eden. Sumerian and Akkadian texts confirm that ancient Mesopotamian traditions pictured early populated worlds and cities, but they do not identify Cain's neighbors or supply a second creation account for Christian doctrine.

The deeper answer lies in Cain's conscience. He knew that bloodshed could return to him. God judged the murderer but restrained private revenge. Cain built walls, yet no wall could cleanse him. Abel's blood continued to speak until Scripture directed us to the blood of Christ, which speaks better things.

Cain feared that his past would find him. The gospel announces a Savior who came to find the guilty and bring them home to God.

Selected Scripture Index

Cain, Abel and the sentence: Genesis 4:1-16.

Cain's wife, city and descendants: Genesis 4:17-24.

Seth and Adam's chronology: Genesis 4:25-26; Genesis 5:1-5.

Common human ancestry: Genesis 3:20; Acts 17:26; Romans 5:12-19; First Corinthians 15:21-22, 45-49.

Murder, justice and vengeance: Genesis 9:5-6; Numbers 35:9-34; Romans 12:19-21.

Lamech and forgiveness: Genesis 4:23-24; Matthew 18:21-22.

Abel's witness and Christ's blood: Matthew 23:35; Hebrews 11:4; Hebrews 12:24; First John 3:11-12.

Salvation and cleansing: Romans 3:23; Romans 6:23; First Corinthians 15:3-4; Ephesians 1:7; First John 1:7-9.

Comparative ancient texts: The Sumerian King List; Enki and Ninmah; the Sumerian Flood Story; Atrahasis. These sources are included for historical comparison, not as authorities equal to Scripture.