

<p>Introduction to the Study of GENESIS Chapters 4: Cain and Abel, Sin's Progress & Cainite Civilization</p>

It is worth noting that beginning with chapter 4 another change takes place in the usage of the divine name. In chapter 1, the divine name used exclusively is "God"; it is His common name (Heb. *elohim*) and conveys the idea of great and mighty power. In chapter 2, however, this general designation for God becomes His compound name: the "LORD God," which now includes God's personal name: Jehovah or Yahweh (i.e., trans. "LORD"). Then in chapter 4 another meaningful change occurs, the general term for God is dropped and the divine name simply becomes "the LORD," His personal name.

This progression, however, is not for literary variation; rather, it moves from the incomprehensible greatness and transcendence of *God* the Creator, to the equally incomprehensible *personal* God who condescends in love, compassion, counsel, and mercy with those He made from dust, with those who transgressed His one and only command. On display then, in chapter 4, are the LORD'S glorious *personal* attributes, attributes that are also to characterize those made in His image and likeness.

Indeed, the central figure of chapter 4 is the LORD Himself who lovingly, patiently corrects disobedience, who responds to blatant sin with both judgment and mercy, and who watches sorrowfully as Cain turns his back and departs from His presence, leaving us a picture much like that of the father with the prodigal son.

By God's mercy and grace, Cain's new civilization advances remarkably, but so also does it descend into the dark abyss of sin. As the chapter concludes, the tragedy of Cain's departure far overshadows all the marvelous advances of the Cainite civilization, because it is a civilization without hope: one without "the LORD." It is timely therefore, at this point in our study of Genesis, to remind ourselves that 'it is just *the beginning*.' For the LORD God in love will not abandon fallen man who is hopeless, helpless, and doomed to death. Rather, God's plan of immeasurable grace has been already set in motion, and His glory is only *beginning* to be revealed!

Cain and Abel, Sin's Progress and Cainite Civilization (4:1 - 26)

A. Cain and Abel, and Sin's Explosive Progress - 4:1-16

1. The Birth of Cain: Eve's *First* Birth and *First-Born* Son (vv.1)
 2. Cain and His *Brother* Abel: the Same but Different (vv. 2-7)
 - Their Contrasting Lives and Worship (2-4)
 - God's Rejection of Cain and His Offering (5)
 - God's Loving Confrontation and Counsel (6-7)
 3. Cain's *Shocking* Action and Unrepentant Heart (vv.8-15)
 - The *First* Murder: Cain kills Abel, His *Brother* (8)
 - God Confronts Cain: Mankind's *First* Deceiver (9-10)
 - God's Condemnation: Cain *Cursed* but Mercy Extended (11-15)
 4. Cain *Departs* from the Presence of God for land of Nod (16)
- B. Cainite Civilization: Its Beginning and Accomplishments – 4:17-26**
1. Cain Fathers a Son and Builds a City – (17)
 2. Cain's Descendants: a Civilization with Everything But *God* (18-22)
 3. Cain's Descendant Lamach: His 2 Wives and Justifiable Murder (23-24)
 4. The Birth of Seth: Eve Receives from God a Replacement for Abel (25-26)