

Series: God & Cain #1040

Title: Genesis 4.6-7

God Speaks of Sin

Thank you for joining me today from wherever you are and by however you listen as we meet together coast-to-coast here in the United States and all the way around the world. We come now to the end of yet another week and we are another day closer to the Lord Jesus, appearing on the clouds to take His children home to heaven. Until that sweet and joyful moment, let's pray that we – the Christians – will remain faithful to God, that we will endure persecution, and that we will continue to share the Good News of the gospel with everyone to whom we come in contact. Let us seek God and pray for the Holy Spirit to give us opportunities to tell others about our hope in Christ. Christ is *the hope* of the world!

Friends, join me in eagerly anticipating *Christ*. He *is* coming and we want to be ready to meet Him! And if you are not yet a Christian, make it today as the day you turn to Him to rescue you from all of your sins and to make you righteous in the eyes of holy God. Jesus has paid the penalty in full for your sins. God made Jesus who was not a sinner to be made sin on your behalf. All God requires is that you place your *faith alone* in *Christ alone* and you *will* be saved! Sin will no longer have you trapped, addicted, and bound. Whoever Christ sets free, we will be free indeed!

And I am always here, available to tell you more about what it means to be Christian. My email is mark@godisministry.org and my mailing address is God Is, PO Box 802, Winchester Massachusetts 01890. My website is godisministry.org and you can find us on Facebook and Instagram. Just search for God Is Podcast, that's God Is Podcast on these social media platforms. I look forward to hearing from you this weekend. *Today is the day of salvation!* Trust in Christ Jesus, my friend. It is the best decision you will ever make and you will *never* regret it!

When we left off last time we had read Genesis chapter 4, verses 6 and 7. I commented on verse 6 and we also had time to get into verse 7. As a reminder, and to set the context for what we'll look at today, let me read Genesis 4, verses 6 and 7. If you have your Bible, follow along as I read Genesis 4.6 and 7. **"*6 Then the Lord said to Cain, 'Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? 7 If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it.'*"**

Regarding verse 7, we said this:

We will take this verse and break it down into two parts so that we can more easily understand what God says. The Lord pursues Cain and speaks of doing well. If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? Here, we have an issue of translation. From the Hebrew text this should say, "If you do well, surely you will be accepted." So, let's take the Hebrew and translate it into the English as, "If you do well, surely you will be accepted."

Here is the point, plain and simple: as long as you do right, you will be acceptable to God. The implication is you have done wrong and therefore you are not acceptable to God. And who is it that determines right from wrong? *God does*. God had clearly communicated to Cain what He expected in Cain's offering, but Cain did wrong by God (Cain did not do right, he did not do well), and therefore God rejected him. God did not accept him.

The gracious God is calling Cain toward repentance. When we repent of our sin we stop sinning and we move in a completely new direction, back to God. That's what God wants Cain to do. God calls for repentance. "If you do well, surely you will be accepted." That was part one of the verse.

Here now is part two: "And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it."

What we have in this second half of verse 7 is a vivid picture of sin. And this is something every one of us must have highlighted in our Bibles. The first time the word “sin” is used in the entire Bible is here at Genesis 4, verse 7. Cain’s sin is not the first sin. We know that from what we have already studied in Genesis chapters 2 and 3. Satan sinned against God. Adam sinned. Eve sinned. But the first usage of the word “sin” is right here.

In the margin of your Bible, or in the notes section of your Bible app mark it down. The word “sin” is first used in Genesis 4.7. And what I love about how God inspired this verse to be written is that as soon as sin is mentioned it is described! For those of you who think sin is no big deal, take a listen to this verse and let it sink in. Sin is a vile thing and God lays that out for Cain.

The Lord begins, “If you do not do well...” Again we can translate this as, “If you do not do what is right,” then there is a big implication, “sin is crouching at the door.” What does holy God mean by this? The meaning of sin is to miss the mark. God set the mark. Cain missed the mark. And so sin is crouching at the door! What about this crouching at the door?

First, note this: door is better translated opening. (Sin is crouching at the opening).

Second, the crouching at the opening represents a wild animal that is crouching, carefully watching its prey, ready to pounce. As that animal would pounce on the prey when the prey emerges from that opening, likewise sin will pounce on you, Cain!

And this is no house cat. I like cats and have owned them. Well, we had cats and that means we had cat toys. One was a set of fake bird feathers that we had on the edge of a plastic pole with string – kind of like a fishing rod – and you could bounce those feathers around and the cat would crawl up on it, low to the ground and dive for the feathers and just as the cat got there we could pull on the pole and up in the air the feathers would fly with the cat leaping for it! Cats can jump!

And we had an opening where I could stand behind a wall and drape the feathers out through that opening and the kitty cat would be right there, crouching, waiting, big eyes all alert, and when those feathers emerged from opening – *BOOM!* – that cat pounced on them and bit down hard! I was always glad those feathers were not my flesh!

But still, that’s Tiger your friendly pet who you love more than you love many people. The image God gives is of a completely wild cat, let’s say a great, big, fast Leopard. Imagine you are camping in a game park somewhere in Africa and there is an opening in your tent and when you pop your head out there early one beautiful morning to see the sunrise, *SNAP!* You have lost your head! Well, that is what sin does. It leaps up quick seemingly out of nowhere and sin *attacks!* Sin hurts. Sin kills.

And here is the other reality for Cain (and for us sinners): while it is possible to escape the clutches of sin, while the escape is possible, it is also *very* problematic! I mean how does one get past the wild beast crouching at the opening? Not easily, that is for sure. And sin is exactly like that. Every one of us who wrestles with our flesh, that is our sin nature, we know that getting past sin is the hardest thing we have to do, even as we live in the grace and power of Jesus Christ.

And then God adds, “...its desire is for you...” “Its” refers to sin. Sin’s desire is for you. This is strong language, and also vivid. In Hebrew this is better said, striving to get at you. (Sin is striving to get at you.) Picking up on sin as the wild, untamed beast, HC Leupold says, “[sin] thirsts after your blood (126).” “[Sin] thirsts after your blood.” Sin is *very serious*. And Cain has woefully underestimated sin as his enemy. So that, as verse 7 concludes, God tells Cain that he must master sin.

The message here is not, I repeat is *not*, that Cain can master sin in his own strength or ability. None of us can do that. It is impossible to master a wild, ravenous beast, crouching and ready to pounce without help. And who is our help? Who is Cain’s help? *God is.*

What God is doing by pursuing Cain is to say, "Let Me help you master sin." By God's grace and in God's power sin is mastered, sin is overcome. And so, as we have said, verses 6 and 7 are the gracious offer of God to draw the man Cain back to Him. How does Cain master his sin? He sprints *to God* and takes shelter from the wild beast therein the Lord's powerful arms.

Quoting Leupold again, "There is no book that so emphatically reveals what a cursed thing sin is as the Bible. [We] should know what an octopus fastened its tentacles upon the [human] race when sin took hold of it. With terrible realism the narrative continues (126-127)."

Indeed, what a vivid picture of sin and its destruction this is.

Do not pass quickly over verse 7. Internalize it.

And what was Cain's answer to God's questions? We will find out next week when you join me, beginning Lord willing on Monday, for God Is.

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