



# Potomac Hills

## Presbyterian Church, PCA

By Grace Alone ~ Through Faith Alone ~ In Christ Alone

The Reverend Dr. David V. Silvernail, Jr.  
Genesis 4:1-16

September 6, 2020  
English Standard Version

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### *“Cain and His Sacrifice”*

This is the 1st sermon in a topical series entitled,  
*Misused Stories of the Bible*

#### **Genesis 4:1-16**

*“Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, saying, ‘I have gotten a man with the help of the Lord.’<sup>2</sup> And again, she bore his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, and Cain a worker of the ground.<sup>3</sup> In the course of time Cain brought to the Lord an offering of the fruit of the ground,<sup>4</sup> and Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat portions. And the Lord had regard for Abel and his offering,<sup>5</sup> but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his face fell.<sup>6</sup> The Lord said to Cain, ‘Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen?’<sup>7</sup> If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is for you, but you must rule over it.”<sup>8</sup> Cain spoke to Abel his brother. And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him.<sup>9</sup> Then the Lord said to Cain, ‘Where is Abel your brother?’ He said, ‘I do not know; am I my brother’s keeper?’<sup>10</sup> And the Lord said, ‘What have you done? The voice of your brother’s blood is crying to Me from the ground.<sup>11</sup> And now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother’s blood from your hand.<sup>12</sup> When you work the ground, it shall no longer yield to you its strength. You shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth.’<sup>13</sup> Cain said to the Lord, ‘My punishment is greater than I can bear.<sup>14</sup> Behold, you have driven me today away from the ground, and from your face I shall be hidden. I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me.’<sup>15</sup> Then the Lord said to him, ‘Not so! If anyone kills Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him*

sevenfold.” And the Lord put a mark on Cain, lest any who found him should attack him. <sup>16</sup> Then Cain went away from the presence of the Lord and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden.”

*Heavenly Father, this is Your Word and we need it. Thank You for giving us the Scriptures and making us Your people. We do not live by bread alone, but by every Word that proceeds from Your mouth and we especially need this Word for it deals with faith and repentance. Lord, as we come to your Word, we pray that You would give us greater understanding of this dark and difficult passage. Help us to see Your grace in this. Help us to see our own need of Your grace this morning. Get rid of our smug and self-sufficient attitudes. Soften our hearts. Make us repentant. Bring us to Yourself, for we are sinners who want to walk in the way of Cain. And so we pray, **have mercy on us** this morning, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, **help us see Jesus**, for in His name we pray, amen and amen.*

### **INTRODUCTION: We Underestimate the Power of The Predator**

#### **v. 1-2a: \_\_\_\_\_ OF HOPE <sup>1</sup>**

*“Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, saying, “I have gotten a man with the help of the Lord.” <sup>2</sup> And again, she bore his brother Abel.”*

**Matthew 12:34b-35**, Jesus said, *“For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. <sup>35</sup> The good person out of his good treasure brings forth good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure brings forth evil.”*

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**1** The Introduction and Exposition of the text are adapted from my sermon, “The Way of Cain” 4/3/11, preached here at Potomac Hills. **And the books**, The Most Misused Stories in the Bible by Dr. Eric Bargerhuff, pages 30-39; Preaching the Word - Genesis: Beginning and Blessing by Dr. R. Kent Hughes, pages 101-108; Focus on the Bible Commentary – Genesis: The Beginning of God's Plan of Salvation by Dr. Richard Belcher, Professor of Old Testament, Reformed Theological Seminary, Charlotte, pages 75-8; and Preaching Christ from Genesis by Dr. Sidney Greidanus, pages 86-100. **And the sermons**, “Cain and Abel” 7/12/98 and “Sin as Predator” 1/21/96, both by Dr. Tim Keller, Redeemer Presbyterian Church, New York, NY, The Timothy Keller Sermon Archive, Logos Bible Software 8.15 and “Cain-R-Us” by Rev. Matt Woodley, Pastor, Church of the Resurrection, Wheaton, IL, July 2007, [www.preachingtoday.com](http://www.preachingtoday.com).

**v. 2b-8: \_\_\_\_\_ ATTITUDE**

*“Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, and Cain a worker of the ground.<sup>3</sup> In the course of time Cain brought to the Lord an offering of the fruit of the ground,<sup>4</sup> and Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat portions. And the Lord had regard for Abel and his offering,<sup>5</sup> but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his face fell.<sup>6</sup> The Lord said to Cain, “Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen?<sup>7</sup> If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is for you, but you must rule over it.<sup>8</sup> Cain spoke to Abel his brother. And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him.”*

**Hebrews 11:4**, *“By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain, through which he was commended as righteous, God commending him by accepting his gifts. And through his faith, though he died, he still speaks.”*

**1 Peter 5:8**, *“Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around **like a roaring lion**, seeking someone to devour.”*

**James 1:14-15**, *“But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.”*

**v. 9-12: \_\_\_\_\_ HEART <sup>2</sup>**

*“Then the LORD said to Cain, “Where is Abel your brother?” He said, “I do not know; am I my brother’s keeper?”<sup>10</sup> And the LORD said, “What have you done? The voice of your brother’s blood is crying to Me from the ground.<sup>11</sup> And now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother’s blood from your hand.<sup>12</sup> When you work the ground, it shall no longer yield to you its strength. You shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth.”*

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<sup>2</sup> David Brooks quote comes from his article, “When the Good Do Bad” by David Brooks, *New York Times*, 3/19/12, [www.preachingtoday.com](http://www.preachingtoday.com).

**v. 13-16: HEARTS THAT NEED \_\_\_\_\_**

*“Cain said to the LORD, “My punishment is greater than I can bear. <sup>14</sup> Behold, You have driven me today away from the ground, and from Your face I shall be hidden. I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me.” <sup>15</sup> Then the LORD said to him, “Not so! If anyone kills Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold.” And the LORD put a mark on Cain, lest any who found him should attack him. <sup>16</sup> Then Cain went away from the presence of the LORD and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden.”*

**CONCLUSION:** *East of Eden* <sup>3</sup>

**Hebrews 12:24,** *“... to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood **that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.**”*

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<sup>3</sup> East of Eden is the classic novel by John Steinbeck, loosely based on the story of Adam and his sons, Cain and Abel.