

Genesis 4:8-15

8 Now 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 killed him. Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" He said, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?" 10 And He said, What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood cries out to Me from the ground. 11 So now you are cursed from the earth, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. 12 When you till the ground, it shall no longer yield its strength to you. A fugitive and a vagabond you shall be on the earth. 13 And Cain said to the LORD, My punishment is greater than I can bear! 14 Surely You have driven me out this day from the face of the ground; I shall be hidden from Your face; I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond on the earth, and it will happen that anyone who finds me will kill me. 15 And the LORD said to him, Therefore, whoever kills Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the LORD set a mark on Cain, lest anyone finding him should kill him.

Commentary

The Bible does not tell us what Cain and Abel talked about. Any answer that is not from the Bible is not to be taken as the truth. However in such places as rational people we do tend to wonder and fill in between the lines. The Jerusalem Targum (Jewish commentaries on the Scriptures) says the conversation was this, "Cain said to Abel his brother, there is no judgment, nor Judge, nor will a good reward be given to the righteous; nor will vengeance be taken of the wicked; neither is the world created in mercy nor governed in mercy; otherwise, why is thine offering received with good will, and mine not?" Some other versions of the Hebrew text add that Cain asked able to go abroad with him, or into the field. While these are worth considering the only fact we need to know is they were out in the field together after they had talked. It can only be assumed then that Abel did not see any harm or danger in going with Cain.

A very key lesson for us here is that even when we think no one knows what we have done that God does know exactly what we have done down to the smallest detail. While we do not hear of such direct judgment by God against sin today does not mean that it does not take place. While not of the Bible or to my knowledge proven fact I have never talked to anyone who did not agree that when as children they disobeyed their parents they did not end up getting hurt in some way because they did whatever it was they did. God is sovereign so there are no accidents in life. God directs or orders things to happen just as He wants them to happen. We can just as surely then say and believe that God does still punish sin today and everything is not waiting until the end of time for God to bring justice.

What was this mark upon Cain? That we do not know either and though many speculate here the lesson is not the mark but the fact that Cain understood that away from God he was without protection and his life was in danger. Often when we see those who we think are Christians being hurt or killed we think God does not protect us from the evil of the world around us. Life comes from God and returns to God in God's time. God has set a number of days for every human being to live. There are no untimely deaths because a person is young since God has numbered the days of all mankind it was in God's time. God can allow the end of a believer to come from the hands of an evil person. This in no way reflects on

the believer. God uses this to the condemnation of the evil person. For the believer to die is always gain no matter how old they are because their soul immediately returns to be with God.

The lesson then is not how God punishes or just what this punishment meant to Cain but that God does judge today and will hold a final judgment at the end of the world as we know it. When God directs things to happen as they do it is known as providence. God providently orders everything that happens on earth so that He is glorified from it. This can be the glory God gets when His people love and obey Him, or it can be when God punishes those who do not obey Him.

Application: In the New testament we are told to do everything as if for Jesus Christ. This is because God created everything that is for the single purpose of bringing glory to His name. As believers then we should not do anything that does not glorify God. This can be in what we think, say or do as all things must glorify God. So while we may not see how God is just we know from the Bible God is always just and that our not being a witness to the punishment does not mean God did not punish those who disobey the Bible. As human beings life does not seem fair and like Cain we might even think there is no mercy with God and that there is no justice on earth. God gives us the ability to believe Him. This is called faith. Three times in the Bible we find the words that believers live by faith. So it is that we trust the Bible as God's word and do not doubt that God is just and that all evil deeds do receive their just due, both in this life and the one to come.

Questions:

Name two lessons we should learn from this passage.

What do we call God's directing everything so that He gets the glory for what happened?

Why did God create everything?

How do we glorify God?