

FAITH SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

January 9, 2011

“Sin is Crouching at the Door”

Focal Passages: Genesis 4; 1 John 3:10-12

Cross References:

1 Peter 5:8-9; Romans 6:13-16; James 2:15-17

Central Idea: Cain’s offering to God wasn’t acceptable, so he killed his brother.

Lesson Idea: Sin crouches at the door, but we must master it through a right relationship with the Lord.

Background: As we begin this journey through God’s Word again this year, we start with the Beginning. The opening chapters of Genesis explain that God created the world and all that is in it. It also shows the unique creation of man. God created man in His own image. We are a special creation and have a unique relationship with God. We are not descended from other animals; God made us for Himself.

Genesis 3, which we looked at last year, showed the first sin and its cause. Genesis 4 tells how sin continued to grow as Cain murders his brother, Abel. Sin reaches such a horrible state that God floods the earth and saves the only righteous family in the ark in Genesis 6-9. Chapter 10 features an early genealogy. Chapter 11 tells of the Tower of Babel and the confusion of languages.

This year as we read chronologically through God’s Word, we will read the book of Job before moving to the call of Abraham in Genesis 12, because Job seems to have lived in a time prior to or at the same time as Abraham and the other patriarchs.

Bible in a Year Readings

Jan 2-9, 2011

Jan 2: Gen 4-7

Jan 3: Gen 8-11

Jan 4: Job 1-5

Jan 5: Job 6-9

Jan 6: Job 10-13

Jan 7: Job 14-16

Jan 8: Job 17-20

Jan 9: Job 21-23

Highlights of the Week:

Gen 4: Cain and Abel

Gen 6--9: Noah and the Flood

Gen 11: The Tower of Babel

Job 1-2: Satan Tests Job

Job 3: Job’s Speech

Job 4-7: Conversation with Eliphaz

Job 8-10: Debate with Bildad

Job 11-12: Debate with Zophar

Job 13-14 Job’s Plea Before God

Job 15-17: With Eliphaz Again

Job 18-19: Against Bildad Again

Job 20-21: Against Zophar Again

Job 22-23: Eliphaz’s 3rd Response

Genesis 4:1-8
Sin is Crouching at the Door

4:1 Now the man had relations with his wife Eve, and she conceived and gave birth to Cain, and she said, "I have gotten a manchild with the help of the LORD." 2 And again, she gave birth to his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of flocks, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. 3 So it came about in the course of time that Cain brought an offering to the LORD of the fruit of the ground. 4 And Abel, on his part also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions. And the LORD had regard for Abel and for his offering; 5 but for Cain and for his offering He had no regard. So Cain became very angry and his countenance fell. 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." 8 And Cain told Abel his brother. And it came about when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.

DISCUSSION:

- Eve acknowledges that she got Cain "with the help of the Lord." How are all children born with the help of the Lord? and what kind of responsibility should that imply for parents?
- The phrase "in the course of time" doesn't give any indication of how much time passes, but apparently enough for the boys to grow up and take responsibilities such as tending flocks and gardening. They both brought offerings to the Lord.
- Many people have speculated that God accepted Abel's offering but not Cain's because Abel brought a blood gift. This is not the case because both gifts are called "offerings" instead of Abel's being called a "sacrifice."
- Some have wondered if it is significant that Abel offered "the firstlings" of his flock while Cain brought just some "of the fruit of the ground." How do people today give less than their best to the Lord?
- Note that v 4-5 emphasize that the Lord had regard "for Abel and for his offering" but had no regard "for Cain and for his offering." Why is it significant that the regard or lack of it was not just for the offering but for the giver as well?
- The passage doesn't actually spell out why one was accepted and the other wasn't, but moves quickly to Cain's response to the rejection. His response may give clues to why he wasn't regarded by the Lord. What does Cain's response show about his heart towards the Lord?
- When things don't go the way you think they should what does your response reveal about your heart towards God?
- How do you think Cain would respond to the Lord's questions in v 6: "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen?"
- There are two ways to translate God's statement in v 7. The NASB says "If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up?" The other way to translate it is "If you do well, surely you will be accepted." How are both of these translations true?
- What does it mean that "sin is crouching at the door, and its desire is for you?"
- Compare God's statement to the warning in 1 Peter 5:8-9. Note how things concerning sin haven't changed much since the beginning of time.
- See also Romans 6:13-16 and reflect on your life. Who is the master?
- Why did Cain kill Abel?

Genesis 4:9-16
Am I my Brother's Keeper

9 Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" And 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 is crying to Me from the ground. 11 "And now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. 12 "When you cultivate the ground, it shall no longer yield its strength to you; you shall be a vagrant and a wanderer on the earth." 13 And Cain said to the LORD, "My punishment is too great to bear! 14 "Behold, Thou hast driven me this day from the face of the ground; and from Thy face I shall be hidden, and I shall be a vagrant and a wanderer on the earth, and it will come about that

whoever finds me will kill me.” 15 So the LORD said to him, “Therefore whoever kills Cain, vengeance will be taken on him sevenfold.” And the LORD appointed a sign for Cain, lest anyone finding him should slay him.

16 Then Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

DISCUSSION:

- If God is all-knowing, why does He ask Cain where Abel was?
- How would you answer the question “Am I my brother’s keeper?”
- What does James 2:15-17 say about our responsibilities towards our brothers?
- God said that Abel’s blood was “crying out” to Him. What truths does that statement teach about our sin?
- God announced Cain’s punishment and Cain said it was too great to bear. How does God’s response in v 15 demonstrate His mercy?
- The worst consequence of Cain’s sin is having to go out “from the presence of the Lord.” How does sin separate us from God?

1 John 3:10-12

What the NT Says about Cain

10 By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother. 11 For this is the message which you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another; 12 not as Cain, who was of the evil one, and slew his brother. And for what reason did he slay him? Because his deeds were evil, and his brother’s were righteous.

DISCUSSION:

- How does the New Testament view Cain and Abel?
- What are the characteristics of children of God?
- How are you practicing righteousness?

APPLICATION

As we begin 2011, consider the following:

- What sins are crouching at the door of your life?
- How can you master it? Remember that we have to depend on the power of the Holy Spirit to do so.
- How can you be a better “keeper” for your brothers this year?
- Think back on how God has shown you mercy and thank Him for it.