

DOING IT MY WAY

Bible Study

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“Doing It My Way” Bible Study Guide

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Journey In His Word
Doing It My Way - Study Guide
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Read Genesis Chapter 4

Chapter notes:

Author: Moses Characters: Cain and Abel. Theme for this chapter: "*Doing It My Way*"

Chapter 4 Highlights:

- Worshipping the Lord
- The Lord Confronts Cain
- The Hardened Heart Sins
- Consequences of Doing It My Way
- Religion Rejects God

Introduction

As we continue our journey through the Book of Genesis, we will explore the lives and actions of Cain and Abel, sons of Adam and Eve. In this chapter we will learn the outcome of "doing it my way" vs. "doing it God's way."

Genesis 4 1-2

After being cast out of God's Garden, Adam and Eve had children, which included two sons.

What are names of Adam and Eve's sons?

Holy Spirit informs the reader that Cain and Abel both had respectable jobs. Cain was a tiller of the ground, whereas Abel was a keeper of the sheep.

List Cain and Abel's occupations.

Eve named her first son Cain, which means "acquired" believing him to be the promised one. When she gave birth to her second son, realizing Cain wasn't the promised one, she named him Abel meaning "breath or vanity" because of her disappointment.

What does Cain's name mean? What does Abel's name mean?

Read John 3:6 what does this scripture mean?

Eve didn't realize that one born of the flesh is flesh and one born of the spirit is spirit. Cain and Abel were born of the flesh and could never be the Promised One.

Genesis 4:3-5 Worshipping The Lord

How old Cain and Abel were we are not told, but from the recorded scriptures, it would appear both men were adults. The terminology recorded in verse 3 says: "And in the process of time it came to pass," meaning a lot of time had pass since the boy's birth. On one particular day, both Cain and Abel presented themselves before the LORD to offer Him a sacrifice of worship. Cain's offering was a sacrifice from the fruit of the ground. Abel's offering was a sacrifice of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat. The Lord had respect to Abel's offering, but unto Cain's offering He had no respect. This made Cain very angry!

What does the process of time mean?

What were the sacrifices Cain and Abel offered to the Lord?

Why did Cain become angry?

Genesis 4:6-7 The Lord Confronts Cain

Verses 6-7 remind me of a parent reprimanding their child. The Lord compassionately asks Cain "*what is wrong and why does your face look so distraught?*" Cain didn't respond! The Lord then explains to Cain his problem! Cain didn't want to worship the Lord as required. He wanted to worship by "doing it his way!" The Lord says to Cain, "*when you do what is right you will be accepted, if not sin lies at the door desiring you.*" So, what does this mean?

Why did the Lord confront Cain?

What does the phrase "sin lies at the door desiring you" mean?

We can't come to the Lord in any form or fashion or whatever we feel is best. The Lord is Holy and as such we are to respect who He is, our Creator who is righteous and holy!

In this historically account we see Cain symbolically representing a "religious spirit" and Abel symbolically representing a "man of faith." A religious spirit person is prideful and says, "I will approach God my way, which is false worship," whereas a man of faith is humbly says, "I will approach God with reverence and with obedience." The Lord says unto Cain, "*Why art thou wrath? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.*" With the Lord telling Cain sin lies at the door, He was referring to Cain's heart condition. Cain's heart was not concerned with

worshipping God the correct way. He demonstrated a disobedient heart, which is a "hardened heart, rejecting the Cross."

Can we approach the Lord any type of way? Explain.

What was Cain's heart condition? Explain.

Genesis 4:8-10 Hardened Heart Sins

God's rejection of Cain's sacrifice didn't lead him to repentance, instead Cain allowed his anger and jealousy lead him to murder.

Did God's rejection of Cain's sacrifice lead him to repentance? Explain.

Verse 8 reads that while Cain talked with Abel, in a field, his angry rose up against his brother and killed him. Cain's anger was really directed at God and this anger undealt with produced bitterness, that turned into jealousy, with the end result of a hardened heart, producing murder.

List what can happen with an unrepented heart?

Cain allowed the hardness of his heart to rule over him, hence *sin lying at the door of his heart*. After this violate act, the Lord called out to Cain asking "*where is your brother*" (giving him an opportunity to confess his sin), he replied, "*I know not, am I my brother's keeper?*" These verses reveal that God will always confront us first with an opportunity to repent of our sin. The Lord then tells Cain, "*the voice of thy brother's blood cries unto to me from the ground.*" Think about this for a moment - "the voice of his blood cries out!" In other words, Abel's blood was calling out for revenge! Life is precious to God. Cain's "religious spirit" and "hardened heart" refused to repent or take responsibility for his unrighteous act

against his brother Abel. A hardened heart justifies their wrong doing, while a man of faith readily repents before God.

Why did Cain kill his brother?

What did God say about Abel's blood?

God's Way

What is God's Way? The way of the Promised One, i.e., the Cross! Until the Promised One was to come, it was to be a "blood shed" offering, which was an animal sacrifice! This was demonstrated to Adam and Eve in Genesis 3:21 *"Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them."* When God made coats of skins for them, an innocence animal had to die. This animal was killed in the presence of Adam and Eve to show them that blood had to be shed for the covering of their sins until the Promised One comes. Adam and Eve taught "animal sacrifice" to Cain and Abel, that is why God didn't accept Cain's offering, he knew the right way but chose to "do it his way." (Matthew Henry states there is evidence that the First Family had an Altar and offered sacrificial offerings to God).

What is God's way?

In Genesis 3:21, what did God do for Adam and Eve when they sinned?

Did Cain and Abel know what type of sacrifice was acceptable by God? Explain.

Genesis 4:11-15 Consequences of Doing It My Way

Sin always produces negative consequences. Cain's consequences were severe, especially since he was a farmer. The curse God pronounced on Cain was fourfold:

- The earth would no longer produce food for him.
- He would no longer do the work he enjoyed.
- He would be a fugitive and vagabond on the earth.
- He would be hidden from the face of God, void of God's blessing and protection.

Cain's response to the Lord was not one of remorse. It was one of a religious spirit, "what did I do wrong, why am I being punished so severely? Everyone will try to hurt me! This punishment is unfair!" Cain realized the magnitude of his evil action, but still no remorse for murdering his brother! If Cain would have repented, I don't believe his judgment would have been so severe.

List Cain's fourfold curse pronounced upon him by God.

Did Cain show or demonstrate any remorse? Explain why do you think he did or didn't.

What type of spirit did Cain have? What type of spirit did Abel have? Explain.

Did God have mercy on Cain? Explain.

However, God did show some mercy to Cain by placing a "mark" on him that prevented others from killing him. The Lord said *"whosoever's kills Cain, He (God) will avenge sevenfold."* I always found this to be a bit unnerving, Cain wasn't too concerned about killing Abel, but was mortified of someone killing him, that's what religious spirit does - thinks of self only.

Sin separates us from God's presence. When this happens, we become open prey for our enemy, satan (read 1 John 1:6). Knowing this Cain still showed no remorse or repentance.

What does sin do?

Genesis 4:16-17 Religion Rejects God

After his pronounced of judgment, Cain went out from the presence of God and dwelt in the land of Nod, married and had children. While in the land of Nod Cain, built a city and named it after his firstborn Enoch. Unfortunately, Cain rejected God and continued in his path of wanting to do things his way. This "religious spirit" of his was evident with the naming of his son Enoch, which means "education." The city of Nod was named after his son Enoch and dedicated to be a place of education and learning, void of God.

Cain left God's presence and dwelt where?

What did Cain establish in the place he lived?

Did Cain ever repent to God for his evil action?

Conclusion

A religious spirit is a person, group or organization that opposes the truth of God and His ways. A religious spirit says, I will disregard God’s way and “do it my way.” Faith says “obedience is better than sacrifice!”

Religious spirit produces a hardened heart toward God, whereas faith embraces the things of God. Religious spirit receives judgment, whereas faith receives blessing and protection. God tells us to guard our hearts because the issue of life flows from it. We should never allow sin to hardened our heart and become unbelieving. There is only one way to God and that way is through Jesus Christ and Him crucified – the finished work of the Cross.

Describe a “religious spirit” and its reward.

Describe a “man of faith” and his reward.

Yes, God created us with “free will, or choice,” but the price for “doing it our way” is costly. Sin separates us from God, which ultimately is eternal damnation. Don’t fall into satan’s trap of “doing it your way.” Seek God’s perfect will for your life, which is to live a life free from the bondages of sin. Jesus Christ went to the Cross for mankind so that “whosoever will” believe in Him as Lord and Saviour of their life will have eternal life with Him. Cain and Abel were both taught “there is only one way!” Unfortunately, Cain choose religious spirit way while Abel choice faith. Which way have you chosen?

What is the price for “doing it our way?”

Why did Jesus Christ go to the Cross?

Explain how one can live a life free of the bondage of sin.
