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On this week's episode of Chosen and Cherished we talked about how God sent His Son, Jesus, to "reverse the curse" that Adam and Eve brought on themselves and the whole world because of their rebellion. There is always hope for us because we have Jesus! If you'd like to listen to the podcast, here's the link... <https://summitpoint.org/chosen-and-cherished/>

*Blessings,
Jonna*

Genesis 4

The title Tim gave this message from Genesis 4 is, "God of Patience." God truly is so patient with us! I think about the fact that He knows my every thought... and He still loves me! That takes a lot of patience!!! And mercy!!!

So what happened in Genesis 4 that shows God's patience? First... He didn't abandon Adam and Eve when He sent them out of the garden. He continued His purpose for them, that they would "be fruitful and multiply." God blessed Adam and Eve with a baby. His name was Cain. Eve understood that she and Adam would not have conceived without the miraculous power of the Lord allowing it. She said, "I have gotten a man WITH THE HELP OF THE LORD." The name Cain sounds like the Hebrew word for "gotten."

Then they had another baby! Abel. Cain and Abel grew up and were given different jobs. Abel was a shepherd. Cain was a farmer. Both brothers brought an offering to God from the fruit of their labor. Abel brought his offering... the firstborn of his flock of sheep and their fat portions. Cain brought his offering... the fruit of the ground. God "had regard" (looked favorably upon) Abel's offering, but not Cain's. Why? Hebrews 11:4 and 1 John 3:12 give me the answer...

Hebrews 11:4 says, "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." Abel offered God the best of what he

had, and he offered it in faith. God counts our faith in Him as righteousness.

1 John 3:12 says, "We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous." Cain offered God "the fruit of the ground." Fruit doesn't grow on the ground. It grows on trees. It sounds like he picked up what was gonna be rotten soon and offered that to God... not in faith... but maybe thinking to appease Him. His offering to God was evil... rebellious... not done in faith.

Seeking to appease God and seeking to please God are two very different things. To appease God is to try to satisfy Him without really caring for Him. Seeking to please God is all about gratitude and relationship.

Well... Cain got really angry that God didn't like his gift. Sin is so deceptive!!! He didn't look at his own heart or his own motives. He just didn't like the outcome. So... just like Mom and Dad, HE BLAMED and got mad at another... Abel. Cain's unrighteousness was not Abel's fault... but he didn't like that Abel made him look bad... as if God would have appreciated his evil offering if Abel hadn't been there. Abel was not responsible for Cain's sin, just as no person is responsible for someone else's sin. All I have to do is look at Jesus to see that proven out. With all the evil done against Him, He never responded in sin... not even once.

Cain did not go to the Lord. He just got mad. BUT the Lord went to Cain! The Lord pursued him and warned him that his anger would be his undoing." The Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? 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 contrary to you, but you must rule over it." (Side note... these are the same words God used with Eve about her desire for her husband, and his ruling over her.) The Lord was saying to Cain, "I'm not choosing Abel over you. If you offered your gift to Me in faith, I would love your gift, too. But sin wants to conquer you... you must rule over it." Don't let sin control you.

Cain could have cried out to God for help. But he didn't. He continued to let bitterness fester, and when he had the opportunity... he rose up against Abel and killed him out in the field.

Again... Cain did not go to the Lord, but the Lord went to him. He said to him, "Where's Abel your brother?" Sounds a lot like God calling out to Adam when he hid, "Where are you, Adam?"

Cain did not respond like Adam. He felt no shame. Anger blinds us from our guilt. Instead, Cain said, "I don't know! Am I my brother's keeper?" Flat out lie! Sin upon sin. One sin always leads to more unless we truly repent.

I don't know if Cain thought he could lie to God and bamboozle Him, but he quickly realized that he couldn't. "And the Lord said, 'What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying to Me from the ground.'" Oh snap! Caught!!! "Here are the consequences for what you did. You are cursed from the ground that opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood by

your own hand. You will no longer be successful in farming, and you will be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth."

When God told Adam and Eve their curse, there is no record of them complaining. Not so with Cain. He said, "My punishment is more than I can bear! Whoever finds me will kill me!!!" You mean... like how you killed your brother?

2 Corinthians 7:10 says, "For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death." Cain wasn't repentant... he was just scared of the consequences. Those are two very different things.

Who would kill Cain? Wasn't it just Adam, Eve, and him now that he killed Abel? Well, Genesis 5:4 tells me that Adam lived to be 930 and he had other sons and daughters. No birth control. Lots more years of life than what we live now. I'm guessing he and Eve had a lot of kids!

Here's where God's patience is clearly seen. He put a mark on Cain to show that he was protected and said that anyone who killed him would face the Lord's vengeance 7 X's worse than what would be done to Cain. How do I know that Cain was not repentant? As soon as God told him he wouldn't die, he "went away from the presence of the Lord." If he truly loved the Lord, being away from His presence would have been worse than death to him. O Lord, please help me to have godly sorrow over my sin... that leads to genuine repentance. Let me say and mean with my heart, "Your love is better than life" (Psalm 63:3).

Cain was married and had a kid named Enoch... who had a kid who had a kid and so on until there was a kid named Lamech. Lamech had two wives... not God's plan... and he killed a man for hitting him. He was very arrogant like his forefather, Cain. Instead of the remorse he should have had, he justified his actions and said, "If someone were to kill Cain and would have had sevenfold revenge on him, then for killing me it would be seventy sevenfold." God did not say that... but Lamech wasn't concerned about God's opinion on the matter. I think this story is included to show just how uninterested people were in following God. They didn't care about what God cared for.

But for Adam and Eve, God allowed them to have another baby. They named him Seth. Eve said, "God has appointed for me a baby in place of Abel, because Cain killed him." And along with losing Abel, she really lost both sons because Cain left after killing Abel. God showed comfort and kindness to Adam and Eve over their loss. Seth had a son named Enosh. What's really significant about that is a man named Methuselah came from his lineage. Methuselah lived 969 years... and right after his death came the flood. There is so much history and meaning here!!!

Finally, Genesis 4:26 says, "At that time people BEGAN to call on the name of the LORD." Why? How? It had to be the Lord moving in hearts. Before that time, there were a few that called on the name of the Lord, but now His name spread. God was at work. He is still at work. He is accomplishing His purpose and no rebellion or sin can stop Him from accomplishing His purpose.

My prayer is that I will be like Abel, giving the Lord my best because He's worthy. I pray that when I sin against Him, I will be genuinely repentant... that I will seek to please Him because I love Him and not appease Him so that He'll just give me what I want. O Lord, I pray that more than anything, I will desire to be in Your presence. Any consequence for my sin, regardless of how severe it is, is better than being away from Your presence. I pray that today, tomorrow, and for all eternity... I will call on the name of the Lord with all my heart, soul, mind, and strength. Amen.