

26-0809a - Detailed Summary

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Bible Readers: John Nousek and Roger Raines

This detailed summary by Grok, xAI, (Transcription by TurboScribe.ai)

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The First Family and Crouching Sin

Scripture Readings

1st Reading (0:04 - 0:44): John Nousek

Genesis 3:15: John opens the service by reading Genesis 3:15. God declares that He will put enmity between the serpent and the woman, and between the serpent's seed and her seed. The woman's seed will bruise the serpent on the head, while the serpent will bruise him on the heel. This single verse, the first gospel promise given immediately after the fall, sets the theological backdrop for everything that follows in the narrative of the first family.

2nd Reading (0:49 - 1:27): Roger Raines

Genesis 4:1-2: Roger continues the reading from Genesis 4:1-2. The text records that Adam had relations with his wife Eve; she conceived and gave birth to Cain, declaring, "I have gotten a man child with the help of the Lord." She later gave birth to his brother Abel. Abel became a keeper of the flocks, while Cain became a tiller of the ground. These two verses introduce the first children born into the fallen world and establish their respective occupations, preparing the way for the offerings that will soon reveal the condition of their hearts.

Summary of Transcript (0:04 - 22:51), Preacher: Scott Reynolds

(1:31-3:11) Introduction to the Continuation of the Genesis Series

Scott greets the congregation and explains that the church is continuing its series through Genesis chapters 1 through 11. Considerable time has already been spent on the first three chapters—creation, the goodness of God's design, the entrance of sin, the curses, and the first bright promise of a coming Redeemer in Genesis 3:15, which John has just read. Although Scott normally provides a recap, he deliberately omits one this morning. He notes that the full summary of chapters 1 through 3 was given in both the AM and PM services on May 31 and remains available on the church website. Today the historical narrative picks up immediately after Adam and Eve are driven from the garden. The fall is no longer an abstract idea; it is now lived out in the first family. Scott describes chapters 3 and 4 as a truly sad story—both heartbreaking and instructive. The same sin that entered the world through one man continues to crouch at the door of every human heart, and God still speaks to His people today.

(3:11-6:20) Public Reading of Genesis 4:1-16

Scott then reads the full account beginning at Genesis 4:1. Adam knew Eve his wife; she conceived and bore Cain, saying she had gotten a man with the help of the Lord. She later bore his brother Abel. Abel kept sheep; Cain worked the ground. In the course of time Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground, while Abel brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat portions. The Lord had regard for Abel and his offering, but for Cain and his offering He had no regard. Cain

became very angry and his face fell. The Lord asked Cain why he was angry and why his face had fallen, then warned him: if he does well, will he not be accepted? But if he does not do well, sin is crouching at the door; its desire is for him, yet he must rule over it. Cain spoke with Abel in the field, rose up against him, and killed him. When the Lord asked where Abel was, Cain replied, “I do not know. Am I my brother’s keeper?” The Lord answered that the voice of Abel’s blood was crying from the ground. Cain was therefore cursed from the ground that had received his brother’s blood; it would no longer yield its strength to him, and he would be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth. Cain protested that his punishment was greater than he could bear; he had been driven from the ground and from the Lord’s face, and whoever found him would kill him. The Lord replied that anyone who killed Cain would suffer sevenfold vengeance and placed a mark on Cain so that no one who found him would attack him. Cain then went away from the presence of the Lord and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

(6:20-9:50) The Birth of Cain as the First Child of the Fallen World

Scott begins the exposition by focusing on the opening words: “Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain.” The Hebrew verb *yada* (“knew”) is the ordinary biblical idiom for the intimate union of husband and wife; it has no connection to the English slang “yadda yadda yadda.” Scott notes that he confirmed this distinction with Grok. The event occurs after the expulsion from the garden. Scott is convinced, along with many careful readers, that Cain is the firstborn son for two main reasons. First, it is highly unlikely that Adam and Eve had children while still in the garden in their state of innocence. Genesis 2:25 records that they were naked and unashamed; only after they ate did their eyes open and they know they were naked. That knowledge of nakedness was part of the knowledge gained from the forbidden fruit. Adam later admitted he hid because he was afraid of his nakedness, and God asked who had told him he was naked. Their innocence was real; they did not yet possess the self-consciousness that came with the fall. It is difficult to imagine them engaging in the act that produces children while still in that complete innocence. Most commentators believe the couple remained in the garden only a short time—perhaps mere weeks—mainly because of the timing of childbearing in relation to God’s command to be fruitful. Too many events occur before Adam fathers Seth at the age of 130 (Genesis 5) for them to have remained in the garden long. Second, the ancient world placed enormous weight on the firstborn son. To leave the firstborn unnamed while carefully recording Cain and Abel would be almost without parallel in the Old Testament. One commentator observed that this would be the only instance in the entire Old Testament of failing to mention the firstborn son if Cain were not that son. Therefore the first child born into the fallen world is almost certainly Cain.

(9:50-12:27) Eve’s Naming of Her Sons and the Contrast of Hope and Vanity

Eve’s response to Cain’s birth is electric with hope. Naming Cain begins what Scott calls “the quest for righteousness.” She names him with the declaration, “I have gotten a man with the help of the Lord.” The name Cain sounds like the Hebrew verb meaning “to acquire, to get, or to possess.” Her excitement is audible; she has just heard the promise of Genesis 3:15 that the offspring of the woman will bruise the serpent’s head. Now she holds a son and believes the Redeemer has arrived. She is anxious for her wrong to be righted and perhaps hopes the serpent’s defeat is near. Sometime later she bears another son and names him Abel. The contrast in the meanings of the two names is striking. Abel means “breath, vapor, mist, vanity”—something transient, insubstantial, and fleeting—the same word that saturates the book of Ecclesiastes (“Vanity of vanities; all is vanity”). Something has changed in Eve’s perspective between the two births. At first the names

seem almost backwards: the one named “Acquired with Yahweh’s help” becomes a murderer, while the one named “Vapor” becomes the righteous man whose blood still speaks today. Eve will learn, as every believer must learn, that God’s timetable and God’s chosen instruments are often not what human expectation anticipates.

(12:37-14:24) The First Human Offerings and Divine Acceptance or Rejection

In the course of time both brothers bring offerings to the Lord. Cain, the worker of the ground, brings fruit of the ground; Abel, the keeper of sheep, brings the firstborn of his flock and their fat portions. This is the first occurrence in Scripture of humans offering and sacrificing to God. It is not the first sacrifice itself; God made the first sacrifice when He killed animals to make coats of skin for Adam and Eve, covering their nakedness and their sin. The Lord had regard for Abel and his offering but no regard for Cain and his offering. Hebrews 11:4 explains that by faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain, through which he was commended as righteous. Romans 10:17 reminds us that faith comes from hearing the word of God. Somehow—whether by direct revelation or through Adam—God had made known what He desired. Abel’s offering matches the later pattern of the Mosaic law concerning firstborn animals and fat portions for sin offerings (Exodus 13, Numbers 18, Leviticus 3). Cain brought something else, but it was evidently not acceptable and was offered without faith.

(14:24-15:45) Cain Characterized from Other Scriptures

From other passages of Scripture we learn that Cain was not a righteous or nice person. In 1 John 3:11-12 John writes that the message heard from the beginning is that we should love one another and should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. Scott emphasizes the phrase “of the evil one,” noting that it is another way of saying Cain was of the seed of the serpent. The reason for the murder is given plainly: Cain’s own deeds were evil while his brother’s were righteous. Jude 11 adds a further warning, pronouncing woe on those who walk in the way of Cain, abandon themselves for the sake of gain to Balaam’s error, and perish in Korah’s rebellion. Cain is therefore grouped with Balaam and Korah—a sobering company that reveals the moral trajectory of his life.

(15:45-16:57) Cain’s Anger and the First Mention of Sin

Cain’s immediate response to the Lord’s rejection of his offering is telling. He was very angry and his face fell; the Hebrew is vivid, describing his face as collapsing under the combined weight of rage and dejection. Instead of examining himself, Cain burned with resentment against God and against his brother. At this point the narrative introduces the first use of the word “sin” in the Bible. The account shifts from story to direct divine speech. God initiates the conversation; He does not wait for Cain to seek answers. The Lord asks, “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.”

(16:57-20:48) Three Crucial Observations from God’s Warning to Cain

Three crucial observations emerge from what God tells Cain. First, God is still offering a way of acceptance. The words “If you do well” show that opportunity for repentance and a right offering remain open. Second, sin is personified. It is not merely an action but is pictured as a living

predator crouched at the door, waiting to spring. The language deliberately echoes Genesis 3:16, where the woman's desire is for her husband and he will rule over her. Now sin's desire is for Cain, and he must rule over it; the same Hebrew word for "desire" appears in both places. The same tension surfaces later in Paul's anguished description in Romans 7 of sin as a power that wages war, yet the believer is not left without responsibility or without the Spirit's help. Sin wants to be master. Third, responsibility remains: "You must rule over it." Even after the fall, even with sin crouching, the human being is still called to mastery. God is directing Cain at this early date toward the doctrine of righteousness. Scott recalls a prior study of the elementary teachings in Hebrews 5:12-14, where those who consume only milk are said to be unacquainted with the doctrine of righteousness. Romans, which Scott regards as a bookend with Hebrews in Paul's teaching, centers on righteousness, grace, and justification. God is already introducing Cain to a righteousness that is not of our own and is not without faith. Meanwhile the law of sin and death is expanding, and new expectations concerning offerings and sacrifice appear to be emerging.

(20:48-23:23) The Murder and Cain's Defiant Response

Now comes the murder. Cain speaks to Abel—some ancient versions add the words "Let us go out into the field"—and when they are in the field Cain rises up against his brother and kills him. The first human death recorded in history is therefore not a natural death but premeditated fratricide. God comes again to Cain with the question, "Where is Abel your brother?" The question is deliberate; it does not seek information but creates space for confession and repentance. It echoes the earlier question to Adam in Genesis 3, "Where are you?" Like his father, Cain refuses to accept responsibility, yet he escalates the deflection. Adam had accused "the woman you gave me"; Cain answers with an outright lie wrapped in defiance: "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?" The attitude is plain. The first murderer refuses the most basic human responsibility to guard the life of his brother—an especially weighty duty for an older brother.

(23:23-26:07) The Curse Intensified, Self-Pity, and Unexpected Mercy

God's reply is thunderous: "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying to me from the ground." This is the first occurrence of the word "blood" in the Bible. Blood has a voice; the ground itself has become a witness. The curse that fell on the ground in Genesis 3 is now intensified for Cain. The ground has opened its mouth to receive Abel's blood and will no longer yield its strength to him. Cain is sentenced to be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth—perhaps a wanderer precisely because the land will no longer sustain him. Cain's response is pure self-pity. He makes himself the victim: "My punishment is greater than I can bear." He fears for his own life yet never once expresses remorse for the brother he murdered. There is no confession, no grief over Abel—only terror at the consequences for himself. Yet even here mercy appears. God places a mark on Cain and declares that anyone who kills him will suffer sevenfold vengeance. Why protect the murderer? One possibility is that at this stage in redemptive history no formal public law against murder yet exists; that statute will come only after the flood.

(26:07-27:29) The Principle of Sin Without Law and Restraint of Vengeance

Romans 5 teaches that sin was in the world before the law and that death reigned from Adam to Moses even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam. Cain's sin was certainly different—and worse. Paul continues that sin is not counted where there is no law. Scott regards this as an important principle, the same principle by which God takes away the sins of

those who have died in the likeness of Jesus' death, so that there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. The principle is already at work in Cain's case. Cain is punished, yet not with what later generations would regard as the full and proper penalty for murder. God is restraining the cycle of blood vengeance before the legal boundary is given after the flood. An offspring of Cain—Lamech—will later twist this very protection into arrogant boasting when he claims to have killed two people. What God intended as mercy, a rebellious man turns into license.

(27:29-28:48) Theological Threads and the Better Blood of Christ

Several deep theological currents run through the chapter. The promise of the woman's offspring is still alive, yet it will not be fulfilled in the firstborn who looked so promising. The conflict between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman continues. Faith is not mere ritual; it is what God regards. Sin is personal, predatory, and must be mastered or it will master us—this is the biblical quest for righteousness: How are we made righteous? Is it through our own merit or some other way? Even in judgment God shows restraint and mercy. The blood of Abel still cries out; Hebrews 12:24 later tells us that the blood of Jesus speaks a better word than the blood of Abel. Abel's blood cried out for justice; Christ's blood cries out for mercy and reconciliation.

(28:48-31:03) Application to the Human Heart and the Gospel Invitation

The story of Cain is not ancient history only; it is the story of the human heart. When God regards another's offering more highly than ours, do we examine ourselves or burn with anger? When sin crouches at the door of jealousy, resentment, or bitterness, do we rule over it or open the door? Do we live as our brother's keeper, or do we still answer with Cain's question? The good news is that the true offspring has come. He is not named Cain; His name is Jesus. He did not bring an offering of fruit or of flocks; He offered Himself. His blood does not cry from the ground for vengeance; it speaks from the cross for forgiveness. If anyone has never turned away from the way of Cain—still justifying, angry, refusing responsibility—and has not placed trust in the better blood of Christ, the invitation is open. If a believer knows that sin is crouching at the door, the word of the Lord to Cain still applies: "You must rule over it." Yet the greater word of the New Testament is that the believer is not alone in the struggle; the Spirit of the risen Christ lives within. Therefore let no one go away from the presence of the Lord as Cain did. Notice that it was Cain who moved away. Let us instead come near by the blood that speaks better things than Abel's. The congregation is invited to stand and sing.