

KINGS NORTON BAPTIST CHURCH

Sunday 20th February 2022 10 am

Living away from God - The city of Cain

Welcome to all

Opening Scripture Hebrews 10:19-22

Hymn MP 1003 My Jesus My Saviour

Scripture Isaiah 42:1-17 (page 727)

Prayer

Children's talk

Chorus MP 633 Thank you Jesus

Missionary PPT Ina

Prayer time Start Ps 121:1,2

Notices HG at 33 WHR, Members meeting, 4pm L/B

Reading Genesis 4:10-26 (p.6) James 4 (p.1215)

Hymn MP 1036 Blessed be your Name

Sermon Living away from God - The city of Cain

Hymn MP 990 I will offer up my life

Closing Prayer:

Close



Welcome and pray from Mark 4:23,24a

- I remember it was a very sunny day, it was my birthday, my 16th birthday, the day I left school. I remember the excitement of walking out. With the type of school I went to, no-one left at sixteen. As I was told later, I was jumping before being pushed. I had wasted both my time there and my father's money. It was then I also left home. Moving a hundred miles away I turned my back on my family, on my father, on my background. I was off! I was young and stupid. I was keen to make my own way in the world, I was longing to tune into what this world had to offer.

Was I a prodigal son? Certainly. But I was also like Cain.

Away

v16 **Cain went out from the LORD's presence.** Cain, who did not take heed of God's kind warning but instead murdered his brother is to live his life away from **the presence of the Lord.**

Now Cain is trying to escape the eyes of God, God had ceased to speak with him. Cain is away from restraint, he can now do as he pleased.

- Like on a dark night walking away from a bright light off into the darkness, the further you go the darker it gets. ... in a cave

Bildad in Job 18 speaks of the wicked 6 **The light in his tent becomes dark; the lamp beside him goes out** 18 **He is driven from light into darkness.**

This way - is *the way of Cain*, - the heading of the last sermon. His way took him away from God. Today the title is: *living away from God.* (dying!)

Wanderer

We are told he **lived in the land of Nod**, Nod – means 'wandering' (see the footnote) v12,14 speaks of him being a **restless wanderer on the earth**

Cain had left the Lord's presence and become a wanderer, a wanderer. Like Cain I too had departed and was now to wander in the world for nine long years until the wonderful day came when I was found.

- Cain was the original Jack Kerouac who wrote the iconic "on the road" a book that influenced me as I headed off wide eyed to American years ago.
- Before in London we used to sing along to Iggy Pop who wrote "wandering wanderers" and "the passenger" a song spontaneously written as he drove with around Berlin with his friends at night:
- "I am a passenger, And I ride, and I ride
Oh, the passenger, He rides and he rides

He looks through his window, What does he see?
He sees the silent hollow sky, He sees the stars come out tonight
He sees the city's ripped back-sides
And everything was made for you and me
All of it was made for you and me
So let's take a ride and see what's mine, La, La, La"

That is lost Cain, away from God, to wander this dark world.

Cursed

Like the prodigal son who headed out expecting a wonderful new and free life away from home - things were not going to be so easy, **11 Now you are under a curse and driven from the ground, which opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. 12 When you work the ground, it will no longer yield its crops for you. You will be a restless wanderer on the earth."**

Cain worked the soil. Now it would be hard work - and there would be little or nothing to show for it. That is what the curse does, it stops you being fruitful, and useful. All that you do - and plan - and hope for - will go wrong, will fail, will be disappointing - and come to nothing.

- So many homes are like that, there is a constant stream of new things but they are soon spoiled, broken and discarded.
- The new home, the new location, the new friends, the new relationship, the new car, kitchen or pet, whatever; deliver nothing.
- ✚ They never will - as long as you are away from God.

Eliphaz this time in Job 15:22 says: **He despairs of escaping the darkness; he is marked for the sword. 23 He wanders about—food for vultures; he knows the day of darkness is at hand.**

The dynasty

Cain - whatever the hindrances - cherished his independence. What did he do? He went off to make a name for himself, to build his own line. He went off to carve out a new life for himself, a wife, a family, a dynasty.

In those day people lived a long time, Adam and Eve lived 930 years and had other sons and daughters. Cain, as they all did, married a sister or close relation, there was no-one else. It was not against the Law and not a problem genetically with the purer gene pool.

19 Lamech married two women, did he pursue polygamy to produce more children and thus increase his power base? Bigamy was clearly contrary to God's will. Cain produced a family line, many more than is mentioned in the

list of his descendants there in v 17-19. These are recorded to lead us to Lamech, who we will look at in a moment.

Cain builds a city

Adam and the rest of his family seem to remain where they were - in the Lord's presence and trusting his care - they live in tents or the such like. But not Cain, no he **built a city**. Cain not content with a house, builds himself a city. Why? To make his mark? Yes. Is it also that with no fear of the Lord - he is now fearful of man? v14 **whoever finds me will kill me**. He wants to fortify himself; his wife, family and household within the defence and protection of a city wall.

Hear Eliphaz again in Job 15 about the man living away from God, **Terrifying sounds fill his ears; when all seems well, marauders attack him. Distress and anguish fill him with terror; they overwhelm him, ... because he shakes his fist at God and vaunts himself against the Almighty**, Job 15:21-24

Cain with his agitated and guilty mind builds a city. It's diffident pride. He calls it after his **son Enoch**. **Enock** probably means "dedication" or "start". This is to be a different life altogether from the one he had known with his parents - who no doubt spoke to him of the garden of Eden.

The city of Cain

We have a description of this city v20-22, From creation to the flood is a long period of time, more than 1600 years and with the long lives and many children the population would have grown rapidly to billions of people.

This city was an advanced city. God gives good gifts, skills and abilities to all men, the godly and the ungodly. Three of the sons born are especially noted in the development of this antediluvian civilization.

20 Adah gave birth to Jabal; he was the father of those who live in tents and raise livestock. Jabal who name means "wanderer" invented the tent, thus enabling him to carry his home with him and develop a nomadic lifestyle. He **raised livestock**. An organised systems for domesticating and commercially producing other animals besides Abel's sheep. Why? Was it to eat? Had they become meat eaters contrary to the command of God? (Gen 1:29) Eating meat was only permitted after the flood.

Then and now livestock = wealth. They we accruing wealth for themselves, there's no sign they were used for sacrifice and worship.

21 His brother's name was Jubal; he was the father of all who play the harp and flute. Jubal's name means "sound". How markedly different he is from

his brother. He had an ear for music and favoured the esthetic rather than the commercial. He was an inventive genius, originating both stringed and wind musical instruments. These appealed to the senses.

God gives music to be used in glorying Him. No sign they ever did that.

For many years I was obsessed with music, many young people are. It is used like a drug, to bring me into a world of my own making. Music can make us soporific, dulling, shutting me off from reality. Music was my god, a means of alleviating or filling my empty heart.

22 Zillah also had a son, Tubal-Cain, who forged all kinds of tools out of bronze and iron. From his name the Roman god Vulcan is possibly derived. In fact **Vulcan** was the Roman god of fire, forge and weaponry, the patron of artisans and smiths. Tubal-Cain's inventive genius enabled the advancement of weapons - but also a high standard of living.

■ Eric von Daniken books,

These talented sons of Lamech in the period before the flood show huge social, civil, cultural, technological advance. But where is God? x2

God in his general grace gives us many things to relieve the consequences of sin. However so often these become an end in themselves.

In the world around – are things done for the glory of God? No, for self-aggrandisement, for my own pleasure, they take the place of God.

This is a city in rebellion to God. They did not **fill the earth** as they were commanded, they did not scatter - but dug in.

Notice there is no mention of government, God's agency for restraint, no order, no authority, no place for God. It was a god-less city.

Although Adam undoubtedly instructed his children concerning the curse, God's promise of a coming Redeemer, the intermediate provision for approaching Him through blood sacrifice, yet we hear of none of this.

Cities in the Bible

In fact this is often how cities are mentioned in the Bible. Yes the Bible starts in a Garden and ends in a City – a Holy City.

However, cities in the Bible are marked as places of sin. From this city of Cain, Babel, Sodom, Gomorrah, Nineveh, Rome, and especially Babylon. They are places that portray all the evils of the world. Babylon seduced all who fell under her power and spell. Cities are places where people become anonymous and therefore there is less restraint. Such as Onesimus the slave

who ran away to Rome. How many people have run away to the 'big city' London is full of them.

God's people are to live in the desert, a place away from the temptations and allurements of the city.

Hear David's anguish in Psalm 55 "My heart is in anguish within me; the terrors of death assail me. Fear and trembling have beset me; horror has overwhelmed me. I said, "Oh, that I had the wings of a dove! I would fly away and be at rest— I would flee far away and stay in the desert; I would hurry to my place of shelter, far from the tempest and storm." Confuse the wicked, O Lord, confound their speech, for I see violence and strife in the city. Day and night they prowl about on its walls; malice and abuse are within it. Destructive forces are at work in the city; threats and lies never leave its streets.

✚ Beware - The temptations of the city and it's way are all around, they come into our home and heart.

God says to his people 'come out of her'. ... a voice from heaven said: "**Come out of her, my people, so that you will not share in her sins, so that you will not receive any of her plagues;** Re 18:4

And referring to God's judgment on wicked Jerusalem. "**Come out of her, my people! Run for your lives! Run from the fierce anger of the LORD.** Jer 51:45

Application - living away from God

Cain and his descendants were people living away from God.

That is how most people live today.

The truth of God has been systematically and intentionally removed from every area of life in Britain over the last few decades. We as a nation do not want God. Oh you might say we have an established church, a national church, - it is pure window dressing.

God's word is not thought about, it's not referred to, it has no regulatory effect on conduct for almost everyone in our land.

There are some who claim to have faith in Jesus yet are too in reality living away from God. They see no value in regular worship, have no interest in reading or applying God's word, no area of service, they do not work for the good of the Lord's people, nor carry the life-saving gospel to the lost. Look at that person's life and it's all about self, - entertaining and caring for self.

That is to live far from God. **16 Cain went out from the LORD's presence.** We are all now born that way, and many love it that way. A life lived in this world – but far from God.

Jesus calls us all to repentance. To turn to Him who came into this world to rescue us from our lives of darkness and disobedience.

Are you are living away from God? Are you - and you know it? Then turn to Christ, the Holy Son of God who came into this world to save sinners. He lived perfectly and gave up his precious life, dying on the cross for sinners. God accepted his sacrifice and he rose from the dead. He is alive now and he beckons you. Come. Come you who are far from God - come to Jesus and you will be brought nigh, brough close. Confess those evil years, that is right, living away from God is to live in sin. Earnestly seek forgiveness and turn and He will receive you. **Seek me and live** he says. What a loving God he is - Now is the time to heed His call to repentance, there are several in the room who need hear this.

- Won't change? – this will always lead to judgment.
- Sins repented of - leads to everlasting life.

✚ The curse sent me away, the Grace of Christ brings me close.

✚ Hell is eternity away from God – Heaven is living in his presence

- I am so glad that I was stopped in my wanderings I have been cleared of all the past that I am so ashamed of. It has gone in the sight of God. Now I am with him, eternally.

No more away from the God into the darkness - now I can live in his light!

Lamech

v23,24, is the first recorded poem in the Bible. Seventh in line from Cain is Lamach. 23 **Lamech said to his wives, "Adah and Zillah, listen to me; wives of Lamech, hear my words. I have killed a man for wounding me, a young man for injuring me. 24 If Cain is avenged seven times, then Lamech seventy-seven times."**

What a ferocious, blasphemous outburst against God! In punishing his ancestor Cain, God had nevertheless issued warning against killing him stating that sevenfold punishment would overtake anyone doing so.

But now Lamech says in effect: "Well, if God promises a sevenfold vengeance on anyone killing Cain: *Watch out for me*"x2 – *You should fear me more than God!* I will punish 10 times worse. you will have a seventy-sevenfold punishment if you even hurt me!" What pride. x2

How interesting that Jesus said to Peter that he should forgive his brother not just seven times, or even seventy-seven times, but seventy times seven! Mat 18:22. What a different attitude those who follow Christ have.

Was there another reason? Were these erring wives? Their names suggest Lamech's wives **Adah** and **Zillah** were attractive women. Or were there men in pursuit – and Lamech is trying to ward them off. What a despotic place it had become. Cain's descendants - far from God - become worse and worse.

The film "Noah" with its portrayal of sin and violence out of control.

Judgment

The LORD saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time. Ge 6:5

With no place for God, unrepented wickedness always leads to judgment. The next city mentioned in the Bible is Babel also a place of rebellion, - but there was a difference Babel had a place for God. The city of Cain did not. So the judgment is pronounced: **"The LORD was grieved that he had made man on the earth, and his heart was filled with pain. So the LORD said, "I will wipe mankind, whom I have created, from the face of the earth—men and animals, and creatures that move along the ground, and birds of the air—for I am grieved that I have made them."** Ge 6:6,7

And so the flood comes. The end! x2

For those who live away from God, there is only one outcome. Judgment.

- On Thursday I was talking to a lady who said how nice it was to think God is there. Not at all. It is the most dreadful thing, for if God is there and he is a Holy God and Just God then all of us stand condemned. There is to a fearful day of shame and horror awaiting, punishment for ever, no end no let up.

✚ No place for God with you now – no place for you with God later. x2

It is the end of them - but with God there is hope

Those far from God die in the flood - But the Lord will rescue some through the flood. Lamech was the seventh in line from Adam – Enoch, Godly Enoch was also the seventh from another line from Adam.

Enoch's grandson is Noah. The man of God through whom God will bring salvation. All in the Ark are saved. Noah is like his descendent Jesus Christ. All who are in Christ are saved. Make sure that is you.

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Have you been living far from God? Then now is the time to come close through Jesus Christ. Amen