

Greater Than I Can Bear

Introduction & Review

- ❑ 2 kinds of anger: righteous & unrighteous (Eph. 4:26). Righteous anger is unselfish with godly motives & it is constructive.
- ❑ The unrighteous anger of Cain toward Abel was unreasonable & unjustified (Gen. 4:6-7; Heb. 11:4).
- ❑ Unrighteous anger is filled with hatred & results in premeditated harm of others – murder (Gen. 4:8; 1Jn. 3:12, 15).
- ❑ Even when God graciously seeks confession, unrighteous anger denies & lies regarding sin (Gen. 4:9).
- ❑ No sin can ever be concealed or hidden from God (Gen. 4:10).

I. God's Curse on Cain (Gen. 4:11-14)

A. God's judgment (Gen. 4:11-12)

The first human murderer has been found guilty & must now be sentenced by God. Cain is the first human being to be cursed (Gen. 4:11). A curse is an oral pronouncement of harm. The serpent & Cain are cursed (3:14) – both are evil. Cain was a farmer & God created the ground to sustain life, not to be abused in taking life. Cain's curse involved unproductive labor (v. 12a) & an unstable lifestyle (v. 12b). God's judgment is often to let people live out the consequences of their sin in this life, not immediate death (Rom. 1:24, 26, 28) – “gave them up”. Unproductive labor (lying, cheating, stealing, etc.; gambling, hustling) leads to a restless & unstable lifestyle – no peace.

B. Cain's response (Gen. 4:13-14)

Cain is still filled with pride & selfishness – no concern for disobedience to God, murder of Abel or the effect on his parents (Pr. 21:2). He even feels that his punishment is excessive, unjustified & puts his life in danger – “greater than I can bear” & “whoever finds me will kill me”. He feels that he deserves God's provisions, protection, etc.

APPL: Like Cain, we all deserve this curse because every one of us has disobeyed God's law. **But Jesus Christ has delivered us from the curse through His sacrificial death (Gal. 3:10-13).** God had mercy on us & blessed us rather than curse us - because of Christ [Hallelujah]!

II. God's Conditions for Cain (Gen. 4:15-17)

A. Protection in judgment (Gen. 4:15)

God alone reserves the right for vengeance & ultimate judgment (Rom. 12:19). God alone makes the judgment & ensures that it is carried out – no one can interfere or interrupt (“Not so!”). God may use other people, groups or nations to carry out His judgment at His prerogative. God protects Cain with a warning to potential attackers & a sign on Cain – He rules over everyone (righteous & wicked).

B. Provision in judgment (Gen. 4:16-17)

*Even though life would be extremely difficult for Cain by divine design, God still ensured his survival – land & a wife are necessary for survival. God preserves the wicked for His own purposes (Pr. 16:4). Cain was a living testimony & reminder of the consequences of murder – 100s of years. God now gives Cain up & over to the rebellious lifestyle he desires **away from God's presence & blessing forever – judgment!***

APPL: Like Cain, we all deserve to be cast away from God's presence because everyone of us has disobeyed & committed awful sins. **But Jesus died to draw & keep us near to God so that we can pray with David, “Cast me not away from your presence...”**.