

STUDY SHEET #2
FOR RABBI NANUS' TORAH STUDY

CAIN AND ABEL

And the man knew his wife, Chava, and she conceived and bore Cain. Saying “I have acquired a male child with the Lord. She continued to give birth to his brother, Abel.” (Gen. 4:1)

1. Chava was amazed by the first human birth, at the fact that she, together with God, created a human being that until now did not exist. Chava felt that could not create a person by herself; she was instead a partner with God in giving birth to this new being. To this day, women in labor, and people in general, express similar astonishment at the wonder of childbirth.
2. The first child, Cain, sparked amazement at the birth process itself, and the second child Abel revealed the wonder of diversity which is inherent in the human spirit and physical appearance.

Abel was a shepherd and Cain was a tiller of the soil. It happened after some time Cain brought from the fruit of the ground an offering to the Lord. And Abel, he too brought from the first-born of his flock and from the choicest of them, but towards Cain and to his offering He did not turn. (Gen. 4: 2-5)

1. According to one opinion, this occurred 40 years after their births.
2. It is possible that Cain became a farmer to make up to his parents for Garden.
3. The *Tanakh* regularly portrays younger siblings as more virtuous and has a special fondness for shepherds (Abraham, Jacob, Moses, David)
4. Why would God not accept Cain's offering?

Cain was very incensed, and his face became downcast. The Lord said to Cain,

**“Why are you distressed
And why is your face fallen?**

**Surely, if you do good,
You will be elevated.**

**And if you do not do good,
Sin crouches at your door.**

**Its urge is toward you,
Yet you can be its master. (Gen. 4:5-7)**

Cain said to his brother Abel...and when they were in the field, Cain set upon his brother and killed him. The Lord said to Cain, “Where is Abel your brother?” And he said, “I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?”

1. It is unknown what Cain did with Abel's body after killing him. Perhaps he threw it aside or buried it or simply left it untouched. It is entirely possible that Cain's response was sincere as this was the first human death. If so, his response bears relevance to one of humankind's burning questions: "What happens to a person after he dies?"
2. "Brother" is mentioned 7 times in this chapter to emphasize the relationship of Cain and Abel and to teach us that man is indeed his brother's keeper and all homicide is fratricide.

He (God) said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood cries out to Me from the ground. (Gen.4:10)

The word blood is in the plural. What might this signify?

Therefore, you shall be more cursed than the ground, which opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. If you till the soil, it shall no longer yield its strength to you. You shall become a ceaseless wanderer on earth."

Cain said to the Lord, "My punishment is too great to bear! Since you have banished me this day from the soil, and I must avoid Your presence and become a restless wanderer on earth –anyone who meets me might kill me! (Gen.4: 11-13)

1. My sin is too great to be forgiven. Or Is my is too great to be forgiven? It is possible that Cain made teshuva.

The Lord said to him, "I promise, if anyone kills Cain, sevenfold vengeance shall be taken on him. And the Lord put a mark on Cain, lest anyone who meet him should kill him. Cain left the presence of the Lord and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden. Cain knew his wife and she conceived and bore Enoch. And he then founded a city, and named the city after his son, Enoch (Gen. 4: 15-17)

NOAH'S SONS (Gen. 9:21-27)

The sons of Noah who came out of the ark were Shem, Ham and Japheth. (Ham was the father of Canaan.) ¹⁹ These were the three sons of Noah, and from them came the people who were scattered over the whole earth.

Noah, a man of the soil, proceeded^[a] to plant a vineyard. ²¹ When he drank some of its wine, he became drunk and lay uncovered inside his tent. ²² Ham, the father of Canaan, saw his father naked and told his two brothers outside.

23 But Shem and Japheth took a garment and laid it across their shoulders; then they walked in backward and covered their father's naked body. Their faces were turned the other way so that they would not see their father naked.

24 When Noah awoke from his wine and found out what his youngest son had done to him, 25 he said,

“Cursed be Canaan!

**The lowest of slaves
 will he be to his brothers.”**

26 He also said,

“Praise be to the LORD, the God of Shem!

May Canaan be the slave of Shem.

**27 May God extend Japheth's^[b] territory;
 may Japheth live in the tents of Shem,
 and may Canaan be the slave of Japheth.”**