

Lesson 2: Anger



Old Testament

New Testament

Where in the Bible?

Genesis Chapters 1-11
describe the era
of Pre-History

The Old Testament: Pentateuch

The first five books of the Bible are known as the **Pentateuch** — meaning “the five scrolls.” The early chapters of Genesis are important in describing humanity as a whole and our relationship with God as his special creation. We are meant to see ourselves reflected in the stories of human nature, sin, and the grace of God.

Biblical Time Period: Pre-History

There was a time in the ancient past, before writing was invented, that there was no written history. By the time the first stories and records were ever written down by human beings, the world in which we live already existed. This is what we commonly refer to as the prehistoric era — the time before history.

Farming and herding were among the first occupations of “civilized” human culture, represented here by Cain and Abel. It is not hard to imagine some contention and rivalry between these two competing professions.

Introduction

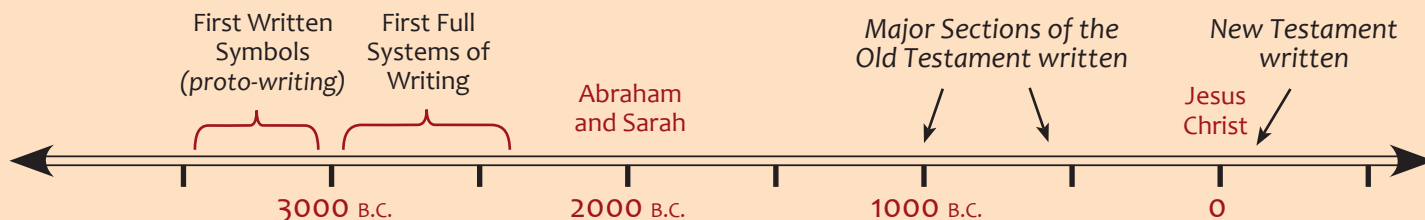
After the fall of Adam and Eve and their expulsion from the garden, Scripture shows how the legacy of sin passed down to their children. Cain became jealous of the favor that God had shown to Abel. In his rage, Cain took out his frustration not on God but on his brother. He was exiled but remained under the protection of God.

Genesis 4:1-16

On reading these verses, what are some of your initial impressions and questions? What stands out to you?

When in Time?

The first historical instance of writing was among the Sumerians around 3400-3100 B.C. Called cuneiform, it consisted of wedge-shaped symbols pressed into clay, originally used to record merchant transactions and inventories. Fully written texts did not appear until centuries later.



Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son ... (Hebrews 1:1-2a).

Discuss: Genesis 4:1-16

1. Who were Cain and Abel, and what did each one of them do for work? How do these occupations set human beings apart from wild animals? How does this relate to what God said in Genesis 1:28-30?
2. What did Cain and Abel offer to God? Why do you think they both did this? How were each of their gifts received by God?
3. Does the Bible give a *reason* the Lord did not accept Cain's offering? Why might we be tempted to come up with our own explanation? Can we human beings control God's choices?
4. What did God mean when he told Cain, "Sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is for you, but you must rule over it" (v. 7)? How is sin like a wild animal waiting to attack? What did God want Cain to do about it?
5. Everyone feels angry or jealous at times. What can we do when we have strong negative feelings? What is the danger of giving in to anger?
6. What did Cain mean when he said, "Am I my brother's keeper?" What did Cain assume was the answer to that question? Why? How would God answer that same question?
7. How did God show his grace and mercy to Cain? Why would God protect someone who is a sinner? What message does that send?
8. In James 4:1-10, Scripture talks about the way human desire leads to sin. What did Cain covet or desire that led him to sin?
9. What advice does James give for how to handle the reality of sin and temptation in our own lives?

Where in the World?

The map shows lands described in the Bible, where some of the earliest civilizations in the world began.

Three major rivers are shown on this map. The Nile flows through Egypt, and the Euphrates and Tigris flow through Mesopotamia.

- a) Use a map to label the three major rivers shown here: the Nile, the Euphrates and the Tigris. Remember them in order from left to right by the word N-E-T.
- b) Label the largest body of water: The Mediterranean Sea.

