

The Way of Cain

“Woe to them! For they have gone the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward . . . “
Jude 11

It is quite remarkable that thousands of years after his death people, were still walking in the “way of Cain.” Cain, as you know, was a religious man who got mad at God, and killed Abel, his brother. Then God gave Cain a new brother in place of Abel, and called his name Seth. The genealogies of these two men are found in the book of Genesis. Genesis 4: gives the genealogy of Cain, and Genesis 5: the genealogy of Seth. These two brothers, and their families, were quite different. The family of Cain excelled in earthly things. They founded the first city, raised cattle, developed skills on the harp and organ, and became instructors in working with copper and iron. (See Gen. 4:16-24)

The family of Seth, by contrast, called on the name of the Lord (Gen. 4:26) They did not excel in earthly inventions or accomplishments.

Lamech was the seventh descendant of Cain. He is distinguished as the first man with more than one wife. He also killed a man for wounding him, and bragged that if Cain would be avenged sevenfold, he would be avenged seventy and sevenfold.

Enoch was the seventh descendant of Seth. He is distinguished by walking with God. In fact, he was so close to God that he was translated and did not see death (Gen. 5:24; Heb. 11:5.)

The world, however, became so wicked that the thought of man was only evil continually. It was at this time that Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. We should not be surprised that Noah came from the family of Seth. He abandoned his earthly home and took refuge in the ark. Through this he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith (Heb. 11:7.)

All of the descendants of Cain, with their amazing earthly achievements, perished in the flood. The spirit of Cain, however, did not die. It infected the family of Noah and caused them to plan a tower that would reach to heaven. It was here that God confounded their language and scattered them across the face of the earth (Gen. 11:1-9.)

In another period of spiritual decline, God found Abram. And called him to leave the comforts of city life and dwell in tents. Again, we note that Abram came from the family of Seth. He too “called on the name of the Lord,” and searched for a city whose builder and maker was God.

Abram was directed to the “Promised Land.” It was a land that flowed with milk and honey. It was replete with houses, cities, orchards and vineyard. It was here that Lot pitched his tent toward Sodom and vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds. When God destroyed those wicked cities, Lot’s wife looked back and became a pillar of salt. She is the only woman in the world that we are commanded to remember (Lk. 17:32.) Though Abram died without receiving so much of this land as to put his foot in (Acts 7:5.)

When the descendants of Abram came out of Egypt to inherit the Promised Land, they were opposed by Balaam, who loved the wages of unrighteousness (11 Pet. 2:15.) He taught Balak to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit fornication (Rev. 2:15.) The “way of Cain,” was very much alive.

For 1,500 years the descendants of Seth lived in their own land. In retrospect, however, it was a time of constant conflict and strife. Not only did they have to fight to conquer the land, they had to fight to defend it. During this time, however, they did produce one significant book, the Bible, and build one significant building, the Temple. The Bible remains, the Temple is gone.

The way of Cain involves walking after the flesh and despising the government of God. It lays up treasure on earth and makes no provision for eternity. It reduces man to the level of brute beasts that live only for physical pleasure.

It causes men to riot in the daytime and have eyes full of adultery that cannot cease from sin. It leads men to speak great swelling words of vanity and allure unstable souls. It causes people to promise liberty, while they themselves are slaves of corruption.

Don’t go the way of Cain! Someday the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat. The earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burned up. **Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in all holy conversation and godliness. Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat” (II Pet. 3:10-12,)**

