

“The Way of Cain”

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In his brief New Testament letter, Jude wrote of “the way of Cain” (v. 11). Genesis 4 tells us that Cain was the first human being to be born of human parents, the eldest son of Adam and Eve. He was a farmer by occupation, and he was religious. He also suffered a curse from God because of his behavior. Wise men will avoid the “way of Cain,” who:

- **Substituted his way for God’s way in religion.** God told him and Abel, his brother, what offerings to bring, but Cain brought what he chose. He learned, as billions of people since have **not** learned, that God does not accept whatever men may choose to offer, but only what He authorizes (John 4:23–24).
- **Rebelled instead of repenting.** He was angered when God accepted Abel’s offering, but rejected his. When God rebuked Cain, instead of repenting, he compounded his sin by rebelling. Rebellion was the recurrent sin of the Israelites, which sin is comparable to witchcraft and idolatry (1 Sam. 15:23).
- **Envied God’s approval of Abel.** “His works were evil, and his brother’s were righteous” (1 John 3:12). Envy is a cancer of the soul; it was a powerful motive behind the crucifixion of Jesus (Mat. 27:18).
- **Failed to control his wrath.** He allowed envy to fuel rebellion, and rebellion, wrath, which spilled over to murder. Unfettered wrath produces road rage violence, spousal abuse, and sometimes murder even now. “For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God” (Jam. 1:20).
- **Disregarded human life.** Cain failed to appreciate the value and sanctity of human life in slaying Abel. God later said that the shedder of blood should have his own blood shed (Gen. 9:6). One of His Ten Commandments forbade murder (Exo. 20:13). A Christian dare not commit murder (1 Pet. 4: 15). Since 1973, Millions of babies have been “legally” murdered in the womb and/or the birth canal. God cannot be pleased.
- **Lied.** When God asked Cain where Abel was, he said, “I know not” (Gen. 4:9b). Sin begets sin: Cain disobeyed God, leading to envy, which gendered wrath, murder, and a lie to cover the murder. Satan is the father of all liars (John 8: 44b) and lying is “the way of Cain.”
- **Behaved selfishly.** Selfishness was the root of all his other sins. No sin or crime can be named (except one committed in ignorance), but that selfishness is its motive. Peter condemned false teachers as self-willed (2 Pet. 2:10).

“The way of Cain” is the way of sin and damnation. One walks in it at the peril of his soul.

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