

Genesis 4:6-8

Then the Lord said to Cain, “Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? 7. “If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it.”

I am so very grateful for the way in which the Lord took the time and patience to teach Cain. God had no legal responsibility to do it, yet He did it because He loved Cain. I also see here how the Lord shows Cain that his very choices will dictate his countenance; which will simply be an outward representation of what is going on inside of him. But we must not stop there either; let's look one more time at the last sentence of verse 7. **And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it.** Why can't we believe that consequences are waiting for our choices? We live our lives as if surprised when our consequences are standing in front of us, nose to nose. Our very choices will either let sin in, or they will be the springboard for helping us to master them. When I was going through the withdrawals of breaking the addictions in my life, I was constantly aware of how easy it would be to slip back in to that destructive lifestyle. It was not one choice that allowed me to master those addictions either; rather it was the sum total of every choice of every day that finally did it for me.

Verse 8 **And Cain told Abel his brother. And it came about when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.** Have you ever seen verse 8 in this light? **And Cain told Abel his brother.** Cain told Abel what? He told him what the Lord had spoken to him. Also, what was the measure of time between Cain first telling Abel, and when were they out in the field together? Did Cain allow bitterness and jealousy to enter into his heart, to the point where the thought of murder first took root? Did all of this brew over an extended period of time, or did it all happen at once? We are not told the full dialogue here, but certainly it was a highly volatile conversation, even if it was only on Cain's part. Cain allowed his anger and humiliation to fuel his emotions to the point where he took the life of his own brother. Whether or not it was premeditated or manslaughter, no one knows today. Whatever the drama or dialogue; Cain is recorded for all time as the first man, to ever kill another man; only this man, was his brother. Having come from West Virginia, which was still part of Virginia during the Civil War; I was told how my great, great grandfather was a Confederate, with the Virginian 7th Calvary, in the Civil War. After the war, he was asked by members of my family what he would have done had he ever met any of his own brothers who were fighting for the Union. He said that he would have killed them, because they certainly would have done the same to him, if given the chance. I have often thought about this ever since I first heard this story. With Cain it was undeniably murder. How do you live with the knowledge that you took your brother's life, whether in war or not, I do not know? It is heart wrenching to think that since sin entered the garden, man has been killing his brothers in one way or another. Some by taking their very life, and some through another form of murder, character assassination! In God's eyes, is either one really any worse than the other?