

Initially, there were only two witnesses on the earth and they were permitted to go and do as they wished within its perfect environment and specifically within Eden.

This freedom was made possible by their personal states of perfection although advised that they were not to eat from “the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.”

We have noted their failure on that account. Mark up two points for Lucifer and the defense. This failure resulted in their loss of Perfect Life and the acquisition of human life plus the addition of the sin nature in their bodies.

In this new status, 'Adam and 'Ishshah were able to procreate which they did in the persons of Cain and Abel, the former becoming a witness for the defense while the latter becoming a witness for the Prosecution.

The Lord instituted rituals designed to reflect gratitude for the provision of eternal life through faith in Christ and recovery for one's sins through rebound.

This initial ritual before the Lord was not brought to an altar of fire, but instead presented to the Lord personally:

Genesis 4:3 At the designated time Cain brought some of the fruit of the ground for an offering [מִנְחָה] (*minchah*)] to the Lord.

v. 4 But Abel brought some of the firstborn of his flock—even the fattest of them. And the Lord was pleased with Abel and his offering [מִנְחָה (*minchah*)],

v. 5 but with Cain and his offering [מִנְחָה (*minchah*)] he was not pleased. So Cain became very angry, and his facial expression was downcast. (NET)

The word for “offering” is מִנְחָה (*minchah*) and was used to describe the item each man presented to the Lord. The casual reader of this word in Genesis 4:3–5 might assume that the offering was meant for an altar and there to be burned.

However, the Hebrew word of altar is מִזְבֵּחַ (*mizbeah*) whose first use does not occur until Genesis 8:20. The noun, *minchah*, translated “offering.” is quite different and is defined as follows:

Hebrews 4:3–4. ... the author has turned to the question of God's acceptance of the “offering” (*minchah*) and worship of Cain and his brother. Cain's worship was not acceptable, whereas Abel's worship was.



Contrary to the popular opinion that Cain's offering was not accepted because it was not a blood sacrifice, it seems clear from the narrative that both offerings, in themselves, were acceptable—they are both described as “offerings” (*minchah*) and not “sacrifices” זֶבַח (*zevach*). The narrative suggests, as well, that they were both “firstfruits” offerings (v.4); thus as a farmer Cain's offering of “fruits of the soil” (v.3) was as appropriate for his occupation as Abel's “firstborn of his flock” (v.4) was for his occupation as a shepherd

Hebrews 4:5–7. Rather than attempting to discover what was wrong with Cain's offering, we would be better advised simply to take notice that the author has omitted any explanation. He was apparently less concerned about Cain's offering than he was Cain's response to the Lord's rejection of his offering. ... the narrative itself focuses our attention to Cain's response. It is there that the narrative seeks to make its point. Cain's response was twofold: (1) anger against God (v. 4b) and (2) anger against his brother (v.8). By stating the problem in this way, the author surrounds his lesson on “pleasing offerings” with a subtle narrative warning: “by their fruit you will recognize them” (Matthew 7:20). In his understanding of the importance of a pure heart in worship, the author is very close in his ideas to those expressed by Jeremiah against the false and hypocritical worshippers in his day. Just as Jeremiah pleaded with his people “to do well ... and do not shed innocent blood,” lest they be exiled from their land (Jeremiah 7:5–7), so God pleaded with Cain to “do what is right” or face consequences of shedding innocent blood and exile from the land (v.7; cf. v.12).⁵

The above review confirms that the items brought to the Lord in Genesis 4:1–4 were not to be offered as sacrifices but presented as offerings.

⁵ John H. Sailhamer, “Genesis,” in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, gen. ed. Frank E. Gaebelin (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1990), 2:61–62.



Cain considered his offering was worthy for the presentation to the Lord but he did so in arrogance. Abel did the same with his presentation of a choice lamb from his flock.

Cain's was disapproved while Abel's was approved. The Lord's requests for an offering from these two men were designed to reveal what was going on in the souls of these two brothers—gratitude or arrogance?

Abel's motivation was to bring the best sheep within his flock and to do so with a mental attitude of gratitude. On the other hand, Cain brought his with an attitude of self-centeredness regarding his vegetables as Cain the master agronomist.

It is all about mental attitude. Abel displayed grace while Cain displayed arrogance. The Lord discerned the difference and made His views known. Abel graciously accepted the Lord complement but Cain assumed he, in the parlance of present-day fractured English, had been “dissed,” ergo, “disrespected.”

What the Lord perceived in Cain's attitude was soon displayed. He warned Cain about His perception in:

Genesis 4:7 “Is it not true that if you do what is right, you will be fine? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching [רָבַץ (*ravas*): “To stoop, as an animal waiting for prey.”] at the door. It desires to dominate you, but you must subdue it.” (NET)

It was not long before Cain fulfilled the Lord's warning about the crouching sin waiting for the vulnerable Cain at the door:

Genesis 4:8 Cain said to his brother Abel, “Let's go out to the field.” While they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed [הָרַג (*harag*): **fratricide**] him. (NET)

This act by Cain eliminated one-third of the witnesses for the Prosecution. He is the lone witness for the defense, however, the Lord set in motion Operation Exile accompanied by withdrawal of all logistical assets:

1. **Genesis 4:12:** Although an accomplished agronomist, the earth will not produce quality produce; he will be a homeless vagrant and a wanderer while continuing to function as history's first witness for the Dark Side's defense.
2. His punishment is isolation in a desolate land scrounging out a way of life while continuing to be a witness for the defence but fearful that he would be marked by this comment to the Lord in:

Genesis 4:14 “Look! You are driving me off the land today, and I must hide from Your presence. I will be a homeless wanderer [נָדָד (*nuth*): wayfarer] on the earth; whoever finds me will kill me.” (NET)

3. The Lord banished Cain from His presence in:

Genesis 4:16 So Cain went out from the presence of the Lord and lived in the land of Nōd [נֹדֶד (*Nōth*): “wandering”] east of Eden. (NET)

4. Because of murdering his brother, Abel, Cain was not only banished from Eden but also sentenced for life in a land whose name indicated his punishment. Cain was sentenced to wayfaring in a land called, “Wandering.”
5. There is a hymn which tells the story of “The Wayfaring Stranger.” No one knows who wrote its lyric and the music is “Arranged from an old southern melody.” It tells the story of a wayfarer, one who travels on foot. Regardless of his earthly trials, he is motivated, encouraged, and sustained by the truths he expresses in the hymn. Here are the first and fourth stanzas of:

The Wayfaring Stranger

I am a poor wayfaring stranger,
While traveling thro' this world below;
There is no sickness, toil, nor danger
In that bright world to which I go.
I'm going there to see my father,
I'm going there no more to roam;
I am just going over Jordan,
I am just going over home.

I'll soon be free from every trial,
This form will rest beneath the sod;
I'll drop the cross of self-denial,
And enter in my home with God.
I'm going there to see My Saviour,
Who shed for me His precious blood;
I am just going over Jordan,
I am just going over home.⁶

⁶ “The Wayfaring Stranger,” in *The Broadman Hymnal*, music ed. B. B. McKenney (Nashville: The Broadman Press, 1940), 74.

