

The Problem of Sin; Genesis 4:3-7

I. To Miss The Mark

- A. Sin — often times we hear this word and we think it is synonymous with breaking the law
- B. Maybe some of the commandments from Exodus 20 come to your mind
 - 1. steal, murder, adultery
 - 2. Out of those three, only two actually break any of our current laws in America
- C. We have all heard (and I have said before) that the definition of the Hebrew word sin is to miss the mark
- D. It is an archery term and it comes from Judges 20:16
 - 1. This is a very gruesome story about a Levite from Ephraim who was traveling through Gibeah (which belongs to the tribe of Benjamin)
 - 2. A man of the city brought him in to lodge for the night
 - 3. The men of the city demanding the man to bring the Levite out so they could abuse him
 - 4. The Levite gave them his concubine instead
 - 5. In the morning the concubine is on the doorstep, presumably dead.
 - 6. He takes her home to Ephraim, he cuts her up into 12 pieces and sends them out to all the territories of Israel
 - 7. Israel bands together and goes to war with the tribe of Benjamin
 - 8. Judges 20:16 (ESV); Among all these were 700 chosen men who were left-handed; every one could sling a stone at a hair and not miss.
- E. The term to 'miss the mark' is very much an oversimplification of sin

II. The Problem of Sin

- A. The very first time we read about sin in the Bible is the offerings of Cain and Abel
 - 1. Abel offered of the first born of his flock and their fat portions
 - 2. Cain offered "the fruit of the ground"
 - 3. God accepted Abel's offering but not Cain's
 - 4. Genesis 4:7 (ESV); If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it."
 - 5. Cain's answer to God's second chance was to kill his brother, Abel — Cain did 'miss the mark,' but as you can see there is more to it than that
 - 6. Mankind has a sin problem
- B. We're only about 1000-1500 years into creation by the time we get to chapter 6
- C. Genesis 6:5-8 (ESV); ⁵ The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. ⁶ And the Lord regretted that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. ⁷ So the Lord said, "I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens, for I am sorry that I have made them." ⁸ But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord.
 - 1. Some versions use the word 'grieved' in verse 6 — to be sorry, to be remorseful
 - 2. "Every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually"
 - 3. God's answer was to immerse the world in water wiping away all the people whose "every intention of the thoughts of [their] heart was only evil continually"
 - 4. God literally cleansed the earth of sin through the flood
 - 5. Mankind had a selfish streak, fulfilling all of their desires and wants — to 'miss the mark' doesn't quite tell the whole story
 - 6. Mankind has a sin problem
- D. Not very long after the flood, some historians say 106 years, we have the event of the tower of Babel

- E. Genesis 11:4 (ESV); Then they said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth.”
 - 1. “Top in the heavens” — trying to make themselves equal with God
 - 2. “Make a name for ourselves” — That is to separate themselves from God
 - 3. God confused their language and they dispersed
 - 4. Mankind has a sin problem!
- F. Now you might be thinking, “I haven’t stolen from, or murdered anyone,” or “the thoughts of my heart are not only evil continually”
- G. We find our main problem within the event of the tower — our desire for self-sufficiency
- H. God wants us to completely and totally trust Him — He wants our whole person
 - 1. Reading through the prophets we see Israel in a state of rebellion against God
 - 2. They trust in Baal, or the Asherah, or Molech
 - 3. They trust in their own greed and oppress the poor of Israel for their own gain
 - 4. They refuse to give themselves over to God and obey His commandments — even though they bring life and not death
- I. God knew, from the beginning, that we would have this problem and He created a plan that would completely overcome our sin problem

III. But God

- A. Ephesians 2:1–5 (ESV); ¹ And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ² in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— ³ among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. ⁴ But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—
- B. The plan, from the beginning was His Son
 - 1. Acts 2:22–24 (ESV); ²² “Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know— ²³ this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. ²⁴ God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it.
 - 2. We call it the Gospel, which means, good news

IV. The Gospel

- A. The good news is that we don’t have to be ‘dead in [our] trespasses and sins’
- B. The good news is that we have a sacrifice that satisfies God’s wrath — His Son
- C. The good news is that Jesus is the Christ, the anointed one, the Messiah