

if these are unworthy or evil, "sin lieth at the door" crouching like a wild beast eager to devour its prey. "But thou shouldst rule over it," master the evil. (Rom. 6: 12; 8: 3; 12: 21; Col. 3: 5; Jas. 4: 7; 1: 14, 15). The majority of commentators find the essential difference between the sacrifice of Cain and that of Abel to lie in the absence of bloodshedding in the former thus revealing on Cain's part a wilful rejection of the divinely appointed way of salvation. In accordance with this view the seventh verse is understood to mean, "If thou offerest not the appointed sacrifice, a sin offering lies at hand, present it, and thy rights as an elder brother shall be restored and secured. Abel will look up to thee and thy authority shall be unquestioned." It is necessary to choose between conflicting views of a very difficult passage but it seems to us that the word for "offering" cannot here have its technical meaning of a "bloodless offering." If this narrative is, as is not improbable, an extract from a primitive document, the general sense of the word may have been the only one known to the times of the writer. The fundamental principles of all worship are here emphasized—the state of the heart determines acceptability, and persistent wrong-doing terminates in spiritual death, the religious faculty itself is atrophied. 8. Talked with—We are not told what they talked about. Some translate it "told it to Abel his brother" and connect it with the preceding verse. Others suppose that their conversation was about the whole subject of the rejected sacrifices and that Cain's temper was aroused by the discussion. Notice how often the word "brother" occurs. (Matt. 23: 35, 1 John 3: 12, 15; Jude 11).

III. SUFFERING 9. Brother's keeper—An insolent answer, both in form and substance. What is required and what is forbidden in the sixth commandment? Every man is his brother's keeper as far as regards his influence for good or evil. 10. Crieth unto me—Heinous crimes are figuratively said to "cry to heaven." Compare ch. 18: 20; 19: 13; Ex. 3: 9; Also ch. 9: 5, and read Ps. 116: 15; Heb. 11: 4; Jas. 5: 4; Rev. 6: 9, 10; Isa. 26: 21; Ezek. 24: 7; Job. 16: 18. The blood of Christ cries louder for mercy than Abel's did for vengeance. (Heb. 12: 24). 11. Cursed from the earth—"The very ground curses thee and refuses to yield thee subsistence or a home." Compare Lev. 18: 25, 28; 20: 22; also Deut. 18: 15-20. The race of Cain abandoned agriculture and founded cities, inventing arts and music. Here again the curse carried a blessing latent in it. 12. Lashed by the stings of a remorseful conscience, he could no longer endure the reproachful eyes of men. 13. My punishment—Marg. "My iniquity is greater than can be forgiven." Either way there is no real penitence. He expresses no regret for the crime, utters no cry for pardon. He realizes his hard lot and dreads just vengeance from man when the protecting care of God is withdrawn. In reply God sets a mark upon him and guarantees that his life shall be preserved. He is given time for repentance and is constantly reminded of the divine mercy in sparing him.

- 1—What did Cain bring as an offering? (3)
- 2—What did Abel bring? (3)
- 3—Why did God accept the one and refuse the other? (5)
- 4—When Cain shewed his anger what did God say to him? (Give the sense of it in your own words). (6)
- 5—When God asked Cain for his brother, what answer did he make? (5)
- 6—What curse was pronounced upon Cain?

Name, \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Teacher,—Please excuse my absence from Sabbath School to-day, I cannot come because I have read the "Daffy Portions" and answered the questions as well as I could. I have committed to memory verses in addition to the Golden Text, and Questions in the Catechism and have recited them I was at church

I send with this my Weekly Offering of \_\_\_\_\_ cents.