

Your Brother and You.
Gen. 4: 1-10 (9)

Roadside Meth. C.
10-9-72.

God's search after man always starts with the simple, but penetrating question: Where are you? It is God's way of preventing man to escape from God - and from himself. Man's first reaction is always one of self-defence (the sign of fear - Gen. 3:10). The more God tries to reach out after his creature, the more man tries to flee, to retreat, to hide himself, ^{perhaps in another} to hide his true identity.

The result? God ~~does~~ ^{does} not let go or give up. He calls man from his hidingplace (when man tries to hide himself in paradise, paradise becomes a hell) by his penetrating ~~call~~ ^{call}: Where are you? And when man refuses to answer or hides himself to avoid hearing this question, God follows it up with another question: Where is your brother? This question asked of Cain is just another way in which God asks the same question as originally put to Adam: Where are you? That is God's way of telling everyone of us that no person is able to ascertain & understand where his brother is unless he first has discovered and knows who he is. His willingness to ask where will depend on his willingness to ask who.

Cain is willing to face any of these questions. However because he does not care to discover who Abel, his brother, really is, he ~~is~~ ^{is} not concerned about where he is. So he takes

he takes ~~the~~ ^{the only} logical ~~attitude~~ step flowing from such an attitude -- he liquidates his brother, he removes him from his sight, he puts the biggest possible distance between him and this man whom he regards as his enemy -- not because of anything this brother has said or done but because of what he is: ~~only~~ a human being who has been accepted by God. Abel is (initially in any case) totally unaware of this enmity -- the bitter enmity of jealousy -- in the heart of his brother. He loves his brother, he trusts him, he willingly & gladly accompanies him to participate in worship with him.

- His attitude when discovered: one of self-justification "Am I my brother's keeper? Isn't he old & wise enough to look after himself?" Is it my duty to know where my brother is?" This is a crucial question: Do it my duty to know? ~~at the~~ After the war a German was asked: "Did not you know of the liquidation of Jews?" - Answer: "I did not know." Question: "Wasn't it your duty to know?" - "How can I know every thing?" No - we can't - but we can want to know as much as possible about our brothers - all our brothers our willingness + openness to know determines our sincerity

- Three questions we have to ask:
- ① How do I ascertain where my brother is?
 - a) Knowledge
 - b) Personal contact + communication
 - c) Identification:

Crucial question which God is asking his children in I.A. to-day: Where is your brother? Ask: where is your sick br., your drunken br., your drug add br. - but also where is your unemployed br., your homeless br., your uneducated br., your unemployed br., your voteless br.

but it faith is tested by this question and revealed by the answer we give to it

Consequences because of our evasion, refusal, compromise:
 - estrangement - discrimination - injustice - embitterment - polarization

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The way back : Back :