

Heirlooms

*Bible keepsakes,
new and old*

Therefore every scribe instructed
concerning the kingdom of heaven
is like a householder who brings
out of his treasure things new and old.

Matthew 13:52 (NKJV)

Heirlooms

*Bible keepsakes,
new and old*



Janie Craun
Foreword by Wayne Jackson



Books with Class

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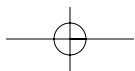
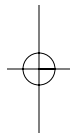
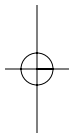
***To the memory of my mother,
Ruby Hardeman Porch Jackson***

“Poor indeed is the man whose mind is not enriched by some phrase of lasting truth and beauty which serves to restore his soul in the exigencies of life. Each of us needs in his heart’s treasury the memory of a lovely line to renew fellowship with the great and noble of this earth—”

Leaves of Gold

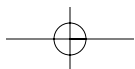
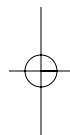
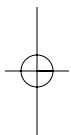
“. . . in whom [Christ] are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.”

Colossians 2:3



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Foreword

God's loving plan of redemption is somewhat like a sparkling stream. Beginning as a bubbling spring in Eden, with the promise of Him who ultimately would crush Satan's head (Genesis 3:15), it rushes on, centuries later pouring its refreshment into the city of Jerusalem with dynamic force. This culmination was on the day of Pentecost—just fifty days following the resurrection of our Savior, Jesus Christ (Acts 2).

The study of how that torrent developed, gaining momentum across the landscape of antiquity, is the most thrilling adventure in the annals of literature.

In her book *Heirlooms*, Janie Craun has traced that "water course" that was carving an eternal niche in providential events of time. And she has done so in a rather unique manner—by probing certain penetrating "questions" that were posed along the way, in the various epochs of biblical history.

From Cain's sarcastic query, "Am I my brother's keeper?" to Pontius Pilate's evasive, "What then shall I do with Jesus?"—questions by biblical personalities are employed as stepping stones in the centuries-long trek.

Questions are intrinsic to human nature. Unlike the beasts of the field,

human beings are inquisitive creatures. We raise inquiries, and long to know the answers. Some questions are generated from devout hearts; others (like those cited above) are mere rhetorical devices fashioned to rationalize disingenuous conduct. In any event, questions are marvelous teaching devices.

This book is a wonderfully illuminating sketch of redemptive history. It evinces a great deal of research, is buttressed with practical applications, and is written in an engaging style that does not weary the person of spiritual inclination.

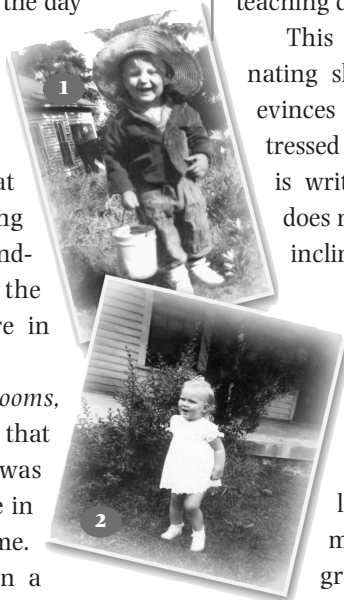
I am delighted to commend this volume most enthusiastically.

On a crisp February morning in the eighth year of my life, I was playing with schoolmates on the grounds of my old grammar school in Old Hickory, Tennessee—just a couple of hundred yards from the house in which our family lived. I

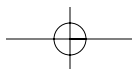
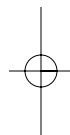
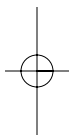
saw our old Plymouth pull up to the home place, and my mother and dad exit the car. "Momma" was carrying a tiny bundle—my new baby sister, Janie.

That sweet child grew up to become the remarkable Christian woman who authored this book.

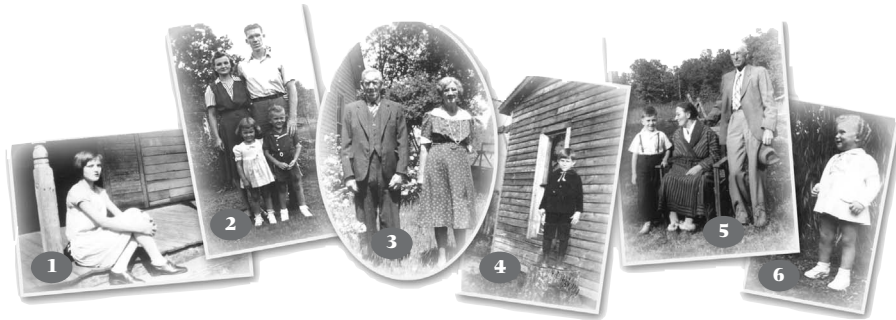
Wayne Jackson
Stockton, California



1. Wayne Jackson
2. Janie Jackson Craun



From Generation to Generation



Dear Reader,

Are you an heirloom collector? I am. Almost to the point of clutter! Old photographs, dishes, furniture. Even my great-grandparents' silver communion cup has found a treasured place in my home.

I save partly from a sense of nostalgia but also because these relics from the past help me better understand who I am. Karl and I live on land that belonged to his grandparents. All around us are precious reminders of who we are and from where we have come.

In the same way, the Bible is a treasure-trove for those willing to delve into it. It reveals our privileged ancestry as children of an all-powerful God, and it equips us for the needs of today.

A number of years ago, when a close friend lost her mother suddenly, we undertook the task of cleaning out her attic. That necessity was made more pleasurable as each nook and cranny began to yield the

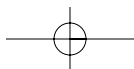
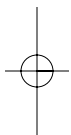
- 1. Mom, Rubye Porch Jackson**
- 2. Mom, Dad, Wayne, and Diane**
- 3. Granddaddy and Grandmammy, Clayton and Annie Tipton Jackson**
- 4. Dad, Harry Boyd Jackson, age 5**
- 5. Mama and Papa Craun, Charles Craun**
- 6. Janie**

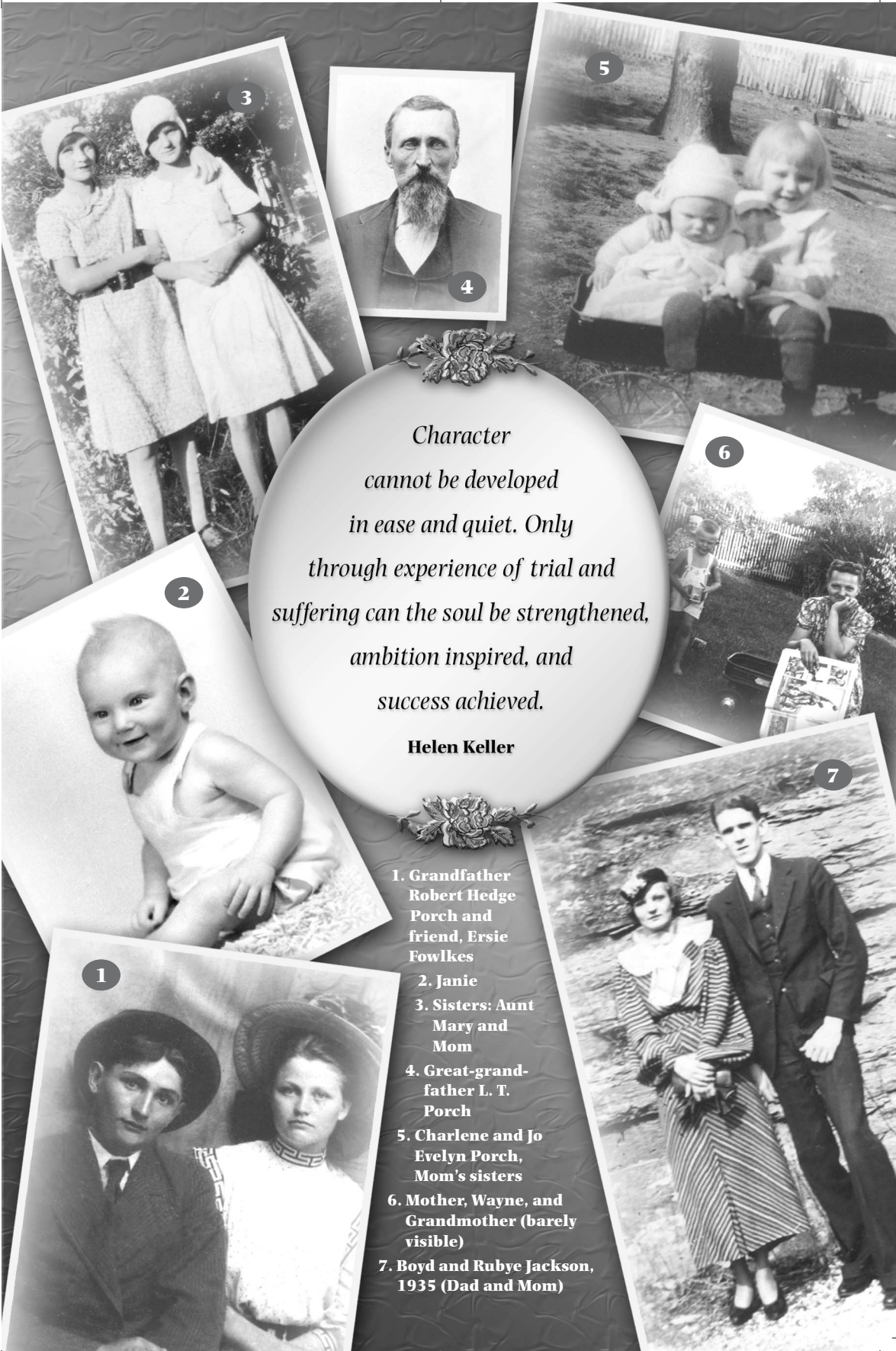
unexpected. We discovered keepsakes she had loved and forgotten, packed alongside items that were practically new. I have often thought of that experience when reading Matthew 13:52, where the Lord said, "Therefore every scribe instructed concerning the kingdom of heaven is

like a householder who brings out of his treasure things new and old" (NKJV).

In this study we will explore some beautiful heirlooms of Scripture which connect us to the past. Although we face challenges that are unique to our day, the questions that we ask are not new. Those before us struggled with similar queries, and their experiences have been passed on to us as treasures from the past. May we handle these heirlooms with care and pass them on untarnished to generations to come.

Janie Craun

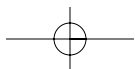
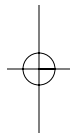
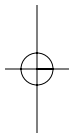




*Character
cannot be developed
in ease and quiet. Only
through experience of trial and
suffering can the soul be strengthened,
ambition inspired, and
success achieved.*

Helen Keller

1. Grandfather Robert Hedge Porch and friend, Ersie Fowlkes
2. Janie
3. Sisters: Aunt Mary and Mom
4. Great-grandfather L. T. Porch
5. Charlene and Jo Evelyn Porch, Mom's sisters
6. Mother, Wayne, and Grandmother (barely visible)
7. Boyd and Rubye Jackson, 1935 (Dad and Mom)



1

Am I My Brother's Keeper?

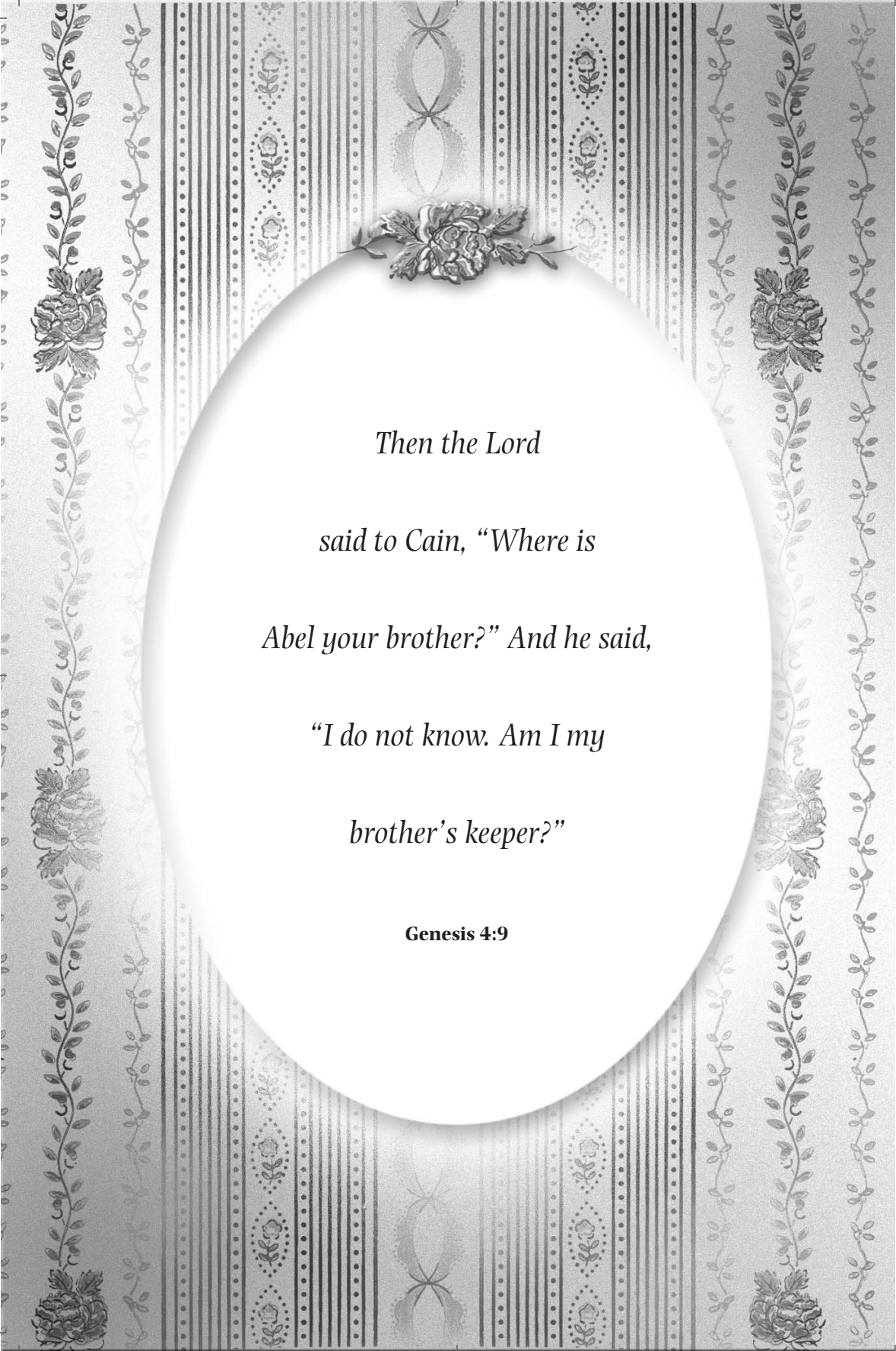


Jimmie Andrews Newman and Linda Meacham Crosslin

Comedian Flip Wilson's famous line was, "The devil made me do it!" That excuse did not work for Eve; neither will it work for us. Personal freedom obligates each of us to live with the consequences of our behavior.

"I will not let any man reduce my soul to the level of hatred."

Booker T. Washington



*Then the Lord
said to Cain, "Where is
Abel your brother?" And he said,
"I do not know. Am I my
brother's keeper?"*

Genesis 4:9

Am I My Brother's Keeper?

A Lesson on Responsibility

Genesis 4:1–26

A Perfect World Lost

Paradise Gained

The Gospel writers credit Moses with the first five books of the Old Testament, known as the Pentateuch. In chapters 1 and 2 his eloquent account of the creation depicts a beautiful and perfect world where all the personalities of the godhead were present (Genesis 1:2, 26; John 1:1–3; Hebrews 1:1–2). God measured time by the passing of evening and morning, and ever since, we have observed the seven-day week, a fact which evolutionists are hard pressed to explain.

Moses wrote about God's creating man—"Adam" or "red earth"—and giving him a garden home in Eden (Genesis 2:8). It was a paradise in which all the wonderfully unique animals He created mingled with Adam, who gave each a name. But when the man realized that there was no one in all of creation like himself, God made a special companion for him from one of his ribs as he slept. She was like Adam, yet delightfully different.

Woman, which is what Adam called her, was not an afterthought on God's part. By creating the man first, God established the principle of male leadership in the home—and later in the church—according to 1 Timothy 2:12–13. Perhaps God also delayed woman's creation so that Adam would experience the loneliness that endeared her to his heart. With pleasure Adam exclaimed, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman because she was taken out of Man." In Genesis 2:24 Moses recorded God's timeless intent for marriage, repeated by Jesus in Matthew 19:5: "For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh." God told the couple to be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth and subdue it, and to have dominion over every living thing.

The Bible account of the first home paints a picture of perfection. Six times Moses states that everything God made was good or very good. Genesis 3 presents a great contrast with the entrance of sin into their perfect world.

Paradise Lost

God chose to make the human couple significantly different from the animals when He created them in His own image and gave them the intelligence to

Heirlooms

make choices (Genesis 1:27). With that privilege came responsibility, and God would test whether they would act responsibly by giving them one restriction. They were allowed full rein in Eden; only the tree of the knowledge of good and evil that grew in the center of the garden was off limits. One day the serpent visited with the woman and stirred within her a strong desire to taste its beautiful fruit. Genesis 3:1–6 tells how he deceived her into thinking she could disobey God without any consequences.

We understand all too well our adversary's power, because the apostle John writes that we fall victim to his same devices (1 John 2:16). Although Adam was not deceived by the serpent's lies, he made a decision to join his wife in disobedience.

After they had violated God's instructions, the couple experienced a sense of shame they had never known. They realized they were naked and sewed fig leaves together in an attempt to cover themselves. Sin had deprived them of all dignity and security and caused them to be afraid. (Genesis 3:10 is the first mention of fear in the Bible.) It is not hard to imagine the problems that must have developed almost immediately in their home. Likely there were words of discord, for neither of them wanted to take full responsibility for what they had done. We have to wonder: if this perfect woman, married to the perfect man and living in a virtual paradise, was so easily deceived, is there any hope for us in this very imperfect world? We shall see in the lessons to follow that there is indeed hope.

Oh, the Consequences!

They were driven from the beautiful garden, and Adam had to toil by the sweat of his brow to make the soil produce. God had warned him about death (Genesis 2:17), and from that day their bodies began a process of aging which would eventually return them to dust. These were the natural consequences of their disobedience, and they were hard consequences.

Contrary to the tempter's claims, they had seen that God keeps His word. So it must have lifted their wounded spirits when God made a magnificent promise. He foretold that in time the woman's Seed would utterly destroy the devil; and He placed a curse upon the serpent, through whom he had worked. Woman would be saved, so to speak, through the great responsibility and privilege of motherhood, for it was through woman that the divine would take on human flesh and enter the world (Galatians 4:4; 1 Timothy 2:15).

Am I My Brother's Keeper?

Adam renamed his wife Eve, meaning “life,” because she was to become the mother of all humanity. After their union, Eve conceived and bore a son named Cain. She exclaimed, “I have gotten a manchild with the help of the Lord.” Later she gave birth to another son, Abel. It is unlikely that Eve realized the sorrow that lay in store for her family. How could she have known that one of her sons would become the murderer of his own brother, because sin had entered into the world?

Out of Control

When Cain and Abel grew to manhood, each assumed an occupation, Abel as a keeper of sheep and Cain as a farmer. In the process of time (literally, “after a considerable lapse of time”) they both came before the Lord with offerings. Cain brought a gift of his produce; Abel sacrificed an animal from his flock.

Two things are significant about Abel’s gift. Not only did he choose from the firstlings of his flock, but it was the very best he had. Keil and Delitzsch, in their *Commentary on the Old Testament*, give the Hebrew construction as “the fattest of the firstlings, and not merely the first good one that came to hand.”¹ “And the Lord had regard for Abel and for his offering; but for Cain and for his offering He had no regard” (Genesis 4:4–5). In this first instance of worship recorded in the Bible, it is noteworthy that God accepted one man’s effort while rejecting the other.

We may wonder why God refused Cain’s offering. It appears that there were instructions from God which Abel obeyed but Cain did not, based on Hebrews 11:4. “By faith Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain.” Romans 10:17 teaches that faith results from adherence to divine instruction: “So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.” We do know that God was looking at Cain’s attitude as well as his action. Acceptable worship has always involved doing the right thing in the right spirit (John 4:24).

Which of God’s laws did the tempter misrepresent to Eve? (Galatians 6:7–8)

1. C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 90.

Heirlooms

Sin on the Prowl

God questioned Cain, “Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen?” He warned Cain that he was about to be overtaken by sin. Genesis 4:7 is the first use in Scripture of that word. The depiction of sin as a wild beast lurking at the door for an opportunity to enter Cain’s heart is similar to Peter’s description of Satan’s walking about as a roaring lion seeking its prey (1 Peter 5:8).

I can recall a haunting story from my childhood about two children, living on the frontier and left alone temporarily by their parents. The youngsters were cautioned sternly to keep their cabin door locked. But hours later, the sound of scratching at the door prompted them to open it just a crack. It was enough to allow a ravenous bear to attack them. The story illustrates God’s warning to Cain that sin was crouched at his door, looking for an opportunity to overtake him. Satan is always on the prowl, looking for those he can overtake (Galatians 6:1), and it is our responsibility to keep the door shut.

Blood on the Ground

God pointed the finger of blame squarely at Cain. Your offering would have been accepted, God told him, if you had done well. But Cain was not sorry. He spoke to Abel, perhaps luring him to the field; and there he rose up and slew him. The word *slew* signifies being slaughtered or butchered, by cutting the throat.² When God asked, “Where is Abel your brother?” his answer was insolent. “I do not know. Am I my brother’s keeper?” Having murdered, he was not ashamed to answer God with an arrogant lie.

God told Cain that his brother’s innocent blood was crying out from the ground. Justice must be done. Interestingly, the writer of Hebrews noted that the blood of Jesus speaks better things than that of Abel (Hebrews 12:24). His blood whispers peace, according to Edward Bickersteth’s well-loved hymn.

Cain became a fugitive in search of a living. He complained that his punishment was greater than he could bear and that he feared being hidden from God, but it seems that he mostly feared revenge. The Lord marked Cain, and lest there be more violence, He promised sevenfold vengeance upon anyone who sought retribution.

We wonder about Cain’s state of mind as he left the presence of the Lord and moved eastward. Did he grieve for the younger brother he had slain? Was

2. Burton Coffman, *Commentary on 1 John* (Austin: Firm Foundation, 1979), 425.

Am I My Brother's Keeper?

he ever sorry he had brought such anguish upon his parents? There is no mention of any penitence; and he fathered a race of descendants who introduced polygamy, musical instruments, and implements of brass and iron. Perhaps weapons were among their inventions, since violence clung to his family.

Eve gave birth to another son, Seth, and there is the suggestion that he was a good boy. Adam, we know, lived long and saw many more sons and daughters grow up before him. Did Eve ever see her wayward son again? There is no record in the Bible. It appears that some of Cain's female descendants intermarried with their distant relatives, which later led to a decline of their good morals (Genesis 6:1–2). Don't you suppose she searched her soul to understand what had happened to her family? Opening the door to sin had changed her world forever.

***What brought about
Cain's downfall?***



What if I can't help how I feel?

I am responsible for controlling my emotions.

Cain's insolent question is troubling. The apostle John wrote that Cain slew his brother "because his works were evil and his brother's righteous" (1 John 3:12 NKJV). Cain was consumed with anger, envy, resentment, and even hatred for Abel (1 John 3:13). How do we respond when these same emotions come knocking on our door?

David declared in Psalm 139 that we humans are "fearfully and wonderfully made." We possess a wide range of feelings and emotions, which the adversary is adept at using to gain entrance into our hearts.

Solomon wrote that there is "a time to love, and a time to hate" (Ecclesiastes 3:8). There is also a time to feel angry, as long as we remain in control. When Moses felt outraged over the actions of the rebellious Israelites, God understood because He was also provoked (Exodus 32:10, 19). It wasn't *feeling* angry that

Heirlooms

got Moses into trouble. It was how he responded to his anger by disobeying God that created problems for himself (Numbers 20:8–12).

According to government statistics, the number of murders in this country is again on the rise. What causes this kind of violence?

Anger often stems from envy. This green-eyed monster characterizes a corrupt mind, according to Romans 1:29, and is found in company with wickedness, deceit, and hypocrisy (1 Peter 2:1). Envy also leads to resentment, which damages the body as well as the spirit. One physician reported on personal interviews with patients suffering from colitis. The most prominent personality characteristic noted by the interviewers was resentment, occurring in ninety-six percent of the victims.³

Unchecked emotions like envy and resentment inevitably result in hatred. The apostle John warned that when we fail to love one another, we are in danger of becoming like Cain, adding that everyone who hates his brother is a murderer (1 John 3:15). Jesus explained that the prohibition against murder in Moses' law would be unnecessary if everyone would control his anger against his brother (Matthew

5:21–24). We would do well to adopt the philosophy of Booker T. Washington, a man who knew the brunt of prejudicial malice but vowed, "I will not let any man reduce my soul to the level of hatred."

I am accountable for my actions.

The lesson of Cain is that we are accountable for our actions. Under the law of Moses, every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty (Hebrews 2:2). The gospel of grace brought hope into the world; but this prompted some in Paul's day to think they could keep living in sin, and God would overlook it. Not so, according to Romans 6:1–2. God holds each person responsible for the choices he makes (Acts 17:30; Hebrews 2:2–3).

Furthermore, God has required accountability in every age, even from those not in a covenant relationship with Him (Romans 1:18–19; 2:14–15). Every civilization has morés of right and wrong, which illustrates that we humans expect responsible behavior from others, even if we are sometimes

3. S. I. McMillen, *None of These Diseases* (Old Tappan, NJ: Revell Co., 1980), 68.

Am I My Brother's Keeper?

willing to overlook our own failures (Matthew 7:1–5). Comedian Flip Wilson's famous line was, "The devil made me do it!" That excuse will not work for us any more than it worked for Eve.

I must deal responsibly with my mistakes.

The responsible way to deal with transgressions is to confess them (1 John 1:9). David lusted for another man's wife, which led him to commit adultery and murder. Until he came to terms with his sin, he suffered mental and physical anguish, as recorded in Psalm 51. His actions were reprehensible, but he acknowledged them and repented with bitter tears. In Psalm 32 he poured out his deep gratitude for God's forgiveness. There was no way for him to undo all the consequences of his behavior; but God forgave him, and his penitence resulted in these beautiful psalms which have brought comfort to so many others.

I must live with the consequences of irresponsible behavior.

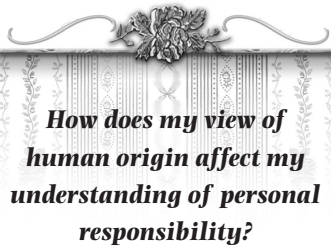
In Hebrews 11, the great faith chapter, the writer records that Moses chose to suffer affliction rather than enjoy the "pleasures of sin for a season" (Hebrews 11:25 KJV). No doubt about it; sin is pleasurable! Satan has found a way to appeal to every appetite (1 John 2:16), but there is a price to be paid.

Our society is reaping the fruits of an "anything goes" mentality. Behaviors once considered irresponsible have become acceptable. Although they have always been with us, today they are "out of the closet." As a result our nation is plagued with diseases, addictions, unwanted pregnancies, and disrespect for human life. Like our Grandfather Adam and Grandmother Eve, we must live with the consequences of our sins and the resulting guilt of unconfessed sin.

In his classic book *Whatever Became of Sin?* Dr. Karl Menninger suggests that although the word *sin*

**What is wrong with
"passing the buck"?
Everyone does it!**

**Why must I confess
my failures and
shortcomings?
(1 John 1:8–10)**



Heirlooms

has almost disappeared from our vocabulary, a sense of guilt remains that has afflicted the world with the depression, gloom, discouragement, and apprehensiveness that is so prevalent.⁴ Irresponsibility has created a stressed-out generation in which violence is a far-too-common response.

One prominent politician, in commenting on the violence in some of our schools, has suggested that it is the result of our “evolutionary heritage.” The Scriptures do not support this explanation. Violence erupts when human emotions are not governed by the limits set by God. Personal freedom obligates each of us to live with the consequences of her behavior. Without personal responsibility, the consequences will always make society a very dangerous place.

4. Karl Menninger, *Whatever Became of Sin?* (New York: Hawthorne Books, 1973), Book Jacket.

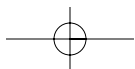
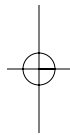
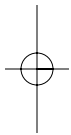
Am I My Brother's Keeper?

Points To Remember

- ◆ I am responsible for controlling my emotions.
- ◆ I am accountable for my actions.
- ◆ I must deal responsibly with my mistakes.
- ◆ I must live with the consequences of irresponsible behavior.

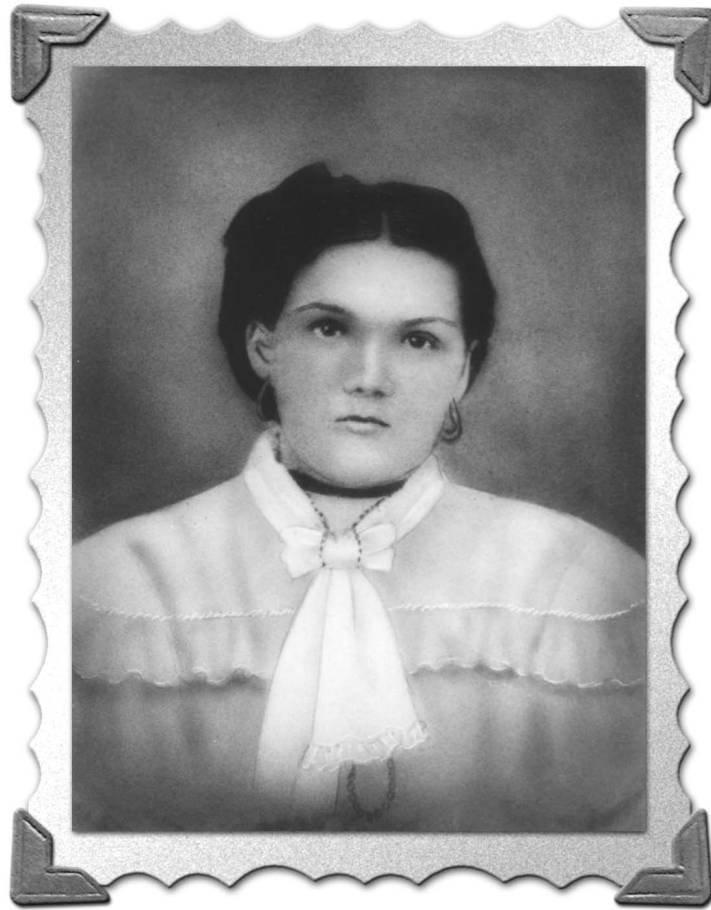
Points To Ponder

- ◆ *Freedom is a package deal—with it comes responsibilities and consequences.*
- ◆ *When you take responsibility on your shoulders there is not much room left for chips.*
- ◆ *"We become what we are as persons by the decisions that we make." Aristotle*
- ◆ *"Responsible persons are mature people who have taken charge of themselves and their conduct, who own their actions and own up to them—who answer for them." William Bennett, The Book of Virtues*



2

Is Anything Too Hard for the Lord?



Great-grandmother, Eliza Wade Hardeman

Even though Sarah laughed at God's promise,
her actions indicated that she believed He would keep it.

*"By faith even Sarah herself also received ability to conceive . . .
since she judged Him faithful who had promised."*

Hebrews 11:11