

Reading the Bible Together – Genesis 4

Course Description:

This 7-session course offers a close reading and grammatical exploration of Genesis Chapter 4, covering the narrative of Cain and Abel, the consequences of sin, early genealogies, and the beginnings of human society. Each 45-minute class will delve into specific verses, focusing on key Hebrew vocabulary, grammatical nuances, and interpretive questions to enhance understanding of the Biblical text.

Course Objective:

- To improve skills in reading and comprehending Biblical Hebrew.
- To gain a deeper understanding of the narrative, themes, and linguistic features of Genesis Chapter 4.
- To explore specific Hebrew roots, words, and phrases in their biblical context.

Session 1: The First Family and Offerings (Genesis 4:1-4)

- **Welcome:** בְּרוּכִים הַבָּאִים (Welcome!)
 - The root **י.ד.ע** (to know?) in context.
 - Discussion: **קַיִן / קָנִיתִי** (Cain / "I have acquired/gotten"?).
 - Vocabulary in context: **מִנְחָה** (offering), **חֵלֶב** (fat portions).

Session 2: Rejection and Divine Warning (Genesis 4:5-7)

- Understanding the idiom: **וַיִּפֹּל פָּנָיו** (And his face fell?).
- The meaning of **רֹבֵץ** (crouching/lying in wait?).
- Exploring the word **תַּשׁוּקָה** (desire/longing?).

Session 3: Fratricide and Divine Confrontation (Genesis 4:8-10)

- Grammar: Waw consecutive with weak verb roots.
- Narrative analysis: What did Cain say to Abel?
- Narrative analysis: What did God say to Cain?

Session 4: The Curse and Cain's Lament (Genesis 4:11-14)

- Lexical inquiry: **פ.צ.י** (The root meaning to crack open – how does it fit?)
- Thematic analysis: **אֲדָמָה אָרוּרָה** (cursed ground).
- Vocabulary: **עוֹן** (iniquity/punishment?).

Session 5: Mark of Cain and Exile (Genesis 4:14-16)

- The particle **הִנֵּה**? (Behold/Lo?).
- The phrase **וְהָיָה**? (And it shall be/come to pass?).
- Cain's cry possible meaning: **כָּל-מֹצְאִי יִהְרֹגֵנִי** (Whoever finds me will kill me).
- Introduction: Cain and the Kenites.
- Location: **קִדְמַת-עֵדֶן**? (East of Eden?).

Session 6: The Line of Cain and Early Civilization (Genesis 4:17-22)

- The first genealogies: structure and significance.
- Identifying "the subtle judgements" within the narrative and lineage.

Session 7: Lamech's Song and the Line of Seth (Genesis 4:23-26)

- Literary feature: Poetic text embedded in prose (Lamech's Song).
- Name meanings: Seth (**שֵׁת**), Enosh (**אֵנוֹשׁ**).
- **הוּחַל לְקַרְא בְּשֵׁם**? (Then it was begun to call upon the name [of the LORD]?) A literal interpretation.