

3. Defining Cain's Covenant with Satan (Genesis 3–4; Moses 4–5)

From the days of Cain, who slew his brother Abel (Genesis 4:8; Moses 5:32), murder and mayhem have persisted among the world's inhabitants. As the scriptures describe, Cain's covetousness and envy of Abel led to a secret pact Satan made with Cain: "Cain loved Satan more than God. And Satan commanded him, saying: Make an offering unto the Lord. And in process of time it came to pass that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel, and to his offering; but unto Cain, and to his offering, he had not respect. Now Satan knew this, and it pleased him. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. And the Lord said unto Cain: Why art thou wroth? Why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, thou shalt be accepted. And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door, and Satan desireth to have thee" (Moses 5:18–23; cf. Genesis 4:3–7; Helaman 6:27).

Cain's ongoing collusion with Satan led to his final condemnation: "From this time forth thou shalt be the father of his *lies*; thou shalt be called Perdition; for thou wast also before the world. And it shall be said in time to come that these *abominations* were had from Cain; for he rejected the greater counsel which was had from God; and this is a cursing which I will put upon thee, except thou repent. And Cain was wroth, and listened not any more to the voice of the Lord, neither to Abel, his brother, who walked in holiness before the Lord" (Moses 5:24–26). While "lies" don't qualify scripturally as "abominations," people commonly lie to *excuse* abominations. Instead, the Bible defines "abominations" as same-sex relationships, transvestitism, bestiality, and sorcery (Leviticus 18:22–30; 20:13; Deuteronomy 22:5; 29:17). Satan's "desire" for Cain, moreover (Moses 5:23), mimics Eve's "desire" for Adam: "To you shall be his desire and you will rule over him" (Genesis 4:7; cf. 3:16).

Having succeeded in getting Cain to become a candidate for Perdition—a spiritual point of no return (cf. John 17:12; Revelation 17:8)—Satan led him to the next level: "And Satan said unto Cain: Swear unto me by thy throat, and if thou tell it thou shalt die; and swear thy brethren by their heads, and by the living God, that they tell it not; for if they tell it, they shall surely die; and this that thy father may not know it; and this day I will deliver thy brother Abel into thine hands. And Satan sware unto Cain that he would do according to his commands. And all these things were done in secret" (Moses 5:29–30). Cain's "brethren"—persons who entered into this secret pact—were thus likewise spiritually compromised by their participating in Cain's descent to Perdition. Of this secret society, Cain became a *master*: "And Cain said: Truly I am Mahan, the master of this great secret, that I may murder and get gain. Wherefore Cain was called Master Mahan, and he gloried in his wickedness" (Moses 5:31).

Descendants of Cain thereafter perpetuated such secret societies. Five generations later, for example, "Lamech having entered into a covenant with Satan, after the manner of Cain, wherein he became Master Mahan, master of that great secret which was administered unto Cain by Satan For, from the days of Cain, there was a secret combination, and their works were in the dark, and they knew every man his brother" (Moses 5:49, 51). Every man's *knowing* his brother again mimics Adam's *knowing* Eve, upon which she conceived and gave birth to sons (Genesis 4:1, 25)—except that in this case men begot only wickedness. Says Jude, "Even as Sodom and

Gomorrah, and likewise the cities about them, giving themselves over to fornication and going after strange flesh, are held up as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. So also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of noble persons. . . . Woe to them, for they have gone the way of Cain” (Jude 1:7–8, 11).

Isaiah predicts that many of God’s end-time people will turn from living righteously to practicing similar evils: “How the faithful city has become a harlot! She was filled with justice; righteousness made its abode in her, but now murderers” (Isaiah 1:27); “Their feet rush after evil; they hasten to shed innocent blood. Their thoughts are preoccupied with mischief; havoc and disaster follow in their wake” (Isaiah 59:7). Consequently God closes the heavens: “When you spread forth your hands, I will conceal my eyes from you; though you pray at length, I will not hear—your hands are filled with blood” (Isaiah 1:15). Isaiah likens God’s end-time people to those of Sodom, whom God destroyed for their abominations: “Hear the word of the Lord, you leaders of Sodom; give heed to the law of our God, you people of Gomorrah!” (Isaiah 1:10); “The look on their faces betrays them: they flaunt their sin like Sodom; they cannot hide it. Woe to their souls; they have brought disaster upon themselves!” (Isaiah 3:9).

Because conspiratorial powers ultimately led to the utter destruction of both the Jaredite and Nephite civilizations (Ether 8:21), the Book of Mormon describes their manner of operation as a warning to the end-time Gentiles: “Whatsoever nation shall uphold such secret combinations, to get power and gain, until they shall spread over the nation, behold, they shall be destroyed; for the Lord will not suffer that the blood of his saints, which shall be shed by them, shall always cry unto him from the ground for vengeance upon them and yet he avenge them not. Wherefore, O ye Gentiles, it is wisdom in God that these things should be shown unto you, that thereby ye may repent of your sins, and suffer not that these murderous combinations shall get above you, which are built up to get power and gain—and the work, yea, even the work of destruction come upon you, yea, even the sword of the justice of the Eternal God shall fall upon you, to your overthrow and destruction if ye shall suffer these things to be.

“Wherefore, the Lord commandeth you, when ye shall see these things come among you that ye shall awake to a sense of your awful situation, because of this secret combination which shall be among you; or wo be unto it, because of the blood of them who have been slain; for they cry from the dust for vengeance upon it, and also upon those who built it up. For it cometh to pass that whoso buildeth it up seeketh to overthrow the freedom of all lands, nations, and countries; and it bringeth to pass the destruction of all people, for it is built up by the devil, who is the father of all lies; even that same liar who beguiled our first parents, yea, even that same liar who hath caused man to commit murder from the beginning; who hath hardened the hearts of men that they have murdered the prophets, and stoned them, and cast them out from the beginning” (Ether 8:22–26).

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