

The Story of Cain
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Good morning, Lighthouse! Are you ready for the Word of God this morning?

Every year here at Lighthouse, we encourage; actually challenge, our members to read through your Bibles in a year. We often see twenty or thirty members complete this challenge annually.

Some of you are in the beginning of your challenge right now! You can do this!

Even though this is not a lightweight goal, you will have accomplished something worthwhile that will bless your life for many years to come when you have completed your task.

Making it through Genesis, especially the early chapters, is pretty easy although many questions are generated.

Genesis chapter 4 is one of those passages of Scripture that raise a lot of questions. If you are reading through your Bible, you have likely just finished reading about Cain and Able.

Genesis 4:1-13

1 And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bore Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD.

2 And she again bore his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

3 And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD.

4 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:

5 But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.

6 And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?

7 If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee *shall be* his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.

8 And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.

9 And the LORD said unto Cain, Where *is* Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: *Am* I my brother's keeper?

10 And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.

11 And now *art* thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand;

12 When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth.

13 And Cain said unto the LORD, My punishment *is* greater than I can bear.

Here in the beginning we find two blood brothers who literally represent mankind itself.

One is righteous and obedient; the other is unrighteous and disobedient.

One is acceptable to God and the other is unacceptable to God.

One is a hater and a murderer and the other is a righteous victim of that hate.

When folks find out that I am a Pastor, I am often asked about various Biblical issues and questions. I suppose it is true that most people don't often get the opportunity of one-on-one face time with their Pastor.

Of all the subjects in the Bible that I am asked about, one that is often asked is, "Why did not God accept Cain's offering?"

Cain seems to get a lot of sympathy among folks who read this passage. He was a farmer, he brought what he had; surely God understood that.

I suppose the question is common because when people set out to read their Bible, they almost always get past Genesis chapter 4 before they give up and quit. I trust that this year, you are not going to give up and quit; amen? *Epecially as we now have, in this computer age, Bible Apps that will read it to us!*

It seems to me that there is a better question that no one ever asks me; it is about something that few seem to notice.

The Bible doesn't just say that God had not respect to Cain's offering; it says "...But, **to Cain** and to his offering he (God) had not respect."

As defined by the context in verse 7, God having not respect simply means that neither Cain nor his offering was acceptable to God.

It seems to me that the Lord not accepting Cain is a lot more serious than whether his offering was acceptable or not.

Before you judge the Lord as partial or unfair to Cain, you need to understand some things about these two brothers.

Be reminded that:

I. Both of them were equally aware of the divine presence of almighty God.

A. They observed God's amazing creation first hand every day.

1. They observed His handiwork:

Psalm 19:1 The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork.

Psalm 97:6 The heavens declare his righteousness, and all the people see his glory.

2. These were grown men who were farming and raising livestock.

3. They saw the miracles of birth and planting and harvesting; they saw it all.

4. They had the same parents and they had the same upbringing.

B. These men experienced the unmistakable, undeniable presence of God on an even greater and more personal level than you or I ever have or ever could.

1. God spoke with them in person and first hand.

2. They both experienced the literal voice of God; something that men today only dream about.

3. Did Cain know that God is real? Yes, of course he did!

4. Was he some native in the wilderness who never heard the good news? No, he was not!

5. Was he mentally crippled so that he was incapable of understanding? No, he was not!

6. Cain had none of the excuses that men so often claim and place false hope in.

7. Yes, just like you, Cain was without excuse:

Romans 1:18-20

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

19 Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed *it* unto them.

20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

II. Both of them were taught about sin and redemption.

A. It is apparent from the context that both of these men were taught of God.

John 6:44-45

44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

45 It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.

1. They were both taught of God. How else would they even have known to bring an offering?
2. Whether by Dad and Mom or by the Lord Himself; they both knew to bring an offering.
3. After Cain was rejected and angry, the Lord even explained it to him again!
4. Much like some of you who have heard it and heard it, yet you still have not trusted Christ to save you from your sins..
5. Where is the scripture where Cain says, "Lord I'm sorry, what can I do to be saved?"
6. No such verse appears, does it?

B. Sin had destroyed them, as it has each of us.

1. Jesus said in John 3:3 ... Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.
2. Most people think that being born again is only in the New Testament; it is not.
3. Sin brings death to our spirit; as it was then, so is it now.
4. When a man places his trust; willingly, readily, and on purpose; in the shed blood of Jesus who died in our place, paying the penalty of sin for us...our dead spirit is made alive again; born again; re-created in righteousness and true holiness.

5. **John 5:24** Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

6. Whether you are on Able's side of the cross trusting that Christ will come and die for us; or you are on our side of the cross trusting that He did; salvation comes just one way; by placing your trust in the shed blood of Jesus!

7. David described it this way:

Psalm 32:2 Blessed *is* the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit *there is* no guile.

III. Both brought an offering that reflected what was inside; what they were depending on.

A. The scripture says that God did not accept Cain nor did He accept Cain's offering.

1. The right and proper offering was a lamb without blemish; the first and best that he had or could obtain.

2. The truth is that if Cain had brought the blood sacrifice of an unblemished lamb, he still would not have been accepted.

3. Why? Because Cain was not a believer; he was still a child of the Devil like every one of us either were or still are.

1 John 3:11-12

11 For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.

12 Not as Cain, **who was of that wicked one**, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.

If Cain was rejected it was because God knew what was in him!

John 2:23-25

23 Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did.

24 But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men,

25 And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man.

B. Cain brought the fruit of his own works because that is all he had to offer God.

1. Without placing your trust in Jesus and receiving the free gift of His shed blood on your behalf; the fruit of your works is all you have to offer God.

2. As it was then, so is it now:

Ephesians 2:8-9

8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God:

9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

3. **Proverbs 15:8** The sacrifice of the wicked *is* an abomination to the LORD: but the prayer of the upright *is* his delight.

4. **Isaiah 64:6** But we are all as an unclean *thing*, and all our righteousnesses *are* as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

C. Every year as he was taught, Able brought a blood sacrifice to the Lord signifying his faith in the coming Redeemer.

1. There is no doubt that Able gave other offerings as well, as the handed down practices of generations to come would demonstrate.

2. Later under the law, the sin offering was a remembrance that was made every year.

3. With us, because the real Lamb has come and all has been fulfilled, it is now complete.

4. Hebrews 10:3-4

3 But in those *sacrifices there is* a remembrance again *made* of sins every year.

4 For *it is* not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

5. Hebrews 10:12-14

12 But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God;

13 From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.

14 For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.

Conclusion:

Why was Cain not acceptable? Because he was a child of the Devil, because he was not a believer.

When from the heart, you place your trust in the blood that Jesus shed for you on Calvary, God will accept you and then He will also accept your offerings.

If you are a saved, born again child of God, only then can you offer acceptable sacrifices unto the Lord;

The sacrifice of praise, giving glory to His name;

The sacrifice of tithes and offerings bringing honor faithfully to God's house;

The sacrifice of your faithful presence in His house;

The sacrifice of your participation in his work;

The sacrifice of preeminence placing Jesus first in your life!

Colossians 1:12-18

12 Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:

13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son:

14 In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins:

15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:

16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all *things* he might have the preeminence.

Like Cain, I was not acceptable either. Like Abel, I was made acceptable **in the beloved!**

Ephesians 1:6-7

6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

7 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;