

Abel

Genesis 4:1-16

And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD. ² And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

Verse 1 -- Cain = possession; Abel = breath

Cain is the first man and Abel is the second man. Already there is a revelation of God's plan and our hope. Our first man, much like Adam and Cain here is flawed. But the second man is often shown in scripture as the one standing on the promises by faith in right standing with God. Application, my first man (Chuck) lived outside of the plan and will of God and fell short of the glory of God. But when I was saved and born again, it is the new Chuck which now lives in right standing with God.

Verse 2 – Abel was a shepherd but Cain was a farmer.

Abel – second man. He kept the sheep, Cain worked with his hand and tried to produce from the ground. Wait, the ground was cursed in the previous chapter. Be careful putting all of your hope in the ground/earth/world....only temporary. Trying to work out the curse on his own, Cain is about to make a huge mistake.

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.

Offering time, Cain brings the result of what he was able to produce from the ground or from the curse.

Abel brings an offering. A lamb, firstling. His best. See Exodus 12, one year old lamb. A picture of Jesus.

Note: Both brothers know about God and know that an offering is required. They both bring an offering. Both are performing an act of worship unto God. But one offering was accepted and the other rejected.

Application: There are two types of worship, right and wrong. You can go to church and give an offering and still not please God or bring Him glory if you do it out of order or incorrectly.

Before we look at this from a Feast perspective (reference to our seven steps relationship model), I like the notes I took from a Dr. Tony Evans sermon:

Able is key to right worship; Cain example of bad worship. Able brings his best to church for a God who deserves our best. Cain doesn't change his worship....wants to worship God in his sin. You can be going to church and not going to heaven. Must be going to church for Christ. Abel – Heb 11:4 – Abel still speaks to us today....are you giving God your best in the worship. Are your emotions going off because your worship is off?

Cain's offering doesn't follow the essential steps of the Feasts. It was probably nice to look at, but it was out of order. Why? Application for today?

- Cain lacks the first step, humble submission and recognizing his need for God.
- Cain provides a "works" sacrifice. Faith must come before works to please God.
- Cain is trusting in himself and his skills as a farmer rather than following God's plan.
- This is a sin offering and there is no remission of sin without the shedding of blood (Hebrews 9:22).
- Why was it important for Him not to accept Cain's offering?
 - What should have been Cain's response after God rejected or delayed His favor?
 - What did he do? Got real mad and stuck his mouth out, not happy any more.

Abel's offering follows the steps and instructions that even today we as Christians must follow.

- He doesn't rely on his works, he humbly provides a lamb.
- Rather than trust in himself, his faith is in trusting in God by obeying His plan.

Better be careful bringing a Cain offering to God. How do we do that today? Out of order.

How did they know what to do? God showed them before when He killed the lamb to cover their parent's sin/nakedness. Adam tried but his own method of covering his mistake was insufficient. They must have been given the way since Abel's sacrifice is consistent with what God later requires of His people in Exodus.

**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.**

God loves him so much, He asks Cain some questions that God already knew the answer to. What would have been the correct answers? What is God asking you and how will you respond when He asks? Remember the purpose of the questioning is to get you to repent and come correct.

God basically asks, why are you looking like that? What are you mad about? God asks the same questions of us today. We can also, being led by the Spirit, ask questions of others for the purpose of helping them to repent. So you really need the Holy Spirit for this.

Cain receives a promise from God and another question....If you do right and come correct, won't you be accepted? Answer...yes. But if you don't come correct and clown instead, sin is waiting for you. In fact, sin is waiting outside your front door to see if you will obey and follow God's plan.

Next comes a clear warning for every believer....God tells and warns Cain that sin is waiting at the door for him and desires to rule over him. However, God tells Cain that he should rule over sin. **Application:** Sin still desires to rule over us. It waits outside the door of our disappointments for the opportunity for self and pride to overtake us. But if we are watchful and follow the steps, we will overcome and rule over sin as described in Romans. Just come correct. What are the steps for coming correct? It is the first four steps of the Feast to get started. Thanks to David Guzik for sparking this insight for me.

- Again be watchful and careful...sin is waiting at the door to see how you will respond to your latest disappointment.

Cain's biggest problem...is a lack of humility leading to being ruled by his pride. Cain wants a good thing. He desires to be accepted by God. He really wants to be blessed and accepted by God, but he doesn't want to do it the way God has required. Lack of repentance...wants to be blessed by continuing to clown.

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.

Cain goes to talk with Abel.....should have been answering those questions and talking to God first. While talking to his brother, tricked him into coming out to the field and rose up against him and raised some knots on his head. Notice, Abel didn't do anything to him, Cain was just jealous because Abel was getting favor and he wasn't. Don't be surprised if it is people who know God who eventually hurt you (church hurt I rough). See 1 John 3:11-15.

Sad, because Cain could have and should have been enjoying a season of blessings and favor from God. But he refuses to come correct. Cain tore his brother down, but if he had only broke himself down, God would have lifted him up.

You better be careful going out to the field to meet with Cain....might come back with some lumps. Better know what spirit you're dealing with before you go out there, before you speak and communicate with them to see if they are in obedience with God. You will know through the Spirit whether they are meeting you for the glory of God or for their own selfish motives.

God asks more questions. Why? Result...finally answers God and that was a lie. Never did come correct. His father had a similar response in the Garden. Not good to cover up what God is trying to get you to reveal for your restoration and recovery.

When evil tries to take you out, God still hears.

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. ¹⁴ Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me.

¹⁵ And the LORD said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the LORD set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him. ¹⁶ And Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden.

Cursed and God hits him where it hurts.....what he is most proud of, what he enjoys doing the most....producing from the earth.....he won't be able to enjoy that anymore. No more fruit from that place. No increase from the old stomping grounds.

Instead of standing in righteousness, he loses this and is no longer in the presence of God. When we bring a Cain offering and respond in hate rather than love, we risk losing His presence and going off the map.

David Guzik in his commentary notes that Cain doesn't repent of his sin. He appears to only be concerned with his punishment rather than his crime and guilt. How often do we see this attitude in the world today?

We see more of the spiritual application to the story of Abel in Hebrews Chapter 11. Also see Jude 11 for spiritual application for Cain's actions. "Woe unto them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core."

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

² For by it the elders obtained a good report.

³ Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.



⁴ By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh.

Faith defined. What I'm hoping for but I don't see it yet is faith. I may not see it, but it doesn't mean I can't pursue it. My expectations are faith even though it is not here yet.

I know it is coming so I live differently.

Exercising faith. We do this every day where we exercise faith to some degree.

Sitting in a chair, starting your car, etc.

It is faith of the elders had that produced a good report.

It is by faith that we understand and believe that God created all things through His Word. So that the things that we do see was made by the unseen. I don't know how it was all done exactly but by faith I know that God did it.

Must be important for us to have this down before we go much further.

Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain. How, because it was brought by faith. Faith in what? Faith in God as the creator. Both brought gifts to the L-rd. Only one was accepted.

Cain – offered his works

Abel – offered himself by faith in God, not his own works. Also, it was a first fruit or his best. More excellent. Abel's offering followed divine order and showed his obedience to God's plan.

Cain's offering was out of order, see the feasts.

Faith caused Abel (one of the elders) to have a testimony and confirmation that he was in right standing. His faith pleased God the Father. How do we know this? The Bible tells us.

- Matthew 23:35 – he died literally for his faith. Can we do that? Not always a physical death. Can you crucify your wants, pride, self for the glory of God instead of what you want?

His faith still speaks to us even though he died. Powerful. Want to be remembered, have faith. Want to please God, have faith. Without faith, it is impossible to please God (Heb 11:6).