

CAIN AND ABEL, ONE WRONG, ONE RIGHT

Genesis 4:3

Ordinary People Used By God Series

Introduction: From the very beginning God has given instructions on the manner and method of worship to be rendered to Him. There are guidelines given by God Himself, and those who worship Him are to do so in the manner He has prescribed. In the beginning God was to be worshipped through sacrifice and that sacrifice was to be offered through and by one's faith. Cain and Abel are examples of how and how not to worship God.

I. GOD IS TO BE WORSHIPPED IN A PARTICULAR WAY

1. There was a place where God was to be worshiped: *"...Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord..."*
 - Cain selected the fruit of his offering in one location and brought it to another location.
 - Abel offered his gift upon an altar.
 - There was already an established place where they met God with their offerings.
2. There was an appointed time for worship: *"...and at the end of days it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord..."*
 - "...at the end of days..." implies the end of a certain number of days, perhaps the end of the week?
3. There was a prescribed means of worship"
 - God could be approached and worshipped only by means of sacrifice.
 - Cain and Abel had been instructed that there was a place where God could be found, that there was a time in which to come before Him, and that appointed manner of approach had been established. *"...by faith, Abel offered his sacrifice..."*

II. GOD DOES NOT ACCEPT ALL WORSHIP

1. Cain was no different from Abel in relationship to God but the **nature** of their offerings was different.
 - Cain went before God, prepared to worship God, but in his own way.
 - His offering was a bloodless one.
 - His offering was from his own effort, his own labor, of his own hands.
 - His offering was from the earth, the very earth God had cursed.
 - God refused to accept Cain's offering. *"...but unto Cain and his offering He had not respect..."*
2. *"...The Lord had respect unto Abel and to his sacrifice..."*
 - No doubt Cain had worked hard at gathering his offering and brought the very best he had.
 - No fire came down from heaven and consumed his offering.
 - Cain became furious because God had not accepted what he brought but accepted Abel's offering.
3. *"...And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? And why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt not thou 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..."*

- The condition of Cain's heart was clearly revealed by his anger at God's refusal to accept his offering.
- Had Cain's offering been presented in God's prescribed manner God would have accepted it.
- Cain was the first born and he was afraid that he would lose his rights of the firstborn and his younger brother would have precedence over him.
- Ever since that day man has been following Cain's example - bringing to God whatever comes to mind, even sincerely as did Cain, but not what nor how God commands.

III. DISOBEDIENCE TO GOD ALWAYS BRINGS SIN

1. Cain and Abel came together to present their offerings unto the Lord. Abel's offering was accepted, Cain's was rejected. Thus in Cain's mind, "God liked Abel better than him."
 - Believing that he had lost the place and privilege of the firstborn, refusing to sacrifice according to God's requirements, fearing that Abel would become ruler over him, Cain decided that he would kill his brother.
2. God asked Cain why he was so angry and that there was no just cause for his displeasure, and that if he would bring the required offering it would be accepted and all would be well, but to be careful for sin was just around the corner. (Just do what you are told to do...)
 - ***"...When lust (desire, passion) hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin when it is finished, bringeth forth death..."***
 - The precise order in Cain's case: first - lust, anger- then sin, lying at the door - then death, Abel was murdered.
3. ***"..And the Lord said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not. Am I my brother's keeper? And He said, What hast thou done? The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground..."***
 - Sin cannot be hidden. Nobody saw what Cain did - except God!
 - Cain denied his act. No contrition, no confessing, but a repudiation and covering of it.
 - Things have not changed, man is the same today as was Cain. Only until God's grace works in us is there ever an admission of the guilt of sin.
4. God cursed Cain and made sure that everywhere he went his crime and sin would be known.
 - ***"...and Cain said unto the Lord, My punishment is greater than I can bear..."***
 - Cain now realized something of what he had done, although he was more occupied with his punishment than with what he had done.

SUMMARY:

1. God is to be worshipped in a particular way - the way He prescribes.
2. Not all worship is accepted by God.
3. Disobedience to God always results in sin and sin is always fatal.