**24 – Voice of Abel**

*Hebrews 11:4; Titus 2:6-8*

**Why was Abel’s sacrifice *“more excellent…than Cain[‘s]”*?**

* More excellent – more in quantity, number, or **quality**.
* **Genesis 4:1-5** – account of Cain and Abel’s birth, and offering to God.
	+ Abel’s offering – God respected.
	+ Cain’s offering – God did not respect.
* What is said of their offerings? (Genesis 4:1-5)
	+ Cain ***(“tiller of the ground”)*** – ***“brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the Lord.”***
	+ Abel ***(“keeper of sheep”)*** – ***“brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat.”***
* What is said of their offerings? (Hebrews 11:4)
	+ Abel – ***“By faith”***; more excellent
	+ Cain – not by faith (implied); less excellent (quality)
* Some suggestions:
	+ Abel’s was more carefully chosen and valuable than Cain’s.
	+ Offered in a more humble, sincere, and loving spirit than Cain’s.
	+ Something amiss ritually in Cain’s offering.
	+ Abel offered a blood sacrifice, Cain did not.
	+ To reach a proper understanding we must not look beyond what the scripture teaches. We must consider the context of Hebrews 11.
* Cain didn’t offer ***“by faith”*** – this is the purpose of Hebrews 11. The necessity of faith is emphasized, and Cain is used as a contrast to acting by faith.
	+ Cain believed in God – ***“that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.”*** (If he did not believe, they why did he give God an offering?)
	+ So how did he not offer it by faith? (Consider Hebrews 11)
		- **Noah (v. 7)** – given instruction for ark; followed instruction.
		- **Abraham (v. 8-12)** – told to go out; went out.
			* (**v. 17-19**) – told to offer Isaac; offered Isaac.
		- **Etc. – The individuals, and groups, mentioned as having a faith that is pleasing to God were given instruction, and followed the instruction. (Whether in their general life, or at a specific time mentioned.)**
		- Cain and Abel fall into this same discussion. They are actually at the beginning of the discussion.
			* God gave them instructions. Abel followed, and Cain did not (**cf. Romans 10:17**).
			* The rest is left up to speculation. The general understanding should be that whatever God told them to do, only Abel did it correctly.
* Through his sacrifice, Abel ***“obtained witness that he was righteous.”***
	+ God accepted his gift, which showed he was righteous (**cf. Matthew 23:35; 1 John 3:12**).
	+ **Romans 1:16-17; 4:3 – Those who live by faith are declared by God to be righteous.**

***“Through it he being dead still speaks.”***

* **Actions in life remembered by others. (Good or bad example.)**
	+ **Titus 2:6-8** – Titus was to be a ***“pattern of good works.”***
		- He was to teach the young men, and lead by example, in such a way that continued to speak to them – “remember how Titus acted?” (As he was faithful to God.)
	+ **Hebrews 13:7** – Elders are those who lead by example. (Also by word.)
		- We are to follow their faith!
		- They speak to us, even though they have died. (Elders who began to lead and yet passed on; **v. 17, 24** – those who are currently ruling.)
	+ **Romans 15:4** – The entirety of scripture (Old and New) is filled with men and women, nations, and groups of people who either obeyed God and received reward, or disobeyed God and were punished.
* **God Remembers the Righteous and knows how to deliver them.** (cf. 2 Peter 2:9; Deliver from death – Abel’s blood, and righteous life taken.)
	+ **Genesis 4:10 –** possibly what the Hebrew writer was specifically referring to.
		- God was not ignorant of what happened. He was convicting Cain of his sin, and proving a point.
		- **Abel was righteous in that he lived by faith before God. Cain killed him in jealousy, and God continued to have love and concern for Abel who was faithful to Him.**
			* **Justice was served (v. 11-15; 1 Peter 2:23; Romans 12:19).**
			* **God will care for, and guard, His fallen saints (cf. 2 Peter 2:9; Psalm 116:15; 9:12; Revelation 2:10).**
			* **God will not leave Abel in hades (cf. Acts 2:27; 1 Corinthians 15:20-23, 54-57).**