**Cain and Abel**

*Genesis 4:1-15*

**Introduction**

1. The record of Cain and Abel is given to us that we might learn (**cf. Romans 15:4)**.
2. A consideration of the events of **Genesis 4:1-15** prove most beneficial.
3. To understand what to avoid we look to Cain. To understand what to do and how to be we look to Abel.
   1. More is said about Cain than Abel in the account.
   2. Other scriptures refer to Abel.
   3. **There is a stark contrast between Cain and Abel. Many of the things which characterized Cain were the opposite with Abel.**
4. Cain and Abel
5. Faithless and Faithful
   1. **Genesis 4:2b-5** – God respected Abel’s sacrifice, but not Cain’s.
   2. Why?
      1. **Firstfruit offering vs. Animal offering?** – **Leviticus 23:9-11** – Feast of Firstfruits (Conjecture. Nothing inherently wrong with Firstfruit offering).
      2. **Favoritism?** – **Romans 2:6-11** (God shows no partiality) ***(“In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality” – Acts 10:34***).
   3. Abel followed God’s word. Cain did not:
      1. **Hebrews 11:4** – Abel offered his sacrifice by faith.
      2. **Romans 10:17** – Faith comes by hearing God’s word.
      3. **We deduce from the aforementioned scriptures that Cain’s sacrifice was unacceptable because he did not follow God’s instructions.**
         1. We do not have God’s instructions recorded for us.
         2. **All we know is that Cain did not do as God said. Otherwise it would have been pleasing to Him.**
   4. **Matthew 7:21-23** – It does not matter what we do for the Lord if it is not what He desires.
      1. T offer something to God which He does not request is to practice ***“lawlessness.”***
      2. **Romans 12:1-2** – Our sacrifice should be our bodies in service to God. We find out what is acceptable to Him by being transformed by His word.
6. Overcome by Sin and Overcame Sin
   1. **Genesis 4:5-8** – God gave Cain the assurance that he would be accepted if he did well. However, he had to overcome sin.
      1. **1 Corinthians 10:13** – God provided Cain with a way of escape.
      2. ***“’Be angry, and do not sin’: do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil” (Ephesians 4:26-27)***.
      3. Instead of looking to God for strength, and letting go of his wrath, Cain allowed it to control him. (He gave place to the devil.)
      4. ***“Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak” (Matthew 26:41).***
   2. **Hebrews 11:4a; Matthew 23:35** ***(“righteous Abel”*** – Jesus) – Abel is described as a righteous person.
      1. This can only be so because that is what he hungered and thirsted for (**cf. Matthew 5:6).**
      2. **1 John 2:28-29** – Abel desired to, and constantly practiced righteousness.
      3. **Galatians 5:16-18** – He allowed his spirit to gain ascendency over his flesh.
7. Persecutor of Righteous and Persecuted Righteous
   1. **1 John 3:10-12** – Cain murdered Abel because Abel was righteous and he was not.
   2. **1 Peter 3:17; 4:12-16** – It was good that Abel suffered for doing good, but bad that Cain inflicted the suffering.
      1. In fact, as a result of Cain’s actions, he suffered for doing evil, which is not a good thing – **Genesis 4:10-12**
      2. **Romans 12:17-21** – Abel never had the opportunity, as Cain killed him, but God avenged him.
      3. **We will receive the reward if we are persecuted for righteousness sake, and the persecutors will be punished!**
8. Bad Example and Good Example (For forever)
   1. **Jude 8-13** – The horrible false teachers who were causing so much trouble with Jude’s audience are described as having ***“gone in the way of Cain.”***
      1. They were selfish, unrighteous, hatful, disobedient, envious, etc.
      2. **Cain will forever be used as a reference for the way of the ungodly!**
   2. **Hebrews 11:4** – Abel was a righteous man of faith.
      1. His actions and character still speak to this day.
      2. **Hebrews 12:24** – His righteous sacrifice given to God is recorded as a type of that which was to come with Jesus.
   3. **Our actions, although in the past, have the tendency to remain in the remembrance of others.**
   4. We should be a good example to follow – **1 Timothy 4:12, 16** (*This example can help others in their walk of faith.*)
9. Let us seek to by like Abel, and avoid the ***“way of Cain.”***

**Conclusion**

1. The story of Cain and Abel serves as a great teaching tool.
2. It is a story most are familiar with, and that all would do well to heed!