

In Search Of Innocence

**Pastor Jerry Tallo
Sunday, March 30th, 2014**

Genesis 4:1-8 (ESV)

Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, saying, “I have gotten a man with the help of the Lord.”
2 And again, she bore his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, and Cain a worker of the ground. 3 In the course of time Cain brought to the Lord an offering of the fruit of the ground, 4 and Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat portions. And the Lord had regard for Abel and his offering, 5 but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his face fell. 6 The Lord said to Cain, “Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? 7 If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is for you, but you must rule over it.” 8 Cain spoke to Abel his brother. And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him.

What We Learn From The Text

1. Cain followed Adam's vocation.
2. Abel brought the "first and best" offering.
Not sure about Cain.
3. Abel's offering please God. Cain's did not.
4. Cain had a bad attitude.
5. Cain gave in to the sin that tempted him.

What Was The Meaning Of The Offering?

1. A “Minha” – ancients used it to:
 - a) express gratitude
 - b) seek reconciliation with God
 - c) accompany worship

2. First fruits was a principle of submission in the ‘minha.’

Moses later put it in writing in the law.

Key Worship Principle At Work Here

- The worshipper and the offering are inseparable.
- My heart and attitude drive my offering.
(We are 'living sacrifices.')
- Something in Cain's heart affected God's rejection.

Does This Mean Able Was Righteous, And Cain Was A Sinner?

Was Abel a “good man”? Was he innocent?

What do we mean by ‘good’?

Why did Abel need an offering, if he was already
‘good’?

The Bible's Explanation

Hebrews 11:4 (ESV)

⁴ By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain, through which he was commended as righteous, God commending him by accepting his gifts. And through his faith, though he died, he still speaks.

The Bible's Explanation

- Abel's faith (humble submission) made it acceptable.
- Cain lacked this faith and submission.
- God “acknowledged Abel was in right standing with him.”
- This is not the same as being inherently good, or innocent.

There Is Still A Problem

- Abel would have to continue to offer sacrifices by faith.
- Reason: he was a sinner condemned to death.
- Genesis 2: 17 “Eat of this tree, and you will die”
- Genesis 3:19 “You shall return to dust”
- Isaiah 53:6 “All have gone astray .. every one to his own way ..”
- Romans 3: 23 “All have sinned and fall short...”

Total Depravity

- The natural inclination toward sin: the ‘fruit’ of original sin.
- Romans 5: 12-14 – Adam represented everyone in his act and transmitted the condition (depravity) to the entire human race.
- Every human sins because we are sinners by nature.
- Refers to our corruption from the inside-out (every part of me affected).

Utter Depravity

- To be as wicked as a person could possibly be (differs from total depravity).
- Were Nero, Hitler or Stalin as wicked as they could possibly be?

Question: Do the Scriptures teach this view?

Supporting Scriptures

- **Jeremiah 17:9** ‘The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick.’
- **Romans 3:10-12** ‘None is righteous; all have turned aside...’
- **Ephesians 2:1-3** ‘We are dead in our sin... we are by nature children of wrath.’

Preparing For Next Week

- We cannot help ourselves.
- There is one hope.
- The miracle of salvation is greater than we think.

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