

**Intro:** James Moffatt wrote, “Death is never the last word in the life of a righteous man. When a man leaves this world, be he righteous or unrighteous, he leaves something in the world. He may leave something that will grow and spread like a cancer or a poison, or he may leave something like the fragrance or perfume or a blossom of beauty that permeates the atmosphere with blessing.” Dead men do tell tales. Abel speaks to us today. Chapter 11 is about faith and is full of examples of faith that is isolated from works.

For those whom hadn't trusted Christ yet, this distinction was to show them that faith has always been the way to find acceptance with God. Adam and Eve did not have faith like the following generations. They had walked with God, seen Him, talked with Him, and had lived in the Garden. Until they sinned, they had no need of faith like those that would follow. Even after they sinned, they still had the memory of the garden and the relationship with God. When God put them out of the garden, He had promised them a coming one that would deal with the sin problem, Ge 3:15, the proto-evangel. The one who would be the seed of the woman, would one day destroy the works of Satan - 1Jo 3:8.

Eve may have thought that Cain was that coming one as seen in her response when he was born - Ge 4:1. But flesh can only reproduce flesh, Adam reproduced after his own image. Cain was not the savior, but a murderer. Abel was born some time after Cain and his name means breath, weakness, or vanity carrying the idea of brevity, Ge 4:2 Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. Both were born after the fall outside the garden. They both had the same nature, capacities, limitations, and inclinations. Why did one have faith and the other become a murderer?

God's plan for a Savior was different than Eve thought. His plan was that a young teenage woman would be the one who would bear a Seed some 4000 years later. Normally, you need two for pro-creation, in Mary's case the holy Spirit, came upon her and brought forth life and that life was God the Son, the One who would fulfill that first prophecy.

XXVI. Abel: Worshipping In Faith - vs 4

A. Abel Made A True Sacrifice - vs 4a

1. A place to worship

a. By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain,

b. Ge 4:3-5 And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the LORD. Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. And the LORD respected Abel and his offering, but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.

c. no mention of building an alter, possibly the same one from Ge 3

2. A time to worship

a. Ge 4:3 And in the process of time it came to pass

b. lit. “at the end of days” - at the end of a certain period of time

c. may have been a designated time seeing that

i. God is a God of order

ii. Both brothers came at the same time

3. A way to worship

a. without revelation from God, what would Cain and Abel know about the right way to worship

i. possibly through their parents

ii. possibly from God Himself

b. Significant that the first recorded sacrifice is a sin offering

- i. The heart of the New Covenant is Jesus' once for all sacrifice on the cross
- ii. since only one sacrifice was accepted, seems to indicate that God had established a pattern to worship
- iii. God says in Ge 4:7 "If you do well, will you not be accepted?"
- iv. Acceptance with God is based on sin remitted (atoned) by blood - Le 17:11 or the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul.'
- c. Abel offered his sacrifice by faith
  - i. since faith comes by hearing - Ro 10:17
  - ii. Again indicates revelation was given to Abel
- d. Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the LORD.
  - i. nothing intrinsically wrong with an offering of grain, fruit, or vegetables
  - ii. The mosaic covenant include such
  - iii. Blood offerings were always first, dealt with sin
- e. the life of faith begins with
  - i. a sacrifice for sin
  - ii. believing what God says about us,
    - we are sinners deserving of death
    - we are in need of forgiveness
    - we accept His revealed plan for our deliverance
  - iii. Abel's sacrifice was accepted by God b/c it was offered in faith
- f. Abel offered a better sacrifice
  - i. Abel believed what God had revealed about him and did what God prescribed in obedience
  - ii. Cain was disobedient and did not acknowledge his sin
    - Cain believed in God, but didn't believe God,
      - he brought a sacrifice
      - he didn't bring the right one
    - he acknowledged a supreme being and even that he owed some sort of worship
      - he thought he could come to God in whatever way he wanted
      - he became the father of false religion
    - false religion is coming to God by any other way but what God has prescribed
      - Pr 14:12 There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.
      - the idea that one way is just as good as another does not seem to be accepted in any other area of life except religion and morality
        - Doctor's diagnosis and treatment
        - b/c of accepted medical truths
        - God's absolute truths and standards are rejected
  - iii. With Cain's disobedience to and rejection of God
    - is God's rejection of Cain and his sacrifice
    - was the beginning of Satan's world system
    - Ge 4:16 Then Cain went out from the presence of the LORD into a life of continued self-willed living
- g. Jude 1:11a Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain,

- i. Cain is an example of religious natural man
- ii. Ro 10:2-3 For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God.
- h. Cain was also a hypocrite
  - i. he didn't want to worship God, only have the appearance
  - ii. His purpose was to please himself, not God
- i. Abel's sacrifice represented obedience
  - i. one lamb - one person
  - ii. the Passover, one lamb - one family
  - iii. the Day of Atonement, one lamb - one nation
  - iv. Good Friday, one lamb - the whole world

## B. Abel Obtained Righteousness- vs 4b

1. in faith, Abel did what God had said to do and obtained righteousness
  - a. what changes our relationship with God
    - i. not how good we are, between Cain and Abel, which was a better person
    - ii. Whether or not you will trust Him
  - b. Trust is evidenced through obedience
    - i. Jo 8:31 Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed.
    - ii. Belief is marked by obedience
      - Jd 3-4 Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.
      - 2:14 What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? 17 Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.
      - 2:19-20 You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe--and tremble! But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?
      - Jas 2:21-22 Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect?
2. through which he obtained witness
  - a. faith was the only thing through which he might obtain
  - b. *emarturathas* - obtained witness
    - i. 3rd pers, aorist indicative passive
    - ii. to be a witness, testify, charge, give (evidence), bear record, have (obtain, of) good (honest) report, be well reported of, testify, give (have) testimony, (be, bear, give, obtain) witness.
    - iii. How did God testify that Abel's sacrifice was accepted
      - at least 5 times, God sent fire to consume a sacrifice - Le 9:24; Ju 6:21; 1Kgs 18:38; 1 Chr 21:26; 2 Chr 7:1
      - His approval or disapproval was known to Cain and Abel

c. that he was righteous,

i. Abel was counted righteous b/c he trusted God

ii. Like Abraham - Gen 15:6

- Imputed righteous - *logizomai* - to take an inventory, i.e. estimate, conclude, (ac-)count (of), + despise, esteem, impute, lay, number, reason, reckon, suppose, think (on).

- *dikaios* - equitable (in character or act); innocent, holy (absolutely or relatively):--just, meet, right(-eous).

C. Abel Speaks From The Dead - vs 4c

1. The Lord's confrontation of Cain

a. Ge 4:10 And He said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood cries out to Me from the ground.

b. like the souls under the alter - Rev 6:9-10

2. Abel's confrontation of Cain

a. the ground cursed - Ge 4:11 "So now you are cursed from the earth, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand.

b. the results

i. 12 "When you till the ground, it shall no longer yield its strength to you.

ii. A constant reminder of his wicked deed

3. The author says he (Abel) being dead still speaks

a. man comes to God by faith

b. man must accept and obey God's revelation above his own reason and self will

c. sin is severely punished