

I-THOU ACCESS

¹ Adam made love to his wife Eve, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Cain. She said, “With the help of the LORD I have brought forth a man.” ² Later she gave birth to his brother Abel. Now Abel kept flocks, and Cain worked the soil. ³ In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the LORD. ⁴ And Abel also brought an offering--fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock. The LORD looked with favor on Abel and his offering, ⁵ but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor. So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast. ⁶ Then the LORD said to Cain, “Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast?”

Genesis 4:1-6

⁴ By faith Abel brought God a better offering than Cain did. By faith he was commended as righteous, when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith Abel still speaks, even though he is dead.

Hebrews 11:4

²¹ The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them.

Genesis 3:21

I. Abel and Cain would have heard what sacrifice to bring for I-Thou access. / Five lessons (Romans 10:17)

¹⁷ Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ.

- A. Adam and Eve learned that, in order for a guilty sinner to approach a holy God, he needed a suitable covering.
- B. The aprons of fig leaves, which their own hands had made, were not acceptable to God.
- C. God himself must provide the covering.
- D. The necessary covering could only be obtained through death. Either Adam and Eve must die, or another must die in their place. Mercy can only come in after justice has been satisfied.
- E. Adam and Eve were given a promise that one called “the seed of the woman” (Genesis 3:15) would come and destroy the works of Satan. Eve mistakenly thought Cain was the fulfillment of this promise.

¹⁵ And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

II. The way of Cain

- A. Cain’s offering was bloodless. (Hebrews 9:22)

²² In fact, the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.

- B. Cain’s offering was of the work of his own hands.
- C. Cain’s offering was the fruit of the now-cursed ground. (Genesis 3:17)

¹⁷ To Adam he said, “Because you listened to your wife and ate fruit from the tree about which I commanded you, ‘You must not eat from it,’ “Cursed is the ground because of

you; through painful toil you will eat food from it all the days of your life.

D. The dividing line between Cain and Abel was blood. (As it was between the Egyptians and the children of Israel.)

E. Cain received no visible token of divine approval. (Leviticus 9:24; Judges 6:21; I Kings 18:38; I Chronicles 21:26; II Chronicles 7:1)

[Lev 9:24 NIV] ²⁴ Fire came out from the presence of the LORD and consumed the burnt offering and the fat portions on the altar. And when all the people saw it, they shouted for joy and fell facedown.

[Jdg 6:21 NIV] ²¹ Then the angel of the LORD touched the meat and the unleavened bread with the tip of the staff that was in his hand. Fire flared from the rock, consuming the meat and the bread. And the angel of the LORD disappeared.

[1Ki 18:38 NIV] ³⁸ Then the fire of the LORD fell and burned up the sacrifice, the wood, the stones and the soil, and also licked up the water in the trench.

[1Ch 21:26 NIV] ²⁶ David built an altar to the LORD there and sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings. He called on the LORD, and the LORD answered him with fire from heaven on the altar of burnt offering.

[2Ch 7:1 NIV] ¹ When Solomon finished praying, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the LORD filled the temple.

- F. However hard Cain worked and no matter how sincere he was, the sweat of his brow was no substitute for the blood of the lamb.
- G. Cain did not need to lose his first-born position, but he chose to forfeit.
- H. Cain denied his fallen condition, and refused to accept the remedy God provided.
- I. When he did not get his way, Cain murdered his brother.
- J. Cain became the author of all false religion.

III. The way of Abel

- A. Abel acknowledged his fallen condition by putting a sacrificial substitute between himself and God's wrath.
- B. Abel was accepted, because he offered a bleeding lamb. Cain was rejected, because he refused to offer such.
- C. There are only two ways of approach.
- D. One is God's way; the other is man's.
- E. One is by grace; the other by merit.
- F. One is by faith; the other by works.
- G. One rests on what God has said; the other rests on man's opinion.
- H. One rests on what Christ has done; the other rests on what men can do.
- I. Abel says, "Done." Cain says, "Do."
- J. Abel represents I-Thou access to intimacy. Cain represents all I-It religious opinion.