



### **Genesis 4: Pay with the heart**

**Genesis 4:7 "If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it."**

Many people have struggled over these verses. Abel brought an animal sacrifice. Most sacrifices to God were animals. People also forget that God had grain offerings. He had money offerings. Further to that, God had not given these people the Law yet. The Ten Commandments were not around at this time. Yet, I bet there was an understanding. Cain and Abel gave an offering. I bet they were either commanded by God or asked by their parents to give. We just don't know why they gave.

Yet, we do. God accepts Ables gift. Because it was an animal? Was Abel his favorite? Then there was Cain. The verse 4:7 says it all. Cain gave because he had to. Cain gave some type of gift to God. They best gift? An abundant harvest sacrifice to the Lord? God said if you do what's right. What was right? It's to give from the heart. In the law of Moses God asked for what is called a tithe 10%. Do you give from the heart if it's a command? At one point the Israelites were asked to give to build the tent of meeting for God. During the giving Moses had to ask them to stop because they were giving too much.

It's all in the heart. I give at least 10%. It's tough to do. I treat it like a bill. Yet, I give it faithfully and without thought. It's Gods for his kingdom work. Does God need it? No, but my devotion and faith have grown through giving. That is, it to me. Cain was stalled. He gave because it was time to give. It may have been right to give, but Cain gave out of abundance rather than a good portion. It was not in

love. God could see his heart. I bet Abel gave his best. He may even have set aside a goat and made sure it was healthy for God. I am just speculating but clearly God accepted Ables gift. Something in Cain's gift was off.

Jesus said to leave your gift at the altar and go make amends first. To look good? To be kind? I suspect the reason was to grow the heart. To give with a clean heart. There would be no pride, anger, or jealousy. To go forgive is to humble yourself. Then, before the Lord, you will return humble. I bet the last thing Cain was is humble. God only needs money from those willing to give from the heart. To give for any other reason is not acceptable.

The sin crouching at the door is chilling. Cain's heart was full of many things like jealousy, anger, and rage. That rage killed his only brother. It's called the worlds first murder. Yet, the Canaanites became a murderous clan. Cain never masters his sin. instead he let it master him. Clutching your wealth invites sin to crouch at your door. It may infect generations. Are you willing to be the reason your grandchildren don't give generously?

Matthew 5:24 **"Leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift."**