

# GRACE GAZETTE

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*Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.*

*Hebrews 12:12-13*

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## THE RELIGION OF CAIN

*Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.*

*I John 3:12*

GOD has made a "difference" between that which is holy and that which is profane. We see this first mentioned when the LORD would bring Israel out of Egypt. *"But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast: that ye may know how that the LORD doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel."* (Exo 11:7) We see it again mentioned when the LORD set apart a priesthood of the house of Aaron and established a pattern for them to follow. *"And the LORD spake unto Aaron, saying, Do not drink wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations: And that ye may put difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean."* (Lev 10:8-10)

We see it again mentioned in reference to the dietary laws which the LORD gave to Israel: *"Ye shall therefore put difference between clean beasts and unclean, and between unclean fowls and clean: and ye shall not make your souls abominable by beast, or by fowl, or by any manner of living thing that creepeth on the ground, which I have separated from you as unclean. And ye shall be holy unto me: for I the LORD am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine."* (Lev 20:25-26)

It is clear from what we read in the New Testament about the vision which the LORD gave to Peter that HE, in reality, did not have a particular regard to steak or ham, chickens or crows, but rather to the setting apart of a people in the earth to manifest the glory of HIS grace in their redemption. We further see in Peter's vision that this setting apart (i.e.; sanctifying or making a difference) of this particular people was not because of their human bloodlines but rather according to HIS purpose, wherein HE loved a people in CHRIST JESUS and chose them that they might be holy and without blame before him. *"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."* (Eph 1:4-6)

This "separation" or "sanctification" of HIS people from the population of the world in general is manifested in this world in the form and OBJECT of their worship. The LORD plainly declared this truth to the woman at the well in Samaria when HE said, *"But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."* (John 4:23-24)

Cain is a type of the "natural man" who has neither part nor lot in the kingdom of heaven. He sought to worship GOD on his own terms and became angry when it was revealed to him that

GOD had no regard unto him or that which he offered. In fact he became so incensed at the sovereign prerogative of GOD (to shew mercy to whom HE would) that he killed his own brother, hoping again that by destroying the heir of the promise that he might gain it for himself. (see Mat.21:38,39) The wickedness of the wicked is compounded, even as those who try to gain entrance into heaven by presenting a list of their good deeds show. (see Mat.7: 21-23)

Cain's religion was of the earth, or fleshly and he sought to gain favor with GOD by presenting to HIM the fruits of his own labor, which he had produced with the sweat of his own brow. I am sure he was proud of that which he brought to the LORD assuming that, with such, the LORD would be pleased. This makes perfect sense to the mind of the natural man.

Yet the LORD had no respect unto the offering which Cain brought, primarily because HE had no respect unto Cain as the figure of the heir of destruction, but just as importantly (as HE reveals in Gen.4:7) because Cain, in his offering, had no respect unto the blood SACRIFICE that was necessary for a sinner to come into the presence of GOD.

The LORD had respect unto Abel's offering primarily because HE had respect unto Abel as the figure of the HEIR (and heirs) of the promise. As Abel was a figure of the HEIR of the promise, HE is that ONE who is BELOVED of the FATHER, the APPLE of HIS eye, HIS beloved SON in whom HE is well pleased who gave HIMSELF as an ATONEMENT for sin. As Abel is a figure of the heirs of that same promise, he brought forth not the works of his own labor but, having respect unto that ONE who should shed HIS precious blood, brought forth unto GOD that which was given to HIM by the mercy of GOD. *"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." (1Jn 3:1) "That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." (1Cor 1:29-31)*

The purpose of the religion of Cain is to satisfy the needs of the flesh. One of those needs is the contemplation of "mysteries". Man has a natural distrust of the LORD because of his innate sin. Since the LORD has hidden many things from men according to HIS own purpose, (see Deut.29:29) this natural distrust and spiritual blindness causes him to disregard the word of GOD and to seek his own explanation of things not seen by the natural eye, in a fashion which can be more easily grasped by natural reason.

Thus man has developed his many theories to "explain" creation, from the "big bang" to various forms of evolution and alien visitations of the planet. Arising out of this same distrust and spiritual blindness to truth, comes all forms of fleshly religion and resultant theories of an afterlife. That form of religion which lays claim to believing the scriptures while continuing to promote a purely carnal understanding of them, is that which is a most insidious evil, which the powers of darkness would use to destroy (if they could, see I Pet.5:8) the children of GOD.

The religion of Cain is easily received and believed because it is not contrary at all to the natural religious reasoning of men. This religion must be readily available to all men, whenever they desire it, because otherwise it would be "unfair". Man's free will must at all costs and times be respected in this religion and his "rights" maintained. The glory of GOD is somewhat important but can never take precedence over man's right and ability to determine his own fate.

The religion of Cain has respect unto the good works of men to some degree, if not to purchase his redemption, at least to secure his present blessing in this world and the level of reward or status which he might attain in the world to come. The things which he does and does not do have to count for something in the religion of Cain.

The "religion" of Abel on the other hand is no religion at all, insofar as men would define the term. Rather it is a place of complete rest and reliance in that which is performed by CHRIST. The glory of GOD is the primary goal of it. Those who are awakened to enter into HIS rest confess with one accord that HIS grace alone is sufficient for life and blessing. Its only creed is that of the apostle Paul. *"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." (Gal 6:14)* mam