

Y Team Skills

Successfully Overcoming Anger Part 2

Yeshua's lesson on anger is clearly linked to the story of Cain and Abel. In his world, rabbis and teachers added their insights to commandments in the Jewish Scriptures to help people obey them. Their insights were called *ōfences around the Law.ö* If a people followed the instructions of the *ōfencesö* they would keep the commandment.ö Yeshua was a master fence builder. Let's review the part of the Cain and Abel story that Yeshua had in mind when he built the fences I called **Plan A & Plan B** in the Part 1.

And **Abel** was a keeper of flocks, but **Cain** was a tiller of the ground.¹

Cain and Abel were twins. Cain was born first and he became a tiller of the ground like his father, Adam. Abel is the first shepherd in the Bible.

At the appointed time, Cain brought an offering to Yahweh from the fruit of the ground.
And Abel, on his part also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions.²

This is the first reference to the bringing of an offering (gift) to Yahweh in the biblical text. The brother's gifts were from the work of their hands. Cain the farmer brought a portion of his crops, while Abel brought the firstborn animals of the season and his best animals to Yahweh. The wording seems to highlight that Cain brought Yahweh *ōwhat he was required to bring.ö* Abel brought *ōthe best of what he hadö* to Yahweh. Now get ready for the part of the story that raises some very interesting and important questions.

And Yahweh gazed toward Abel and toward his offering;
but toward Cain and toward his offering He did not gaze.³

Now let's free the scene and take another look at it.

- (1) Yahweh can be seen by Cain and Abel and his attention is completely focused on Abel and his offerings. Yahweh completely ignores Cain and his offerings.
- (2) Abel is standing there with Yahweh's focus completely on him. How do you think he felt? Was he aware of what was happening to Cain?
- (3) Cain is standing there being completely ignored by Yahweh. How do you think he felt?

The ancient audience would have understood a very important point about offerings and sacrifices that is reflected here *ō they are acceptable only if an acceptable spirit of the presenter accompanies them.*

And Cain burned exceedingly and his face fell.
And Yahweh said to Cain, "Why are you burning?
And why has your face fallen?"⁴

His anger was so apparent it could be seen by anyone looking at his face. Now Yahweh asks *ōtheö* question!

Why are you angry?

Why did Yahweh ask that question? Doesn't he know the answer? Didn't he play a very important role in the whole thing?

Surely, if you do **YTV**, you shall be accepted; but if you do not do **YTV**, sin will be a **ROVETZ** at your door; its desire shall be for you, but you will be able to master it.⁵

Yahweh gave Cain instructions for how to deal with the anger he was now feeling and this links the Cain and Abel story to the foundational message of Yeshua.

Do **YTV** and you *act of doing YTV* shall be accepted by me as a gift.

The Hebrew word **YTV** is alternative form of the word **TOV**. As we saw in Part 1, *acts of TOV protect lives, preserve lives, make lives more functional and/or increase the quality of life*. In the *Jewish Scriptures*, *ōacts of TOVō* and *ōacts of righteousnessō* are synonymous. This verse teaches a number of very important lessons.

- (1) Cain will be accepted by Yahweh even though he is angry with Abel if he will do *acts of TOV* for his brother.
- (2) But if Cain remains angry and does not *do acts of TOV* for Abel, something new will enter into his life, the potential to act on his anger and sin. The word **ROVETZ** describes something like an *ōevil creature*. Sin will become a creature, stalking Cain and crouching at Cain's door, waiting for him to sin so it can pounce upon him. Its desire is to devour him.
- (3) Cain's story shares something very important with his parents' story in the Garden in Eden. They also faced a challenge from a creature too, the serpent. They blew it and the serpent won. Will Cain will do better against sin than his parents did against the serpent.

We know he didn't do any better -- *Cain murdered Abel*. Anger led to murder and that the link Yeshua used to build fences around anger in his teachings. In Part 1, the first fence is what I call **Plan A**, and the second fence **Plan B**. Of course, if we follow Yahweh's instructions and *do acts of TOV* for the person we are angry with *ó that's even better*.

- (1) *We obey God's commandment.*
- (2) *We reveal God's presence through our actions.*
- (3) *We recognize that the person we are angry with is created in God's image too.*

I hope you find this information helpful.

YT

¹¹ Genesis 4:2

² Genesis 4:3-4a

³ Genesis 4:4b-5a

⁴ Genesis 4:5b

⁵ Genesis 4:6-7