**‘The Trigger Event to Murder’**

***Now the man had relations with his wife Eve, and she conceived and gave birth to Cain, and she said, “I have gotten a manchild with the help of the Lord.” 2Again, she gave birth to his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of flocks, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. 3So it came about in the course of time that Cain brought an offering to the Lord of the fruit of the ground. 4Abel, on his part also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions. And the Lord had regard for Abel and for his offering; 5but for Cain and for his offering He had no regard. So Cain became very angry and his countenance fell. 6Then the Lord said to Cain, “Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? 7If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up?”*** Genesis 4:1-7a

It may be difficult for us to imagine that it was the offerings Cain and Abel brought to the Lord that triggered the first murder, but that is exactly what we are told in this passage. We are told that God had “regard” for Abel’s offering but not Cain’s. This made Cain so mad it showed on his face and God saw it.

God didn’t have to see the anger on Cain’s face. He already knew it. He knows the thoughts and intentions of our hearts before we do and is able to judge them.[[1]](http://yourbibleblog.com/2017/02/%22%20%5Cl%20%22_ftn1)

Let’s get back to the offerings Cain and Abel brought to the Lord. Why did God have regard for Abel’s offering but not Cain’s offering? Aren’t all offerings we bring to the Lord equal in worth? Apparently they are not! We are told, ***3“So it came about in the course of time that Cain brought an offering to the Lord of the fruit of the ground. 4Abel, on his part also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions.”***

The wording we have in this verse tells us that there **WAS** a difference between the offerings Cain and Abel brought to the Lord, distinction which set Abel’s offering above Cain’s. What was it? Abel brought of **the firstlings of his flock** and of their **fat portions** *(possibly meaning the fattest firstlings of his flock that he could find)*.[[2]](http://yourbibleblog.com/2017/02/%22%20%5Cl%20%22_ftn2) He brought the best of the best to the Lord. Because of this, the Lord took notice of it. By not keeping the first or the best to himself, Abel was telling the Lord, *‘You are first in my life and my trust is in you. I will trust you to keep providing for me in the future.’*

The offering Cain brought doesn’t have anything that would distinguish it. We aren’t told that he went out to the field to bring in the first of what ripened in the field. That would have been noteworthy, and the Holy Spirit would have had Moses record that for us. It appears that Cain simply went out into his fields and brought in whatever he could find, and that’s what he brought to the Lord as an offering. His heart attitude was completely different from that of his brother Abel.

How could God have regard for Cain’s offering when Cain’s heart was so far removed from the Lord? He couldn’t have regard for it. Cain knew that the Lord had no regard for his offering and it made him angry. Cain was the one at fault here. He needed an attitude adjustment, which is exactly what God sought when He came to Cain and said, ***“Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? 7If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up?”***

***“If you do well…”*** The acceptability of Cain’s offering by God was completely dependent upon Cain. If he wanted God to accept his offering, he had to make changes. The changes Cain needed to make weren’t external changes. They were internal. Remember, God knows the thoughts and intentions of our hearts. If Cain would have gone out to the fields and brought in some of the first fruits from the field to bring to the Lord, then that would have looked good. If his heart’s attitude would have been something akin to, ‘There, are you happy now?’ God still would not have accepted his offering.

The fact of the matter was this; Cain needed to cry out to God for help. He couldn’t change his heart, but God could. God was willing to do this in him. He’s willing to help us make the changes we need to make. The first step toward change is the acknowledgement that we have a problem. This isn’t easy for anyone, but it must be done.

The Lord clearly stated that Cain had a problem, and God told him what the solution was.  If only Cain would do well *(meaning do what’s right with the right attitude)*, his offerings would be accepted, and his fallen “countenance” would have been lifted up to show forth joy.

That would’ve been much better than the choice Cain made?

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[[1]](http://yourbibleblog.com/2017/02/%22%20%5Cl%20%22_ftnref1) Hebrews 4:12-13

[[2]](http://yourbibleblog.com/2017/02/%22%20%5Cl%20%22_ftnref2) http://biblehub.com/commentaries/kad/genesis/4.htm