

Failed Offering, Fratricide, and Revival of Fellowship

4:1-26

The first parents sinned and were cursed. Adam and Eve would still have contact with God, but at a distance. They would no longer have access to the Garden of Eden where they experienced intimacy with God (Genesis 3:23). Another part of the curse was that the “seed” of the serpent would be at war with the “Seed of the woman” (Genesis 3:15). In Genesis 4 we see the beginnings of this war played out in the first family.

The First Family

Genesis 4:1-2 - Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, and said, “I have acquired a man from the LORD.”² Then she bore again, this time his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

Adam and Eve were blessed with a son who they named Cain which means, “acquire.” They named him this because, “I have acquired a man from the LORD” (4:1). Since children are a blessing from God (Psalm 127), the birth of Cain seems to indicate a measure of reconciliation between Adam, Eve and God. The birth of Abel and his name which means “breath” or “nothing” seems to indicate his parents were aware of the fragility of life. God had evidently further instructed Adam and Eve about the seriousness of sin when He killed the animal to provide them with a covering (Genesis 3:21).

The vocation of Cain and Abel is significant. Cain tilled the ground and Abel was a shepherd of sheep. Since animals were not at this point a source of food (Genesis 1:29; 2:16; 3:19), but would only become such after the flood (Genesis 9:3), it is very possible that one of the purposes of shepherding sheep was not only to provide wool for clothing, but may too have been to provide animals for sacrifices to bring an offering of worship to the Lord. If this is the case then Abel probably took an active role in this service. Since Adam and Eve had other children (Genesis 5:4), the entire family of Adam, Eve, Cain, Abel and their siblings were all likely involved in the worship of God with animal sacrifices too. Since Abel was the one in charge of raising the animals that would be used for sacrifices, he was in a prominent position.

Cain on the other hand was a “tiller of the ground” which meant hard labor (Genesis 3:19). Since he was not directly in charge of raising sheep, he would have to go to Abel to get sheep for sacrifices.

The First Offering

Genesis 4:3-4a -³ And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the LORD.⁴ Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat.

It is very possible that in “**the process of time**” God set the Sabbath as the day of worship when offerings were brought to Him (Genesis 2:1-3). Over time Cain evidently came to think that an offering could be “**of the fruit of the ground**” and not “**the firstborn of the flock.**” Since offering an animal required Cain go to his younger brother to get one, this may have created a situation where Cain grew jealous and resentful of his brother’s position. Bringing an offering of the fruit of the ground was his attempt to bypass going to his younger brother and was a subtle rebellion against the offering apparently prescribed by the Lord. Whatever reason there was for Cain’s type of offering, it was unacceptable to God. It then says, “**And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.**”

A Right and a Wrong Offering to the LORD

What made Abel’s offering right and acceptable to the LORD and Cain’s wrong and unacceptable to the LORD? When we contrast the two offerings we see what a right and wrong offering is.

First, Abel’s offering was special and the best, Cain’s was ordinary. Abel’s offering is described as “**the firstborn of his flock and of their fat.**” Abel’s offering consisted of the firstborn of the flock. However big his flock was this meant each firstborn sheep was brought to the LORD. The firstborn in scripture symbolizes a place of authority (Genesis 27:1-29), a place of special blessing (Genesis 4, 35), preciousness and value (Micah 6:7), and endearing love (Jeremiah 31:9, 20). Abel offered his *best*. And he went beyond that to offer the “**fat**” with the offering which is also symbolic of the best part of something (Genesis 45:18; Exodus 23:18; Leviticus 3:14-17). The fat of an offering, when burned before the LORD made a sweet aroma to the LORD (Leviticus 7:23-25; 17:6). Cain’s offering on the other hand was ordinary and simply described as, “**an offering of the fruit of the ground to the LORD.**” There is nothing in the description of Cain’s offering that makes it stand out as special. What Cain gave was common and God who is Holy will not accept just any offering; it must be special. David would not offer the LORD something that cost him nothing (2 Samuel 24:24). David knew that an offering to the LORD must be costly and special. This is something Cain disregarded. An offering made to the LORD must be the *best* (Malachi 1:4) and that is what is being taught by the LORD in these verses. *God wants your best; nothing less will do.*

Second, Abel’s offering shed blood and cost a life, Cain’s offering was bloodless and cost no life. Abel had remembered how God had took the life of an animal to cover his parents after their sin (Genesis 3:21). Abel understood that sin was deadly serious and atoning for it was costly. Cain on the other hand did not give proper attention to what God had done with his parents and was spiritually dulled to the instruction of the LORD. Later in the New Testament God inspires the writer of Hebrews to tell us that the blood of animals is not sufficient to atone for sin, it was only meant to point us to the perfect sacrifice of Jesus whose precious blood alone was sufficient to atone for the sins of humanity (Hebrews 9:11-28; 10:4, 19-23; 13:20-21).

Third, Abel’s offering was in faith, Cain’s was not. We know this is true because of the testimony of the New Testament where it states:

- **Hebrews 11:4 - ⁴ By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks.**

Abel and Cain may not have understood fully the significance of what God had prescribed, but Abel received God's instruction by faith and obeyed it. Cain on the other hand was unteachable and disregarded God's instruction on sacrifices. An offering to God must be brought in faith. Without faith it is impossible to please God (Hebrews 11:6). An offering to the LORD must be in praise and an act of worship as well (Hebrews 13:15-16).

Fourth, Abel's offering was righteous, Cain's was evil. Abel made his offering in faith from a pure heart whereas Cain brought his offering with evil intent (1 John 3:12). If Cain's offering was brought with a right motive and in the right attitude of heart when God did not "respect" Cain's offering, Cain would have humbly repented and submitted to the correction of the LORD (Genesis 4:5). Instead Cain's countenance fell and he became very angry. Where anger arises the flesh or sinful nature is in control (Galatians 5:20; Ephesians 4:31; James 1:19-20). The essence of Cain's evil offering was that ***he brought an offering to God on his terms not God's terms. Where there is anger there is pride and pride is at the root of sin and at the heart of the nature of the serpent Satan (Isaiah 14:13-15).***

The Respectable Offering

Genesis 4:4b-5 - And the LORD respected Abel and his offering, ⁵ but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.

God "**respected**" Abel and his offering but He did not "**respect**" Cain and the offering he brought (Genesis 4:4-5). The word "**respect**" here is translated from the Hebrew term **SHA-AH** (Strong's #8159 - שָׁאָה **shâ'âh**, *shaw-aw'*) which means, "to gaze at or about; to inspect, consider, compassionate, regard, and have respect."¹ We might say that the offering brought to the LORD by Abel really caught the attention of the LORD; the LORD was impressed and saw the compassion of Abel's offering and responded with like compassion. Cain's offering on the other hand was nothing to look at. Apparently it was just something Cain threw together as an alternative to what was required. It's like when a person is caught off guard by a birthday announcement they have forgotten. Not wanting to appear like they forgot or didn't care, they put together an excuse or last minute shabby unthoughtful gift just to save face. God saw right through this. Cain reacted angrily in part out of embarrassment, in part because he probably felt this sacrificial offering was an imposition on his time and resources. Cain's offering was not respected by God because his heart was not right in the offering.

The Face Behind a Failed Offering

Genesis 4:5b-10 - And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell. ⁶ So the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen?" ⁷ If you do well, will

¹Strong, J. (1997, c1996). *The new Strong's dictionary of Hebrew and Greek words* (electronic ed.) (H8159). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it.”⁸ Now Cain talked with Abel his brother; and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.⁹ Then the LORD said to Cain, “Where is Abel your brother?” He said, “I do not know. Am I my brother’s keeper?”¹⁰ And He said, “What have you done? The voice of your brother’s blood cries out to Me from the ground.

These verses paint for us the face behind failed offerings. This face looks like the following.

First, the face behind a failed offering is proud and angry (4:5). Cain was not broken and humbled by God’s correction; he was self-centered and angry. Cain was more concerned with the fact that God had rejected his offering and accepted Abel’s rather than the sinful offense he had made toward God. He was very angry and anger is always a sign of pride.

Second, the face behind a failed offering rejects God’s instruction (4:6-7). The LORD reached out to Cain and offered to instruct him and correct his sinful way (Genesis 4:6). The New Testament tells us that God seeks to instruct and discipline those He loves (Hebrews 12:3-11). The LORD expressed His impartiality and fairness to Cain and told him if he did well or brought an acceptable sacrifice it would be received by the LORD. But if Cain rejected the instruction of the LORD then, “**sin lies at your door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it.**”

This is the first mention of “**sin.**” The word “sin” is translated from the Hebrew term **CHATAH** (Strong’s #2403 - חָטָא **cha** **th**, *khat-tawth*) which refers to, “an *offence* (sometimes habitual *sinfulness*), and its penalty, . . . an *offender*; *sin.*”² The idea here is that Cain had already sinned by bringing an unacceptable sacrifice; if he did not “do right” it could lead to more habitual sin. When we sin and fail to heed the correction of the LORD, sin multiplies. Sin is like cancer; it starts with a single cell and multiplies.

The LORD was warning Cain and pointing him to the way to avoid temptation and get right with the LORD (cf. 1 Corinthians 10:13). But Cain would have none of it, **he was unteachable**. An unteachable “stiff necked” spirit is a dangerous thing because once a person rejects the instruction of the LORD, sin is at their door and ready to pounce and devour (Exodus 32:9; 2 Chronicles 36:13; Acts 7:51). God is able to cure the stiff necked person if that person humbly comes to the LORD in repentance (Deuteronomy 10:16; 2 Chronicles 30:8; Joel 2:13).

Third, the face behind a failed offering is jealous and hateful (4:8). Abel is referred to by Jesus as the first prophet (Luke 11:49-51) and it is therefore quite possible that the LORD was trying to instruct Cain through his brother Abel. Cain did not heed the prophetic word of Abel but instead became angrier and premeditatively arranged to murder his own brother. No human had ever died until Abel died. Adam had looked at the animals and learned procreation and then he and Eve sinned, how sin cost life. God had to kill an animal to make tunics for Adam and Eve. Cain looked at animals and how they were killed for sacrifice and he learned murder. The murder of Abel by Cain demonstrates how sin corrupts and degenerates the heart. And it

²Strong, J. (1997, c1996). *The new Strong's dictionary of Hebrew and Greek words* (electronic ed.) (H2403). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

demonstrated how Cain came to act more like the devil than the LORD (John 8:44). It all began with a sinful offering.

Fourth, the face behind a failed offering is irreverent (4:9). Cain was confronted by God as to the whereabouts of his brother Abel. Cain should have been the one who sought forgiveness at the altar of the LORD but instead Cain's response, "**Am I my brother's keeper?**" Cain showed no remorse for his evil deed and worse still, no reverence or awe toward the One who held his fate in the balance. His irreverent response to God exposes the hardness of his heart. His response shows no conviction or acknowledgement of wrong doing or sin. He is bold in his sin and should have been on his knees in confession and repentance before God.

In Jude 11 it speaks of "**the way of Cain.**" The "way of Cain" is to have an outward form of religion with no true substance to it. Cain went through the motions when it came to worshipping God. His heart was not in his offering. To have only a form of godliness without true spirituality is to deny God's power and be irreverent (2 Timothy 3:5).

Fifth, the face behind a failed offering is unloving (4:9). When God asked Cain where his brother was the implication is that Cain *should have been concerned for his brother and watching out for him.* Instead Cain heartlessly and without love said, "**Am I my brother's keeper?**" The Bible tells us that that what is done without love is unacceptable to the LORD (1 Corinthians 13; 1 John 3:16-23; 4:7-12). Cain was the first to act in a loveless way.

Sixth, the face behind a failed offering is dishonest (4:9-10). When confronted by God Cain was dishonest and evasive trying to cover his sin. Cain was willing to try and live the lie that he really was righteous and had done nothing wrong. Sin is deceptive and dark and leads to broken fellowship with God (cf. 1 John 1:5-10).

Seventh, the face behind a failed offering is in a position of being judged (4:10). God can no longer speak in mercy to the unrepentant Cain. The blood of Abel is crying out for justice. Thankfully the blood of Jesus has a better message because where Abel's blood cries out for judgment, Christ's blood has the message of forgiveness through the atoning shed blood of Jesus (Hebrews 12:24; 1 John 1:7, 9).

Pride, anger, unteachableness, jealousy, hate, irreverence, dishonesty, and judgment are all parts of the face of the person whose offering will not be respected by the LORD. How do you bring your offerings to the LORD? This is a very important question to consider. An offering made with any or all of these attitudes remaining in one's heart will lead to God disregarding your offering.

The Final Consequence of a Failed Offering

Genesis 4:11-24 - ¹¹ So now you *are* cursed from the earth, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. ¹² When you till the ground, it shall no longer yield its strength to you. A fugitive and a vagabond you shall be on the earth."¹³ And Cain said to the LORD, "My punishment *is* greater than I can bear! ¹⁴ Surely You have driven me out this day from the face of the ground; I shall be hidden from Your face; I shall be a

fugitive and a vagabond on the earth, and it will happen *that* anyone who finds me will kill me.”¹⁵ And the LORD said to him, “Therefore, whoever kills Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold.” And the LORD set a mark on Cain, lest anyone finding him should kill him.¹⁶ Then Cain went out from the presence of the LORD and dwelt in the land of Nod on the east of Eden.¹⁷ And Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bore Enoch. And he built a city, and called the name of the city after the name of his son—Enoch.¹⁸ To Enoch was born Irad; and Irad begot Mehujael, and Mehujael begot Methushael, and Methushael begot Lamech.¹⁹ Then Lamech took for himself two wives: the name of one *was* Adah, and the name of the second *was* Zillah.²⁰ And Adah bore Jabal. He was the father of those who dwell in tents and have livestock.²¹ His brother’s name *was* Jubal. He was the father of all those who play the harp and flute.²² And as for Zillah, she also bore Tubal-Cain, an instructor of every craftsman in bronze and iron. And the sister of Tubal-Cain *was* Naamah.²³ Then Lamech said to his wives: “Adah and Zillah, hear my voice; Wives of Lamech, listen to my speech! For I have killed a man for wounding me, Even a young man for hurting me.²⁴ If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, Then Lamech seventy-sevenfold.” What happened to Cain is a warning to us. His failed offering led to fratricide of Abel. And the consequences of his sinful state grew worse and worse.

The consequence of Cain’s sinful offering led to deeper and more serious sin; the fratricide of his brother Abel. There is a consequence for sin and the consequences of sin experienced by Cain serves as a warning to us. Notice that even in judgment God is merciful as He spared Cain’s life. But God holds to account those who shed innocent blood and remain unrepentant (Genesis 9:5; Job 16:18; Psalm 9:12; Ezekiel 3:18). Indeed unpunished murderers bring a defiling to the Land (Numbers 35:29-34).

Cain lived on under a curse “**from the earth**” or on the earth (4:11). His labor would be hard and difficult and he would live the life of a fugitive and have no place of permanence to lay his head (4:12). No longer would he be able to produce the fruit of the ground which he sinfully sought to use as an adequate offering to the LORD. Cain is described as “**a fugitive and a vagabond**” (4:12, 14).

The word “**fugitive**” refers to someone who is reeling to and fro, staggering, scattered, a wanderer who has the guilt of his misdeeds hanging over him (Strong’s #5128 - נִוָּא, *nūwa*, *noo’-ah*).³ A “**vagabond**” is someone who is wandering, fleeing, whose head is hung down in mourning, a pitiable joyless person (Strong’s #5110 - נִוָּד, *nūwd*, *nood*).⁴ Cain would suffer the loss of stability in life and have no place to call his home. Such is the fate of those who indulge their flesh and sin; they lose stability and direction in life. It is only now that Cain seems to realize what he has forfeited because of his sin. But the sad thing is that Cain still does not express any remorse or regret about murdering Abel, he is merely upset about the impact of God’s punishment on him.

James Montgomery Boice once commented:

³Strong, J. (1997, c1996). *The new Strong's dictionary of Hebrew and Greek words* (electronic ed.) (H5128). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁴Strong, J. (1997, c1996). *The new Strong's dictionary of Hebrew and Greek words* (electronic ed.) (H5110). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

One of the clearest marks of sin is our almost innate desire to excuse ourselves and complain if we are judged in any way. ⁵

Donald Grey Barnhouse once stated:

One of the consequences of sin is that it makes the sinner pity himself instead of causing him to turn to God. One of the first signs of new life is that the individual takes sides with God against himself.

Cain is complaining and we can be sure he is thinking of all kinds of excuses and rationalizations for his terrible sin. He is a picture of what sin will do to a person. Sin drives us to hurt those we should love and it drives us away from God.

He will be evicted from the presence of the LORD and be homeless (4:13). Cain was marked by the LORD for protection, but also as a sign of judgment (4:14-15). The judgment of God involved the loss of God's best for him. But God tempered His judgment with mercy.

Then Cain left the presence of the LORD to the east of Eden and found a wife (4:16-17). Some of seen a problem her with Cain finding a wife. In Genesis 5:4 it states that Adam and Eve had other children besides Cain and Abel and it is likely from these offspring that Cain found a wife. Some might say that this is incestuous and sinful (cf. Leviticus 18:9, 11; 20:17; Deuteronomy 27:22) but the genetic makeup of humans at this point is pure enough to support sibling marriage. Sarah was Abraham's half sister (Genesis 20:12). The gene pool of human beings would become more and more degenerative so that eventually siblings were not allowed to intermarry.

It's interesting that the land Cain wandered to was named "**Nod**" which means "vagrancy," or "restless wanderer" (4:16; Strong's #5113 - נֹדַד **Nôwd**, *node*). ⁶ Cain had relations with his wife and she conceived and bore a son who they named "**Enoch**" which means, "dedicated," or "initiated." Cain then names a city after his firstborn son (4:17). Settling and naming a city was perhaps an attempt by Cain to rebel against the curse and judgment of God. He was making an attempt to settle in one place in defiance of the Lord's judgment against him.

Cain and his wife were able to bear children and we see the rapid advancement of society in the formation of a city, agriculture, music, and bronze and iron working (4:17-22). Enoch produced "**Irad**" whose name means, "fugitive" (4:18a). Irad produced "**Mehujael**" whose name means "smitten by God" (4:18b). Mehujael produced "**Methushael**" whose name means "who is of God" (4:18c). And Methushael produced "**Lamech**" whose name means "powerful."⁷ If you put the meaning of these names together you get, "a fugitive smitten by God who is of God"

⁵ Quoted in David Gudzik's commentary on Genesis (Simi Valley, CA: Enduring Word Media, 1998) page 54

⁶Strong, J. (1997, c1996). *The new Strong's dictionary of Hebrew and Greek words* (electronic ed.) (H5113). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁷Strong, J. (1996). *The exhaustive concordance of the Bible : Showing every word of the test of the common English version of the canonical books, and every occurrence of each word in regular order.* (electronic ed.) (H3929). Ontario: Woodside Bible Fellowship.

powerful.” Names are given to communicate a meaning. We might see a glimmer of hope when we connect the meaning of the names of Cain’s offspring, but we also see what follows shows the human race is degenerating from the infection of sin.

Lamech whose name can also mean, “the conqueror,” was the first one to go against God’s plan to marry one wife and therefore the first bigamist in history (4:19; Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:4-8). Lamech’s first wife was named “**Adah**” whose name means “ornament” or “pleasure.” His second wife’s name was “**Zillah**” whose name means “shade,” as in luxury. The names of Lamech’s wives reveal the prevailing values of the day and probably also the values of Lamech himself. Adah bore a son named “**Jabal**” whose name means, “stream of water” (4:20). Jabal “**was the father**” (which means the first and originator of) “**those who dwell in tents and have livestock.**” Jabal was the first herdsman. Jabal had a brother named “**Jubal**” whose name means “stream” and he was “**the father of all those who play the harp and flute**” (4:21). Jubal was the first musician. Zillah, Lamech’s second wife bore “**Tubal-Cain**” whose name means “thou will be brought of Cain” and he was the first “**instructor of every craftsman in bronze and iron**” (4:22). Tubal-Cain had a sister named “**Naamah**” which means “loveliness,” or “pleasure.”

Despite this advancement and organization of human society, Lamech’s boast of killing a man and bragging about his punishment shows how low humanity had fallen as a result of sin at this point (4:23-24). The word used for “**killed**” (Strong’s #2026 - לָרַחַץ **hârag**, *haw-rag*; “to smite with deadly intent; destroy, murder, put to [death], make [slaughter], slay”⁸) here is the same one used earlier when describing Cain’s murder of Abel (4:8). It is a word that shows a disregard for the value of life. Lamech went so far as to brag that his crime was worse than Cain’s (4:24). Like hoodlums bragging over their crimes Lamech bragged about his offense. But even in the face of this wickedness there is hope.

Revived Fellowship

Genesis 4:25-26 - ²⁵ And Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and named him Seth, “For God has appointed another seed for me instead of Abel, whom Cain killed.” ²⁶ And as for Seth, to him also a son was born; and he named him Enosh. Then men began to call on the name of the LORD.

God never forgets the victims and Adam and Eve bore another child and named him “**Seth**” which means “appointed” or “compensation.” Eve may have incorrectly thought that Abel was the “Seed” mentioned by God in the protoevangelium of Genesis 3:15. but God blessed them with another offspring that brought the first family hope. To Seth was born “**Enosh**” (“man” or “mortal man,”⁹) and then it states, “**Then men began to call on the name of the LORD.**” Perhaps people began to recognize their own mortality and began to call out to the LORD. The

⁸Strong, J. (1997, c1996). *The new Strong's dictionary of Hebrew and Greek words* (electronic ed.) (H2026). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁹Jerome H. Smith, editor, *The new treasury of scripture knowledge [computer file], electronic edition of the revised edition of The treasury of scripture knowledge, Logos Library System*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson) 1997, c1992 by Jerome H. Smith.

phrase “**call on the name of the LORD**” can also be translated “proclaim the name of the LORD”¹⁰ or, “call *themselves* by the name of the Lord.”¹¹

That this is a revival of interest in fellowship with God is attested to by the use of this phrase elsewhere in scripture. To “call on the name of the LORD” is a phrase associated with worship (Genesis 12:8; 13:4; 21:33; 26:25; Deuteronomy 26:16-19; Psalm 116:17; Isaiah 12:4). It is also a phrase used to describe one seeking help from the LORD or seeking His action (1 Kings 18:24). God’s wrath is on those who do not call on His name (Psalm 79:6). The Bible says that all those who call on the name of the LORD will be saved (Joel 2:32; Acts 2:21; 22:16; Romans 10:13). God’s desire is that all people call on Him in purity (Zephaniah 3:8-9). Because His people call on His name (1 Corinthians 1:2).

This is very likely the beginning of a personal revival and regular worship of the LORD. Even in the face of fratricidal murder, and the decline of society, there is hope and reason to call on the LORD. That is the final message of this chapter. Even when evil and sin strikes and strikes hard, turn to the LORD and hope in Him.

What is a Revival?

What is revival? Is it something that only happened with enthusiastic people of the past? Is it when people put up a tent and have special outdoor meetings? Does everyone need a revival? When does a person need a revival in their lives? These and perhaps a few more, are some questions the Lord has directed me to address in this message.

Revival is a work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of a people. A revival is a re-sensitizing and softening of the heart. A revival is a refreshing of the Holy Spirit. Greg Laurie describes revival this way:

“The word ‘revival’ means ‘to restore to one’s original condition,’ to get back to the way that you used to be.’ And so when God speaks of revival He’s speaking to His own people and He’s saying that we should get back to that walk with Him that we may have had at an earlier time in our lives Revival is not something that just happens across the board, it’s something that happens in an individual’s life. We can pray, ‘Oh Lord send an awakening, send a revival!’ But it starts with me. It starts with you We need to get back to the time honored, God-tested, tried and true message of the Bible God has told us how to live.” – Greg Laurie in *What is Revival?* (WFT tape #G381)

Here are some other descriptions of revival:

¹⁰Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. (1983-c1985). *The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures*. Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

¹¹Jerome H. Smith, editor, *The new treasury of scripture knowledge [computer file], electronic edition of the revised edition of The treasury of scripture knowledge, Logos Library System*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson) 1997, c1992 by Jerome H. Smith.

- Charles Finney - Revival is a renewed conviction of sin and repentance, followed by an intense desire to live in obedience to God. It is giving up one's will to God in deep humility.
- Del Fehsenfield Jr. - Revival awakens in our hearts an increased awareness of the presence of God, a new love for God, a new hatred for sin, and a hunger for His Word. . . . Revival is not just evangelism, excitement, or emotionalism. It is the extraordinary movement of the Holy Spirit! . . . Revival, no matter how great or small in its ultimate scope, always begins with individual believers whose hearts are desperate for God, and who are willing to pay the price to meet Him. . . . Revival is the moving of God's Spirit, through the power of His Word, to the hearts of His children, that resurrects to new life those areas which have been lying stagnant, dormant, or out of balance, and that results in new love and obedience to Jesus Christ. . . . Nothing short of an outpouring of God's Spirit will revitalize and empower an impotent and anemic church to display once again His glory to a lost world.
- Vance Havner - Revival is falling in love with Jesus all over again.

When is a Revival Needed?

Generally speaking, a revival is needed when God's people have become ineffective, weakened, or run down and lost touch with His presence. This may be the result of focusing too much on self and not enough on the empowerment of the Lord. This may be the result of a lack of faith.

Revival is needed when the heart of believers has become hardened or dulled. Like an ax that becomes dulled from use and must be re-sharpened, the dulled heart must be repaired too. A revival is a re-breaking of the heart by the Holy Spirit. Cain's sin and the sin of his offspring are evidence of a need for personal revival. Evidently some were broken hearted over this sin and called on the name of the Lord.

Scripture states:

- **Psalm 34:18 - The LORD is near to those who have a broken heart, And saves such as have a contrite spirit.**
- **Psalm 51:17 - The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart— These, O God, You will not despise.**
- **1 Peter 5:5b-6 - . . . Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble." ⁶ Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, (See also revival under Josiah in 2 Kings 22:18-20)**

We need to call on the name of the Lord.

Who Gives a Revival?

Revivals come from God. The Psalmist repeatedly calls on God for revival:

- Psalm 85:6 - Will You not revive us again, That Your people may rejoice in You?
- Psalm 71:20 - You, who have shown me great and severe troubles, Shall revive me again, And bring me up again from the depths of the earth.
- Psalm 119:25 - My soul clings to the dust; Revive me according to Your word.
- Psalm 119:37 - Turn away my eyes from looking at worthless things, And revive me in Your way.
- Psalm 119:40 - Behold, I long for Your precepts; Revive me in Your righteousness.
- Psalm 119:88 - Revive me according to Your lovingkindness, So that I may keep the testimony of Your mouth.
- Psalm 119:107 - I am afflicted very much; Revive me, O Lord, according to Your word.
- Psalm 119:149 - Hear my voice according to Your lovingkindness; O Lord, revive me according to Your justice.
- Psalm 119:154 - Plead my cause and redeem me; Revive me according to Your word.
- Psalm 119:156 - Great are Your tender mercies, O Lord; Revive me according to Your judgments.
- Psalm 119:159 - Consider how I love Your precepts; Revive me, O Lord, according to Your lovingkindness.
- Psalm 138:7 - Though I walk in the midst of trouble, You will revive me; You will stretch out Your hand Against the wrath of my enemies, And Your right hand will save me.
- Psalm 143:11 - Revive me, O Lord, for Your name's sake! For Your righteousness' sake bring my soul out of trouble.

What will you do; will you call on the name of the LORD or go the way of Cain? God has instructed us that sin is crouching, waiting to pounce. He is here and He is waiting for you. What will you do; will you listen and be instructed by God, or will you turn away and walk out from His presence? These are the questions the account of Cain and Abel force us to consider.