

It Came To Pass

By Mark E. Benjamin

In the Bible that I use on my PC, and using the King James version, the phrase “it came to pass” showed up 453 times. That’s a fairly sizeable number of times that something had come... and gone. The first time we see the phrase is in **Genesis 4:3 And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD.**

I have seen many debates on what was wrong with Cain’s offering. I am not going to add another one to the list – at least not here. There is an often overshadowed and missed point I want to share. Instead of trying to figure out why Cain’s offering was not acceptable, let’s look at why this event even occurred at all. In doing so, we can learn a mighty lesson. But first let me share a lesson my family and I learned.

Been There, Done That

Not too long ago I had to experience an unpleasant situation that a lot of people have the misfortune to endure. It was not the first time but it was very different in scope and duration than previous encounters. The company I was employed with had been going through a buyout. From time to time, I would notice someone was no longer gracing the office with their presence. It was always the same reasoning for their absence, “downsizing”.

And so it came to pass in those days that I too received the call to visit the personnel office. My boss had been waiting there in ambush with the personnel manager. Within ten seconds of my entering the room, I too no longer had a job.

I cleaned out my desk and started on my hour-long drive home. On the way, I did a lot of thinking. How up-to-date was my resume, I need to sign up for unemployment benefits, how many payments were left on my car, things of that nature. Looking back on my trip home, I don’t know if any of the traffic lights I went through were red or green. Since no one ran into me, I suppose they were green.

I gathered my five children and my wife and made the announcement. My wife felt sad for me, but her faith is strong and we had been through this before, so she wasn’t too worried about it. At least not in a way that the little ones or I could visibly see. The children on the other hand ran the gambit of reactions; my oldest wanted revenge, the littlest were happy to now have me home all day with them, the middle ones were fearful and upset.

Trying to be the strong leader type, I assured them that all would be fine. Even though this was a tragedy for us, it was in God’s hands and we would survive. God was going to take care of us. We would need to do our part and work as hard as we could to help each other out, but God would provide.

Never before had such thoughts and words been so true.

Cain Vs. Abel

The case before the court is the Cain vs. Abel. A very tragic case of deception and murder. The facts of the case are these: Cain brought forward an unacceptable offering. The LORD informed Cain about the problem. Cain became angry and took the life of his younger brother Abel. God knew of the murder and questioned Cain about it and subsequently punished him.

This event had a purpose in its occurring. Both for those involved at the time and for us today. Plus, it is no small matter that this happened so early in the existence of God’s creation. By purpose, I am not implying that God made Cain do what he did, but certainly He did not stop it. Therefore, allowing it to take place and using the event to give one of the most important object lessons we need to learn.

Just a few verses earlier we see that Adam and Eve sinned and punishment was given to them for that sin. Something needed to be done to try to bring mankind back to God. Thus, the institution of offerings and sacrifices began, but this would not stay forever. How do we know it wouldn’t stay forever? We find the answer in the beginning of all of this. Simply, “it came to pass”.

These are the facts of the case and they are undisputable.

Two For The Price Of One

We see here two nested time frames that start with that statement, “it came to pass”. The first one is the immediate, and that ended about the time chapter four of Genesis ends. The second and larger time frame ended

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many years later. The situation with Cain and his non-par offerings were to end. There was a reason for it to come, but it was not to stick around. It came to pass.

God has commandments that He has put in place. It is irrelevant whether or not we like them or agree with them, but we must follow them. Cain did something that was not in accordance to those commandments. It is also irrelevant what precisely the issue was with Cain's offering. It's the end result that matters here. The passing, not the coming of the situation.

What was the end result of this historical event of Cain bringing forth his offering? It is not the death of Abel nor is it the punishment of Cain. Those things are incidents within the event. Although those are important and tragic, the true result of the initial actions of Cain is far more significant and even farther in reach.

Grace Within The Tragedy

Over the months that followed me losing my job, my income dropped to almost nil. The unemployment check went entirely to paying for insurance. Fortunately, I was able to help an Uncle and he would pay some wages for my services. However, the total income was only a small percentage of what we were used to having.

That was when the miracles started to become so very evident. First off, I paid off my car loan nine months ahead of time. Something I thought would be a good idea in case things became even worse. At least nobody would be trying to take my car from me.

One evening we found on our porch a cooler packed in dry ice and more hamburger and chicken to feed the family for a very long time. Plus, it wasn't just in the packages from the store, it was all neatly vacuumed packed in convenient portions. Other similar events like these happened continuously while I was out of work.

During this time, I also wrestled with tithing. The principle of giving back to the Lord ten percent of the income He has already giving to you is something I have tried to follow for some time. But the way I saw it was ten percent of next to nothing is nothing. Nevertheless, I stayed the course and gave my offering to the Lord as if my income never changed. Some how, like the baskets collected after feeding the 5,000 ([Matthew 14:15 – 21](#)) our bank account never had a higher balance in all the many years of our marriage. We were far more financially well off with much less of an income.

God is good. Amen?

Adam and Eve lost two sons, one from murder and the other from exile. Nevertheless, even in this tumultuous time for them, God still blessed them as well. They became more blessed than before. God gave them a miracle. He gave them Seth.

Can you imagine losing two sons and the pain that is associated with that devastating experience? Now try to imagine receiving a new child, a third son. Oh, how much Adam and Eve must have loved Seth. How grateful they must have been for him. How thankful to God for his gift of mercy and joy within their family's depression of two lost sons.

God is good indeed. Amen?

Why Did It Come

Why would God allow, or in some cases direct, things to come into the world and our lives, just so they could pass on? The answer is always the same. "So they shall know that I am the LORD".

The unmistakable lesson to learn in the loss of my family's only source of income was that through what should have been a devastating time, we were taken care of by the very hand of God. He showed us nothing less than miracles and He watched over us. We knew that He is the LORD.

Adam and Eve learned the lesson in this trying time. Through the birth of Seth, they knew God was not to abandon them. In the lesson of Cain's offering, they knew to listen to God and follow His commandments. For He knows best how everything works, since He created everything. They knew He is the LORD.

The most important reason for those at the beginning of creation and for my family in our financial issues is the same reason for everything that comes into our lives. The reason for a problem that arises is not ever found in its coming or in the events of what has come. It is always found in the passing of the situation. And all situations will pass, for they come to pass.

The second time frame, mentioned above, that started with the early chapters of Genesis, ended with the death of *Y'shua ha-Mashiach* on the cross. The God established offerings and sacrifices were not to function for all

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eternity. The concept of sacrifice came, had its purpose, but was meant to move on and pass out of existence. It came to pass.

The important thing is not the offerings of Cain or his reaction to God's chastisement. Nor is it important that I lost a job of almost nine years of service. Even what you and I might be dealing with at the moment seems impossible, it still is not what is important. All of that is what came. What is important is the passing of what came. For it all has come to pass. It is the passing that is important. What is important is...

To know that He is the LORD.