

Unbelievable

There are some things in this world that I simply have great difficulty getting an handle on. Primarily this pertains to the thoughts of men and their subsequent actions when confronted with ultimatums. I wish this were not so perplexing, but it is, and the Scripture records examples of decisions made by men that can only be described one of two ways: insane or stupid.

One such example is Cain and his response to the LORD God when his offering was rejected:

And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.

And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.

And 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 slew him. (Genesis 4:3-8)

Here we have the infamous story of Cain's response to rejection, and subsequent instruction on how to be accepted by the LORD. It seems pretty simple and straightforward. After all, all that is required of Cain is to do the sacrifice in the way the LORD instructed and it will be accepted, and all will be well. In fact, it is so simple that we could describe it as *"do what you are told."*

The problem is, Cain didn't.

Okay, simply being disobedient would be bad enough if what you desire is acceptance of the LORD. But Cain made it much worse than that. Instead of leaving Abel alone and going off to himself and living his own life, Cain decided (for whatever reason) to get rid of his brother – by killing him.

Yep, this fixes everything. Now Cain doesn't have to see his brother's sacrifice accepted anymore and his rejected. Nope, that situation won't happen ever again. Problem solved, right?

Not hardly. Actually, (and I know we all know this) Cain's decision and subsequent action insured his problem would get worse – and it did. Now Cain is a murderer, and an outcast, sought by his relatives for the murder of one of their own. Cain also proved that he is not to be trusted. Moreover, the Scripture records that Cain's destiny was an eternity in torment.

For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. 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 3:11-12)*

Perhaps the reference above gives us an understanding of why Cain was so bent on not turning and simply doing what he should have. The statement "*Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one,*" tells us that Cain followed after the Devil, and did the Devil's bidding. Cain was as unmerciful as the Devil, and like the Devil, hated the right things Abel did. You know, even though that is the case, it still doesn't make sense to "resolve" the issue by murdering your brother. Of course, the rebellion of Lucifer doesn't make sense either.

Yet, this is not the only instance where individuals were given the clear choice of turning or being destroyed, and the response was utterly senseless.

Now therefore go to, speak to the men of Judah, and to the

inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the LORD; Behold, I frame evil against you, and devise a device against you: return ye now every one from his evil way, and make your ways and your doings good. And they said, There is no hope: but we will walk after our own devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart. (*Jeremiah 18:11-12*)

Turn, or be destroyed – the choice is yours.

There is no hope.

Good grief. Every time I read the passage I am floored by the total unwillingness to even consider turning and doing what is right. You know, I can understand standing up and fighting for what you know for certain is the truth. But the men of Judah and Jerusalem knew what they were doing was not in accordance with the law. They knew they were in violation of the Covenant. Yet, they insisted on doing it anyway – even when plainly warned that destruction would come if they did not immediately repent.

Instead, their answer was: There is no hope.

Yes there is. All you have to do is turn.

There is no hope!

Unbelievable. A total unwillingness to repent and turn away from evil, and thus turn away the judgement of God. Total unwillingness. Not even a smidgen of desire to repent and turn. Nope, that option, even though held out by the LORD God, is not even on the table for discussion.

Un...stinking...believable.

Perhaps I should not be so surprised. After all, in America we are experiencing some events that can only be ascribed to the

judgement of God on us for our wickedness. Yet, there are many (vast majority actually) who simply refuse to believe what the Scripture states about God's judgement. The really sad part of this whole affair is that a whole lot of them wear the label of "Christian" and go to church, and proclaim "Christ" and partake of some of the most wicked things one will ever see. The hopelessness of the situation really is apparent when you see them walk around in totally immodest clothing (virtually naked), and they swear up and down that they "serve God," all the while dressed in pants so tight they had to be painted on, halter tops and various other articles of "clothing" that only passes for a "covering." Oh, and engage them in conversation and see how frequently they reference ungodly and profane television programs, movies and music. Yes, their interest lies some other place than the Bible. Yet, they serve God. Just ask them.

I wonder what Jeremiah would think about America. Knowing America's heritage and the overwhelming focus in early America on the things of God (albeit imperfectly), there really is a contrast between then and now, and it has nothing to do with technology. However, it has everything to do with the hearts of the people – especially those who claim Christ.

America, you are being warned: Repent or be destroyed. I wonder if your response will be as incredulous as the men of Judah and Jerusalem:

There is no hope: but we will walk after our own devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart.

How utterly unbelievable and senseless.