

Resurrection Life of Jesus Church

THE ROOT OF BITTERNESS

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In the message, "Wounds That Hurt Your Soul," I established that the soul is very sensitive and can easily be hurt. If hurts are not dealt with, the wound will fester and create strong feelings that will express themselves in anger, bitterness and resentment.¹

The apostle Paul addressed this problem in his letter to the Hebrews. If we do not have peace with people and walk in holiness, there will be a root of bitterness that will begin to grow in the soul. **Hebrews 12:14-15**

THE DOWNFALL OF CAIN

Cain was the first man to be born to parents who had been created and nothing is spoken of his childhood. His younger brother Abel was the second man to be born on the earth.

They had different vocations as they became adults. Cain became a farmer while Abel became a shepherd. Nothing is said in the Bible about their relationship.

Trouble began when these two brothers were going to worship the Lord and bring an offering. Cain brought a fruit offering while Abel brought a blood sacrifice. God rejected Cain's offering and accepted Abel's blood sacrifice. **Genesis 4:1-4**

It is obvious that God had instructed Adam and Eve that there is no forgiveness of sins without the shedding of blood. They were sentenced by God and driven from the garden after they sinned but God made them clothing from animals He killed before they left. **Genesis 3:21; Leviticus 17:11; Hebrews 9:22**

Cain became extremely angry that God had rejected his offering. **Genesis 4:5**

Cain became angry with God, and instead of accepting responsibility for his own disobedience, he hardened his heart and created a huge wound in his soul.

Cain refused to repent even though God talked to him and cared for him. **verses 6-7**

Cain's wrath was directed at God but he could not take it out on God; instead, his soul wound became so infested that he transferred his wrath to his brother Abel. **verse 8**

When he was confronted by God for Abel's murder, Cain showed no remorse or repentance, he was only concerned about his own well being. **verses 9-14**

¹ <http://www.eaec.org/sermons/2011/RLJ-1281.htm>



The root of bitterness had completely saturated his soul and he left the presence of the Lord, never again to return to the Lord, even though God in his mercy had set a protection for Cain. **verses 15-16**

Cain lived his life as an evil man who was bitter, angry, resentful and hateful to God. This passed on to his offspring and they became cursed and destructive. **verses 17-24**

If a person has been wounded by parents, siblings, or a spouse, the soul will become angry, and since it cannot retaliate and vent its anger on the people that caused the wound, the soul will project the anger on new people who had nothing to do with the wounding.

WHERE DOES THE ROOT OF BITTERNESS COME FROM?

The root of bitterness comes from the wounding of the soul by parents or other people. Abraham and Sarah became terrible parents to their son Ishmael, whom Sarah conceived in unbelief and sin toward God. **Genesis 16:1-10**

Ishmael became a wild man. **verses 11-12**

Ishmael had twelve sons who became twelve princes and established twelve different nations; one of them was the Canaanites. These nations became steeped into idol worship, whoredom, child sacrifices, etc. The root of bitterness is still among their descendants in the Middle East even after more than 4,000 years. **Genesis 25:12-18**

The root of bitterness also comes from the rebellion and self-inflicted wounds of the soul. As a young man Saul had everything going for him. He had a great father and the future looked bright. **1 Samuel 9:1-2**

God had selected Saul and spoken to the prophet Samuel to anoint him with oil. **verses 15-19; 10:1**

Saul decided to disobey the Word of the Lord once he became the king of Israel. Through fear of the enemy and fear that the people of Israel would not stand up to fight, he disobeyed God and created a huge wound in his soul. **1 Samuel 13:5-9**

The wound in his soul was directed toward David, who had nothing to do with the self inflicted wound. **1 Samuel 18:1-16**

YOU CANNOT LOVE WITH A WOUNDED SOUL

There are several words for love in the Greek language.

1. Eros is a sensual sexual love.
2. Phileo is a brotherly love.
3. Agape is a divine love.
4. Thelo is a wishing love like, "I would love to have some ice cream."

You cannot love someone with the agape love as long as there is a root of bitterness, nor can you love them with phileo love.

If there are people that have hurt you so deeply that you do not want to see them, you have not truly forgiven them and still have a root of bitterness in your soul. **Romans 12:17-21**

You might attend and hold positions in the church, witness and do all kinds of things for God, but they are done in the flesh because of the root of bitterness.

The root of bitterness will hinder you from coming boldly to the throne of God. **1 John 4:7-21**

Harboring the root of bitterness is a sin and will make you a slave to anger, resentment, a desire for revenge, jealousy, rebellion and contempt. **Romans 6:12-16**

Examine yourself and repent so God will not have to judge you. **1 Corinthians 11:28-31**

Remember, it's not so important how you begin your life after salvation, but how you finish it!

DO YOU HAVE AN EAR TO HEAR WITH?