



And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in.

Isaiah 58:12

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Depression (part 1)

Genesis is an excellent book to read and study because in it God gives us the first account or first happenings of several events. Genesis chapter four provides the first account of depression. It is in this discourse that we read of Cain and his fallen countenance, which was due to disobedience in the area of approaching God (Gen. 4:6-7). He was supposed to bring a blood sacrifice, but instead he brought something that came from the work of his hands. His offering was probably the result of his perspective or how he saw things. His disobedience brought three results: a wrong standing with God, a fallen or downcast countenance that signified either depression or dejection, and wrath (vs. 5). An important thing to notice is that God instructed Cain in the area of what he should do in his depressed state and that the result would be him being accepted. Because God tied Cain's fallen countenance to his wrong actions, it is a clear indication that right actions would have brought about a right emotional state (vs. 6-7). However, with God's instruction also came a warning: "If thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door" (vs. 7). Another way to understand this would be that sin crouches for an attack at the door. Cain is warned that if he does not deal with things according to God's way, sin will be waiting for its attack.

Everybody has experienced depression. Depression can come from our sinful actions or just normal events of life such as death, failure, loss, confusion, weariness, etc. However, what we do during times of depression will determine if a positive change is to take control or if sin will crouch at the door. Cain chose to respond to life based on how he saw it, but God wanted him to respond according to his design.

In Gen. 4:8, we see the sinful actions of Cain, who refused to deal with life in God's manner. Cain's fallen countenance or depression led to wrath and then murder. The sin lying at the door had his desire over Cain. Eventually, Cain ruled over the sin or lived a life of sin (vs.

7). This is evidenced by him being driven out and the posterity of wicked descendents (Gen. 4:16-24).

This study is recapped into a few steps.

1. An event takes place causing depression.
2. Man is driven to respond to life according to how he sees it and not according to God's manner.
3. Wrongfully handled depression leads to greater emotional problems. (In Cain's case, it was wrath.)
4. Wrongfully handled depression allows sin to have an advantage.
5. Because we sin, our actions cause a problem between us and God that is experienced as emptiness, depression or loss of joy.
6. Man is again at step #1, but in a more depressed state than at the first.

To conclude this study, ask yourself the following questions.

- ✓ When I am depressed, do I respond as God wants?
- ✓ How often do I find myself falling deeper into depression?
- ✓ When I am depressed, do I often experience other emotional problems?
- ✓ When I am depressed, do I respond with sin such as anger, wrath, alcohol, drugs, etc.?
- ✓ Am I like Cain?

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