



40 DAYS FOR LIFE®

Devotional for Day 15, Wednesday, October 9

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Intention:

May God's people awaken to the fact that we are our brothers' keepers.

Scripture:

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. Then the Lord said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" He said, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?" And He said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground."

—*Genesis 4:8-10*

Reflection:

"Methinks he doth protest too much ..."

The Bible is filled with passages that speak to our obligation to care for our fellow human beings.

From the many commands in the books of Moses enjoining love of family, neighbors and even strangers, to Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan, the injunction to care for others is inescapable.

In this account, the guilt-stricken Cain tries to shrug off his obligation to his own kin by dismissing it as an unreasonable duty. A la Shakespeare, though, "methinks he doth protest too much."

Cain's objection doesn't stem from his sense of proper boundaries of responsibility, but from his own self-centered sense of self-preservation.

Christ said, "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends" (John 15:13).

This is the standard of divine love. It required God to sacrifice what was most precious to Him for the temporal and eternal well being of all humankind (see John 3:16). Though on a much-reduced scale, he expects us to do the same.

Trying to duck our obligation to others is futile. We can't get away with simply dismissing others, especially the most vulnerable among us: the pre-born, the disabled, the sick and the aged.

As with Cain, God sees and hears their suffering and will call us to account for what we do – or do not do – for them.

Prayer:

Father, help us to embrace the fact that we are our "brother's keeper." When, due to selfish motives, we try to cast off this responsibility please call to us to account. We would be pleasing to you and to our "brother." Through the help and grace of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.