

The first human family struggled because of original sin.

In the fourth chapter of Genesis we find out about Adam and Eve's two sons. The older son Cain was a farmer. His younger brother, Abel, was a shepherd.

By all appearances this family was loving and happy. Then each brother made an offering to the Lord, but "the LORD looked with favor on Abel and his offering, but on Cain and his offering he did not" (Genesis 4:4-5).

The story does not explain why one offering was acceptable and the other was not. That was the biblical writer's way of indicating that we cannot always understand the ways of God and should not try to judge his ways. Yet Cain judged everything only from his own point of view. He felt that he had been treated unfairly, and he became very angry about it.


God told Cain that he could overcome evil, but Cain took his resentment out on his innocent brother. Cain killed Abel. Murder, one of the worst effects of original sin, had been committed.

God asked Cain where Abel was. Cain replied, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?" (Genesis 4:9) God was deeply offended and said to Cain, "What have you done! Listen: Your brother's blood cries out to me from the soil! Therefore you shall be banned from the soil that opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand" (Genesis 4:10-11).

Cain realized that he was being sent away and would lose God's protection. He feared that he himself would now be killed. However, God put a mark on Cain to show that though he murdered Abel, Cain was protected by God. So even in this terrible circumstance God showed his great love for Cain.

The story of Cain and Abel can be understood on several levels. On one level it declares the sacredness of human life and prohibits murder. On another level it symbolizes the separation of human beings from one another. On a third level it is about accepting one's life and respecting one another. On a fourth level it is about the healing power of God's love.



 Complete the chart.

Situations That Cause Anger or Resentment

Ways We Can Overcome Anger or Resentment

Pray for all families this week. Ask that they may solve their problems in a loving and caring way.