

## ORIGINS SERIES – Cain and Abel

As we continue the Origins series one of the big questions often raised in opposition to the Christian faith is what is referred to as ‘the problem of evil.’ That is the kind of question the passage raises- Genesis 4 and the story of Cain.

It does come as something of a shock to discover that the first baby to be born into the world was a murderer and the first victim was his brother. That doesn’t seem to bode well for the future of mankind does it?

Cain and Abel both had the same physical father- Adam. Both lived in the same household environment and yet one killed and the other was slain. Why? Well, their spiritual fathers were somewhat different. In his take on this dire episode the apostle John writes in his first letter that Cain ‘belonged to the evil one.’ (3:11).

In some ways the writer of Genesis has already prepared us for this so although we may be shocked we should not be surprised, back in chapter 3 God had said to the serpent who had deceived the woman, ‘I will put *enmity* between you and the woman and between your offspring (seed) and hers; he will crush your head and you will strike his heel.’ Here we see this enmity showing itself in the darkest way possible-jealousy and murder.

This serpent is to have a dark spiritual line running right through the human race- the seed of the serpent and the first one we see enacting his father’s will is Cain. But as we see, God has his seed too, preserving a lineage which will eventually issue in his Saviour- man, born of a woman, the Lord Jesus Christ.

But what we have in the story of Cain and Abel is really the story of the cosmic battle between good and evil, Satan and the church and it does not make for pleasant reading, but it is necessary reading if we are going to inject a dose of reality to living as a Christian in God’s fallen world.