

## Abel, the First Martyr

I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you and watch over you.—Psalm 32:8

Cain did not think about killing Abel—he had never seen a human being die and he had never heard of murder. Adam and Eve had been so sure that this son would destroy Satan and restore their happiness. Cain had expected this too, and that he would be God’s favorite. What a shock to see that Abel’s sacrifice was accepted and not his.

Instead of looking to the LORD for guidance (Genesis 4:6,7), Cain’s pride was hurt. He lost control of his temper with terrible results. Abel was the first person who had ever died and when Cain saw that he did not get up or move, Cain became afraid and tried to hide from God.

This same sin was later committed by other people with whom God was dealing. The Jewish people killed Jesus because they wanted a great and mighty king who would deliver them from the Roman soldiers and the tax collectors. They wanted the Gentiles to admire their kingdom and its riches. But they did not follow God’s ways. They could not accept a carpenter’s son even though he was performing miracles. Instead of looking to the Scriptures for an explanation (Isaiah 53), Israel’s pride was hurt. They became jealous and angry and killed the Messiah who had come to deliver them.

Long before Jesus’ time Abel had become the first martyr. Over the years many more people were to become martyrs. It was not until four thousand years after Adam and Eve lived in the garden

that God sent his son into the world to become the Savior of all mankind (John 3:16; 1 Timothy 2:5).

At that time Jesus allowed himself to be taken captive and put to death. He did not need to die since he was perfect and had done nothing sinful. But he knew God's will was that he should take Adam's place in death—a ransom sacrifice—so that the death sentence on mankind could be done away with in due time.

Everyone will come back to life in the Millennial age and have an opportunity to live forever—a wonderful promise from God!



Abel was the first person to die.