**‘Sin’s Strategy’**

***6Then the Lord said to Cain, “Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? 7If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it.” 8Cain told Abel his brother. And it came about when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.*** Genesis 4:6-8

Why was Abel’s offering accepted by the Lord and Cain’s was not?[[1]](http://yourbibleblog.com/2017/05/%22%20%5Cl%20%22_ftn1) Did God want Cain to do well? Absolutely! If this wasn’t so, he would not have encouraged Cain to do right. He would have just let Cain be. But our loving God doesn’t do that. His love compels Him to seek the lost, and Cain at that particular moment was lost – lost in his anger toward his brother. Though in reality, it was really the Lord with whom he was angry. After all, it was the Lord who had not accepted his offering. Yes, the Lord encourages Cain to do well, but he also gives Cain as warning – a warning which reveals sin’s strategy for its intended victims.

Sin **“crouches”** at the door, and from that position it lies in wait for all it would trap in its snares. It lies in wait to see what will go through our minds as we think on those things which take place in our lives each day. A lot of things happen during the course of a twenty-four hour period. Some things are good. Some things aren’t so good. Hearing of the birth of a child is a very good thing. Getting fired from a job isn’t a good thing – even if the firing is warranted. Whether we categorize events in our lives as “good” or “not so good,” how our mind thinks about these things is of paramount importance, because our minds are the primary battleground for good or evil.

Cain “nursed” in his mind the fact that Abel’s offering was accepted but his was not. God told him that he needed to do what was right, and when he did, his “countenance” would be lifted up. God also revealed to Cain that sin was **“crouching at the door,”** lying in wait to see the direction Cain’s thoughts would lean. Sin was ready to pounce upon him and push him over the “edge” in sin’s direction. When the LORD told Cain to master sin – rather than be mastered by it, He was telling Cain to “mind his thoughts.” Cain didn’t have to succumb to his thoughts to do evil to his brother. He could have refused to give those thoughts life and act on them. He could have let the thought go, but he didn’t.

The Word of the LORD to Cain in that early point in human history is just as valid today as it was then. What we think matters. Our thoughts can lead us toward good or evil. What we have got to know is this: **We are to master our thoughts.** If we do not master them, we can be sure that sin is crouching at the door to do us and others harm. Let’s remember these words of caution from Peter, ***“Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.”******[[2]](http://yourbibleblog.com/2017/05/%22%20%5Cl%20%22_ftn2)***

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[[1]](http://yourbibleblog.com/2017/05/%22%20%5Cl%20%22_ftnref1) See http://yourbibleblog.com/2017/02/14/the-trigger-event-to-murder/

[[2]](http://yourbibleblog.com/2017/05/%22%20%5Cl%20%22_ftnref2) 1 Peter 5:8