

January 22, 2006 AM

**THE TWO SONS OF ADAM
GENESIS 4:17-24**

1. CAIN AND THE CITY (17-18)

Cain's wife: If God created only Adam and Eve, and if Cain and Abel were the only two children of Adam and Eve, then where did Cain get his wife? Cf. 5:4 - Adam had "other sons and daughters" besides the ones mentioned. Cain married his sister.

Is this a violation of the law that would later come about marrying close relatives? If Cain were living several thousand years later, yes. But at this time it was permissible.

God allows the marriage of close relatives in the beginning. But when humanity has grown and is maturing, that which is provisional is changed. This is the progress of God's redemptive plan from the smaller matters like the marriage of close relatives to the whole structure of the OC moving to the NC. (Note e.g., offering animal sacrifice; once commanded, later a sin.)

Cain's Son: cp. with 4:1.

Observations: (1) grace is given to the seed of the serpent to continue having children.

Children are the result of the blessing of God to man created in his image. Man images God, in one way, by being fruitful (cf. 1:28).

In some sense, then, (a) Cain is still in the image of God and (b) he is living under God's blessing.

(2) There is a noticeable comparison and contrast between Cain and his children and Seth and his children.

Cp. - Adam and Eve go into exile; birth of Cain. Cain goes into exile; birth of Enoch. These births emphasize exile.

But birth of Seth: 5:1-3 - talk of the "image" again, harking back to original creation. We are being told that God is re-creating humanity through this particular line. This is the line of the seed of the woman.

These two branches of the family tree are controlling themes, not only throughout this text, but also throughout the whole of Scripture. One branch brings death. The other branch brings life.

City and Son: The world is being developed by Cain and his family.

"Enoch" = "dedicated." The city is built and *dedicated* to his son because it is named after him.

Hebrew word play: "build" (*bonē*) and "son" (*beno*). Man was created in God's image to "build" a city/house for God. This is essentially the mandate that God gives when he commissions man to have dominion over the world. Part and parcel to building the city of God will mean "building" children.

Cf. - "to build" refers to people as well structures like the ark (8:20), a city (10:11), a tower (11:4ff.) and altars (12:7, 8; 13:18; 22:9; 26:25; 35:7). God literally "builds" a wife for Adam (2:22). Abraham "builds" children by means of Hagar (16:2). Jacob "builds" children through Bilhah, Rachel's servant (30:3).

The building of a city and its culture happens through the birth and rearing of children.

God has condemned Cain to be a wanderer, a vagabond in the earth. Cain is still rebelling against God by trying to "establish" himself in the earth. Establishing a city, while in and of itself is not a bad thing, for Cain it is an act of rebellion against God.

Cain's Grandchildren: 4:18- Cain's genealogy that goes down to the seventh generation from Adam.

Names are significant for meaning. Cf. Cain (4:1), Seth (4:25), our Lord Jesus (Mt 1:21). These names probably have much to do with the characteristics of those within the line of Cain.

Meanings are a bit "fuzzy" - *Irād* = city (?), thus designating what Cain's line is trying to do. *Mehujael* = "one who wipes out God" (?). *Methusael* = "man of Sheol" or even a "man of oracles," meaning that he could have been a "priest" in their false religion (?). *Lamech* is quite uncertain ... but the quality of his life reveals what he is.

2. LAMECH AND THE CULTURE (19-24)

Lamech, the Seventh from Adam: Cp. Cain's line and Seth's line, 7th in the line: Lamech v. Enoch (the righteous one)

Seven is related to creation and God's "perfecting" or completion of Creation and resting the seventh day. From this point on "seven" takes on the number of "completeness" or "perfection" (in the good *or* bad sense). Lamech as the seventh from Adam through Cain is the epitome, the "perfection," of wickedness, bringing death. In contrast, the seventh from Adam through Seth is Enoch (different from Cain's son) in 5:21-24 who does not die.

Lamech's Two Wives: This stands in contrast to the way God created the marriage relationship to be. Lamech is discontent with the way God established marriage. He is controlled by his sinful desires. He refuses to be bounded in by God's established order.

Lamech's taking of two wives is presented as an aberration. This is not the normal pattern. Sin has been perfected in him.

Lamech and His Children: the story introduces his three sons. The introduction of three sons at particular points in the story stands out at particular points—Lamech (4:20-22), Noah (5:32) and Terah, Abram's father (11:27). At each point the story is taking a major turn.

The turn: development of culture. Names of son share common root: something to the effect of "produce" or "procreation." This fits the character of what they do as the "father" of this and that as given to us in the text.

Jabal: father of all those who dwell in tents and have livestock. Larger animals; e.g., camels, cattle, donkeys, etc. Created some kind of business/commerce out of this.

Jubal: father of all those who play the lyre/harp and pipe/flute. He was the music man.

Tubal-Cain: connected to his grandfather, which might also say something about his craft. He is, literally, the "hammerer" or even the "sharpeners" of all instruments of bronze and iron. He is the "instructor" of others.

What we begin to see in the three sons of Lamech is the development of the culture. They are taking dominion over the world, molding the world according to their image.

Note: This does not mean anything developed by pagans must be rejected. They must be transformed, but not rejected wholesale.

Later on in Scripture we will see how God's true image-bearers take each of these areas of culture and transform them for God's glory. Cf. the tabernacle as "tent;" music used in worship (**1Ch 15:16**); craftsman for Tabernacle, Bezalel.

Lamech and His Song: 4:23f. - "The Sword Song." He sings about a "young man" whom he killed because the young man merely injured him. Lamech takes vengeance upon the young man disproportionately by taking his life for the wrong. His will be unbounded vengeance (i.e., seventy-sevenfold).

(1) Lamech rejoices in violence. He takes pleasure in the death of others. (2) Lamech exercises disproportionate judgment. (3) Lamech rejects God as his avenger and assumes the role of avenger.

3. SETH AND THE NEW MAN (25-26)

The Birth of the Seed of the Woman: cf. 3:15 - Seth and "set" - another play on words. Seth is the "seed of the woman."

The Birth of the Man: First, we are given the name of the son of Seth, Enosh. Enosh is essentially a synonym for Adam. It can be translated "man." What we are left with here at the end of this section is hope because God has given the world a new "man."

Second, we read that it was at this time that *man* [implied from the singular] began to call upon the name of YHWH. This phrase and concept are used throughout the OT to speak about people being worshipers of God (cf. Gen 12:8; 13:4; 21:33; 26:25; 1Ki 18:24; Joel 3:5; Zeph 3:9).

Application: (1) The wicked and righteous grow together in this world.

Application: (2) The wicked do beneficial things.

Application: (3) The righteous are called to transform the world for the glory of God.