

EXPOSITION OF GENESIS

Message #19

Genesis 4:16-24

Cain was a man who blatantly rebelled against God. He refused to offer the proper sacrifice to the LORD, he killed his brother and he lied to the LORD God. God cursed Cain in that he could no longer farm and was destined to wander (4:12). As we come to this passage, we discover that Cain is not lying in some gutter totally broke and depressed, nor is he pleading with God for grace and mercy. What we find is he is producing a godless lineage that seems to be making great progress in the world.

PEOPLE WHO ARE NOT RIGHT WITH GOD AND DO NOT HAVE A PROPER RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD ARE PEOPLE WHO DO MAKE GREAT PROGRESS. IN THIS WORLD FOR A WHILE.

The prosperity of Cain is in this world, not in God's world. Cain's success is only temporary, but the condemnation is eternal.

OBSERVATION #1 - The relocation of Cain. 4:16

Prior to his proud sin against God, Cain lived with the rest of his family somewhere east of Eden (3:23-24). Now, however, he is forced to move further east to a place named Nod. It is not known for sure just where this was, but the Hebrew name "Nob" means land of exile, land of flight, land of the wanderer.

The fact that he was "out from the presence of the LORD" means he was no longer in the place Where he would receive special guidance, care, protection and blessings directly from the LORD. He was, as Dr. Leupold said, "... shut off from God" (Leupold, Vol. 1, p. 213).

OBSERVATION #2 - The propagation of Cain. 4:17a

Cain went to his own 'chosen land' and began his new life apart from God by producing a son by his wife. This means Cain would have married his own sister (Genesis 5:4). The possibility of Cain producing a son by his sister is due to the dispensational fact that at this infant stage in history - 1) People were living to be very old, something impossible today (Genesis 5:5, 8, 11, 14, 17); 2) God had not given His law forbidding this kind of relationship (Leviticus 20:17); 3) By the time Abraham and Sarah were on the scene, the brother and sister marriage was no longer accepted, for to assume that Sarah was Abraham's full sister was to assume that she could not be his wife (Genesis 12:13; 20:12).

The name "Enoch" is a Hebrew word that means initiated. **This was the beginning initiation of a lineage against God.**

OBSERVATION #3 - The construction of Cain. 4:17b

We may recall that when Adam and Eve had their first child, this very Cain, their first thoughts were toward God (4:1). When Cain has his first child, his first thoughts are for himself. Cain built a city and named it after his son. His only thought is to honor his son, not God.

The fact that Cain built a city is proof that he is cursed. We may recall that his love was for farming (4:2), however he could no longer succeed at it because of God's curse (4:12). So he built a city and became **the father of urbanization**. Since he was destined to be a wanderer (4:12), we may assume his motive is to leave behind some great testimonial to his own life. Since Cain was destined to be a wanderer (4:12), this was probably an attempt to defy God by building for himself a place he could call home. But the only testimonial he leaves behind is of one who lives life his way, not God's way.

The thing that testified of Enoch, Cain's son, was this city. The thing that will testify of Enosh, Seth's son, was a love for God (5:6, 19, 21, 23). Two lines of people existed in Cain's day and in ours - those who love this world and those who love God.

The Psalms testify of people who invest their lives in building their house or their land and name it after themselves - all they are really building is their own tombstone (Psalm 49:10-12).

OBSERVATION #4 - The propagation of Enoch. 4:18

In verse 18, we get a glimpse of some of the sons born to Enoch, most of whom we know nothing about. The most famous of them is Lamech, the seventh from Adam on Cain's side. In these names we discover that two of them end in "el", which comes from "Elohim", which is a key name of God, which speaks of His majestic power and might. This tells us that Cain's family had some form of knowledge of God and may have been so proud and arrogant that they were seeing themselves as being majestic and powerful in the world. It is also possible that Irad had some fear of God which was short lived in Mehujael and Methushael, which would demonstrate that even in the most godless of families, there may still be those who fear God.

OBSERVATION #5 - The progression of Lamech. 4:19-24

From all worldly standards Lamech appears to be a winner, but from God's standards, he is a loser. Two things he did that prove his defiance against God: 1) Marriages; 2) Murder.

Fact #1 - Lamech had multiple wives. 4:19

Here is the first account of polygamy. As John Phillips said, "The new age was one of moral disorder ... Lamech felt himself strong enough to defy convention and introduce a new morality." Adah means one adorned with ornaments and Zillah means something with no substance, something shady. He did not select a wife because she loved God.

Fact #2 - Lamech had successful children. 4:20-22

Each wife produced children and each one was a worldly success. **Jabal (4:20)**, Lamech's son by Adah, became the father of nomadic ranching. **Jubal (4:21)**, Lamech's son by Adah, was as Dr. S. Lewis Johnson said, "an inventive genius and originated the stringed and wind musical instruments." Jubal was a gifted man whose specialty was music. **Tubal-cain (4:22)**, Lamech's son by Zillah, was the father of metal work and skilled tradesman who could make all kinds of things out of metal.

These three sons of Lamech were major successes in this world - prosperous and powerful, creative and controlling. But no one in this line had a proper relationship with God. That is what makes them and their developments so dangerous.

Fact #3 - Lamech committed murder. 4:23-24

The close proximity between verse 23 and 22 indicates that Lamech used some metal implement to commit murder. Lamech killed someone who wounded him in some way and he became law unto himself. If a man wronged him, he killed him. Not only did he justify his actions, but he pronounced a God-type curse upon any who touched him.

Our society has become a Cain-like society. In spite of amazing technology, we have lost our standards of morality and our sanctity of life.

Everything that Cain and his family strived for was eventually destroyed. This is a dismal and disastrous story of a failure. So it will be with this world. Cain's offspring were never right with God. They had things, they had money, they had success, they had power and promotions ... but when all is said and done, they are left with nothing because everything they worked for will be destroyed by God.

You and I have a choice to make - go the way of Cain or the way of God. Which choice do we make?