

Spiritual Legacy 10-15-06

Genesis 4:17-26 (NIV)

¹⁷ Cain lay with his wife, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Enoch. Cain was then building a city, and he named it after his son Enoch. ¹⁸ To Enoch was born Irad, and Irad was the father of Mehujael, and Mehujael was the father of Methushael, and Methushael was the father of Lamech. ¹⁹ Lamech married two women, one named Adah and the other Zillah. ²⁰ Adah gave birth to Jabal; he was the father of those who live in tents and raise livestock. ²¹ His brother's name was Jubal; he was the father of all who play the harp and flute. ²² Zillah also had a son, Tubal-Cain, who forged all kinds of tools out of bronze and iron. Tubal-Cain's sister was Naamah.

²³ Lamech said to his wives, "Adah and Zillah, listen to me; wives of Lamech, hear my words. I have killed a man for wounding me, a young man for injuring me. ²⁴ If Cain is avenged seven times, then Lamech seventy-seven times."

²⁵ Adam lay with his wife again, and she gave birth to a son and named him Seth, saying, "God has granted me another child in place of Abel, since Cain killed him." ²⁶ Seth also had a son, and he named him Enosh. At that time men began to call on the name of the LORD.

After Adam and Eve chose to disobey God and were driven from Eden, they found themselves in a fallen condition and living in a fallen world. Sin had marred their relationship with God, with each other, and the world they lived in. One of their sons, Cain, killed his brother in jealousy over God's favor upon him. God then banished him from His presence and gave an additional curse upon his agricultural efforts.

One of the purposes of Genesis is to give us an account of the ancestors of the Patriarchs. Our passage today gives some insight into two of the branches, the lineage of Cain and that of Seth. Surely, Moses included what was relevant and useful for us. As we look at the lineage of Cain, we can learn some eternal truths that can guide our understanding about the world we live in today. There are bound to be points of application to our own lives. (John 13:17)

The amazing use of seven and its multiples continues in this section of Genesis. *The narrative is built on the numerical congruity of sevens and multiples of seven: the emphatic "seven" for Cain (v. 15) and Lamech (v. 24); "brother" is found seven times; "Cain," fourteen and "Seth," seven; the divine names "God," "Lord God," and "Lord" together in 2:4-4:26 occur thirty-five times (5 x 7), equaling the same number "God" appears in 1:1-2:3, and the seventieth (10 x 7) occasion of deity's name in Genesis is at 4:26b when men called on the "name of the Lord."*—New American Commentary

¹⁷ Cain lay with his wife, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Enoch. Cain was then building a city, and he named it after his son Enoch. One of the first things we can see in our text is the incredible mercy of God. God warned Cain about danger of sin controlling him. Cain didn't pay attention to the warning, and that

Commented [notes1]: 17 Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them. John 13:17 (NIV)

resulted in him killing his brother in a rage. God could have executed Cain on the spot. Instead, God mercifully preserved his life. We see that he was even blessed with a wife, probably one of his sisters or nieces. (Genesis 5:4) Though he was cursed to be a wanderer and had to live outside of the presence of the Lord, he found someone that was willing to endure that with him. He was no longer alone. Then God even blessed them with a child. We can see that our disobedience does not completely cut us off from the grace and blessings of God. Jesus said that God's blessings fall on both the just and the unjust. He is merciful to us all. (Matthew 5:45b) We experience the same gracious mercy that Cain did.

Commented [notes2]: 4 After Seth was born, Adam lived 800 years and had other sons and daughters. Gen 5:4 (NIV)

The mercy Cain received should have turned his heart back to God. It is the goodness of God that leads us to repentance. (Romans 2:4) He should have seen how gracious God was to warn him, to not execute him, to give him a mark of protection, to provide a wife, and now to give him a child. (2Kings 13:23) Instead, Cain decided he would defy God's curse. God sentenced him to wander, so Cain decided he would start a city, settle down and stay in one place. He named the city after his son, Enoch. (Psalm 49:11) How do you respond to God's grace?

Commented [notes3]: He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. Matt 5:45b (NIV)

Commented [notes4]: 4 Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, tolerance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness leads you toward repentance? Romans 2:4 (NIV)

Commented [notes5]: 23 But the LORD was gracious to them and had compassion and showed concern for them because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. To this day he has been unwilling to destroy them or banish them from his presence. 2 Kings 13:23 (NIV)

They probably had more children than are mentioned. We only have the names of the key characters to follow the family line. The city (the Hebrew word is used for all sizes of settlements) would have been inhabited by people all related to one another. The text goes through the lineage of Cain to the seventh generation of man, Lamech. Because of their longevity, Cain would have still been alive to see that generation and tell his story to them.

Commented [notes6]: 11 Their tombs will remain their houses forever, their dwellings for endless generations, though they had named lands after themselves. Psalms 49:11 (NIV)

Lamech married two women Adah and Zillah, and thus became the first polygamist in the Bible. (Genesis 2:24) Lamech's sons through these women were very gifted. ²⁰ Adah gave birth to Jabal; he was the father of those who live in tents and raise livestock. ²¹ His brother's name was Jubal; he was the father of all who play the harp and flute. The sixth generation from Cain took on the livelihood of the brother Cain killed. He was a herdsman. His brother created musical instruments.

Commented [notes7]: 24 For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh. Gen 2:24 (NIV)

Zillah's children were also gifted. ²² Zillah also had a son, Tubal-Cain, who forged all kinds of tools out of bronze and iron. Tubal-Cain's sister was Naamah. Zillah and Lamech had the audacity to name their son after Cain. The shame of his deed was no longer remembered or perhaps even considered a virtue. Tubal-Cain means "brought of Cain". The word "forged" is "to hammer and sharpen". He was a metal worker. He discovered how to forge bronze and iron. He probably made tools for farming and implements of war, the first knives and swords.

Cain's descendents seem to be on the cutting edge of civilization, building cities, mastering livestock, creating musical instruments and working metals. Yet, as we are about to see, cultural advancement is not synonymous with godliness. It can often be just the opposite as was the case in so many past civilizations. We can either thank God for the advancements and use them for His glory, or we can credit our natural abilities and exalt man. They were facing the same temptation that their Grandmother Eve faced when Satan said, "You shall be as gods." (Genesis 3:5) We face the same temptation to exalt self instead of glorifying God.

Commented [notes8]: 5 "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." Gen 3:5 (NIV)

Technology and cultural advancement are not evil. As we saw in the story of the fall, evil comes from within the heart of man. (Matthew 15:19) Technology can glorify God in its ability to help people cope with a fallen world, or it can destroy lives by the millions. We can write symphonies to the praise of God or to the glorification of lust. (Isaiah 5:12) The same steel can be a surgical instrument to save a life or a weapon to take it. It all depends on the heart of the user, and the heart of Cain's lineage was not inclined to glorify God. (Jude 1:11)

Commented [notes9]: 19 For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander. Matt 15:19 (NIV)

Commented [notes10]: 12 They have harps and lyres at their banquets, tambourines and flutes and wine, but they have no regard for the deeds of the LORD, no respect for the work of his hands. Isaiah 5:12 (NIV)

Commented [notes11]: 11 Woe to them! They have taken the way of Cain; they have rushed for profit into Balaam's error; they have been destroyed in Korah's rebellion. Jude 1:11 (NIV)

We have come to the Song of the Sword. ²³ *Lamech said to his wives, "Adah and Zillah, listen to me; wives of Lamech, hear my words. I have killed a man for wounding me, a young man for injuring me.* Lamech is uttering another poem, a poem of defiance, a beat your chest macho kind of boast. Some young person injured him, so he over retaliated by murdering him. Mr. Powerful may have used a knife crafted by his son to take the life of that young man. The Hebrew could imply that he was going to, in other words, premeditated murder. He knew the story of his ancestor Cain, and may have even heard it from his own lips. Instead of fearing God, he looked at the grace of God on Cain's life and decided he would boldly commit the same crime. (Romans 6:1)

Commented [notes12]: 1 What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? Romans 6:1 (NIV)

Lamech went on to sing a defiant challenge. ²⁴ *If Cain is avenged seven times, then Lamech seventy-seven times.*" God had answered Cain's concern about revenge by assuring him that if anyone killed him, they would be dealt with 7 times as severely. Lamech put himself in the place of God by declaring that no one dare avenge him or they will be avenged 77 times. Lamech is not only as unrepentant as Cain, he is even more arrogantly defiant. Instead of asking for protection as his forefather Cain had done, he made a threat. (Romans 1:29-31)

Commented [notes13]: 29 They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, 30 slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; 31 they are senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless. Romans 1:29-31 (NIV)

Was the person that Lamech killed of the lineage of Seth, the other side of Adam's family that continued living in the presence of God? He refers to his victim as a young man. It seems if they were closely related and living in the same village he would have referred to him by name. Instead, this was probably a son or grandson of Seth. Were they disputing over territory or a spring, or was it an accident? We don't know. But this is the immediate fulfillment of the prediction of God to the serpent. The seed of the serpent would be at enmity with the seed of the woman. (Genesis 3:15) Cain was the first to persecute the righteous, and his descendents followed in his footsteps. (2Timothy 3:12)

Commented [notes14]: 15 And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel." Gen 3:15 (NIV)

The prophesied enmity continues to this day at a rate of about 10,000 murders a year. The spiritual seed of the serpent is still persecuting and putting to death the children of God, the seed of the woman. They still sing boastful songs about it. They still declare that we have only seen the beginning of their vengeance. They still tell us that if we retaliate we will not see the end of their wrath. What they don't realize is that love is more powerful than the sword, (1Corinthians 13:8a) that God is sovereign over all, and the judge of all mankind.

Commented [notes15]: 12 In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, 2 Tim 3:12 (NIV)

Commented [notes16]: 8 Love never fails. 1 Cor 13:8a (NIV)

Jesus emphasized the difference between the two seeds in a veiled reference to this verse. Peter came to Jesus with a question. How many times should we forgive someone who sins against us? The various religious groups argued over the number

of times and so Peter wanted the Master to weigh in on the argument. Jesus shocked everyone listening by saying 77 times. Some of your translations say 70 times 7, but both translations can be derived from the text. I think He meant 77 times. You see, if the seed of the serpent wanted revenge for a transgression 77 times, Jesus was saying that the children of God need to forgive 77 violations against them. (Matthew 18:21-22) If the seed of the serpent is that filled with hatred, we need to be equally filled with grace. If they are going to be so full of spite and malice, we need to be filled to an equivalent amount of love and mercy. Which do we believe is more powerful, the sword or forgiveness? (Proverbs 22:15) The way you act reveals what you believe. I often say I believe something and find I act differently. That means I've convinced myself that I believe something I really don't. You act on what you believe.

Commented [notes17]: 21 Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?" 22 Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.
Matt 18:21-22 (NIV)

Commented [notes18]: 15 Through patience a ruler can be persuaded, and a gentle tongue can break a bone.
Prov 25:15 (NIV)

Of course I'm speaking of personal responsibility and not governmental responsibility. (Romans 13:3-4) The Christian world needs to be clear on this Biblical teaching and I will devote next Sunday to that subject. There is a great deal of confusion today on the difference because of the ignorance of the teaching in the Word of God.

Commented [notes19]: 3 For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and he will commend you.
4 For he is God's servant to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer.
Romans 13:3-4 (NIV)

Listen to how the Apostle Paul responded to abuse. ^{12b} *When we are cursed, we bless; when we are persecuted, we endure it;* ¹³ *when we are slandered, we answer kindly. Up to this moment we have become the scum of the earth, the refuse of the world.* 1 Corinthians 4:12-13 (NIV) Is that how you respond? It should be if you are a child of God. It is the seed of the serpent, the ones who don't realize that love and forgiveness are more powerful, they are the ones that curse and slander and persecute. We are supposed to be the ones that bless, endure, and answer kindly. It is when we act like the world that we lack the testimony of children of God. We are powerless when we act like the world, not powerful. (2 Corinthians 12:9)

Commented [notes20]: 9 But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me.
2 Cor 12:9 (NIV)

The text jumps back in time to the other side of the family. ²⁵ *Adam lay with his wife again, and she gave birth to a son and named him Seth, saying, "God has granted me another child in place of Abel, since Cain killed him."* Seth means "granted". Adam and Eve were grateful that God had granted them another son in the place of Able. Eve was using the same Hebrew word that God used in His promise when He promised the seed of the woman would crush the head of the serpent. She was voicing faith in the promise of God. Seth's line would take a different route from that of Cain. It is brought out even more clearly in the next verse. Now she believes God!

Commented [notes21]: 32 And everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved; for on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will be deliverance, as the LORD has said, among the survivors whom the LORD calls.
Joel 2:32 (NIV)

²⁶ *Seth also had a son, and he named him Enosh. At that time men began to call on the name of the LORD.* Millennia later, the prophet Joel would write that whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. (Joel 2:32) The Apostle Paul quoted Joel in Romans 10:13. The line of Seth was the first to call on the name of the Lord. What exactly does that mean? The name of the Lord is the sum of His attributes. The line of Seth called out to God to plead for His mercy and love. They desired His grace and goodness in their lives. They would have asked to be saved from the wrath they deserved, for wrath is an attribute of God as much as His love is. His holiness demands justice. They knew that from what took place in the Garden and the curse on Cain. We want to ignore that, like Cain's line ignored it.

Commented [notes22]: 13 for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."
Romans 10:13 (NIV)

The Old Testament people were saved just like you and I are. That is why we have the verse about calling on the name of the Lord in both Testaments and in the very beginning. The people that realize they must call on the name of Lord, plead for His mercy and grace in their lives, they are the seed of the woman, the children of God. It is the arrogant boasters who declare they have no need of God that are the seed of the serpent. (John 8:44) We were all in that category until the grace of God moved our hearts to call on the name of the Lord. (Ephesians 2:3)

Commented [notes23]: 44 You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies. John 8:44 (NIV)

In closing, I would like you to consider these two family lines. One was noted for their creativity, for their civilized progress, but was increasingly like their father Cain. They grew increasingly independent and arrogant toward their Creator. In the weeks to come, we will see how they infected the world with their godless attitude. What a heritage of godlessness Cain produced! What a record of pain and suffering go back to his decision to let sin master him.

Commented [notes24]: 3 All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath. Eph 2:3 (NIV)

Then there is the heritage of Seth. To call on the name of the Lord can also be translated "to proclaim the name of the Lord". Were the children of Seth telling the children of Cain about the glorious attributes of God? It would be consistent with human history. Seth has a wonderful heritage. His testimony will forever be of him choosing good over evil. He had no great accomplishments that the world would look to, but what truly matters in the end? What do you boast in? (2Corinthians 10:17)

Commented [notes25]: 17 But, "Let him who boasts boast in the Lord." [2 Cor 10:17 (NIV)]

I could boast about my children's abilities and often do, but I'd rather boast in the fact that they call on the name of the Lord. They look to him for His mercy and grace. That is a legacy I'm most honored to have. In a hundred years their degrees won't mean anything, but their walk with the Lord will! Your legacy is greatly influenced by the choices you make. If you turned to the Lord later in life and the damage was already done, your children can still have the same turn around that you had. Pray for that day to come and be a loving faithful witness by the change in your life. If you taught them well but they went their own way, remember that if you bring them up in the way that they should go, when they are old they will not depart from it. (Proverbs 22:6) Keep praying for that day to come when they call on the name of the Lord.

Commented [notes26]: 6 Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it. Prov 22:6 (NIV)

Listen to the Lord proclaim His own name to Moses. There is a strong connection with the message of this passage we have studied. ⁵ Then the LORD came down in the cloud and stood there with him and proclaimed his name, the LORD. ⁶ And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, "The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, ⁷ maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation." Exodus 34:5-7 (NIV) What effect will you have on future generations?

Let me repeat the very words of the Lord God to the prophet Joel, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." Have you joined the seed of the

woman, realized your need for the mercy and love of God, your Creator, in your life? Have you moved from darkness to light? That is the first step in leaving a godly spiritual legacy. Here we are, millennia later, making the same decisions that the lines of Cain and Seth made. We can boast in our life of achievements and culture apart from God, a meaningless blip on the radar of eternity, or we can boast in the grace and mercy of a loving God who took our sins upon Himself when He went to the cross in our place. (1 Corinthians 1:31) Those that call on the name of the LORD are the seed of the woman, the sons and daughters of God. (2 Corinthians 6:17-18)

Commented [notes27]: 31 Therefore, as it is written: "Let him who boasts boast in the Lord."
1 Cor 1:31 (NIV)

Commented [notes28]: 17 "Therefore come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you."
18 "I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty."
2 Cor 6:17-18 (NIV)