

## 15. Hope in the Midst of Darkness

‘And Cain knew his wife; and she conceived, and bare Enoch: and he builded a city, and called the name of the city, after the name of his son, Enoch. And unto Enoch was born Irad: and Irad begat Mehujael: and Mehujael begat Methusael: and Methusael begat Lamech. And Lamech took unto him two wives: the name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other Zillah. And Adah bare Jubal: he was the father of such as dwell in tents, and of such as have cattle. And his brother's name was Jubal: he was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ. And Zillah, she also bare Tubalcain, an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron: and the sister of Tubalcain was Naamah. And Lamech said unto his wives, Adah and Zillah, Hear my voice; ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech: for I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt. If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold. And Adam knew his wife again; and she bare a son, and called his name Seth: For God, said she, hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew. And to Seth, to him also there was born a son; and he called his name Enos: then began men to call upon the name of the LORD (Genesis 4:17-26).’

The remainder of chapter 4 further describes the path of man’s rebellion against God. We have seen the original fall of man into sin and its consequences in chapter 3 and the immediate results of that fall in the murder of Abel. Here the picture further darkens as the world (especially the Cainite line) moves further away from God into lawlessness.

Yet in the midst of all this darkness there is hope with the emergence of a godly line through Seth (from Adam and Eve). This is yet another beginning, the beginning of two humanities, of the children of God and the children of Satan. This beginning was foretold by God in Genesis 3:15. These two basic divisions of humanity can be traced throughout the Bible, often with differing names such as the elect and the world.

**QUESTION:** How are these two basic divisions of humanity seen in the world today? Give examples that evidence this division if possible.

**Verse 17:** There is no information in the Bible as to how Cain came to have a wife - all conclusions drawn on the matter are but speculation. There seems no real profit in applying one’s mind to it. Cain has a wife and they soon have a child - Enoch. Given what is recorded in Genesis it is quite likely that Cain had more children than Enoch alone. But it is this line in which the Bible is particularly interested.

Not only does Cain set about building a family, for he builds a city also - Enoch. This seems to be a further attempt to live self-sufficiently without God. Though again speculation, it is likely that Cain’s fear of being killed (4:14) led him to seek out the security of a city.

**QUESTION:** Give examples of how you have attempted to ‘protect’ yourself from the

consequences of your own sin? Explain the similarity between your attempt and Cain's.

**Verse 18:** The reason for mentioning Enoch now becomes apparent, for it was to bring Lamech to our attention. This verse follows Cain's line through Enoch, to Irad, to Mehujael, to Methusael and then to Lamech.

**Verse 19:** The example of Lamech is held up for our observation as a particularly wicked man, showing just how quickly man had become so corrupted by sin. But this man is just one example of a whole race of men who had corrupted by sin (6:2-7).

**QUESTION:** Is there any difference between Lamech and humanity today, or is the example of Lamech and his generation comparable with the lives of men today? Explain your answer.

Verse 19 shows a further corruption of God's revealed purpose. The line of Cain is continuing in its rebellion against God, by abandoning God's plan of marriage (2: 23-25) and modifying it to suit its own purposes. Here we see the introduction of polygamy.

**QUESTION:** How is polygamy a rejection of God's revealed purpose regarding marriage?

**Verse 20:** This verse shows that though humanity had undoubtedly fallen under the sway of sin and the wicked one, it was still blessed of God through His providence. Here is evidence of God's goodness even to men in rebellion against Him. Jabal is held up as the human originator of tents and husbandry, endowments that undoubtedly came from the providential dealings of God. This knowledge was then of course passed down through latter generations.

**Verses 21 and 22:** In these verses further examples of God's goodness toward fallen man are given, with Jubal being the human originator of musical instruments and Tubal-cain the originator of metal working. All these blessings of the providence of God have of course been passed down to latter generations.

**NOTE: INDIVIDUAL DISCOVERY QUESTION HERE:** What does Lamech's declaration relating to his murder of a man reveal about his character and position before God?

**Verses 23 and 24:** It is interesting to note the difference in attitude even between Cain and Lamech. Cain was grieved by the punishment for his sin and sought to flee from it, while Lamech seems to boast in it. This is a further step down the pathway of rebellion against God. Whereas it was God who decreed that He would avenge Cain if he were

killed, it is Lamech who decrees that Lamech would be avenged ‘seventy and sevenfold.’ The pride and barbarity of Lamech is clearly evident in these two verses.

What happens at the end of Lamech’s boasting? Where did it get him? The answer will come soon enough in chapter 6 - the flood. The time of Lamech’s boasting was about the time that God called man to account for his sin.

**Verse 25:** It is probable that the birth of Seth did not mark only the third of Adam and Eve’s children. It is more than likely that Cain had married a sister and that there had been many others already born to Adam and Eve. Given how long both Adam and Eve lived it is likely that there were many, many children as Genesis 5:4,5 indicate. Adam had lived some 130 years prior to the birth of Seth and it is extremely unlikely that he had had only two children during that time.

What is important to note is that having already focussed on the ungodly line of Cain, the focus now switches to consider the godly line through Seth, hence the reason Seth is mentioned and none of the other children. It is a focus on another beginning. Prior to this it had been the beginning of the wicked line, now the focus is on the beginning of the godly line or those that ‘began to call upon the name of the Lord (4:26).’

In this verse we see that even after the disappointment of Cain, Eve still maintained her faith in God’s promise (3:15) of the promised deliverer. Hope was not extinguished in Eve; rather she continued to look ahead in faith. The name ‘Seth’ means ‘appointed.’ In other words Eve recognised Seth as the one appointed by God. Could he therefore be the one appointed by God to deliver man from sin? Eve may very well have been thinking along these lines when she named Seth.

**Verse 26:** The godly line continues through Seth to his son Enos and it was at this time ‘began men to call upon the name of the Lord.’ What an awful picture this verse brings to the mind - two groups of humanity from the one family, one against God and those calling upon God! Yet this has been the way of men throughout the ages, with families divided in their loyalties.

Yet it is a wonderful picture also, for out of the darkness of sin there comes this amazing hope. In the midst of this now fallen world ‘began men to call upon the name of the Lord.’ Here is a clear expression of spiritual life in the lives of fallen men. Men who had not completely abandoned their Creator or more correctly a Creator who had not abandoned His creation.

**QUESTION:** What does it mean to ‘call upon the name of the Lord?’ Does this hope still exist today? Explain your answer.

## INDIVIDUAL DISCOVERY

What is the significance of Enoch having 'walked with God' in Genesis 5:22?

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