

SALT Church

Genesis 4:17-26

“The Way of Cain”

July 16, 2025

“In the Beginning”

Recap:

- Cain has killed Able
- God comes to Cain and ask him where is brother?
- Cain responds with “Am I my brother’s keeper?”

¹⁰ But the Lord said, “What have you done? Listen! Your brother’s blood cries out to me from the ground!”

- Just process that statement.
- When people are murdered their blood cries out to the Lord longing for justice.
 - In 2023 (according to the CDC) there were 22,830 murders in the US.
 - 62.5 per day
- Globally it is estimated that 437,000 are murdered annually
 - 1,197.26 per day
 - 49.88 per hour
 - .831 per minute
- Look what Cain started!

¹¹ Now you are cursed and banished from the ground, which has swallowed your brother’s blood. ¹² No longer will the ground

yield good crops for you, no matter how hard you work! From now on you will be a homeless wanderer on the earth.”

- The ground through no fault of its own had become an accomplice to the murder and cover-up that followed.
- The result of that cover-up would be that the ground would no longer produce life for Cain.
- Cain had subjected the ground to death and death would be the fruit that would spring forth every time Cain planted something.

¹³ Cain replied to the Lord, “My punishment is too great for me to bear!”

- Suddenly Cain is a man of faith!
 - When Jesus went to him and told him that sin was crouching at his door waiting to devour him, Cain did not believe Him.
 - But now Cain believes.

¹⁴ You have banished me from the land and from your presence; you have made me a homeless wanderer. Anyone who finds me will kill me!”

- The irony of this moment is amazing.
- The 1st murderer is afraid of being murdered.
 - This also implies that there are other people on the planet.
 - All children of Adam and Eve.

¹⁵ The Lord replied, “No, for I will give a sevenfold punishment to anyone who kills you.”

- Does this imply that God is against capital punishment? (NO)

Exodus 21:28-32

²⁸ “If an ox gores a man or woman to death, the ox must be stoned, and its flesh may not be eaten. In such a case, however, the owner will not be held liable. ²⁹ But suppose the ox had a reputation for goring, and the owner had been informed but failed to keep it under control. If the ox then kills someone, it must be stoned, **and the owner must also be put to death.** ³⁰ However, the dead person’s relatives may accept payment to compensate for the loss of life. The owner of the ox may redeem his life by paying whatever is demanded.

³¹ “The same regulation applies if the ox gores a boy or a girl. ³² **But if the ox gores a slave,** either male or female, the animal’s owner must **pay the slave’s owner thirty silver coins,** and the ox must be stoned.

Matthew 26:15 Judas was paid thirty pieces of silver for Jesus’ death.

Another strange reality is that because capital punishment exists you and I have been adopted into the family of God.

- For it was through Jesus’ death (capital punishment) that it was made possible.

Capital punishment in the Bible included the death penalty for:

- Murder
- Kidnapping
- Bestiality
- Adultery
- Homosexuality

- Being a false prophet
- Prostitution
- Rape
- Idolatry
- Infant sacrifice
- Blasphemy (Jesus)
- Witchcraft and divination
- Sabbath breaking
- A priest daughter was put to death if she was caught having sex outside of marriage (explain)
- Incest
- Dishonoring your parents!
- Given false witness that led to some one's death.

Fortunately for Cain, these laws had not been written yet.

Then the Lord put a mark on Cain to warn anyone who might try to kill him.

- Perhaps it was a tattoo that said “don’t do it!”
- One writer speculated that Cains head glowed like Moses’ head and therefore would frighten people.
- Another writer said that he thought that God had assigned a divine guard dog that would attack anyone who tried to attack Cain.
 - Whatever it was it was Gods mercy on Cain earthly life.
 - Cain would not be shown any mercy upon his death.

16 So Cain left the Lord's presence and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

- The word Nod means “wander”
 - So, this could read that Cain wandered in the land east of Eden.

Now we pick up where we left off

17 Cain had sexual relations with his wife, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Enoch.

- Clearly Cain married one of his sisters which was not forbidden by God yet.
- Soon the DNA pool of humanity would become so corrupted that God would command humanity not to marry relatives.
- But at this point this is the accepted practice.
 - Cain must have been an amazing guy for everyone would know that he had no future and no hope and still he was able to convince a woman to marry him.
 - It is also possible that he was already married, we just don't know.

(side note)

- Some commentary say that when Cain killed Able that there were only four people on earth. (Adam, Eve, Cain, & Able)
- I struggle with that thought and hears why:

14 You have banished me from the land and from your presence; you have made me a homeless wanderer. Anyone who finds me will kill me!”

- If the only people left on the earth were Adam, Eve, and Cain why would Cain say this?
 - Who would he have to fear?
 - His parents would not have wanted to kill him but rather would have urged him to repent.
- So, you see there are occasions in which I disagree with John MacArthur (not many)

Then Cain founded a city, which he named Enoch, after his son.

- The Hebrew word for city or town is “ir” pronounced eer.
 - It can mean settlement or town.
 - I do believe that it did grow into a city but it took some time.
 - Keep in mind the condition of the earth and the longevity of life.
 - It took a while but once it got rolling it really grew.
- Another observation is that God had told Cain that he would never be able to settle down, obviously Cain is shacking his unrepentant fist at God in an attempt to prove God wrong.
 - Thus we understand the foundation of the city to be one in which rebellion to God is celebrated.

Enoch means “dedicated”

- Cain dedicates his settlement to his son and not God.
 - Some writers say that this is also an indication that Cain did not stay but left later.
 - Meaning that the city belonged to his son and not Cain.

- We do silly things like this today.
- We name streets, property, buildings, and bridges after ourselves in hopes of making our name last forever.

But I am reminded of

Psalms 49:11-13

**¹¹ The grave is their eternal home,
where they will stay forever.**

They may name their estates after themselves,

¹² but their fame will not last.

They will die, just like animals.

¹³ This is the fate of fools,

though they are remembered as being wise.

(Another side note)

- This Enoch is not the righteous preacher Enoch that we will learn about later.
 - This one is simply recorded so that we understand the lineage down to Lamech.

¹⁸ Enoch had a son named Irad. Irad became the father of Mehujael. Mehujael became the father of Methushael. Methushael became the father of Lamech.

- All of this was said to get us to Lamech.
 - There will be another man named Lamech who is righteous before the Lord but this guy is not him.

19 Lamech married two women.

- Sin makes you stupid!
 - God had said that marriage was between one man and one woman and the two had become one.
 - Lamech had shook his fist at God like his father and taken two wives.
 - No one would tell him what is acceptable!

***The first was named Adah,
and the second was Zillah.²⁰***

- We are not given a time frame as to when he took his second wife but there are clues as to the type of man Lamech was.

Adah gave birth to Jabal, who was the first of those who raise livestock and live in tents.

- The Hebrew word “yobal” means a ram’s horn
- Perhaps the origin of that word comes from what Jabal
- Jabal apparently excelled in his work in livestock.
- His early work in animal husbandry would be carried on throughout the earth.
 - Many of the Bibles most well-known men were shepherds as well (Abraham, Moses, and King David)

21 His brother’s name was Jubal, the first of all who play the harp and flute.

- In Jubal’s name we find the origin of the word “jubilee”
- A jubilee was a time of the Lord’s favor.

- It was a time of unbelievable blessing.
- It was signaled by the blowing of the ram's horn!

These two brothers excelled in what they did, and the result was that civilization was enriched by what they did.

- The problem with be that they did not do it for the glory of God and anything that is not done for the glory of God has the potential to be very destructive.
 - Clearly, we see this in music today.
 - A very small part is produced for the glory of God while the other glorifies everything that Jesus came to save us from.

(It gets worse)

²² Lamech's other wife, Zillah, gave birth to a son named Tubal-cain. He became an expert in forging tools of bronze and iron.

- Tubal means hammer or sharpen.
- So, it is clear that he was a maker of tools.
- This technology would help advance building techniques which would further civilization.
- But like all things technology can be used for good or evil.

For example,

- Nuclear medicine is used every day in the fight against cancer and other medical conditions.
- The same nuclear energy that saves lives and utterly destroy all life.

- One nuclear bomb could wipe out more lives than a lifetime of nuclear medicine could ever save.

Why do I think there was a dark side to this man?

- It's his name "Tubal-Cain"
 - Cain was well known as the very first murderer
 - To be named after Cain was to draw upon his evil nature, to project fear.
 - This is what Lamech wanted for his son.
 - So, the maker of metal tools must have made the 1st weapons.
 - Why do I think that? (standby the answer is coming)

Tubal-cain had a sister named Naamah.

- Naamah means, pleasant or delightful.
- Perhaps that's why we don't know much about her.

***²³ One day Lamech said to his wives,
 "Adah and Zillah, hear my voice;
 listen to me, you wives of Lamech.
 I have killed a man who attacked me,
 a young man who wounded me.***

- Can you feel the violence in his tone
- Ask yourself, what kind of man would say this to his wives and what would be his intentions?
 - Fear!

- He wanted his wives and his children to fear him and I am sure they did.
- By the way the word used for young man is the Hebrew word yeled which means child.
 - This means that Lamech is bragging about killing a boy.
 - He was a ruthless man who projected fear.
 - This is what happens when you reject God, you raise children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren who become horrible people.

Lamech continues:

²⁴ If someone who kills Cain is punished seven times, then the one who kills me will be punished seventy-seven times!”

- Pride makes you say stupid things
- Seven is God’s perfect number meaning the punishment was perfectly measured for the crime.
- God had said that He would inflict 7 fold punishment upon anyone who tried to kill Cain.
- Lamech says, “***the one who kills me will be punished seventy-seven times!***”
 - Jesus had told the disciples that they should forgive people 77 times meaning you should pour out a flood of forgiveness because they had been forgiving.

- Lamech is conveying that he would pour out a flood of vengeance but there is one major problem with what Lamech says:
 - How does that work Lamech seeing how you will be dead.
 - Who will carry out the punishment?
 - (David Sharpless would say that's "Stupid, stupid, stupid!")

²⁵ Adam had sexual relations with his wife again, and she gave birth to another son. She named him Seth, for she said, "God has granted me another son in place of Abel, whom Cain killed."

- It is clear to me that Adam and Eve lived with that pain until they entered into Paradise with Able.
 - The pain of knowing that they had raised a murderer
 - The pain of knowing that they had become the 1st parents in all of history to experience both the murder of a child and the pain of knowing their older son was the 1st murderer.
 - Not to mention that God had pronounced a curse upon Cain in which there was no hope of redemption.
 - VERY PAINFUL!
- We don't know how long of a period between Cain and Seth.
 - We don't know if there were sisters born between.
- What we do know is that Adam and Eve lived a long time.
 - We are not told how long Eve lived but we are told that Adam lived to be 930 years old. (Gen. 5:3)

- We are also told that there were many sons and daughters born to them.
- If we assume that Eve lived just as long, it was nearly 1,000 years before they saw their beloved son Able again.
 - I have often wondered how long Able was in Paradise before someone from his family joined him.

²⁶ When Seth grew up, he had a son and named him Enosh. At that time people first began to worship the Lord by name.

- What does that mean?
- It means that Cain's family were the first to pioneer many things that advanced civilization.
 - Farming, music, and metal technology.
- Seth's family were pioneers in worship.
 - They are remembered for how they worshiped.
 - For they called upon the Lord by name.
 - God was real and personal to them and therefore we have an account of their entire line.

Finally, I want to close with this thought as we have arrived at the time of year when mayors and councilmen are voted upon.

- The most important quality of any candidate is their character and whom they have placed their faith.
- Don't fall into the trap of thinking that money for education is the solution to societies problems.
- Jesus is the only solution.

- If we continue to pour money into the education system believing that education will save us what we will discover is that all we have done is created better educated sinners or smarter sinners.
- Please be careful with whom you trust.
 - Ask great questions
 - Follow Jesus
 - Pray for wisdom and discernment
 - Sometimes you must vote for the lesser of the two evils.

With that said may I remind you that chapter 5 is all about those who chose to follow God.

- Meaning there is no more talk about Cain and his lineage.
 - God remembers His own.
 - God punishes those like Cain

Jude 1:10-11

¹⁰ But these people scoff at things they do not understand. Like unthinking animals, they do whatever their instincts tell them, and so they bring about their own destruction. ¹¹ What sorrow awaits them! For they follow in the footsteps of Cain, who killed his brother. Like Balaam, they deceive people for money. And like Korah, they perish in their rebellion.