

# THE BIRTH AND SPREAD OF SOCIETY

## Genesis 4:17-24

### INTRODUCTION

Lost City of Atlantis – legendary “lost” island subcontinent often idealized as an advanced, utopian society. The idea of Atlantis has captivated dreamers, occultists, and New Agers for generations.

In the 1800s, mystic Madame Blavatsky claimed that she learned about Atlantis from Tibetan gurus; a century later, psychic Edgar Cayce claimed that Atlantis (which he described as an ancient, highly evolved civilization powered by crystals) would be discovered by 1969. In the 1980s, New Age mystic J.Z. Knight claimed that she learned about Atlantis from Ramtha, a 35,000-year-old warrior spirit who speaks through her. Thousands of books, magazines and websites are devoted to Atlantis.

The only information recorded for humanity of antediluvian civilization - the time period 1500-2000 years between Adam and Noah - is written by God.

1500 years is a long period of time. Here is a small sampling of the inventions that have come about in the last 1500 years:

- horse collar, toilet paper, bank note, porcelain, gunpowder
- magnetic compass, eyeglasses, printing press, bookkeeping system, newspaper
- thermometer, steam engine, batteries, refrigerator, telephone, light bulb
- planes, trains, and automobiles, radio, television and computers
- cell phones, smart phones and internet

Smartphone push note from USA Today regarding this weekend’s movies - “ *‘Noah’ rides epic wave to the top of the box office*”

- ironic given our message today as we look at **Genesis 4**

### Genesis 4

The Spread of Sin ... Society ... Salvation.

vv. 1-16 – Spread of Sin

vv. 17-24 – Spread of Society (family estranged from God)

vv. 25-26 – Spread of Salvation (godly family)

**Genesis 1-11** is extremely logical – it is an orderly account

- man's development – not from primitive cavemen

Moses in Genesis regularly deals with the less important briefly and firstly. Then he deals with the more important extensively.

Cain (4:17-24)

Seth (4:25-9:28)

Sons of Noah (10-11:26)

Terah/Abraham (11:27-25:11)

Ishmael (25:12-18)

Isaac (25:19-35:29)

Esau (36-37:1)

Jacob (37:2-50)

**READ Gen 4:17-24**

**Proposition: We See Man Advance in 4 Areas:**

I. **Urbanization**

II. **Generation**

III. **Civilization**

IV. **Rebellion**

**So That:** we understand how man progressed and how sin grew

- assaults sanctity of **marriage** and sanctity of **life**
- common mercy of God during the advance of sin/rebellion

Civilizations of godless people flourish under common mercy, their origins are in Cain.

**1<sup>st</sup> Area** we see **Man Advance** ...

**I. Urbanization**

**Gen 4:17**

Point – Birth of the city; advance in urbanization

**Proof – Gen 4:17 – “And Cain had relations with his wife and she conceived, and gave birth to Enoch; and he built a city, and called the name of the city Enoch, after the name of his son.”**

“**And Cain had relations with his wife**” – Where did Cain get his wife? Answer is not far away, only next chapter. In my Bible, I don’t even have to turn the page.

**Gen 5:4 – “The days of Adam after he became the father of Seth were eight hundred years, and he had *other* sons and daughters”**

- Cain married one of his sisters, or nieces - one of his relatives
- prohibition against marrying sisters, nieces, and cousins comes later in the Mosaic Law.
- Abraham’s wife, Sarai was his half-sister (**20:12**) - all the way up to the Patriarchal times, brothers and sisters/half-sisters could still marry

Men and woman lived hundreds of years during this 1500 year period from Cain to Noah.

- health, strength, intelligence
- tropical climate, one land mass
- less physically affected by the consequences of sin

Now there are genetic reasons against incest. Today interbreeding produces harmful mutations and lower IQ’s and deformities.

Mutation is always harmful – contrary to evolution.

You know you can accelerate mutation with radiation. But contrary to comic books and movies, ... I’m sorry to have to tell you this, ... being dumped in a vat of radioactive waste will not give you super powers. It will kill you. Being bitten by a radioactive spider will not give you super powers.

The effects of sin are picking up – at time of Cain, not yet suffered the pollution effects of sin that will be seen in the succeeding centuries

Counting Cain, there are seven generations that are captured in our text today....

**“and she conceived, and gave birth to Enoch”** - his name means dedication, consecration, or initiation

- this is a different **“Enoch”** than **Gen 5** - that Enoch is in the line of Seth

**“and he built a city”** – better translation “and he was building a city” – a walled enclosure with some houses inside.

First **“city”** named in the Bible. Other cities may have already been established by Cain’s brothers and sisters but this is the first one recorded in Scripture. Remember, people lived upwards of 900 years in the antediluvian world.

**“and called the name of the city Enoch, after the name of his son”** – **Deut 3:14; 2 Sam 5:9; 12:28**

Perhaps **“Enoch”** finished what Cain could not.

Mohler – 3 Problems with Cities:

- 1) usually built based on pride - a line of people who are worshiping themselves; monuments to self

*Psa 49:10-12 – “For he sees that even wise men die; The stupid and the senseless alike perish, And leave their wealth to others.*

*<sup>11</sup>Their inner thought is, that their houses are forever, And their dwelling places to all generations; They have called their lands after their own names. <sup>12</sup>But man in his pomp will not endure; He is like the beasts that perish.”*

- 2) concentration of sin - the more people, the more sin and more temptation to sin
- 3) concentration of idolatry

The only other reference to building a city in **Gen 1-11** is at the Tower of Babel

**Gen 11:4 – “come, let us build for ourselves a city”**

Most of the cities in the Old Testament, with the exception of The City of David, Jerusalem, are not painted in a positive light.

The problem with “godless cities” is not the “cities.”  
The problem with “godless cities” is the “godless.”

Problem with “civilization without God” is not the “civilization.”  
Problem with “civilization without God” is the “without God.”

Boice – *“The loneliest people I know are in the city. The saddest stories I know concern city people.”*

- 10<sup>th</sup> Presbyterian Church of Presbyterian, where Boice was the pastor, had a wonderful ministry to people suffering from AIDS.

**Application** – Timeless truth! Our responsibility is not to moralize the unconverted. Our responsibility is to convert the immoral. This has always been the case.

Change in the New Testament □ Paul’s ministry was a metropolitan ministry. This is where the people are, a target-rich environment.

- his Epistles were written to churches in cities

**Urbanization** □ Legacy and Lineage, ...

**2<sup>nd</sup> Area** we see **Man Advance** ...

**II. Generation** **Gen 4:18-19**

Point – Advance in lineage; generation - in the descendants of Cain

Proof – **Gen 4:18-19** – “**Now to Enoch was born Irad; and Irad became the father of Mehujael; and Mehujael became the father of Methushael; and Methushael became the father of Lamech. <sup>19</sup>And Lamech took to himself two wives: the name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other, Zillah.**”

Of the six generations past Cain, three of the six we have the name but no further information:

**“Now to Enoch was born Irada”**

– from same word as “city” □ townsman

**“and Irada became the father of Mehujael”**

– possible “God makes me live” or “God gives life”

**“and Mehujael became the father of Methushael”**

– “man of God”

“el” – this is short for Elohim - we see this ending in the name of three of these men

- either saved men within the genealogy (e.g., Hagar, Ruth, mixed multitude) or a form of godliness without substance, profession without possession
- if any were saved, they died before the Flood because only Noah and his three sons and their wives were righteous and survived the Flood

Main point that God is communicating with this lineage:

- this is real history
- these are real people
- like **Gen 2:10-14** - this is a real place with real rivers etc

**“and Methushael became the father of Lamech”**

– could mean conqueror

Of the six names in our passage, we have more information about the other three:

**“<sup>19</sup>And Lamech took to himself two wives: the name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other, Zillah”**

“**Adah**” – pleasure, ornament, or beauty

“**Zillah**” – shade (luxurious hair) or voice of beauty

- even the names of the wives give us a picture of more of the lust and concern with outward beauty
- sanctity of marriage attacked (v.19) - polygamy, bigamy
- sanctity of life attacked (v.24)

Monogamy has been God's clear plan from the beginning (**Gen 2**)

Some people will say that God doesn't condemn polygamy here

- God also doesn't condemn (in the immediate text) Lamech's murder
- God doesn't need to condemn polygamy directly every time it appears in Scripture because He condemns it so clearly in the rest of Scripture - particularly at the beginning in **Gen 2**

Every polygamous marriage or union in the Bible brings problems

- Abram is the first of God's chosen line to fail this way (of many to come: Caleb, Gideon, Saul, David, Solomon, Rehoboam)

Polygamy in Scripture results in devastating consequences, almost all of which are centered around the family.

- always degrading and divisive
- no blessing on Abraham's polygamy
- it led to contempt, and jealousy, and quarreling in the home and estrangement between husband and wife

Perversion and Power □ the three big temptations - girls, greed, glory - all part of the perversion and sin of polygamy

In the 1500 year time period that we are looking at, there doesn't seem to have been any organized government (**Gen 9**).

- Patriarchal clan type of situation
- The larger the clan, the more wealth and power

Contrast:

Cain – 7 Generations – last named with 3 sons (8 verses)

Seth – 10 Generations – last named with 3 sons (5 chapters)

## **Enoch and Lamech** in both lineages

Of the six generations after Cain, God provides additional information for three (Enoch, Lamech, Lamech's children).

No additional information for three (Irak, Mehujael, Methushael).

Lamech in contrast to Enoch (7th generation)

Lamech in contrast to Noah (three sons)

Compare: The Way of Cain vs. The Way of Seth

<u>Cain</u>	<u>Seth</u>
Line of Unbelief	Line of Belief
Line of Violence	Line of Blessing
Line of Disobedience	Line of Obedience
Line of Rejection of the Word of God	Line of Faith
Line of Rejection of the Prophet	Line of Prophecy

## **Urbanization, Generation, ...**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Area** we see **Man Advance ...**

### **III. Civilization**

**Gen 4:20-22**

Point – Birth of culture; advance in civilization

Proof – **Gen 4:20-22** – “**And Adah gave birth to Jabal; he was the father of those who dwell in tents and have livestock.** <sup>21</sup>**And his brother's name was Jubal; he was the father of all those who play the lyre and pipe.** <sup>22</sup>**As for Zillah, she also gave birth to Tubal-cain, the forger of all implements of bronze and iron; and the sister of Tubal-cain was Naamah.”**

Lineage from Cain is six deep (Enoch, Irak, Mehujael, Methushael, Lamech) then four wide from Lamech (Jabal, Jubal, Tubal-Cain, Naamah) – counting Cain □ seven generations

The 3 sons of Lamech are listed as the ancestor of some vocation/cultural accomplishment

**“And Adah gave birth to Jabal; he was the father of those who dwell in tents and *have* livestock”**

“**Jabal**” – may mean wanderer

“**livestock**” – cattle, camels, donkeys, goats (**Exod 9:3**)

“**he was the father of**” – acknowledges the accomplishment of secular enterprise □ common mercy of God

- movable tent while traveling with his flocks or herds for pasturage

**Illustration** – We had an interesting discussion at men’s Bible study on whether or not a “dairy farm” is a “farm” – “Do you grow cows out of the ground?”

This line of Cain probably began eating meat in rebellion against God - **Gen 3:19 - 9:4** - from Adam to Noah, all God-fearing people did not eat meat until after the Flood

<sup>21</sup>**“And his brother’s name was Jubal; he was the father of all those who play the lyre and pipe.”**

“**Jubal**” – possibly same root as “Jubilee” □ sound

- the father of music – both stringed and wind instruments

<sup>22</sup>**“As for Zillah, she also gave birth to Tubal-cain, the forger of all implements of bronze and iron”**

“**Tubal-cain**” –named for his great, great, great, great grandfather Cain - he is the smith - brings forth the bronze and the iron

- stone age and iron age came from him
- after the Flood, with the earth being repopulated by Noah’s sons and their wives, it would take a while for the full fledged metallurgy industry to flourish again
- stoneware was easily accessible and durable so many would use these

“and the sister of Tubal-cain was Naamah” – name means pleasant, graceful, gorgeous

- culture committed to physical beauty

**Illustration** – Dr. Zenko Hryniw, an Alabama neurosurgeon, was at Brookwood Medical Center during the January 2014 Atlanta “Snowpocalypse” when he was needed six miles away for emergency brain surgery at Trinity Medical Center.

Dr. Hryniw set off in his car but the snowstorm locked down traffic and he didn’t get farther than a few blocks.

The 62-year-old got out of his car and walked the 6 miles in freezing temperatures dressed in his hospital scrubs.

He was asked about walking six miles in the freezing snowstorm dressed just in hospital scrubs. His reply – *“The patient had a 90 percent chance of death. If he did not have surgery he would have died. And that’s not going to happen on my shift.”*

I have no idea if Dr. Hryniw is a Christian. If he is not, that is just an example of the common mercy of God. That is a positive, beneficial outworking of what we see God laying out in **Gen 4**.

**Application** – I care about the souls of my mechanic and Margie’s surgeon. I don’t care if my mechanic or Margie’s surgeon is a Christian or not. I am looking for the most skill.

**Illustration** – I have had both Christian and non-Christian business partners. In my experience, both have been fine. I have been blessed to partner with honorable Christians and honorable pagans.

**Application** – For the Christian, in so far as it depends on us with regards to work ethic, we need to direct our work back to the glory of God.



“killed” – gr;h’ – *harag* – same as **4:8** – Hebrew word – to murder with intent; deliberate premeditated murder

- word is even stronger than the Hebrew word in the sixth commandment, which can mean either murder or even manslaughter.

**If Cain is avenged sevenfold, Then Lamech seventy-sevenfold.’**

- severe arrogance, the wickedness, the love of self just bleeds out of this
- and how perverse that he puts this in song

**Illustration** – Metal songs or rap songs glorifying violence

- this song of Lamech is almost a primitive form of these

“I myself” guarantee a “**seventy-sevenfold**” vengeance

- Lamech doesn’t need God. He will provide his own security and protection and he will take his own vengeance into his own hands.

**Application** – In contrast - **Matt 18:21-22** – “**Peter came and said to Him, ‘Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Up to seven times?’**” <sup>22</sup>**Jesus said to him, ‘I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.’**”

That is the New Testament counterpart.

That is the Christian counterpart.

That is the flowing out and manifestation in the Christian’s life, when we are living in Christ.

That is the contrast to the wickedness that we see in Cain and all the way down to Lamech.

**CONCLUSION**