

**Pray**

This is not going to be an uplifting message.

From the beginning of time civilizations and cultures have come and gone. Great nations have arisen and the disappeared.

No nation on earth will last forever. This is an important lesson for us Americans.

What we find in our text today is a short story of the founding of the first city, the first culture on earth.

This is a culture that did not begin well.

We will find in this original civilization a lesson that is applicable to our civilization today some 6,000 years later.

People have not changed much.

**Rebellion, pride, and murder lead to more rebellion, pride and murder.**

What became of the man who ignored the Lord's warning and slew his brother?

What became of the man who tried to hide his sin and felt sorry for himself when he was found out?

What became of the man who could not bear his judgment and fled from the presence of the Lord?

*Invictus, Wm. E. Henley (at H.S. and college graduations)* When Cain left God his head was bloodied but unbowed.

And, the surprise is that he prospered... for a while... Why? So that you and I could learn a lesson.

In this text we have, first, a genealogy of Cain's descendants.

Then there is a song... sung by Cain's great (x3) grandson, Lamech

Finally we have the account of the birth of Cain's brother, Seth... which prepares us for the genealogy of chapter 5.

It is important to note that Gen. 4:16-24 is concurrent with Gen. 4:25-6:4

Such that Cain's descendants are contemporaries with Seth's descendants of Gen. 5...

And, that Lamech and his song represent the attitude of the men who strove with God... Gen. 6:1-4

Thus we are going to see that the results of sin and the fruits of rebellion against God...

lead to culture-wide problems that invite the right judgment of God.

For, after all this growth, technological advancement, and progress... God will wipe out all of these people in a flood.

**I. A city without the Lord. vs. 16-22**

It is important to notice something at this point. Cain leaves God. God does not leave Cain.

In fact it is not God who tells Cain that he will leave the presence of God. **Gen. 4:13-14**

God actually protects Cain.

But, it is Cain who then actually leaves God's presence... **vs. 16**

Now, does God not see Cain? Is God not there? Of course God sees all and is everywhere.

But Cain thinks he has gotten away from God. He is Captain Cain - "master of his fate, captain of his soul"

Cain travels east lives in the land of Nod = wandering, but he builds a city and names it after his son.

In this city we find Cain's second act of defiance against God.

God has said that he will be a wanderer. Cain says "No I won't be. I will have a city of my own to rule."

No doubt the city was not large by our standards. There were not very many people.

Adam and Eve had other sons and daughters. **Gen. 6:4**

Cain and his descendants no doubt had other children not mentioned.

Seth and his descendants surely had other children not mentioned.

Then we focus in on Cain's great great great grandson, Lamech... and we discover that this city has become advanced and prosperous.

Notice that there is no crop farming mentioned here. Possibly God has not allowed them this. Gen. 4:11-12

But what amazing progress has been accomplished:

Jabal - tents and livestock... travelling herdsmen

Jubal - music

Tubal-cain - metalworking, probably weapons more than farm implements as we hear nothing about farming in this city.

People have accomplished amazing things, even apart from God. We see in the city of Enoch high culture, amazing progress.

But there is another, disturbing development. vs. 19 "Lamech took to himself two wives." (1st instance of polygamy)

"Adeh" = ornament, pretty

"Zillah" = shade, sweetness

Sounds good for Lamech, does it not... except that the development is stunning in this first city,

It is in direct contradiction to God's design in **Gen. 2:24**... and Lamech, we discover, is not a good guy. He does what he wants.

So, we find that in this first city on earth, in this early culture that people have made apart from God...

People are pleased with their astounding technological advances and ingenuity.

Women are valued for their physical beauty and desired as possessions to acquire.

People are not content with God's definition of marriage and wish to do it their own way.

Does this sound familiar?

We are reading of the arrogance that sin and rebellion against God produce, and the arrogance is blossoming.

In Lamech's song, the arrogance comes to full bloom.

## II. Greatness without the Lord. vs. 23-24

It is easy to read right through this song and not recognize the stunning hubris,  
not to mention its similarity with attitudes around us in our culture.

It was originally sung nearly 6,000 years ago by an arrogant man who has in his hands iron and bronze weapons made by his son...  
a man who does what he wants as a brute in his small city, singing over his two wives, as another son plays the lyre.  
The words could be sung today, put to rap music and sung by a gangster waving a gun and surrounded by girlfriends.  
Or it could be sung by an angry cowboy out to seek vengeance after enduring an atrocious insult.  
Or by a kid in a school armed and angry because he's been bullied.

### Gen. 4:23-24 "The Sword of Lamech"

This is a song of angry, arrogant vengeance. He leaves no room for the wrath of God. He is not even thinking about God.  
He is his own master. He is free. He takes what he wants... power, women, lives. What a monster this guy is.

Cain killed his brother out of jealousy. Lamech killed a boy because the boy hurt him. He glories in violence!

"Cain was avenged sevenfold" = vs. 15 God's penalty for murdering Cain, a perfect judgment.

Do you see what Lamech is saying? God!? I'll outdo God... just mess with me and you get an avalanche of vengeance!

Brothers and sister, increasingly to many in our culture, this an American ideal.

*I remember a line from the old movie The Untouchables, Officer Malone tells Elliot Ness, "You wanna get Capone?*

*Here's how you get him. He pulls a knife, you pull a gun. He sends one of yours to the hospital,  
you send one of his to the morgue! That's the Chicago way, and that's how you get Capone!"*

Exponential vengeance... Interestingly Jesus uses this text as the backdrop, a contrast to the kingdom of God...

...in order to teach Peter a lesson about forgiveness... **Matt. 18:21-22** Exponential forgiveness, an avalanche of forgiveness.

This is our job, forgiveness. "Vengeance is mine says the Lord."

Now, it is interesting that in this first culture in the world there are three things that stand out as results of the corruption.

1. Arrogant pride due to material progress and the acquisition of power.
2. Rejection and corruption of God's design for marriage.
3. Devaluation of life as people do what they want rather than seeking justice according to God.

This is what has happened with Cain and his descendants. What does God do about it?

## III. The Lord finds another way. vs. 25-26

In vs. 25 we take a step back to Adam and Eve in order to establish a contrast...

a contrast between Cain and his line, and Seth and his line.

The contrast will be the main storyline going forward in Genesis, but at this point we are told what we need to know...  
in order to understand how God deals with situations like Cain and what would come of his people.

God gives Adam and Eve another son in the place of righteous Abel whom murderous Cain had killed.

We read about this new line, "Then they began to call upon the name of the Lord." = they worshipped!

This is in contrast to what the people of Cain, ultimately Lamech, represent.

They do not call upon God. Thiers is a secular society, an anti-God society.

You might imagine the laws in the city Enoch:

No praying in public or in school, no public speech about God.

Marry whoever you want and as many as you want.

Murder whoever you wish if you have power over them, children beware.

God is not going to put up with that.

If you reject God for your own way, God can find another person to bless with a place in His plans.

If a church refuses to listen to God, God can raise up another church filled with believers who will follow Him.

If a whole nation or culture wants to run God out and make Him illegal... to be the captains of their own souls,

God will raise up another nation in which people will look to him and be saved.

And, what does God do with all of Cain's descendants and his city? All destroyed in the flood. Nothing is left, forever.

Our nation. Our America is presently at a tipping point... not just because we are murdering the unborn, and lots of other people.

...not only because we are ignoring God's design for marriage... and I'm not talking just about homosexual marriage...

We would not have a problem with confusion about gay marriage if heterosexual marriages followed God's design.

Our nation is at a tipping point not just because we have entertainers and athletes say things like "I am the greatest"

...and hoodlums wandering our streets with illegal guns. (The 20th century was the most violent century in history. civilization?)

Our nation is at a tipping point because regular people don't want God involved in their lives... public and private. And we need Him!

The government cannot fix the problem. Governments NEVER fix this kind of problem.

This sort of problem get fixed by praying, Bible reading, Gospel sharing people doing what they do in obedience to God.

It is the work of God though you and me... not primarily by voting or protesting... but by loving and telling people about Jesus.

God has to change the hearts of people before He will change the direction of our country.

Allow Him to begin with your heart... you have to "call upon the name of the Lord."

We need a national transformation. But through whom will it come if not through you as you let God transform you.

# Invictus

Out of the night that covers me,  
Black as the Pit from pole to pole,  
I thank whatever gods may be  
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance  
I have not winced nor cried aloud.  
Under the bludgeonings of chance  
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears  
Looms but the Horror of the shade,  
And yet the menace of the years  
Finds, and shall find, me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,  
How charged with punishments the scroll.  
I am the master of my fate:  
I am the captain of my soul.

William Ernest Henley, published in 1875