

THE WORLD GOD DESTROYED

August 17, 2014

Genesis 4:1-24

“The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.”

Genesis 6:11, 12

Scripture was written to reveal that Jesus of Nazareth is the one and only Savior; that He alone is our deliverer from judgment, from sin and from sin's consequences. It reports what is relevant to his life as our Savior. It is not a history, nor a biography, but the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ.

It therefore does not claim to be nor provide an exhaustive record, but reports briefly the names of people who were relevant to Christ's genealogy, purpose and ministry. It identifies others who impacted their lives. Some played significant roles in the coming of Christ, and are more prominent in Scripture: Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses and David. Some were powerful among men but are named only to show how they responded to Christ and His developing genealogy: Pharaoh, Haman, Nebuchadnezzar and Herod.

Many others are merely cited to show the landscape of humanity in which the genealogy of Christ developed. This is the case with Cain, the firstborn son of Adam and Eve. Cain's brief appearances reveal the extent to which depravity had developed in the second generation of the human race, and as an example of divine judgment.

In twelve verses, Scripture describes Cain's hardness of heart (Gen. 4:6-17). In seven generations of descendants only one is described beyond his name: Lamech; and only to report his brazen impudence. From these descended a progeny of wickedness that infected the whole human race, so that all of Cain's descendants were destroyed in the flood, ending his family line.

Cain imagined that his own work could reverse the curse God pronounced upon the ground when Adam sinned (Gen. 3:17-19). He brought a sacrifice to God that consisted of fruits he had grown. His sacrifice was rejected, for the only acceptable sacrifice is a living creature offered as a substitute for the sinner who offers it. Thus, Abel's dying lamb was accepted by God, but Cain's sacrifice was rejected.

Cain became enraged with Abel, murdered him, responded in impudent rejection of God's authority, enlarged the curse upon himself and his descendants, and established a civilization built upon godless, human self-sufficiency. His offspring, reared in this context of unbelief, enlarged its arrogance, and five generations later produced Lamech.

Lamech's sons exhibited genius in developing livestock, musical instruments and metals. Equipped with these tools, Lamech's impudence expanded, and is exhibited in a poem he authored – the first piece of human literature known to man. It boasted that if God would repay Cain's enemy sevenfold, Lamech could repay his foes seventy-seven fold. This arrogance infected all humanity. Thus, “the earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.”