

## In Step with Jesus 202

June 14, 2026

**Key Text: “You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, 6 but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.” (Exodus 20:5-6)**

### Introduction

Today we shall read the final verses of Genesis chapter four. It tells us about the children of Cain, even before telling us that Adam had another child after the death of Abel. This section of the bible has raised questions about the truthfulness of the creation story. One question is, “if God created just Adam and Eve and they had two sons and one killed the other, who did Cain marry? The bible did not tell us who Cain married but what we know is that Adam had other sons and daughters that the bible did not say anything about. Genesis 5:3 - 4 says “When Adam had lived 130 years, he fathered a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth. 4 The days of Adam after he fathered Seth were 800 years; and he had other sons and daughters.” Adam had lived a hundred and thirty years before he had Seth. It is possible that he had daughters before Seth and that Cain had married one of his sisters.

As hard as it is for us, in our day, to accept that a man could marry his sister, we have evidence in the bible that people married close family members in bible times. One example is Abraham. In Genesis chapter twenty, Abraham confirms that Sarah was his half-sister “Besides, she is indeed my sister, the daughter of my father though not the daughter of my mother, and she became my wife.” (Genesis 20:12). In the book of second Samuel Chapter thirteen, the bible records one of the saddest stories about rape and incest in the house of King David. Amnon, the son of David, sexually violated his half-sister, Tamah. When Amnon asked Tamah to lie with her, Tamah said something that indicates that both of them could have been legally married if Amnon had done the right thing. Tamah said to Amnon. “Now therefore, please speak to the king, for he will not withhold me from you.” (2 Samuel 13:12-13). So, people could marry close family members in the bible times. However, the focus of our lesson for today is not on how they contracted those marriages but on how sin multiplies from one generation to another. Let us read our text for today, Genesis 4:17-26, and see what the Spirit of God will show us.

### Genesis 4:17-26

17 Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bore Enoch. When he built a city, he called the name of the city after the name of his son, Enoch. 18 To Enoch was born Irad, and Irad fathered Mehujael, and Mehujael fathered Methushael, and Methushael fathered Lamech. 19 And Lamech took two wives. The name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other Zillah. 20 Adah bore Jabal; he was the father of those who dwell in tents and have

livestock. 21 His brother's name was Jubal; he was the father of all those who play the lyre and pipe. 22 Zillah also bore Tubal-Cain; he was the forger of all instruments of bronze and iron. The sister of Tubal-Cain was Naamah. 23 Lamech said to his wives: "Adah and Zillah, hear my voice; you wives of Lamech, listen to what I say: I have killed a man for wounding me, a young man for striking me. 24 If Cain's revenge is sevenfold, then Lamech's is seventy-sevenfold."

25 And Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and called his name Seth, for she said, "God has appointed[g] for me another offspring instead of Abel, for Cain killed him." 26 To Seth also a son was born, and he called his name Enosh. At that time people began to call upon the name of the Lord.

## Reflections

In today's reading, the bible tells us a little about the family of Cain, the son of Adam. From Cain's family history, we learn that God does not always pronounce immediate destruction upon evil doers. Most often than not, in His wisdom, God allows evil to take its course. Unfortunately, evil grows worse from generation to generation if it goes unchecked. In the seventh generation from Adam, Lamech did not only marry two wives, an aberration from God's original plan for marriage, he killed a man and was bragging to his wives about it. Lamech committed the same sin that Cain committed and expected the protection that Cain received from God. Just like His ancestor, Cain, Lamech was unrepentant. In his speech to his wives, Lamech was saying "I have killed a man, and no one can do anything to me because if Cain's revenge is seven-fold, mine will be seventy-sevenfold. In other words, I am untouchable." This is the earliest biblical evidence for the deceitfulness of sin. Because God did not destroy Cain immediately after he murdered his brother, Abel, Lamech thought that God would not execute justice against him. This is a typical example of how sin worsens from one generation to another. When children cannot see or discern the consequences of the sins of their parents, they are more likely to repeat the same sins. Worse still, sin separates us from God and weakens our capacity to make good decisions about right and wrong, and we pass our weakened morality and sense of judgement from generation to generation.

Now that we know that sin increases from one generation to another, what can we do? Our duty is to submit ourselves to God so that we can change the course of our own generation. We need to spend time to reflect on the lives of our parents, identify their weaknesses, intentionally renounce their sins, and commit ourselves to live in accordance with God's will. That way, we can impact our future generations for the better. The good news is that while God visits the iniquities of the fathers upon their children, unto the third and fourth generations of them that hate Him, He shows His mercies or steadfast love to thousands of generations of those who love Him and keep His commandments. (Exodus 20: 5-6). Where sin abounds, grace abounds much more. God is indeed a God of love and justice.

