

MAN ... and evolution in reverse
MAN ... and evolution in reverse (Genesis 4 :16-26)

And Cain went out from the presence of the Lord," and abject despair reigned in his heart. He had cried to God, " My punishment is greater than I can bear. Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth . . . and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me." He had discovered that the way of transgressors is hard; that the world can be a very lonely place. Yet Cain was a great fighter, and as time healed the wound in his pride he became exceedingly resourceful.

Astounding Growth

What is this? A city! Cain, you wonderful fellow! It seems impossible that you could have performed such a miracle. Perhaps your city would not compare with the modern monstrosities which sprawl over the face of the earth; but at least, with your own hands, and without much assistance, you foresaw an increasing need, and with bricks baked hard in the sunshine, you solved your housing problems. And your cattle, too! V, /hat wonderful herds you possessed; and even your children profited from your example, for "Adah bare Jabal: he was the father of such as dwell in tents, and of such as have cattle." When necessity drove your children far from their permanent homes, they made tents and became nomads. Cain, your people were amazing! When they sat in the cool of those ancient nights and looked at the stars, the music of the eternal demanded expression. "And Jabal's brother's name was Jubal: he was the father of all such as handle the harp or organ." Yes, Cain, your children were the first musicians in the world, and their harps thrilled the ancients. " And Zillah, she also bare Tubal-Cain, an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron." He produced ploughs, tools, building materials; he was the father of the modem foundries, the vast steel works, and the chimneys belching forth clouds of blackness. Cain, when all seemed lost, you fought back well. You were a wonderful fellow.

Another Grave

" And Lamech said unto his wives, Adah and Zillah . . . I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt. If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold." What a shame that the growth of man's soul did not keep pace with his advancing civilization. He overcame the difficulties of survival; he mastered some of the great secrets of the earth; yet in spite of au his remarkable achievements, lie failed to conquer himself. He created a wonderful environment in which to spend his days, yet he never tamed the tiger in his own heart. A difference of opinion; smoldering passions; vehement opposition; a sudden blow, and once again tragedy had darkened God's world. A Young man lay dead, and the corpse seemed strangely out of place amid the products of civilization. Clever man had to pause awhile to dig another grave. There were no tears of penitence, but just a bullying claim for absolution from punishment. He was entitled to eleven times more protection than that afforded to his father, because, after al!, his capabilities made him of greater value to the world. He was a great man. He could maintain cities, increase his flocks, train musicians, create foundries. He was indispensable-he was like God.

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Amazing Grace

It was significant that God waited to give man his chance. The grace of God only moved to the rescue of a fallen race when foolish sinners had demonstrated their depravity. "And Adam knew his wife again; and she bare a son, and called his name Seth: For God, said she, hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew. And to Seth, to him also there was born a son; and he called his name Enos: then began men to call on the name of the Lord." Man's failure has ever been a challenge to the resources of God. His grace always supplies the remedy when sinful man is bankrupt. Through Seth came the godly line of descendants in whose hearts prayer was born. These people recognized that advancing civilization had its rightful place in the world, and yet at the same time it could not satisfy the inherent requirements of human hearts. They needed God. In all probability they sought remote corners, and when the burdens of life became intolerably heavy, they knelt to pray. Thus they discovered spiritual gold reefs in the desolate wilderness of human failure. They prayed, and God heard them.

The ancient story shows evolution in reverse. A man increases his stature when he learns to kneel.

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