

Who was Tubal-Cain in the Bible?

Tubal-Cain (“Tubalcain” in the KJV) is the name of a pre-flood descendant of Cain. Tubal-Cain was the son of Lamech and Zillah. His half-brothers were Jubal and Jabal; his sister’s name was Naamah. The two elements of his name mean “producer” and “smith,” and he is associated with the origin of metal working.

“Lamech married two women, one named Adah and the other Zillah. Adah gave birth to Jabal; he was the father of those who live in tents and raise livestock. His brother’s name was Jubal; he was the father of all who play stringed instruments and pipes. Zillah also had a son, Tubal-cain, who forged all kinds of tools out of bronze and iron” (Genesis 4:19-22).

These verses say that Lamech and his wives produced four children. Each of their sons is listed with a cultural accomplishment. Jabal raised livestock, Jubal played musical instruments, and Tubal-Cain forged tools out of bronze and iron. The reference here may be to copper and iron. It seems that Tubal-Cain was the world’s first coppersmith.

What can we learn from this section of Scripture? We learn that God used the disobedient descendants of Cain to significantly impact history through their discoveries, inventions, art, and industry. The cultural contributions of Tubal-Cain are an illustration of the grace of God at work.