

Who was Lamech in the Bible?

The Bible mentions two different men by the name of Lamech, both in the book of Genesis. The first Lamech was the son of Methushael, and the second Lamech was the son of Methuselah. Although the men shared a name and had fathers with names that sound very much alike, that is where their similarities end.

The first Lamech was a wicked descendant of Cain. After Adam and Eve were forced out of the Garden of Eden as a punishment for their sin, they had children. Two of their sons were Cain and Abel. The Bible tells us that both men offered God a sacrifice, and God accepted Abel's sacrifice but rejected Cain's (Genesis 4:3-5). Out of jealousy, Cain murdered Abel in cold blood. God punished Cain by cursing him and sending him away to live as a fugitive (verses 11-12). When Cain complained about the severity of the punishment, God marked Cain and promised that anyone who harmed him would receive punishment sevenfold (verse 15).

Cain settled in the land of Nod and eventually begat children (Genesis 4:16-18) who continued the trend of sin. Lamech son of Methushael was Cain's great-great-great grandson, and he followed Cain's disobedient and murderous ways. Lamech married two wives—the Bible's first mention of polygamy—and he committed murder. Another man struck and wounded Lamech in some way, and Lamech killed him for this seemingly small offense. Afterward, he boasted of his sin to his two wives and exulted in that he suffered no consequences: "If Cain is avenged seven times, / then Lamech seventy-seven times" (verse 24). This Lamech was the father of Tubal-Cain (verse 22).

The other Lamech was a descendant of Seth. After Cain's banishment Eve bore another son and named him Seth. In contrast to Cain's sinful line, Seth's descendants were known for

righteousness. Enoch, Seth's great-great-great grandson, walked so closely with God that God took him directly to heaven when Enoch was 365 years old (Genesis 5:22-24). Enoch's son Methusaleh (the oldest man recorded in the Bible) continued the righteous line and fathered Lamech (verse 25).

When Lamech was 182 years old, he fathered his own son and named him Noah, a name that sounds like the Hebrew word for "comfort." Lamech said, "He will comfort us in the labor and painful toil of our hands caused by the ground the Lord has cursed" (Genesis 5:29). Lamech looked forward to the day when the curse on the ground would be ended by God's promised Savior (cf. Genesis 3:15). After Lamech died, his son Noah was known as a righteous man in a world filled with great sin and perversion (Genesis 6:90). Noah and his family were saved from the flood God sent to judge the earth and thus were able to continue the line of promise. Thousands of years later, Jesus Christ would be born into the line of Seth through Lamech (Luke 3:37). Lamech's godly hope that the curse would end was realized in Jesus, whose death and resurrection abolished the reign of sin and death.