

# Genesis 4:24

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold.

## Analysis

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### **If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold....**

This passage belongs to the primeval history section (Genesis 1-11) which establishes universal truths about God, humanity, sin, and divine purposes before focusing on Abraham and Israel. These chapters answer fundamental questions about human origins, the spread of wickedness, God's judgment, and the preservation of a righteous remnant.

Recurring patterns emerge: human sin escalating from individual disobedience to societal corruption, divine patience followed by judgment, gracious preservation of a remnant, and covenant promises ensuring redemptive purposes continue. The genealogies connect historical persons, demonstrate the fulfillment of divine promises (blessing and multiplication), and trace the line leading to Abraham and ultimately Christ.

Key theological themes in this section include:

1. sin's destructive progression affecting all humanity
2. God's righteous judgment while preserving mercy
3. human pride and autonomy opposing divine sovereignty
4. cultural development as both blessing and potential idolatry
5. God's sovereign plan advancing despite human rebellion.

These narratives provide the necessary context for understanding God's calling of Abraham and the covenant promises through which all nations will be blessed.

## Historical Context

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The primeval history (Genesis 1-11) parallels ancient Near Eastern traditions including Sumerian King Lists (pre-flood longevity), Akkadian flood traditions (Atrahasis, Gilgamesh), and Mesopotamian city foundation myths. However, Genesis demythologizes these traditions, presenting monotheistic history rather than polytheistic mythology. The genealogies connecting Adam to Noah to Abraham provide historical framework absent in pagan myths.

Archaeological evidence confirms ancient urbanization (chapter 4's cities), agricultural development, metallurgy, and musical instruments emerging in Mesopotamia's early history. The Babel account reflects Mesopotamian ziggurat construction (stepped pyramid temples), particularly in Babylon. Linguistic diversity requiring explanation was obvious to ancient peoples, making the Babel narrative culturally relevant.

For Israel in covenant with Yahweh, these chapters explained their relationship to surrounding nations. All peoples descended from Noah, but Israel descended from Shem through Abraham—chosen for blessing all nations. The flood demonstrated God's justice and mercy: judging wickedness while preserving the righteous. This pattern would recur throughout Israel's history, assuring them that God's covenant faithfulness endures despite judgment on the wicked.

## Related Passages

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**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

## Study Questions

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1. How does understanding this verse shape our doctrine of humanity, sin, or salvation?
2. What obstacles prevent us from living out the truths presented in this verse?

3. What connections can we trace from this verse to Jesus' life, death, and resurrection?

## Interlinear Text

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כִּי	שִׁבְעָתַיִם	יִקָּח	קַיִן	וְלִמֶּכֶךְ	שִׁבְעִים
If	sevenfold	shall be avenged	Cain	truly Lamech	seventy
H3588	H7659	H5358	H7014	H3929	H7657

וְשִׁבְעָה:  
and sevenfold  
H7651

## Additional Cross-References

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**Matthew 18:22** (Parallel theme): Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.

**Genesis 4:15** (Parallel theme): And the LORD said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the LORD set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him.