

Where Did Cain Get His Wife?

by Gary T. Panell

"Then Cain went out from the presence of the LORD and dwelt in the land of Nod on the east of Eden. And Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bore Enoch." Genesis 4:16,17a. Many, many people have asked this question: "Where did Cain get his wife?" The reason they have this question is because people are thinking, and rightly so, that Adam and Eve are the parents, and up until this point in Scripture the boys in the family are the only ones that are talked about.

In days gone by, they usually talked about the men; however we know that Adam and Eve had girls as well as boys because that is what Genesis 5:3, 4 says, "And Adam lived one hundred and thirty years, and begot a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth. After he begot Seth, the days of Adam were eight hundred years; and he begot sons and daughters."

Adam and Eve had both sons and daughters, and now you know where Cain got his wife. He took one of his sisters with him when he went to the land of Nod. You say, "But it would be wrong to marry a sister." Yes, in our time it would be, but then, that was the way God had ordained for people to populate the world to begin with. Also, it would not take too long and there would be cousins to marry.

Before the law was given by Moses there was nothing wrong with marrying a close relative. Since the law has been given, yes, it is wrong to marry a sister or brother. Before the law we have examples of close relatives marrying--Abraham is one. Look at Genesis 20:12 where Abraham says to Abimelech, "But indeed she is truly my sister. She is the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife." This was even after the flood, but before the law was given. After this Moses says: "None of you shall approach anyone who is near of kin to him, to uncover his nakedness: I am the LORD. The nakedness of your sister, the daughter of your father, or the daughter of your mother...their nakedness you shall not uncover," Leviticus 17: 6-9.

Today we know that the "gene pool" has defects in it, and close relatives marrying could cause their offspring to have even more defects. However, there are cases even today where brothers and sisters have been married. This happens when siblings have been separated at birth. Since the information about adoption is sometimes kept secret, brothers and sisters sometimes, even today, end up marrying each other unknowingly.

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