

Who was Cain's Wife? Was Cain's Wife his Sister?

by Tony Warren



One of the questions that has been asked thousands of times since people began to read the Bible is, "*Who was Cain's wife?*" Christians want to know "*Was Cain's wife his sister?*" If so, how could Cain marry his sister? In order to answer the question of where Cain got his wife, we must first accept the Bible as authoritative and inerrant. That means that we accept God's Word that we are all descendants of one man and one woman (*Adam and Eve*), and thus are all related in the strict sense of the word. We're not going to find out who Cain's wife was without accepting this foundational truth of the creation of mankind. While it is true that the Bible does not specifically say Cain's wife was his sister, we know from Scripture (*since Adam and Eve were the first and only human beings*) that their children would have no other choice than to marry each other in order to fulfill the divine command to "*be fruitful and multiply.*"

Genesis 1:27-28

- "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.
- And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth."

With only two people on the face of the earth, they certainly cannot be fruitful and multiply without their children intermarrying and becoming husband and wife ([Genesis 2:24](#)) according to the creation marriage ordinance. If the Bible is true, it is obvious that the human race began through the inter-marriage of family members, which we should note "*in the beginning,*" was not forbidden. Brothers married sisters, then nieces, nephews, cousins and so on and so fourth. This is the way the human race grew from two people to populate the whole earth. In my view, it shouldn't even be debatable for the conscientious Christian who believes the Biblical record that we are all (*including Eve*) descendant from one man, Adam. So there really is no need for the Christian to be silenced or defeated by being asked the loaded question, "*where did*

Cain get his wife?" If we believe the Bible that the whole earth was populated by the descendants of Adam, then the answer must be that she came from the daughters of Adam and Eve.

Genesis 5:4-5

- "And the days of Adam after he had begotten Seth were eight hundred years: and he begat sons and daughters:
- And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died."

Did Cain marry his sister? Well this verse pretty much sums up the reality of where Cain (*as well as his brother Seth*) got his wife. They came from the daughters of Adam. Since the Bible normally does not record the birth of a daughter, we wouldn't have record of these births. Cain would have married one of these daughters, since the mother would have been the only other woman on earth. Of necessity they had to have daughters whom the sons married.

Why question '*where did Cain get his wife,*' when the wife of Seth is not questioned? In other words, where did Seth get his wife in Adam's tribe? He was the son of Adam just as Cain, and he too would have had to have a wife in order to produce the Son he called Enosh. We can't even imagine how many children Adam and Eve could have produced in the 800 years. It would probably be a whole tribe. The unpalatable truth is, since everyone on earth is descendant from one man representing Christ ([Malachi 2:10](#)), the only possible answer to who Cain's wife was, is that she was his sister. These daughters of Adam were the only possible women on earth at the time and Adam's sons were the only other men. So it is clear Biblical reasoning, not to mention just plain common sense, where their wives came from. As it is written, we all came from one blood line. If they had not intermarried, then there would not have been any more generations after Adam's children. Thus either they did intermarry, or God's Word is false that "all mankind" descended from the bloodline of Adam and Eve.

Acts 17:26

- "And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;"

We are all of one blood where we have one common parent. That means all of mankind sprung up from the same seed of one man. However different our complexion, features or language today, we all have one ancestor. And if Eve was the original mother, then every human being must have been brought forth from her. The Biblical record confirms these truths.

Genesis 3:20

- "And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living."

Eve is the mother of all living because all the children of the earth sprung from her. No man or woman on the earth came from another parent, they are all descendant from this one woman. Was Cain's wife his sister? Absolutely. As defenders of the truth of Scripture, we should always be prepared to give an answer from the Bible that all human beings are descendant from one father and one mother. In fact, salvation in being redeemed from the death of original sin in man, only makes sense ([1st Corinthians 15:22](#)) if we are all descendants of the first man Adam ([Romans 5:12](#)), who was made from the dust of the earth ([Genesis 2:7](#)). Therefore Cain's wife also had to be a descendant of Adam, else we have no Saviour. From the witness of Scripture of the heritage of mankind, she could not have come from another lineage of people. Lest we forget, the reality is, we are all relatives and all descendants of that original man, Adam. Because of this we carry the stain of his sin within us. That is why the last Adam, Christ ([1st Corinthians 15:45](#)), has to be the propitiation for us being born ([Psalms 58:3](#)) with that birthright. Therefore, by comparing Scripture with Scripture and allowing God's Word to be its own authority and interpreter, Cain's wife of necessity must have come from among Adam's daughters.

Genesis 4:16-17

- "And 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 bare Enoch: and he builded a city, and called the name of the city, after the name of his son, Enoch."

Clearly Cain brought his wife with him when he was cast out. Some have assumed that because it doesn't say here where Cain got his wife, that there must have been other people who were not related to Adam. But considering the authoritative nature of Scripture, this is really an untenable position. To make the claim that we have no warrant to say that he married his sister, but then wildly speculate that there were other people in Nod, is hypocrisy. First, there really is no speculation about him marrying a daughter of Eve "if" we believe the biblical record to be accurate. The fact is, God explicitly tells us where Cain got his wife by telling us that all of mankind came from the loins of Adam. Not most of mankind, but all mankind. If that is true, then Cain had to have married a woman born of Adam and Eve. The problem is that some people are so busy being skeptics, that they are not really listening to the biblical record. When Cain murdered Abel ([Genesis 4:8](#)), he was likely a full grown adult, since in his occupation he was a tiller of the ground. Adam and Eve must have given birth to sons and daughters so that at the time that Abel was killed, sisters were the only women there to marry. Any other conclusion is without biblical foundation. Moreover, the very fact that after Cain had killed Abel, he was afraid for his own life indicates that there were already a good number of people from Adam's children. If Cain and Abel were the only two sons, they had to have sprung forth from Adam's daughters whom the two sons had married. What is the "Biblical" alternative? These were those whom Cain feared might retaliate and kill him because of what He had done to his brother Abel.

Genesis 4:14-15

- "Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me.
- 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."

We see that Cain was punished for his sin, and yet assured by God that he would not be killed by another. By these truths, only two possibilities can be implied. That during the course of his life Cain would fear being avenged by his siblings or their children for the killing of Abel, or the biblical record of Adam being the progenitor of all mankind is false and other unmentioned created humans populated the earth. Since I believe the Bible to be the unadulterated infallible word of truth, his fear of his relatives after the murder of His brother is additional proof that there were children of Abel (*who may have even had children themselves*) already living at that time. Cain feared they would kill him to avenge Abel's murder. To me, it really is not a difficult question when we consider all that is written and not jump to unsound conclusions. Because of this situation, Cain was forced to become a wanderer or vagabond, away from the rest of the family of Adam.

Genesis 4:16

- "And Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden."

The Hebrew word translated Nod is [*nowd*], and means to be exiled, and by extension, being a vagrant or being without a home. This indicates that Cain was the first person to live there, being the first exiled. Indeed, in the previous verse Cain actually says of Himself:

Genesis 4:14

- "Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a **vagabond** in the earth; and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me."

Indeed, that word translated vagabond there is [*nuwd*], meaning Nod, a wanderer or vagabond. It is the exact same root word of which [*nowd*] is derived from. So this Nod is the town of Cain, where he took his wife and they became another tribe or family. He didn't get his wife from Nod as some have speculated, God says ([Genesis 4:16-17](#)) Cain went out from the presence of the LORD and dwelt in the land of Nod, and he knew his wife and she conceived. There is not an ounce of support for the speculation that Cain got his wife from Nod. Indeed, that would make God's declaration that all mankind descended from Adam, null and void. The people of Nod had to be descended from Adam.

Many skeptics of Christianity and attackers of the Bible have used Cain's wife as a smoke screen in their attempts to discredit the book of Genesis as a true literal, historical record, but far from producing more questions about it, it actually addresses

the question of progeny by declaring that we all originated from this one man. Was Cain's wife his sister? Of necessity Cain had to have married his sister, otherwise the creation of Adam and man's genealogy is all just a myth.

There are others who protest this obvious brother sister relationship declaring it a violation of God's law against marrying a close relative. The truth is, there is nothing in Scripture that would even imply that God had forbidden inter-family marriage in the beginning. In fact, it would have been unalterably necessary in order for man to be fruitful and multiply, unless Adam was not what God claims he was. These marriages weren't forbidden because Adam and Eve were created perfect, and so they had not yet picked up all the genetic defects of imperfect genes and diseases that mankind has today. Genetic imperfections accumulated in man gradually over time. They were not present in the beginning. That's why people in those days lived to be hundreds of years old without dying of disease or having their bodies break down. This enabled the first descendants of Adam and Eve to intermarry and have a far greater quality of health and life span. It was only much later when the gene pool was diluted enough that recessive characteristics were amplified enough to cause genetic abnormalities that intermarriage between close relatives was forbidden by God.

Leviticus 18:5-6

- "Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and my judgments: which if a man do, he shall live in them: I am the LORD.
- None of you shall approach to any that is near of kin to him, to uncover their nakedness: I am the LORD."

This was much later in the history of mankind where people were not any longer living to be hundreds of years old, because the gene pool was diluted and recessive characteristics were amplified causing genetic abnormalities in intermarriage between close relatives. We don't have to be hesitant in declaring the truth of either man's genealogy or the origin of the wife of Cain. The book of Genesis is the infallible record of the history of man. When we use God's Holy Word as the sole basis for understanding man, sin, the fall and redemption, we can make perfect sense of what might seem a mystery.

People may claim this question frustrates them, but make no mistake; no one is frustrated in their belief of the Bible by questions of the origin of Cain's wife. If it were proven to them where Cain got his wife, there would be another question rise up to take its place in frustrating them about God. This is because it is not really about where Cain got his wife, it is about doubts and insecurities concerning the Word. Nevertheless, there is actually scientific evidence to show that all humans spring from the same DNA and that all of us originated from one person. Even secular scientists agree that Man had a common ancestor, an "Adam" beginning. Some suppose it was via an organism, but they all fundamentally agree on the common gene pool ancestry. Which to me makes their claims against the creation of one man, dubious at best. Then again, scientific evidence is not the point here, the truth of Scripture is. We cannot let skeptics define the Bible for us, nor privately interpret Genesis from the point of view of current morality concerning siblings, social mores or the modern age.

When we interpret it in the light of the whole Bible, we understand that we are actually all relatives through our one progenitor, Adam. Not one of us is from a different blood line than Adam. This is why we are all in the bondage brought about by Adam, making us slaves of trespass and sin.

1st Corinthians 15:22

- "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

It is specifically because we are all in the same blood line of Adam that we were born in sin, and that is the reason we all need to escape original sin through the death and resurrection of Christ. It is the only way to bring back that perfection and righteousness of the Garden of Eden that we had in the image of God before the fall.

It is sad that one of the reasons that some Christians cannot answer the question, "did Cain marry his sister," is that they tend to look at the Bible through the eyes of unbelievers, modern mores and what seems right in their own eyes, rather than read from the strict biblical record. When we allow the Scriptures to interpret themselves, our eyes are opened to the simple but honest answers that are right there before us. We don't have to make puzzles of what is not really a puzzle to begin with. Through sound exegesis, we can answer all challenges to these Scriptures, whether they come from friend or foe. For we either have the faith of Christ to believe the Biblical record, or we don't. What we cannot do is to try and have it both ways. Unless God supernaturally created a separate woman apart from Adam and Eve, and gave her to Cain to be his wife (*which would make a multitude of Scriptures null and void*), then obviously Cain married his sister. Some Christians still refuse to accept common sense explanations saying, "well maybe Cain married a niece." Well, where did the niece come from? A brother? Then where did the brother get his wife--the point is, no matter where you end up, you have to "start" with the truth that originally, brother and sister were allowed to marry, as it was not forbidden by God until much later on in the history of mankind. So the answer to the question, "*Did Cain marry his sister*," is an unequivocal yes.

May the Lord who is gracious above all, give us the wisdom and humility to discern the truth of His word.

Amen!

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