

THE BEGINNING OF CIVILIZATION

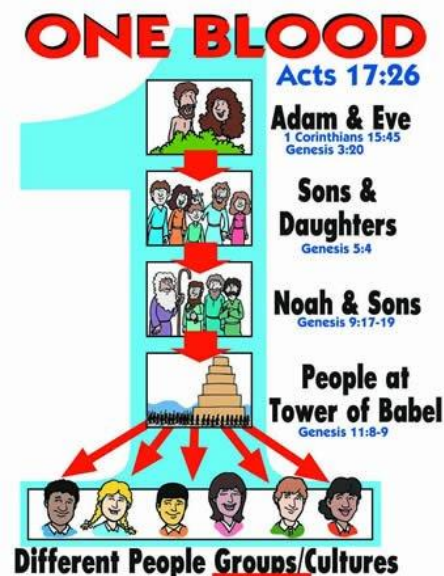
THE DESCENDANTS OF CAIN

Genesis 4:16-17 ~ Then Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden. 17 Cain had relations with his wife and she conceived, and gave birth to Enoch; and he built a city, and called the name of the city Enoch, after the name of his son.

- In fulfilment of the curse on him (v. 14), Cain “went out from the presence of the Lord”
- “Nod” = literally “wandering, flight, exile...a restless wanderer” = consistent with Cain’s recognition that he would be a “vagrant and a wanderer on the earth” (v. 14) = probably refers to an area rather than a specific site
- Nod is “east of Eden,” virtually the same location of the Garden (cf. Gen 2:8)
- Apparently, Cain tried to keep himself near the place where God had previously met with him
- This was Cain’s last act of defiance against God...his curse was to be a ceaseless wanderer in the earth...but he chose to “settle in the land of Nod” and build a city (v. 17), probably an attempt to lessen the curse imposed on him by the Lord
- It is possible he was attempting to recreate the Garden about which he had heard so much from his parents and perhaps was even able to glimpse through the gate
- Again, the picture that emerges of Cain is that of a man without faith, living in rebellion to God!
- The society described here is one that is away from God...a society that is thriving, but empty spiritually

Who was Cain’s Wife?

- The question about the identity of Cain’s wife is often used by skeptics of the Bible to try to discredit the book of Genesis (and the whole Bible) as a true historical record
- Many skeptics claim that, for Cain to find a wife, there must have been other races of people on the earth who were not descendants of Adam and Eve
- For this reason, believers must be ready to answer this question so that we can “always [be] ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence” (1 Pet 3:15)
- The identity of Cain’s wife:
 - According to Gen 3:20, Eve is the mother of all living such that every single person who has ever lived (except for Adam) is a descendant of Eve; thus, Cain’s wife must be a descendant of Eve
 - According to Gen 5:4, Cain had many brothers and sisters
 - According to Acts 17:26, every single person who has ever lived (except for the first woman) is a descendant of the first man Adam; thus, Cain’s wife must also be a descendant of Adam
- Cain would have likely chosen a wife from among his sisters or nieces, or some other close relative



- Objections to Cain’s wife being a close relative:

1. The Bible Prohibits Incest

- True, the Bible does, but not until the time of Moses...prior to the Mosaic Law, it was not considered wrong or unnatural

Leviticus 18:6-15 ~ None of you shall approach any blood relative of his to uncover nakedness; I am the LORD. 7 You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father, that is, the nakedness of your mother. She is your mother; you are not to uncover her nakedness. 8 You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father’s wife; it is your father’s nakedness. 9 The nakedness of your sister, either your father’s daughter or your mother’s daughter, whether born at home or born outside, their nakedness you shall not uncover. 10 The nakedness of your son’s daughter or your daughter’s daughter, their nakedness you shall not uncover; for their nakedness is yours. 11 The nakedness of your father’s wife’s daughter, born to your father, she is your sister, you shall not uncover her nakedness. 12 You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father’s sister; she is your father’s blood relative. 13 You shall not uncover the nakedness of your mother’s sister, for she is your mother’s blood relative. 14 You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father’s brother; you shall not approach his wife, she is your aunt. 15 You shall not uncover the nakedness of your daughter-in-law; she is your son’s wife, you shall not uncover her nakedness.

- It was not until the time of Moses that incest was specifically forbidden...likely because God intended humanity to “be fruitful and multiply” in order for the earth to be properly cared for
- Also, intermarriage was unnecessary by the time of Moses since there were plenty of people in the world at that time
- It is also important to remember that Noah’s grandchildren must have married brothers, sisters, or first cousins since there were no other people after the flood
- Similarly, Abraham married his half-sister (Gen 20:2, 12), Isaac married Rebekah, the daughter of his cousin Bethuel (Gen 24:15, 67), and Jacob married his cousins Leah and Rachel
- Clearly, the prohibition against the marriage of close relatives did not begin until the time of Moses

2. The Possibility of Biological Deformities

- Today, most states outlaw the marriage of brothers and sisters (or other close relatives) because children of such unions have a greater chance of being deformed
- Because of 6,000 years of genetic mutations and “pollution,” the chance of passing on genetic defects to the children of incestuous unions requires that such relationships are prohibited
- “The more closely related two people are, the more likely it is that they will have similar mistakes in their genes, inherited from the same parents. Therefore, brother and sister are likely to have similar mistakes in their genetic material. If there were to be a union between these two that produces offspring, children would inherit one set of genes from each of their parents. Because the gene probably have similar mistakes, the mistakes pair together and result in deformities in the children. Conversely, the further away the parents are in relationship to each other, the more likely it is that they will have different mistakes in their genes.”¹
- In other words, when two people of similar genetics have children together, there is a high risk of their recessive characteristics becoming dominant
- However, the issue of genetic mutations did not largely pertain to Adam and Eve and their offspring since they were created perfect (Gen 1:31) and comparatively little time had passed for genetic mutations to multiply

¹ Ken Ham, “Cain’s Wife – Who Was She?,” in *The New Answers Book 1*, 72.

- Cain was in the first generation of children ever born and, therefore, would have received virtually no imperfect genes from Adam and Eve
- By the time of Moses (2,500 years later), genetic mutations would have accumulated within the human genetic code such that laws restricting such incestuous relationships were necessary
- Three reasons for the laws in Leviticus prohibiting marriages between close family members:
 1. There was a need to protect against the increasing possibility of genetic deformations
 2. God’s laws were instrumental in keeping His people strong, healthy, and set apart from other nations
 3. These laws were meant to protect society at large from the psychological damage caused by incestuous relationships²

Where Did the Population Come from to Form a City?

- Cain built a city which he named after his firstborn son, Enoch
- “Even very conservative assumptions suggest that the population after 125 years would be more than large enough for a ‘city’ to be built and for Cain to choose and marry a ‘wife,’
 - There was no death until Abel’s murder (125+ years, at least 5 generations)
 - Assume a ‘marriage’ or sexual partner engaged by age 25
 - Allow for only 10 children from each pair: five boys, five girls
 - After 125 years, the population would be at least 7,800

It doesn’t take long to grow a population. This would have been especially true with the pristine environment and long lives of these first people. It is quite likely that the population would have been much larger. Very little is known about actual population rates during early recorded history. Average rates during more modern times have varied from 2 to 0.5 percent. Population models make assumptions, but even using death and marriage rates commensurate with modern history, an initial population of only two people, increasing at 2 percent per year would become 3.5 billion people in only 1,075 years.”³

How Would Cain Have Had the Technology Necessary to Build a City?

- Some claim that he would have had to have learned this from other races...but Adam and Eve and their descendants were very intelligent people
- Jubal made musical instruments including the harp and organ (v. 21)...Tubal-cain worked with brass and iron (v. 22)
- Because of evolutionary indoctrination and presuppositions, most people today believe that our generation is the most technologically advanced generation that has existed
- However, although we do benefit from the accumulation of knowledge over the millennia, we have suffered from 6,000 years of genetic degeneration
- Thus, we may be nowhere near as intelligent as those early generations after Adam and Eve

Genesis 4:18-24 ~ Now to Enoch was born Irad, and Irad became the father of Mehujael, and Mehujael became the father of Methushael, and Methushael became the father of Lamech. 19 Lamech took to himself two wives: the name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other, Zillah. 20 Adah gave birth to Jubal; he was the father of those who dwell in tents and have livestock. 21 His brother’s name was Jubal; he was the father of all those who play the lyre and pipe. 22 As for Zillah, she also gave birth to Tubal-cain, the forger of all implements of bronze and iron; and the sister of Tubal-cain was Naamah. 23 Lamech said to his wives, “Adah and Zillah, Listen to my voice, You wives of Lamech, Give heed to my speech, For I have killed a man for wounding me; And a boy for striking me; 24 If Cain is avenged sevenfold, Then Lamech seventy-sevenfold.”

² Adapted from Ken Ham, “Cain’s Wife – Who Was She?,” in *The New Answers Book 1*, 74.

³ Henry Morris, *The Book of Beginnings*, 205.

- Despite the fact that he was the father of a son who invented instruments and another son who invented metallurgy, his prosperous life betrayed a sinister side
- The fact that Lamech followed in Cain's (his great, great, great-grandfather) wicked ways is evident from both his polygamy and murderous actions
- Lamech's marriage to two wives constitutes the first recorded instance of polygamy in the Bible, a direct violation of God's standard for marriage clearly stated in Gen 2:24
- This shows that one of the earliest manifestations of the effects of the curse on mankind was the distortion of God's divine design for monogamous relationships in marriage
- Lamech was the first to openly defy God's marital instructions and to lead the way into the aberration of this most sacred union
- "The attempt to improve on God's marriage ordinance...set a disastrous precedent, on which the rest of Genesis is comment enough."⁴
- Not only was he guilty of polygamy, he was also a murderer just like his forefather Cain
- Lamech killed a young man, probably a youthful warrior, who had offended him
- The word "killed" is the same word used in the account of Cain's murder of Abel, which links the two crimes together
- Afterward, he boasted of his sin to his two wives and prided himself on his belief that, if God would avenge the death of Cain 7 times, he would avenge any wounding of him 77 times (v. 24)
- Killing, the first sin committed outside the garden, was here to stay
- "Many of Cain's descendants had, no doubt, followed their first father's rebellion. The centuries passed, and there is nothing noted about the major sons until we get to Lamech. If he is representative of the line, as seems to be the purpose of giving the information, then Cain's line has degenerated into open rebellion as well as obvious prosperity."⁵
- There is an interesting comparison between the descendants through Cain and those through Seth in Genesis 5
- The line through Cain is a genealogy of 7 names with the last one (Lamech) having 3 sons (and a daughter)
- The line through Seth is a list of 10 names with the last one (Noah) having 3 sons
- This purposeful arrangement points to a comparison between Lamech (Cain's great, great, great grandson) and Enoch (Seth's great, great, great grandson)
- Both were the 7th recorded generation from Adam...assuming that each generation roughly paralleled the other, Lamech and Enoch lived during the same era, their lives overlapping the 365 years that Enoch lived (Gen 5:23)
- Their lives (and their lines) serve as polar opposite examples of how to live – Lamech an example of wickedness (polygamy and murder)...Enoch an example of godliness (he walked with God – Gen 5:24; the only other person who was translated to heaven was Elijah – 2 Kings 2:11)
- Also, it is important to note that 2 speeches are attributed to only 2 people within the two genealogies in Genesis 4 and 5 – the two Lamechs...Lamech the descendant of Cain boasted of his prowess in killing a young warrior (Gen 4:23-24); Lamech the descendant of Seth named Noah in the hope that he would bring people comfort from the pain of the curse (Gen 5:29)
- So, Moses apparently juxtaposed the 2 genealogies to highlight the contrast between the way of Cain and the way of Seth

⁴ John Davis, *Paradise to Prison*, 104.

⁵ Morris, *Book of Beginnings*, 207.

Chart 10. Descendants of Cain and Seth

The Line of Cain	The Line of Seth
Adam	Adam
Cain	Seth
Enoch	Enosh
Irad	Kenan
Mehujael	Mahalalel
Methushael	Jared
Lamech	Enoch
Jabal	Methuselah
Jubal	Lamech
Tubal-Cain (Naamah)	Noah
	Shem
	Ham
	Japheth

Hebrews 11:5 ~ By faith Enoch was taken up so that he would not see death; AND HE WAS NOT FOUND BECAUSE GOD TOOK HIM UP; for he obtained the witness that before his being taken up he was pleasing to God.

Jude 14 ~ It was also about these men that Enoch, in the seventh generation from Adam, prophesied, saying, “Behold, the Lord came with many thousands of His holy ones,

- “There is absolutely no evidence of a ‘religious’ side to Lamech. His faith is in himself. He believed that he could do anything he pleased – and so he did. He believed in personal revenge and took it. He believed that he was more important than God and said so. Lamech was wrong and had chosen foolishly to defy the God of creation, but he was not a hypocrite.”⁶
- “So here is a picture of an affluent society defying God and His laws, seeking pleasure and self-indulgence.”⁷

- The negative examples from the life of Lamech illustrate the fact that the institution of marriage and the need to protect human life have always been issues in a fallen world
- These same issues are under attack today

THE BIRTH OF SETH

Genesis 4:25-26 ~ Adam had relations with his wife again; and she gave birth to a son, and named him Seth, for, she said, “God has appointed me another offspring in place of Abel, for Cain killed him.” 26 To Seth, to him also a son was born; and he called his name Enosh. Then men began to call upon the name of the LORD.

- After Abel’s death and the removal of Cain, God graciously granted Adam and Eve another son, Seth, who would be the antithesis of Cain, living by faith in the Lord
- Seth was considered a son “in place of Abel”
- It would be through Seth’s line that Christ would come

Luke 3:38 ~ the son of Enosh, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.

- After the birth of Seth’s son, Enosh, men “began to call upon the name of the Lord” as they recognized that there was no cure for their inherent sinfulness
- This phrase (“call upon the name of the Lord”) is used 6 other times in Scripture, all in a context of worship:

Genesis 4:26 ~ To Seth, to him also a son was born; and he called his name Enosh. Then men began to call upon the name of the LORD.

Psalms 116:13, 17 ~ I shall lift up the cup of salvation And call upon the name of the LORD...17 To You I shall offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving, And call upon the name of the LORD.

⁶ Ibid., 209.

⁷ Ross, A. P. (1985). [Genesis](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 1, p. 35). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

Zephaniah 3:9 ~ For then I will give to the peoples purified lips, That all of them may call on the name of the LORD, To serve Him shoulder to shoulder.

Romans 10:13 ~ for “WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED.”

1 Corinthians 1:2 ~ To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling, with all who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours:

- Each time that phrase is used, there is some form of public worship of the Lord associated with it
- Seth and his line were thus focused in their worship of the Lord
- Thus, “In contrast to Cain’s descendants, who, while altering the institutions of God and disdaining the value of life, produced cities, music, and all kinds of implements for the good life, the descendants of Adam through Seth primarily promoted the worship of the Lord.”⁸

⁸ Allen Ross, *Creation and Blessing: A Guide to the Study and Exposition of Genesis*, 165-166.