

Cain's Wife

Who Was She?

Is She the Most-Talked-About Wife in History?

We don't even know her name, yet she was discussed at the Scopes trial, mentioned in the movies *Inherit the Wind*¹ and *Contact*,² and talked about in countries all over the world for hundreds of years.

Skeptics of the Bible have used Cain's wife time and again to try to discredit the book of Genesis as a true historical record. Sadly, most Christians have not given an adequate answer to this question. As a result, the world sees them as not being able to defend the authority of Scripture and thus the Christian faith.

For instance, at the historic Scopes trial in Tennessee in 1925, William Jennings Bryan, the prosecutor who stood for the Christian faith, failed to answer the question about Cain's wife posed by the ACLU lawyer

Clarence Darrow. Consider the following excerpt from the trial record as Darrow interrogates Bryan:

Q – Did you ever discover where Cain got his wife?

A – No, sir; I leave the agnostics to hunt for her.

Q – You have never found out?

A – I have never tried to find.

Q – You have never tried to find?

A – No.

Q – The Bible says he got one doesn't it? Were there other people on the earth at that time?

A – I cannot say.

Q – You cannot say. Did that ever enter your consideration?

A – Never bothered me.

Q – There were no others recorded, but Cain got a wife.

A – That is what the Bible says.

Q – Where she came from you do not know.³

The world's press was focused on this trial, and what they heard has affected Christianity to this day—Christians can't defend the biblical record!

In recent times, this same example was taken up by the late Carl Sagan in his book *Contact*² (which was on the *New York Times* best-seller list) and used in the movie of the same name based upon this work.

In the book, we read the fictional character Ellie's account of how she could not get answers from a minister's wife, who was the leader of a church discussion group:

Ellie had never seriously read the Bible before. . . . So over the weekend preceding her first class, she read through what seemed to be the important parts of the Old Testament, trying to keep an open mind. She at once recognized that there were two different and mutually contradictory stories of Creation . . . and had trouble figuring out exactly who it was that Cain had married.⁴

Sagan cleverly listed a number of common questions (including Cain's wife) that are often directed at Christians in an attempt to supposedly "prove" the Bible is full of contradictions and can't be defended. The truth is most Christians probably couldn't answer these questions! And yet there *are* answers. But since churches lack teaching of

apologetics,⁵ particularly in regard to the book of Genesis, most believers in the church are not able to be “prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect” (1 Peter 3:15).

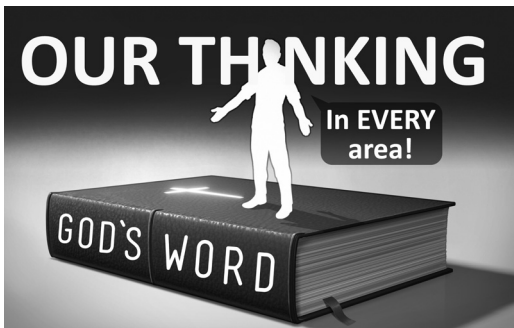
Why Is It Important?

Many skeptics have claimed 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. To many people, this question is a stumbling block to accepting the creation account of Genesis and its record of only one man and woman at the beginning of history. Defenders of the gospel must be able to show that all human beings are descendants of one man and one woman (Adam and Eve)—because only descendants of Adam and Eve can be saved. Thus, believers need to be able to account for Cain’s wife and show clearly she was a descendant of Adam and Eve.

Bible Reading

Genesis 4:1–Genesis 5:5

One of the questions most asked of Answers in Genesis speakers is “Where did Cain get his wife?” In order to answer this question, we



first need to cover some background information concerning the meaning of the gospel.

The First Man

Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned. (Romans 5:12)

We read in 1 Corinthians 15:45 that Adam was “the first man.” God did not start by making a “race” of men.

The Bible makes it clear that *only* the descendants of Adam can be saved. Romans 5 teaches that we sin because Adam sinned. The death penalty—which Adam received as judgment for his sin of rebellion—has also been passed on to all his descendants.

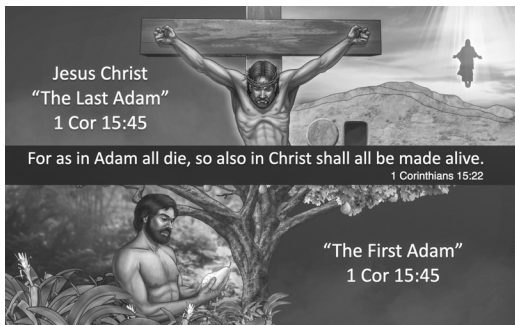
Since Adam was the head of the human race when he “fell,” we who descend from Adam “fell” also. Thus, we are all separated from God. The final consequence of sin would be separation from God in our sinful state forever. However, the good news is that there is a way for us to return to God!

Because a man brought sin and death into the world, the human race—who are all descendants of Adam—needed a sinless man to pay the penalty for sin and the resulting judgment of death. However, the Bible teaches that “all have sinned” (Romans 3:23). What was the solution?

The Last Adam

God provided the solution—a way to deliver man from his wretched state. Paul explains in 1 Corinthians 15 that God provided another Adam! The Son of God took on human flesh—a *perfect* man—yet still our relation! He is called “the last Adam” (1 Corinthians 15:45) because he took the place of the first Adam. He became the new head and, because he was sinless, was able to pay the penalty for sin:

For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in



Christ shall all be made alive. (1 Corinthians 15:21–22)

Christ suffered death (the penalty for sin) on the cross, shedding his blood (and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness—Hebrews 9:22) so that those who put their trust in his work on the cross can come in repentance of their sin of rebellion (in Adam) and be reconciled to God.

Thus, only descendants of the first man, Adam, can be saved.

All Related

Since the Bible describes *all* human beings as sinners, and we are *all* related (Acts 17:26—“And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth.”), the gospel makes sense only on the basis that all humans alive and all that have ever lived (except for the first woman⁶) are descendants of the first man, Adam. If this were not so, then the gospel could not be explained or defended.