**WHERE DID CAIN GET HIS WIFE? [AND OTHER QUESTIONS]**

Genesis 5 tells us that Adam and Eve had many other sons and daughters. So Cain had to marry a sister (or perhaps a niece). That sounds very strange today, but back then, when the genetic code was perfectly pure, it was the only choice he had. All the power and fecundity of the entire human race was in Cain’s parents. In fact, if you look closely, you’ll see that Adam was, in some sense, married to him*self.* His wife was built out of a portion from his own side. (The Rabbinic teachers say that she was not from his head to be over him, or from his feet to be under him, but from his side, under his arm for protection.) So Cain’s wife was his sister. Abraham was married to his sister, too—at least, a half-sister. They had the same father. This was not unusual at the beginning.

Have you ever thought about the term “race” or “racism”? It’s a misnomer. There is only one race, according to the Bible—the Human Race. Within the human race, there are many colors and ethnic groups. Where did all the colors come from? God made us from the dust of the ground. Have you ever realized that there are 5 colors of dirt: black, white, red, yellow and brown? That’s the same colors people are. The three sons of Noah--Shem, Ham, and Japheth—had enough of the genetic make-up of humanity that as they spread over the world after Noah’s Flood, they settled in areas where their colors could be selected out. For example, Japheth, the oldest son, settled in Europe. Most who read this article are Japhethites. (There is a group of people in England who are known as “Yaphetites” today, that is, offspring of Japheth.) The farther north people settled the more white they became. Shem settled in the Middle East. The Arabs and Jews are brothers. (Maybe someone should tell them that.) They are between white and black. The people of the Far East are also “Shemites” (the Semitic peoples); they are mostly yellow or tan. The Hebrew name “Ham” means “burnt.” His family mainly settled in Africa. These are the black ethnic groups. (Shem means *fame*; Japheth means *expand*.)

We are all brothers and sisters. There is no escape from this fact. If we hate one another, we are like Cain, who murdered his brother. In murdering Abel, Cain killed not only Abel, but all the offspring Abel could have had if he had not been killed. He killed a whole nation of people. This is one reason murder is so evil. But God even showed grace to Cain by letting him live. After the Flood, to commit murder earned the murderer a death penalty (Genesis 9). (Incidentally, there are 16 crimes that are penalized by death in the Old Testament.)

People are living souls. “God created man of the dust of the earth and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.” We are of the earth and of God. “And man became a living soul.” According to Genesis 1, animals are also “living souls.” The soul, in Hebrew thinking, is the body animated by the spirit. So animals are souls, too. Nowhere in the Bible is there such a thing as an “immortal soul.” Plato, the Greek philosopher, came up with that. In fact, I Timothy 6 says God alone has immortality. I Corinthians 15 says God will *give* immortality to the mortal; here’s how Paul says it: “The mortal will put on immortality, and the corruptible will put on incorruptibility” in the resurrection from the dead. God gives immortality to whomever he wills. There is no such promise for the unbeliever. Only the believer lives forever. The Bible says twenty-two times that each one will be repaid “according to his deeds.” So the good deeds of believers will be rewarded, and the evil deeds of the unbeliever will be punished. Only believers will live for eternity.

When Jesus died on the cross, he said, “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.” It’s the spirit that lives on after death, not the soul. If the body and spirit separate, then the soul no longer exists. (See Matthew 10:28, where Jesus says the soul can be destroyed.)

I hope at a later time to discuss many other things from early Genesis. The Bible’s most important teaching is this: God made us all to be brothers and sisters—his children.