

The Land of Nod

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After Cain killed Abel and was declared a “fugitive and vagabond” by God (Genesis 4:12), the Bible says that he “went out from the presence of the Lord and dwelt in the land of Nod” (4:16). It was in this land that “Cain knew his wife” (4:17), and it was here that his son, Enoch, was born.

When a person reads about Nod in Genesis 4, he often pictures a land where a large group of people already were dwelling by the time Cain arrived. Because the Bible gives this land a name (“Nod”), many assume it was called such before Cain went there. Furthermore, many believe that it was in this land that Cain found his wife. Based upon these assumptions, some even claim that God must have specially created other humans besides Adam and Eve, otherwise there would not have been a land of Nod, nor would Cain have been able to find a wife there. Are these assumptions and conclusions correct? What can be said about these matters?

It is very likely that when Moses wrote the name “Nod” (Genesis 4:16), he was using a figure of speech called “prolepsis” (the assignment of something, such as an event or name, to a time that precedes it). People often use prolepsis for the sake of convenience, so that the reader or audience can better understand what is being communicated. For example, I might say, “My wife and I dated two years before we got married,” when actually she was not my wife when we were dating, but a very dear friend. We may see a special on television about when President George W. Bush was a boy, but the fact is, George W. Bush was not President of the United States when he was a child. From time to time, even the Bible uses this kind of language. In John 11, the Bible speaks of a woman named Mary who “anointed the Lord with ointment” (11:1-2), yet this anointing actually did not occur for about three months. John merely spoke about it as having already happened because when he wrote his gospel account this event was generally known. Another example of prolepsis is found in Genesis 13:3 where we read that Abraham “went on his journey from the South as far as Bethel.” This area actually did not wear the name Bethel until years later when Jacob gave it that name (Genesis 28:

19). However, when Moses wrote of this name hundreds of years later, he was free to use it even when writing about a time before the name actually was given.

When Moses used the name Nod in Genesis 4, the reader must understand the land probably was not given that name until sometime **after** Cain moved there. This is consistent with the meaning of the name Nod (“wandering”), which in all probability was given because God told Cain he was to be a wanderer upon the Earth (Genesis 4:12). Thus, the land of Nod almost certainly was not an area filled with people whom Cain would eventually befriend. It would become that in time; nevertheless, it probably was not such a place upon his arrival.

But, someone might ask, did Cain not find his wife in the land of Nod? Actually, the Bible never tells us that Cain’s wife came from Nod. The text simply says that Cain “dwelt in the land of Nod on the east of Eden. And Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bore Enoch” (Genesis 4:16-17).

To conclude that God specially created others besides Adam and Eve because “there was a large group of people living in Nod when Cain arrived” and “from this group Cain got his wife” is faulty reasoning and sheer speculation. Scripture does not teach the above premises, nor does it ever hint that God specially created others than Adam and Eve. In fact, the Bible teaches the very opposite when it explicitly states that Adam was the first man (1 Corinthians 15:45) and that Eve would be the mother of **all** living (Genesis 3:20, *emp. added*). It seems clear that there could have been no other people on the Earth contemporaneous with them (except, of course, their own children). Even though some allege that God specially created other people in addition to Adam and Eve during the creation week, such cannot be defended logically in light of what Scripture teaches.

[NOTE : If you would like to read further on this subject, go to www.apologeticspress.org, look under the subheading “FAQs,” and read the article titled “Where Did Cain Get His Wife?” (<http://www.apologeticspress.org/articles/2181>).]



Have you visited our Web site recently? If you haven’t, we hope that you will consider doing so. We update it every Monday with new articles that are instructive, timely, as well as biblically and scientifically sound.



Q What can I do to help children in my community hear the truth about creation and intelligent design?

A The battle over what will be taught in the science classes of our public schools has reached a feverous pitch. Those who believe in an Intelligent Designer are making huge strides in their efforts to open the eyes of the scientific community to the mass of evidence that uncovers numerous and serious flaws in Darwinism and evolution (see Butt, 2005). Those who hold fast to the general theory of evolution continue to do all that is in their power to keep this evidence from getting a fair hearing in the classroom. What can you do to help the students in your community learn the truth about the flaws in evolution? How can you help children see the scientific evidence that points overwhelmingly toward an Intelligent Designer?

There are many outlets at your disposal. You could attend school board meetings in which textbooks are chosen. You could write letters to the members of your school board asking them to push for the inclusion of material on Intelligent Design. There also remains another, more direct approach that has been taken. Recently, with the release of one of our latest books, *Truth Be Told*, one congregation in Tennessee

approached the principal of their small community school and gave him a copy of the book to preview for a couple of weeks. At the end of that time, they asked if he would mind if they donated one of these books to every 5th grader in the school (about 120 students). A letter was sent home to the parents of the children asking permission to send the book home with them. In the end, well over 90% of all the 5th graders in that small county school were given a book free of charge by the local congregation. Think what an impact could be made if scores of congregations across our country would work with a view toward getting accurate materials on creation into the hands of the children themselves. We have heard other reports of people donating our materials to public school libraries, city libraries, and individual public school classrooms. We must focus our attention on putting the right information into the hands of those who need it most: the children.

[NOTE: If you would be interested in donating larger quantities of our materials, we will be more than willing to work with you on pricing issues.]

REFERENCE

Butt, Kyle (2005), "Chalk One up for Academic Freedom," [On-line], URL: <http://www.apologeticspress.org/articles/2757>.

Kyle Butt

IN THE NEWS

A host of social indicators document the continuing moral and spiritual decline of America. Two of the most recent ought to evoke national mourning. One comes from a biennial study of the sexual content of television programming by the Kaiser Family Foundation. Their findings: The number of sexual scenes on television has nearly doubled since 1998. The study found that **70% of all shows include some sexual content**, and that these shows average **five sexual scenes per hour** (Graham and Kingsley, 2005, emp. added).

The second social indicator comes from a report by the National Center for Health Statistics that summarizes the 2004 birth rates for the United States. Childbearing by unmarried women reached a record high of almost **1.5 million births** in 2004. More than 4 in 5 births to teenagers were nonmarital. Over half of births to women in their early twenties and nearly 3 in 10 births to women aged 25–29 were to unmarried women. This data means that in 2004, **35.7 percent of all births were illegitimate** (Hamilton, et al., 2005, emp. added).

These social indicators are staggering! From the 1960s to the present, American civilization is being sucked into the vortex of sexual

disorder and confusion. The dismantling of the Christian foundations of America has resulted in a plethora of sexually deviant actions. America is literally spiraling downward into the abyss of moral depravity and degradation. Many are emulating the adulterous woman, who "eats and wipes her mouth, and says, 'I have done no wickedness'" (Proverbs 30:20). But God still warns: "flee sexual immorality" (1 Corinthians 6:18). Indeed, doom is inevitable for a nation gripped by such widespread sexual anarchy. "Stolen water is sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant. But he does not know that the dead are there, that her guests are in the depths of hell" (Proverbs 9:17-18).

REFERENCES

Graham, Rob and Sarah Kingsley (2005), "Number of Sexual Scenes on TV Nearly Double Since 1998," Kaiser Family Foundation, [On-line], URL: <http://www.kff.org/entmedia/entmedia110905nr.cfm>.

Hamilton, Brady, Stephanie Ventura, Joyce Martin, and Paul Sutton (2005), "Preliminary Births for 2004," National Center for Health Statistics, [On-line], URL: http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/pubs/pubd/hestats/prelim_births/prelim_births04.htm.

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