

“Could My Children’s Autism be the Result of a Generational Curse?”

I understand that it says in the Bible that the children may be cursed for generations because of their fathers’ sins. I have two children with autism and a cousin that has a child with autism as well. Could this be a curse since both of our parents are sisters? There has been talk that in our family that relatives from two and three generations back married cousins. Isn’t that a sin?

I believe the concept of generational curses is best understood as the natural consequence of ingrained behavioral patterns that are passed down from one generation to the next. I yelled at my kids when they were small because my mom yelled at us. My brother is a (recovered) alcoholic because he saw our dad drink a lot every night he was home, and he internalized that behavior for himself. The guy down the street mistreats his wife because he saw his father continually do it to his mother. (And societally speaking, there can be generational “curses” when those in one generation make decisions which have effects for generations to come, such as the abortion decision. Our society continues to pay for that errant decision in more ways than the 30 million+ abortions since Roe v. Wade. The value of young innocent life continues to decline.)

We can’t change what we don’t acknowledge, so these behavior patterns (or curses) continue to play themselves out in the lives of those who don’t confront them and decide to stop them. But we CAN change what we DO acknowledge, particularly when we invite the Lord to release His power into an area we want to change.

But what you’re asking about is something different. Marrying cousins isn’t a sin biblically. The laws in place against marrying close relatives such as siblings are there to protect children from experiencing the fallout of recessive genes being expressed; however, the Journal of Genetic Counseling recently released a report that the risk of serious genetic disorders among children of first cousins is much smaller than originally thought (<http://depts.washington.edu/mednews/vol6/no15/cousins.html>).

Since there is talk in your family of cousins marrying several generations ago, and non-family genes were subsequently introduced through marriage to non-cousins which would strengthen the genetic mixture, I would think that while there is a chance that the autism in your family is connected to the cousin marriage, there’s probably more of a chance that it isn’t. More to the point, I don’t think this is a generational curse since the marrying cousins didn’t break any of God’s laws.

I am so sorry that you are having to deal with autism. That is a difficult burden to bear. Please don’t carry an unnecessary burden of thinking you are dealing with the consequences of someone else’s sin, when you’re probably not.

I hope this helps!

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