

BIBLE EXTRA **2020** **STRANGE SCRIPTURES**

Week 2, Part 2

Forbidden Fruit

“Our shared inheritance with the apes is one of the most certain conclusions of modern comparative genomics... I find it ironic that people who deny our shared inheritance with the apes are carrying around in their bodies about 10 million million copies of their own evolutionary history.”

Prof Denis Alexander

A. Is this an event (whether described figuratively or literally) that “**happened**” at some point in space and time?

OR

B. Is this a parable/myth telling us deep truths about ourselves and God but not corresponding to any event in history?

MODEL 1 - LITERAL

- ✘ Young Earth Creationists
- ✘ Old Earth Creationists
- ✘ Takes the story largely at face value.
These are real events happening to a real Adam & Eve, recently created by God upon the earth and the ancestors of all of us.

PRO

- ✗ Easy to read the story at face value
- ✗ Offers a nice and simple theodicy
- ✗ Fits with NT refs to Adam
- ✗ Fits with Biblical redemption story

CON

- ✗ Ignores weighty biological evidence
- ✗ Ignores a lot of other evidence
- ✗ Begs a few questions

MODEL 2 – FEDERAL HEAD

- ✘ Reads the story as a REAL historical event, but A & E are simply ONE PAIR of many, who are selected by God to be the representative Heads of the whole race. They are not the ancestors of all, but they act for us all.
- ✘ Most proponents of this view would place them in the early Neolithic, though some would argue for an earlier date (Blocher, 40,000 BC).

My acceptance of Adam and Eve as historical is not incompatible with my belief that several forms of pre-Adamic 'hominid' may have existed for thousands of years previously. These hominids began to advance culturally. They made their cave drawings and buried their dead.... You may call them homo erectus. I think you may even call some of them homo sapiens, for these are arbitrary scientific names. But Adam was the first homo divinus, if I may coin a phrase, the first man to whom may be given the Biblical designation 'made in the image of God'. Precisely what the divine likeness was, which was stamped upon him, we do not know, for Scripture nowhere tells us. But Scripture seems to suggest that it includes rational, moral, social, and spiritual faculties which make man unlike all other creatures and like God the creator.

JOHN STOTT

For long centuries, God perfected the animal form which was to become the vehicle of humanity and the image of Himself. He gave it hands whose thumb could be applied to each of the fingers, and jaws and teeth and throat capable of articulation, and a brain sufficiently complex to execute all of the material motions whereby rational thought is incarnated. The creature may have existed in this state for ages before it became man: it may even have been clever enough to make things which a modern archaeologist would accept as proof of its humanity. But it was only an animal because all its physical and psychical processes were directed to purely material and natural ends.

Then, in the fullness of time, God caused to descend upon this organism a new kind of consciousness which could say “I” and “me,” which could look upon itself as an object, which knew God, which could make judgments of truth, beauty and goodness, and which was so far above time that it could perceive time flowing past.... We do not know how many of these creatures God made, nor how long they continued in the Paradisal state. But sooner or later they fell. Someone or something whispered that they could become as gods.... They wanted some corner in this universe of which they could say to God, “This is our business, not yours.” But there is no such corner. We have no idea in what particular act, or series of acts, this self-contradictory, impossible wish found expression. For all I can see, it might have concerned the literal eating of a fruit, but the question is of no consequence.

(C.S. Lewis, Problem of Pain, 68-71)

IMPLICATIONS

- ✘ The DEATH that results is spiritual
NOT physical
- ✘ In fact, death, disease and disaster
are NOT consequences of the Fall,
they have long been part of history.

PRO

- ✗ Fits with a scientific view
- ✗ Explains Cain's wife and "fear" of others
- ✗ Explains "increase pain in child birth"
- ✗ Still fits nicely with NT refs to Adam

CONS

- ✗ Forces us to redefine “good”
- ✗ God’s curse on Adam would have to read only as a reminder of physical death, not as the start of it.
- ✗ Makes EDEN hard to picture. Where in human history do we place this early paradise?

LUKE 3:38

the son of Enosh, the son of Seth,
the son of **Adam**, the son of God.

1 COR 15:45

So it is written: “The first man **Adam** became a living being”; the last **Adam**, a life-giving spirit.

1 COR 15:22

For as in **Adam** all die, so in Christ all will be made alive.

ROMANS 5:12

Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned.

ROMANS 5:14

Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of **Adam** to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did **Adam**, who is a pattern of the one to come.

MODEL 3 - EVERYMAN

This is the theological story of you and me, not the historical story of a past person called Adam. There is NO literal Adam, neither physical progenitor nor Federal Head. This is a story about all of us, our sin and our rebellion, but told in a imaginative and figurative manner.

PRO

- ✗ Removes all the struggle of attempting correspondence with history
- ✗ Recognises the clue in the Hebrew names Adam (man /mankind) and Eve (Life /Living).

CONS

- ✘ Very difficult to accommodate NT references to Adam. How can Jesus be the “second Adam” if there is no “first” one?
- ✘ It means there is no “Fall” event in history. There is no historical stage of human innocence. Eden may perhaps be re-interpreted as the innocence of childhood before we “fall” into adult rebellion, but is not anything historical.