

## Dialogue: Article

*The Real Adam and Original Sin*

# The Real Adam and Original Sin

John A. McIntyre



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*The purpose of this paper is to present the character of an Original Sin that is based on the nature of this new Real Adam.*

*A Real Adam has been proposed whose nature is in agreement with both Scripture and science. However, the nature of this Real Adam is significantly different from that of the traditional Adam of the confessions. As a result of this difference, the injustice of Original Sin has been eliminated, the noetic effects of sin have been explained, and a falsifiable prediction for the propagation of Adam's sin has been proposed.*

**A** recent paper has proposed a Real Adam whose history and nature are consistent both with Scripture and with science.<sup>1</sup> However, the nature of this Real Adam is inconsistent with the nature of the traditional Adam described in the confessions produced at the time of the Reformation. As a consequence of this inconsistency, the Original Sin of the Real Adam has a different character than the traditional Original Sin described by the confessions.

The purpose of this paper is to present the character of an Original Sin that is based on the nature of this new Real Adam. The character of Original Sin depends on four components: (1) the nature of Adam before he sinned, (2) the consequences of Adam's sin, (3) the noetic (intellectual) effects of Adam's sin, and (4) the propagation of Adam's sin to the human race. These four parts of Original Sin will be used to compare the character of the traditional Original Sin for the confessions with the character of Original Sin for the Real Adam.

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In 1950, **John McIntyre** received a Ph.D. in physics from Princeton University under the supervision of Robert Hofstadter. Subsequently he accompanied Professor Hofstadter to Stanford University where they carried out the electron scattering experiments for which Professor Hofstadter received the Nobel Prize in 1962. After spending six years on the faculty at Yale University, McIntyre went to Texas A & M University in 1963 to direct the nuclear physics research program at the new Cyclotron Institute. In 1995, McIntyre was made Professor Emeritus at Texas A & M University. McIntyre has served on the Executive Council of the American Scientific Affiliation. As an active fellow in the ASA, he currently is serving on the Editorial Board of our journal. John and his wife Madeleine are charter members of a new congregation of the Presbyterian Church in America in Bryan, Texas. He may be contacted at: [jmcintyre@physics.tamu.edu](mailto:jmcintyre@physics.tamu.edu).

## Adam before He Sinned The Real Adam

We summarize here the nature of the Real Adam which has been described elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> Beginning with the second chapter of Genesis, Scripture presents Adam as a historical figure connected by genealogies to Abraham, the head of the chosen people. According to Scripture, God formed Adam from the dust of the ground in Mesopotamia about 4000 BC where Adam disobeyed God by eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Adam's son Cain is a farmer while Abel, his brother, is a shepherd. Cain kills his brother Abel and, fearing for his life, emigrates to the east where he builds a city.

Remarkably, little more is recorded about Adam in the Old Testament. However, in 1 Corinthians 15, the Apostle Paul quotes from Gen. 2:7 to provide more insight on the nature of Adam before he disobeyed God:

<sup>45</sup>Thus it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being"; the last Adam (Christ) became a life-giving spirit ... <sup>47</sup>The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven.

In his commentary on Gen. 2:7, John Calvin refers to this evaluation of Paul:

Whatever the greater part of the ancients might think (that this passage describes Adam as an image of God), I do not hesitate to subscribe to the opinion of those who explain this passage of the animal life of man; and thus I expound what they call the vital spirit, by the word, *breath* ... the state of man

was not perfected in the person of Adam ... Before the fall of Adam, man's life was only *earthly*.<sup>2</sup>

For Calvin, Adam in Gen. 2:7 was a normal man of the earth.

Something happened to Adam, however, when he ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil: "his eyes were opened and he knew that he was naked." Knowing good and evil, Adam is no longer simply a part of nature. He now, like God, transcends the natural world and can evaluate the events that occur there. A familiar saying is that one cannot proceed from an "is" to an "ought." Now, with the knowledge of good and evil, Adam had proceeded from an "it" in the natural world to an "I" outside the natural world. Adam had become a person, an image of God.

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A comment here may be helpful for connecting the "image and likeness" of God in Gen. 1:26-27 with the events in Genesis 3. History in the Bible begins in Gen. 2:4b where God creates the earth and the heavens. History then continues with the formation of Adam (Gen. 2:7), the formation of Eve (Gen. 2:22), the acquisition of the image of God when "their eyes were opened" (Gen. 3:7), and on through the genealogies to Abraham and the history of Israel. On the other hand, Gen. 1:1-2:4a appears to be an "overture" to this history. Like an overture to an opera, this overture introduces the themes of the history so that Gen. 1:26-27 contains the history of Adam, Eve, and the image of God in one verse: "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them." This overture in Genesis is similar to the first eighteen verses of the Gospel of John which, in like manner, presents an overview of the historical Gospel that follows.<sup>3</sup> We see here, too, the perception of John Calvin who, in his interpretation of Gen. 2:7, opposed the general opinion and did not find the image of God in the formation of Adam.

Another consequence also followed the eating of the forbidden tree. Before eating of the tree, Adam was an innocent creature even though he followed the desires of his animal nature. Being innocent, he was guiltless but not righteous. Also, he was aware of God's eternal power and deity (Rom. 1:20) but had not yet acquired the knowledge of good and evil. This awareness of God's deity was what made Adam's disobedience of God's command a sin. However, in Adam's acquiring the knowledge of good and evil, God's law was written on Adam's heart. Now his formerly innocent animal desires led him to sin. For "apart from the law sin lies dead" (Rom. 7:8).<sup>4</sup> But not only would his innocent animal desires lead to sin, his newly acquired self-esteem as an image of God also would lead to sins such as pride and envy unrelated to his animal nature. An inevitable feature of being a human in the image of God, and knowing good and evil, is to be a sinner.

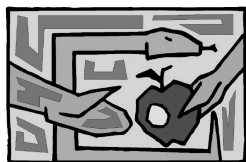
Science, of course, has no knowledge of any of this. However, science can contribute knowledge about the world in which Adam lived. The scriptural description of Adam's sons farming and herding in Mesopotamia in 4000 BC fits in well with archeological knowledge. In addition, Cain's building a city in the east agrees with the archaeological evidence that the first cities were built about 4000 BC in Mesopotamia and shortly thereafter in the Susiana plain some 250 km to the east.

Of more immediate interest for Adam is the archeological evidence that thousands of *Homo sapiens* lived in the Mesopotamian valley in 4000 BC. *Homo sapiens* is a scientific term that we will reserve for creatures that have not acquired the knowledge of good and evil. *Homo sapiens* then are not human beings who are sinners in the image of God.

It is, of course, difficult to demonstrate that the *Homo sapiens* of science are not sinners. This conclusion must simply be accepted if we are to believe Paul's assertion in Rom. 5:12 that "sin came into the world through one man (Adam)." We have therefore accepted this conclusion and assumed that sin came into the world through the Real Adam.

Since the nature of the Adam of Scripture before disobeying God and the nature of the Adam of science (a *Homo sapiens* in Adam's community) differ only in the description of their ancestry, we will assume from here on that the Adam of Scripture and the Adam of science are the same person, the Real Adam. God presumably selected this Real Adam from among the men in the Mesopotamian community just as, two thousand years later, God would also select a man Abraham from among the Mesopotamians to be the father of his chosen people.

As we will now see, the nature of this Real Adam is significantly different from the nature of the Adam described



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in the confessions. As a consequence, the doctrine of Original Sin for the Real Adam will be significantly different from the traditional doctrines of Original Sin described in the confessions. We will use the doctrine of Original Sin described in the *Westminster Confession*<sup>5</sup> to represent the other confessions.

#### **The Westminster Confession**

The *Westminster Confession* describes Adam before his sin:

IV.2 After God had made all other creatures, he created man, male and female, with reasonable and immortal souls, endued with knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness after his own image, having the law of God written in their hearts, and power to fulfill it and yet under a possibility of transgressing, being left to the liberty of their own will, which was subject unto change.

At his creation, Adam (the man) was endued "with knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness ... yet under a possibility of transgressing." The *Confession* presents a righteous Adam, contradictory to Scripture which according to Calvin describes an Adam who is *earthly*. This assumption of a righteous Adam before his disobedience of God is the primary error in all of the confessions, both Roman Catholic and Protestant.

#### **Summary of Adam before He Sinned**

Adam, before he sinned, is described by Scripture as the Real Adam, an *earthly* Adam with an animal nature. It is this Adam, without God's law written on his heart, who disobeyed God's command not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

#### **The Consequences of Adam's Sin**

##### *The Westminster Confession*

Since the nature of the Real Adam before his sin is so different from that of the traditional Adam of the confessions, the doctrine of Original Sin for the Real Adam will be significantly different from that of the confessions. However, there is insufficient space here to develop a doctrine of Original Sin for the Real Adam directly from Scripture. We turn therefore to the generally accepted *Westminster Confession* as a basis for selecting

the most appropriate available doctrine of Original Sin for the Real Adam.

Original Sin is described in the *Westminster Confession*<sup>4</sup> in the following terms:

VI.2. By this sin (eating the forbidden fruit) they (Adam and Eve) fell from their original righteousness and communion with God, and so became dead in sin, and wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body.

VI.3. They being the root of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed, and the same death in sin and corrupted nature conveyed to all their posterity, descending from them by ordinary generation.

Original Sin, then, has four points:

1. by their sin of eating the forbidden fruit, Adam and Eve lost their original righteousness;
2. by their sin, Adam and Eve became dead in sin and wholly defiled;
3. the guilt of their sin was imputed to their posterity; and
4. their corrupted nature was conveyed to their posterity by ordinary generation.

Clearly, the first point contradicts the Real Adam who did not have any original righteousness to lose; thus any confession that omits this point will be a candidate for accommodating the Real Adam. The third, like the first point, is eliminated for the Real Adam, since Adam cannot be guilty of depriving humanity of a righteousness that Adam never possessed himself. The second and fourth points connect the generally admitted sinfulness of the human race to the sinfulness of Adam after his disobedience. We now consider briefly the arguments that have been presented in support of the various points.

#### **Evaluation of the Westminster Confession**

Since the *Westminster Confession* is a confession of the Reformed (Calvinistic) churches, we have selected the writings of three Reformed theologians to evaluate the content of the *Confession*. Not surprisingly, all compare John Calvin's views on Original Sin with those of the *Confession* and all find, perhaps surprisingly, that Calvin disagrees with this *Confession* of the Reformed churches.

**John Murray**, professor at Westminster Seminary in Philadelphia (1937–1966), has summarized Calvin’s interpretation of Original Sin as follows:

Calvin’s view of original sin is radically different from that of Rome. According to Calvin the original sin which is conveyed by natural generation (Points 2 and 4 above) is itself, intrinsically, natural depravity. The protestant polemic was directed with vigour against the Romish view that original sin consisted simply in the privation of original righteousness and integrity (Points 1 and 3) and the concupiscence which resulted from the loss of integrity (Points 2 and 4) was not itself truly and properly sinful, and the Romish polemic was directed with equal vigour against the protestant doctrine that original sin involved a radical corruption of our moral and spiritual nature (Points 2 and 4).<sup>6</sup>

According to Murray, then, the Roman Catholics accepted only Points 1 and 3 of the *Westminster Confession* doctrine on Original Sin while Calvin and the Protestants accepted only Points 2 and 4.

**Charles Hodge**, professor at Princeton Seminary (1820–1878), evaluates Calvin’s interpretation of Original Sin in the following terms:

According to this (Calvin’s) interpretation, the doctrine of the apostle is, that the inherent, hereditary corruption of nature derived from Adam, is the ground or reason why all die.<sup>7</sup>

Hodge thus recognizes, as Murray did above, that Calvin’s interpretation of Original Sin includes only Points 2 and 4 of the *Westminster Confession*. Because of his devotion to both Calvin and the *Confession*, Hodge proceeds to excuse Calvin for his “error”:

He (Calvin) lived in a day when the imputation of Adam’s sin was made, by the theologians of the Romish Church, so prominent as to leave inherent depravity almost entirely out of view. The whole tendency of the Reformers, therefore, was to go to the opposite extreme ... We need not then be surprised that inconsistencies appear in the writings of Luther and Calvin (in the sixteenth century), which are not reproduced in those of Hutter and Turretin (in the seventeenth).<sup>7</sup>

The question remains, however, why did the Protestants in the seventeenth century introduce Point 1 and 3 into the *Westminster Confession* when Protestants of the sixteenth century, like Calvin, did not? Hodge, of course, (in the nineteenth century) gives good scriptural reasons for believing that the *guilt* of Adam’s sin is imputed to his posterity (Points 1 and 3). Commenting on Rom. 5:12–21, he writes:

It is distinctly taught that “judgment came on all men on account of the offense of the one man.” This

therefore is Paul’s own interpretation of what he meant when he said “all sinned.” They sinned in Adam. His sin was regarded as theirs.<sup>8</sup>

We have insufficient space here, however, to enter further into these controversies over the doctrine of Original Sin.

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In his book, *Sin*, **G. C. Berkouwer**, professor at the Free University of Amsterdam (1945–1973), traces the evolution of the doctrine of Original Sin in the confessions from the sixteenth century to the present. Like Murray and Hodge, he expresses great respect for Calvin. After discussing the development of the doctrine of Original Sin in the confessions over the centuries, Berkouwer writes:

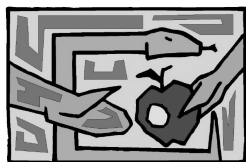
It makes good sense to look at Calvin since the various principals in later debates appealed to him so consistently ... It is a tribute to the sober and careful way in which Calvin addressed himself to this topic.<sup>9</sup>

In his discussion of the *Gallican Confession*, Berkouwer writes:

Is Article 10 of the *Gallican Confession* also “deficient”? Does it lack something for the confession of our guilt? ... Furthermore, the *Gallican Confession* is largely in line with the plan of Calvin.<sup>10</sup>

In following Calvin, the earlier *Gallican Confession* also omitted Points 1 and 3 of the *Westminster Confession* leading to Berkouwer’s query about the deficiency in the *Gallican Confession*.

There is agreement then among the three Calvinist theologians that, although the *Westminster Confession* is the official confession of Calvinist churches, Calvin himself subscribed only to Points 2 and 4 of the confession. And, since Points 1 and 3 of the confession are the points in disagreement with the Real Adam, we will now investigate whether Calvin’s doctrine of Original Sin fits the nature of the Real Adam.



## Dialogue: Article

### *The Real Adam and Original Sin*

#### Calvin Fits Like a Glove

In his discussion of Original Sin, Calvin wrote:

For, since it is said that we became subject to God's judgment through Adam's sin, we are to understand it not as if we, guiltless and undeserving, bore the guilt of his offense but in the sense that, since we through his transgression have become entangled in the curse, he is said to have made us guilty ... And the apostle himself most eloquently testifies that "death has spread to all because all have sinned" (Rom. 5:12). That is, they have been enveloped in original sin and defiled by its stains.<sup>11</sup>

Here, Calvin carefully describes the propagation of sin from Adam to the human race. First, Calvin notes that "since we through (Adam's) transgression have become entangled in the curse, he (Adam) is said to have made us guilty." Applying this to the scriptural Real Adam described earlier, Adam's transgression was to disobey God's command forbidding him to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. It was through this disobedience that Adam's posterity became "entangled" in Adam's sin since it was through this disobedience that Adam became aware of God's law, the knowledge of good and evil. And, it was through the knowledge of this law that Adam's posterity, with their innocent animal natures, became sinners. For "apart from the law sin lies dead" (Rom. 7:8).<sup>4</sup> Calvin's doctrine of Original Sin can thus be used for the Real Adam even though Calvin himself believed that Adam's corruption came from the "fall" and not from an inherited animal nature.

#### The Injustice of Original Sin

Catholics and Protestants have always objected to the injustice of Original Sin as presented in the Roman Catholic Council of Trent (1545) and in the Protestant *Westminster Confession* (1647). Blaise Pascal, a Catholic wrote (1659):

The transmission of sin seems to us not only impossible, it even seems very unjust; for what could be more contrary to the rules of our sorry justice than the eternal damnation of a child incapable of willpower for a sin in

which he seems to have played so small a part, and which was committed six thousand years before he was born?<sup>12</sup>

And this discomfort with the guilt of Adam's sin being transmitted to his posterity is still present today. In his 1971 book, *Sin*, Berkouwer introduced the chapter on Alien Guilt (the imputation of the guilt of Adam's sin to the human race) with the comment:

We now enter an area in which a strenuous and emotional debate has been constantly waged throughout the entire history of the Church and her theology. The debate is still going strong in our own day.<sup>13</sup>

But, as we have seen, the Original Sin of the Real Adam as interpreted by Calvin avoids this transmission of guilt. Humans are guilty because of their own sins.

#### Summary of the Consequences

When the *Homo sapiens* Real Adam disobeyed God's command, he sinned. Eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he became aware of God's law and became a slave to sin because this law contradicted his heretofore innocent animal habits and desires. Adam's posterity, who have the same *Homo sapiens* nature as Adam, also become slaves to sin when they become aware of God's law. Although humans would not have known sin without Adam's sin, they themselves are sinners because they sin and not because Adam sinned. The Real Adam therefore eliminates the unjust imputation of the guilt of Adam's sin to his posterity found in the confessions.

#### The Noetic Effects of Sin

We now turn to Points 2 and 4 of the *Westminster Confession* (Section III.A) which comprise the content of Original Sin for the Real Adam:

2. By their sin, Adam and Eve became dead in sin and wholly defiled.
4. Their corrupted nature was conveyed to their posterity by ordinary generation.

These statements are generally accepted because they just describe the contemporary human condition which all can observe. Nevertheless, many questions can be raised about the application of these statements

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to human actions. We select for discussion, the noetic (intellectual) effects of sin, an area of particular interest to those who use their reason to find truth. Are human beings forever separated from the truth because their reason has been wholly defiled?

### Some Human Thinking Is Futile

John Calvin identifies two kinds of human thinking when he evaluates the cognitive abilities of the ancient world:

Shall we deny that the truth shone upon the ancient jurists who established civic order and discipline with such great equity? Shall we say that the philosophers were blind in their fine observation and artful description of nature? What shall we say of all the mathematical sciences? Shall we consider them the ravings of madmen? No, we cannot read the writings of the ancients on these subjects without great admiration.<sup>14</sup>

However, these accomplishments of the classical world did not extend to the moral law. Calvin remarks about the ineffectiveness of the Greek philosophers concerning God's Kingdom and "spiritual" insight:

In these matters the greatest geniuses are blinder than moles! Certainly, I do not deny that one can read competent and apt statements about God here and there in the philosophers, but these always show a certain giddy imagination ... They saw things in such a way that their seeing did not direct them to the truth, much less enable them to attain it!<sup>15</sup>

Here, Calvin is writing from the perspective of a Christian and he recognizes the limitations of pagans in understanding spiritual matters. For example, Calvin criticizes Plato for saying that sin results from ignorance.<sup>16</sup>

In his book, *The Noetic Effects of Sin*, Stephen Moroney also finds this same distinction between sound thinking concerning earthly matters and futile thinking about heavenly matters.<sup>17</sup> Moroney defines "heavenly matters" as those associated with God's law: "you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and you shall love your neighbor as yourself." Human beings become futile in their thinking when dealing with matters associated with the moral law, the knowledge of good and evil. We need only look at the record of the twentieth century for confirmation of these observations. Never in history has science progressed more rapidly than in this century of unprecedented moral evil.

### The Explanation for Futile Thinking

The connection of futile thinking with the knowledge of good and evil, noted by Calvin and Moroney, immediately reminds us of the Real Adam who became a sinner when he acquired the knowledge of good and evil. Before this acquisition, the Real Adam was a clever *Homo sapiens* who had survived in the world because of his ability to observe

and respond to his surroundings. He had learned to use the law of the lever when he pried up rocks with sticks; with this kind of "practical" knowledge he had built shelters and learned to farm and to raise livestock. Thus, Adam's acquisition of the knowledge of good and evil had no effect on these capabilities. These are the "earthly matters," recognized by Calvin and Moroney, where human thinking is sound.

On the other hand, where the knowledge of good and evil is pertinent, human thinking is futile. Here we find humans, with their animal natures, resisting God's law to love God and their neighbors as themselves.

### Summary on Noetic Effects

From observation, most people have concluded that the noetic effects of sin do not affect human conduct in "practical matters" such as science and medicine. On the other hand, humans become futile in their thinking wherever the knowledge of good and evil is concerned. This distinction is explained by the Real Adam (and his posterity) whose animal inheritance and self-esteem conflict with his ability to follow God's law.

## The Propagation of Adam's Sin

### The *Westminster Confession*

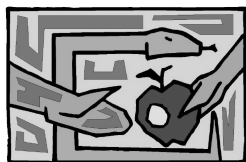
We have now arrived at the last stage of Original Sin, the propagation of Adam's sin to his posterity. Again, we turn to Points 2 and 4 of the *Westminster Confession* which apply to the Real Adam. These points are printed in italic type:

VI.2. *By this sin (eating the forbidden fruit) they (Adam and Eve) fell from their original righteousness and communion with God, and so became dead in sin, and wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body.*

VI.3. *(Adam and Eve) being the root of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed, and the same death in sin and corrupted nature (was) conveyed to all their posterity, descending from them by ordinary generation.*

We see immediately that this 1647 expression of Christian belief is scientifically untenable today. *Homo sapiens* crossed over into North America before 22,000 BC.<sup>18</sup> Yet Adam, the Mesopotamian farmer of Scripture, lived half a world away some time after 9000 BC.<sup>19</sup> It is inconceivable that Adam's sin and corrupted nature could be conveyed by ordinary generation to the American Indians of today whose ancestors colonized the Americas before 22,000 BC.

The American Indians, however, are not the only part of the human race unrelated to Adam. Thousands of *Homo sapiens* lived at the time of Adam. Thus, anyone reading this article is thousands of times more likely to be descended from one of these *Homo sapiens* than to be descended from Adam. So, how did we acquire our sinful natures?



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*The propagation of a common morality (the knowledge of good and evil) from a single center (Adam) coincides with the propagation of sin from Adam to the Homo sapiens of the world. Thus, the existence of a common morality is objective evidence that all of human sin is derived from a single source.*

#### The Real Adam

This question is answered by the Real Adam. With the Real Adam we have inherited our animal natures from our *Homo sapiens* ancestors. We have then become sinners through the acquisition of the knowledge of good and evil from the teaching of Adam's descendants as they spread across the world. The propagation of sin from Adam into the world has occurred in much the same manner as the righteousness from Christ was propagated into the world through the preaching of the gospel. Thus, to follow the propagation of sin across the world we need only follow the propagation of the knowledge of good and evil across the world.

#### A Single Source of Morality

C. S. Lewis has noted that the same morality appears in all cultures across the face of the earth. After collecting examples of this agreement in moral principles for a number of cultures, Lewis commented:

It is at least arguable that every civilization we find has been derived from another civilization and, in the last resort, from a single center—carried like an infectious disease or like the Apostolical succession.<sup>20</sup>

The common morality exhibited by the human race thus implies that this morality had a single source that was propagated over time from its origin.

But the propagation of a common morality (the knowledge of good and evil) from a single center (Adam) coincides with the propagation of sin from Adam to the *Homo sapiens* of the world. Thus, the existence of a common morality is objective evidence that all of human sin is derived from a single source.

However, we do not know how sin was propagated from this source. We know that sin followed morality but there is no written record of the propagation of morality. Thus, our knowledge of the propagation of morality must be obtained from some other source that has left a record that can be found by archeology.

#### A Marker for Morality

We therefore cast about for some archeological marker that, like morality, has spread across the earth from a single source. A can-

didate for such a marker is the origin of cities. Cities, like the knowledge of good and evil, first appeared in Mesopotamia about 4,000 BC. Commenting on the origin of cities, Robert J. Wenke writes:

The same kinds of changes (the origin of cities) that we have been describing for Mesopotamia also happened—largely independently—in various other areas of the ancient world, in Egypt, the Indus valley, China, Peru, Mesoamerica, and a few other places ... By now the reader will not be at all surprised to learn that the question that has fascinated archaeologists for centuries is: Why?<sup>21</sup>

One difference between Wenke and his cities and Lewis and his morality is that Wenke asserts that the similar cities developed independently while Lewis surmises that the similar moralities point to a common source. But Wenke, like Lewis, has no explanation for the worldwide appearance of the similar phenomena.

We will now show how a connection between Adam and the building of cities can provide a marker for the propagation of good and evil (morality). Since the knowledge of good and evil originated with Adam, the demonstration of a connection between Adam and the first cities will demonstrate a connection between the knowledge of good and evil and the origin of cities. And, since sin is associated with the knowledge of good and evil, the archeological dates for the building of cities can be used as a marker for the propagation of sin.

#### Adam and Cities

We find then in Scripture indications that Adam and his associates built cities. For, when Adam ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he was transformed from an "it" bound to the natural world to an "I" who transcends the natural world. He now had the capability to organize and administer the operations required to build a complex organization such as a city. And indeed, we find Adam's son Cain building a city (Gen. 4:17). Furthermore, archeology has found that the first cities were built in Mesopotamia about 4000 BC,<sup>22</sup> a date near the time of Adam. (We note that Wenke's cities are technically defined by their functional complexity. For example, the large

community at Jericho in 8000 BC did not exhibit this complexity and so is not defined as a city by Wenke.)

We have evidence therefore associating Adam, who had acquired the knowledge of good and evil, with the origin of the complex cities of archeology. We will assume in the following then that the origin of cities in a region can be used as a marker for the arrival of the knowledge of good and evil in that region. And sin follows the knowledge of good and evil for "apart from the law sin lies dead" (Rom. 7:8).<sup>4</sup> Thus, the origin of cities in a region can be associated with the arrival of sin in that region.

### The Propagation of Sin

**A proposed route.** Using the origin of cities as a marker for the arrival of sin, and the archeological evidence for the origin of cities, we can follow the propagation of sin across the world.<sup>23</sup> The archaeological record for the first appearance of cities is shown in Fig. 1.

The heavy horizontal lines denote the time of the appearance of cities at different locations, the abscissa being the date (in years).<sup>24</sup> The ordinate on the graph is the distance of the cities from lower Mesopotamia (in kilometers) and has been measured from an atlas along the routes by which humans dispersed across the world.<sup>25</sup> We are assuming that, even after the appearance of Adam in 4000 BC, the routes of original population movement remained in use for trade and communication. Thus, the distance to Mexico from Mesopotamia is found by first taking the distance over the old silk road from Mesopotamia to the confluence of the Yellow and Wei Rivers, the center of the early cities in northern China. This distance is then added to the distance from this confluence to the Bering Strait and thence south to Mexico. To assist the eye in following the course of the dispersion of cities over the course of history, two lines have been drawn connecting the locations on the graph.

As discussed above, the arrival of sin at a location is associated with the origin of cities at that location. Thus, the times for the origin of cities, the primary archeological data in Fig. 1, are also assumed to be the times for the arrival of sin at those locations. The graph in Fig. 1, then, exhibits the propagation of sin across the earth.

**Falsification.** Commentators consider the scriptural account of Adam and Eve to be a story,<sup>26</sup> a myth,<sup>27</sup> or a narrative,<sup>28</sup> but not a history of real events. Consequently, there have been no constraints on the propagation of Adam's sin to the human race. In this article, however, we have assumed the record of Adam and Eve to be historical and have proposed a historical account of the propagation of sin from Adam to the human race. And, since the propagation of sin occurred in history, this historical account can be falsified by historical evidence. It is important to recognize, however, that, even if the proposed historical account were to be falsified, other unfalsified historical accounts could still be considered to be viable. We therefore present

a list of historical events that would falsify the proposed account of the propagation of sin from Adam to the human race:

1. *The presence of sin before Adam.* Scripture states that "sin came into the world through one man" (Rom. 5:12) and so there can be no sin in the world before this man Adam.
2. *The presence of sin before 9000 BC.* Since Scripture describes Adam as a farmer living in southern Mesopotamia, the earliest archeological date for Adam is 9000 BC.<sup>3</sup>
3. *The discovery of sinners in a region before the arrival of cities.* Such a discovery would destroy the postulate that the arrival of cities is a marker for the arrival of sin.
4. *The discovery of inhabitants of early cities who are not sinners.* The presence of such people would also destroy the origin of cities as a marker for the arrival of sin.
5. *The absence of communication routes between cities for the times shown in Fig. 1.* Without such routes of communication, the knowledge of good and evil and, hence, sin could not propagate between the cities.

### Summary of propagation

Since humans, with their animal inheritance, become sinners upon receiving the knowledge of good and evil, the course of the propagation of sin from Adam to the human

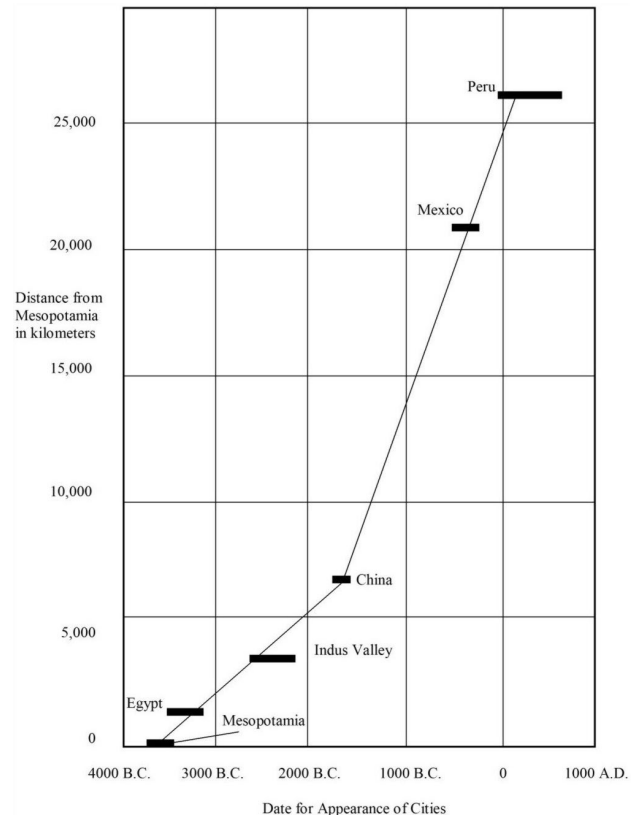
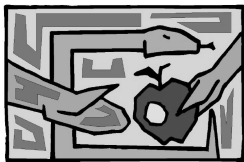


Fig. 1. Propagation of sin in time





## Dialogue: Article

### *The Real Adam and Original Sin*

*The arrival of sin at a location is associated with the origin of cities at that location. Thus, the times for the origin of cities ... are also assumed to be the times for the arrival of sin at those locations.*

race can be determined by simply following the propagation of the knowledge of good and evil (morality). The founding of cities across the world has been shown to be a possible marker for the arrival of the knowledge of good and evil (morality). Thus, the archeological dates for the origin of cities can be used to determine the dates for the arrival of sin (Fig. 1). Since the propagation of sin from Adam to the human race has occurred in history, it can be tested empirically. Five tests for falsifying the proposed propagation of sin have been presented.

### Summary of Original Sin

The nature of the Real Adam is significantly different from that of the traditional Adam of the confessions. As a result of this difference, the injustice of the confessions associated with Original Sin has been eliminated, the noetic effects of sin have been explained, and a falsifiable prediction for the propagation of Adam's sin has been proposed. ✪

### Notes

- <sup>1</sup>John A. McIntyre, "The Real Adam," *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith* 56 (2004): 162-70.
- <sup>2</sup>John Calvin, *Commentaries on the Book of Genesis* (trans. John King, Latin original, 1554, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans).
- <sup>3</sup>Masanobu Endo, *Creation and Christology* (Tübingen, Germany: Paul Mohr Verlag, 2002).
- <sup>4</sup>John Calvin, *Commentary on Romans* (trans. Ross Mackenzie, Latin original 1540, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1960) calls this statement in Rom. 7:8 a general observation.
- <sup>5</sup>*The Confession of Faith* (Richmond, VA: Presbyterian Church in the United States, 1969), Standard Book Number: 8042-3936-3.
- <sup>6</sup>John Murray, *The Imputation of Adam's Sin* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1959), 17.
- <sup>7</sup>Charles Hodge, *Commentary to the Epistle to the Romans* (1864; reprint, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1950), Chapter 5, Verse 12, second class of commentators.
- <sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>9</sup>G. C. Berkouwer, *Sin* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1971), 479.
- <sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, 475.
- <sup>11</sup>John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. John T. McNeill (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster, 1960), II.i.8.
- <sup>12</sup>Blaise Pascal, *Pensees: The Provincial Letters* (New York: Modern Library, 1941), No. 434.
- <sup>13</sup>Berkouwer, *Sin*, 424.
- <sup>14</sup>Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, II.ii.15.
- <sup>15</sup>*Ibid.*, II.ii.18.
- <sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*, II.ii.22.
- <sup>17</sup>Stephen K. Moroney, *The Noetic Effects of Sin* (New York: Lexington, 2000), 13.

<sup>18</sup>Stephen Oppenheimer, *The Real Eve* (New York: Carroll and Graf, 2003), inside back cover.

<sup>19</sup>Robert J. Wenke, *Patterns in Prehistory* (New York: Oxford, 1999), 296.

<sup>20</sup>C. S. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man* (1947; reprint, New York: Collier, 1962), Appendix.

<sup>21</sup>Wenke, *Patterns in Prehistory*, 332.

<sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*, 283-304.

<sup>23</sup>Zimmer has already carried out a similar exercise to determine the spread of speech alone talk: J. Raymond Zimmer, "The Evolution of Talk and the Emergence of Complex Society," *Semiotica* 138 (2002): 205-33.

<sup>24</sup>Wenke, *Patterns in Prehistory*, Mesopotamia (3800-3500 BC), 404-10; Egypt (3650-3200 BC), 447; Indus Valley (2600-2100 BC), 494; China (1800-1650 BC), 523; Mexico (500-200 BC), 577; and Peru (1-600 AD), 636.

<sup>25</sup>Locations selected for distance measurements: Mesopotamia (confluence of Tigris and Euphrates Rivers); Egypt (Memphis); Indus Valley (Rawalpindi); China (confluence of Wei and Hwang Rivers); Mexico (Valley of Mexico); Peru (Lima).

<sup>26</sup>Bruce Vawter, *On Genesis* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1977), 72.

<sup>27</sup>Gerhard von Rad, *Genesis* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster, 1961), 98.

<sup>28</sup>Claus Westermann, *Genesis* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1967), 28.

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