

does not explain why in 4:1a, when Adam fathered Cain, the article is used with his name, but not in 4:25, when the same Adam fathered Seth. Nor does he say why 5:1–5 omits the article consistently (5 times) for the same Adam with whom Genesis 2–4 is dealing. From Genesis 6 onward, “man” cannot denote Adam any more, yet in virtually every case in the rest of Genesis we read *ha’adam*, the same form used for Adam in Genesis 2–4.

Nelson claims that the transition from singular to plural in Gen. 1:27, “in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them,” is explained by the story of the creation of Eve in 2:21–23, implying that therefore in 1:27, “him” refers to Adam and “them” to Adam and Eve. This is not compelling. It looks like circular reasoning. Starting with a belief that Adam was the first man, he concludes that 1:26–27 must refer to Adam, and from this, he concludes that “male and female he created them” in 1:27 must refer to Adam and Eve. Similarly, some translations of 1:27 incorrectly talk of a man and a woman, whereas “male and female” are generic terms. So “them” can be the same collective entity as “him,” which is plural in essence.

A given form of an expression is no guarantee that it always designates the same entity. The context has to be considered within the sentence, the paragraph, the book, the whole Bible, ancient culture, and language flexibility.

One crucial case of context sensitivity is the question of the extent of the geographical frame. Gen. 1:1–2:4a is a creation story, referring to the entire universe, the Earth, and life as a whole. On the other hand, 2:4b–4:16 deals with the history of God’s personal dealing with Adam and his family.³ This second section of Genesis is clearly centered in southern Mesopotamia, the land of Sumer of the fifth millennium BC, as evidenced by the four rivers of 2:10–14.⁴

Between Gen. 2:4b and 12:3, there is no obvious break in the narrative, the geographical context gradually widening toward the northwest, before Abraham goes to Canaan. Nothing in this long story deals with the whole Earth. In particular, this applies to Noah’s flood, its farthest northwestern reach being near Cizre on the upper Tigris, at the edge of the low hill country part of Urartu (Ararat).⁵

Notes

¹P.G. Nelson, “Adam and Eve,” *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith* [PSCF] 60, no. 1 (2008): 71.

²P. Rüst, “Early Humans, Adam, and Inspiration,” *PSCF* 59, no. 2 (2007): 182–93.

³Gen. 2:4 constitutes a symmetric bridge linking the two parts in a manner indicating a temporal succession, rather than an expansion; cf. A. Held and P. Rüst, “Genesis Reconsidered,” *PSCF* 51, no. 4 (1999): 231–43.

⁴C.A. Hill, “The Garden of Eden: A Modern Landscape,” *PSCF* 52, no. 1 (2000): 31–46.

⁵C.A. Hill, “The Noachian Flood: Universal or Local?” *PSCF* 54, no. 3 (2002): 170–83.

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Does the Bible Really “Declare” the Earth Young?

In the recent response (*PSCF* 60, no. 1 [2008]: 35) to the essay review of Randy Isaac on Radioisotopes and the Age of the Earth, Larry Vardiman, a physicist at the Institute for Creation Research and a member of the RATE group, said, “... the apparent conflict between the billions of years of earth history commonly espoused by conventional science and the thousands of years declared by Scripture seems to be resolvable.” This sentence raises a question: Does the Bible really declare the earth young?

Unfortunately, I did not find any biblical sentence that declares the earth young or the earth old. The Bibles that the RATE Group used would be the same as others. I believe, therefore, that the RATE Group should correct the phrase “declared by Scripture” with “declared by young-earth creationists” in the sentence. There can be many interpretations for a single declaration of the Bible. Of course, the young-earth argument is just an interpretation. An interpretation should not be confused with the biblical declaration.

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Can Science Make the “Breath” of God Part of Its Subject Matter?

Graeme Finlay (*PSCF* 60, no. 2 [2008]: 103–14) reflects on how the randomness of natural processes achieves God’s creative purpose. Finlay indicates:

To the Christian it is axiomatic that each one of us is a created being (Ps. 139). Scientifically, we are the product of random genetic process. Theologically, we are the outcome of loving divine purpose. Molecular randomness (in scientific terms) and createdness (in theological terms) inevitably go hand-in-hand.

A human being is a physical/nonphysical/supernatural entity, which is quite consistent with the Christian notion of humans as body/mind/spirit (Matt. 6:22, Rom. 12:2, 1 Cor. 2:11). Scientific study of the human genome cannot access the nonphysical in humans. The notions of life, consciousness, and rationality lie at the foundation of the humanity of humankind, but cannot be reduced to the purely physical. The latter somewhat contradicts the assertion that “Genetic mechanism in all its happenstance has produced the genetic basis of humanness.”

Consciousness is a moment-by-moment awareness of our temporal existence and surroundings. Human knowledge has access only to snapshots and flashbacks of reality. God is the being forever conscious and thus eternal that does not exist in time. God has no history and so he experiences the whole of reality as an eternal “Now.”¹ God is the supernatural or divine being that is omniscient and sustains His creation (Heb. 1:3). It is not