

Letters

in error. Humans tended to fear the gods and sought to appease them.] In the Bible story – as Walton’s elaboration shows so beautifully – God wants to be with his creation and has a plan for building his tabernacle which he gives to his people to construct, to dedicate, to inaugurate, and to care for, and in which to worship their living Lord.

Walton has done some solid work, bringing his readers back into that ancient time, by using the number of creation texts now available to throw light on a possible way of understanding Genesis 1 and its implications for Old Testament studies and for science-faith questions. I hope my few suggestions will stimulate further discussion.

William W. Paul
Retired Professor of Philosophy of Science
Central College
Pella, IA 50219
paulw@wpmcrg.org

Eisegesis Denies Inerrancy

C. John Collins, “Adam and Eve as Historical People, and Why It Matters,” (*PSCF* 62, no. 3 [2010]: 147) practices eisegesis in his approach to Genesis 2 f. and ignores the first chapter. Both reports in Hebrew are clear that a pair of individuals are described. In Gen. 1:29, “male” and “female” are singular nouns, whereas “them,” involving both, is plural. Genesis 2:5 refers to “the man” plus a negation. Verse 7 has “the man” formed and vivified. The reference is singular throughout. The succeeding passage is clear that this is one individual. The reference to building the woman is also clearly singular. But Collins references a tribe as supported by Scripture and history (p. 151).

To argue that the children of Adam and Eve were less civilized than depicted because they were much more ancient (p. 158), living at least 40,000 years ago rather than about 6,000 (p. 159), has no basis in the text. That there were contemporaries (pp. 158, 160) is clearly not in the text.

Here we run into a theological problem. If Adam’s federal headship of the thousands of contemporary human beings involved their receiving the divine image and likeness and being subjected to his disobedience (p. 160; cf. p. 159), then the righteousness of Jesus Christ should apply to all human beings alive since the resurrection. Consequently, Collins should adopt at least some version of Universalism.

Of course, Collins could argue that Adam, Eve, and the talking, walking serpent either organized the tribe to march past the tree and to partake, or arranged distribution to all. On this view, a pregnant woman’s eating would affect the fetus, but even newborns would have to consume a little juice.

Note may also be taken that my commendation of McGrath (p. 165, n. 73) was limited to his matching interpretation of the biblical chronology. Collins, in contrast, expands his chronology without biblical warrant.

David F. Siemens Jr.
ASA Fellow
2703 E. Kenwood Ave.
Mesa, AZ 85213-2384

Historical Adam?

The historicity of Adam was the theme of the September 2010 issue of *PSCF*. An article by John Collins stated in the abstract, “that Adam and Eve were real persons, and the forebears of all other human beings” (p. 147). Although entirely wrong anthropologically, it was a well-articulated article. Dennis Venema authored a thought-provoking article that showed “evidence of human-ape common ancestry” (pp. 166–78). Brachiators swinging on the family tree, eh, Dennis? Good article.

Daniel Harlow read Genesis “in an age of evolutionary science” (pp. 179–95). “Modern science has amply demonstrated that phenomena such as predation, death, and the extinction of species have been intrinsic and even necessary aspects of life on earth for billions of years, long before the arrival of *Homo sapiens*. For this reason, many Bible-believing Christians have long found it difficult to read Genesis 1–3 as a factual account of human origins” (p. 179). True, but what about reading Genesis as a “factual account” of Jewish origins? Did Harlow think of that? No, Adam is a “type of Christ” (p. 181), a “literary figure” (p. 181), according to him. And thus Adam is erased from the line of biblical patriarchs who once breathed air.

John Schneider volleyed, “... in the event that conflict between science and Scripture *seems* to exist, it follows that at least one of the two—the *science* or the *reading* of Scripture—is mistaken” (p. 197). Right on! Here succinctly stated is the heart of the problem.

Sometime in the first century AD a funny thing happened. The beginning history of the Israelite nation contained in Genesis 2–11, which Moses had handed down to the children of Israel, began being interpreted by early Christians as the start of the entire human race. When they received the canon of the Hebrew Old Testament, due to their ignorance, they read themselves into what they should have, or at least could have realized, was a Jewish history book. A simple mistake in thinking Jewish history was human history is a common misunderstanding that has endured for 2,000 years and even left its stamp on this issue of *PSCF*.

Here is what the authors Collins and Harlow apparently did not know and certainly did not recognize. The likely existence of Adam as a legitimate, historical personality has already been substantiated with archaeological and historical evidence. This evidence was first presented in a series of articles that appeared in the December 1993 and March 1994 issues of *PSCF* entitled, “In Search of the Historical Adam, Parts 1 and 2.”¹ A book was published in 2008 entitled, *Historical Genesis: From Adam to Abraham* (www.HistoricalGenesis.com).² A whole school of thought and a movement has sprung up in recent months focused on the historicity of Adam in full recognition of the antiquity of the human race—the Historical Adam Society.

“Historical Adam” is a Christian apologetic that embraces the Genesis narrative concerning Adam and his descendants, and operates completely within the bounds of scientific discovery and historical evidence. This position considers Adam to have been a real historical person,