

Letters

Although, *pace* the reviewers, I am not seeking the genetic Adam and Eve but rather the genealogical Adam and Eve, nevertheless I affirm the relevance and vital importance of population genetics for my quest. My argument is simply that the data of population genetics do not rule out a founding human pair if they lived earlier than 500kya; this is consistent with my hypothesis.

The reviewers seem to ascribe to me the bizarre position that Adam and Eve “completely replaced all other *H. heidelbergensis* members without any death: people died without passing on their alleles; that is what descending from only two people living in a giant population means” (p. 244). I do not understand the view that they ascribe to me. In the book, I hypothesize that Adam and Eve had many nonhuman contemporaries among the population from which they emerged as the first humans. So, all the envisioned factors that actually led to the dispersal of *Homo heidelbergensis* throughout the world remain in place. Moreover, I suggest that it is plausible that, as the only human persons, Adam and Eve’s descendants would naturally prefer one another’s company to that of beasts and therefore naturally tend to self-isolate from their nonhuman contemporaries, thereby abetting dispersal.

Sincerely,
William Lane Craig

Review Authors Reply to Book Author

Craig’s response to our review of his book *In Quest of the Historical Adam* (Sara M. Koenig and Cara M. Wall-Scheffler, “Discussions about Dispersals: Questions Rising from the Search for Historical Adam,” *PSCF* 74, no. 4 [2022]: 242–45) strikes us as representative of the intense value of a liberal arts education. There is nothing so important in this world as understanding the frames of reference, the management of evidence, and the sensitivity of each discipline to vocabulary and word choice: how many of us have toiled through teaching introductory courses which seek to win undergraduates over to the specificity of word choice that allows for in-group, specialist conversations to persist? His concerns that we misunderstood his ideas were framed with examples that seemed, in fact, to misunderstand what we wrote. Potentially, this happened because certain words mean something different when philosophers use them than when biblical scholars and biological anthropologists use those same words.

The first case in point would be to suggest that we made “disparaging” comments about Neanderthals by mentioning that they had significantly better night vision than we have and a very clever form of locomotion

that probably prevented back pain. That they did not have an enlarged frontal cortex is a fact; this did not stop them from being the dominant species in Europe for hundreds of thousands of years and from doing many things extremely well. Not being the same as us is not disparaging (at least not to this biological anthropologist and this biblical scholar). In fact, it is part of the wonder of creation that incredible *biodiversity* exists.

A second example is something Craig admitted and confessed, that he had no idea what was meant by “an enlightenment understanding of truth.” We were referring to the enlightenment’s emphasis on scientific rationality, which could hinder understandings of truth as myth. In response to Craig’s statement in his response, “That I do not ‘equate truth with historical fact’ should be obvious in view of my strong emphasis upon the truth and nonliterality of myth,” we did acknowledge our surprise in the original review, that while he does seem to allow that “someone can read the narratives in Genesis in nonliteral ways,” yet “he insists that the Pauline texts must be read literally” (p. 243). Therefore, he seems to be suggesting that unless something is “literal” it cannot be true; this is an enlightenment understanding.

Ultimately, we want to reiterate that we understand how people believe in the historical or genealogical Adam, and for those people, this book will be helpful. Other reviews of and responses to Craig’s work indicate as much. We do not think that a belief in historical Eve and Adam is necessary for a deep, fruitful, biblical faith and discipleship. We further suggest that this book did not push biblical studies or paleoanthropology forward as disciplines. The ideas put forth about Romans 5 have been discussed previously in many places (including in this journal), and the difficulties of a behavioral ancestor between *H. sapiens* and *H. neanderthalensis* was dealt with in response to hypotheses about *H. helmei*. Currently, paleoanthropology is more interested in the diversity of hominin species, convergence, and the complexity of small changes in development making large changes in morphology possible for specialized niche adaptations. We look forward to a book that seeks to ask testable, theological questions of God’s creative mechanisms within the contexts of forward-thinking biology and spirit-driven theology.

Respectfully,
Sara M. Koenig and Cara M. Wall-Scheffler



REMINDER

Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith will be published three times a year (March, September, and December) beginning in 2023. Look for the next issue in September.