CHAPTER 7. ADAM AND EVE AND HUMAN ORIGINS

Genesis 3:20. And Adam called his wife’s name Eve because she was the mother of all living.

The subject of Adam and Eve and human origins is the most difficult to explain of the many science-Bible issues, and the hardest to reconcile theologically. The church’s position on this issue appears “set” and not about to change: Adam and Eve are the father and mother of the whole human race. This has been the traditional view of the church for centuries, and many church “professions of faith” have this statement in them. Furthermore, the church has not, in general, had this traditional view challenged by science because it has only been in the last 50 years or so, and especially in the last ten, that the preponderance of scientific evidence has mounted against it.

It has been my experience that Christians exhibit one of the following attitudes on the subject of human origins, and I personally know Christians that fall into each of these categories:

Ignorance. People who don’t know. Many Christians, and perhaps the majority, fall into this category. The scientific evidence is relatively recent and still in a state of flux, so this subject has not been prominently featured on television, nor has it been designated by the Christian community as a subject to be contended – in contrast to the subject of evolution, which has been contentious for almost 150 years. Therefore most Christians are unfamiliar with this subject as a science-Bible issue.

Apathy. People who don’t care. Other Christians are aware that there is scientific evidence out there for the position that Adam and Eve are not the parents of us all, but they prefer to remain apathetic about it, their attitude being: “Why rock the boat? If we ignore the
evidence, maybe it will go away.” So these people choose to not think about the subject. They leave it where it is, in relative obscurity, because it is simpler to do so.

**Denial.** People who deny the evidence. Still other Christians deny the evidence by minimizing it or by discrediting it as being unreliable. I have heard Christians dismiss the evidence as being “just a few old bones here and there” or “that Piltdown man thing was shown to be a hoax, and if you ask me, all of this early-man stuff is hoaxy.”

**Hostility.** People who are hostile to the evidence. Some Christians are hostile to the evidence because it upsets their already-set belief system. They have investigated the evidence (or at least part of it) and this evidence is theologically upsetting to them because they realize that it presents a challenge to the traditional church view. They feel backed up into a theological corner, and thus they react with a threatened, hostile response.

**Harmonization.** People who try to harmonize the evidence. There are relatively few Christians who fall into this category because it is a very difficult task – both from a theological perspective and from the psychological risk of being ostracized by the church. Despite these difficulties, a harmonization position is advocated in this chapter. It is sincerely believed that, since this is a major apologetics issue crucial to many people’s faith, it is time to squarely face the issue instead of “sweeping it under the rug”.

**What is the Scientific Evidence?**

Since most Christians are not knowledgeable of the scientific evidence regarding human origins, I will first present an overview of this evidence.
Anthropological and Archeological Evidence

An overview of the anthropological and archeological periods, as defined by modern science, is shown in Table 7.1.

**Table 7.1** Condensed chart of anthropological and archeological periods of humankind, including where Adam and his descendents fit in time according to Genesis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Homo Species/Artifacts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Paleolithic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hominids</td>
<td>~6,000,000 to 2,000,000 YBP</td>
<td><em>Australopithecus</em> (&quot;Lucy&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homo</td>
<td>~2,000,000 to 1,500,000 YBP</td>
<td><em>Homo habilis</em>; earliest tool makers; flaked stone tools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>~1,500,000 to 1,000,000 YBP</td>
<td><em>Homo erectus</em>; flaked and chopping tools, fire control. Found in Europe, Israel, Africa, Asia (&quot;Java man&quot;, &quot;Peking man&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paleolithic (palaeo = old, lithic = stone)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Paleolithic</td>
<td>~1,000,000 to 120,000 YBP</td>
<td><em>Homo neanderthalensis</em> (~300,000-30,000 YBP); ritual burials, flint tools, fire, spears, pendants, carvings. <em>Homo sapiens</em> in Africa (&quot;Mitochondrial Eve&quot; ~150,000 YBP); stone hand axes, huts, markings on bone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Paleolithic</td>
<td>~120,000 to 45,000 YBP</td>
<td>Somewhere between ~80,000-50,000 YBP <em>Homo sapiens</em> migrates out of Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Paleolithic</td>
<td>~45,000 to 20,000 YBP</td>
<td><em>Homo sapiens</em> appears abruptly in Europe ~40,000 YBP (Cro-Magnon). Neanderthals co-exist with <em>Homo sapiens</em> in Europe from ~40,000-28,000 YBP but different species (DNA). Cave art, sculptures, beadwork, weaving, spears, ritual burials; use of primitive boats. Animism &amp; shamanism (?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mesolithic (meso = middle, lithic = stone)</td>
<td>~20,000 to 10,000 YBP</td>
<td><em>Homo sapiens</em>; Natufian, Kebunan cultures in Europe; bow-arrow, cave art. &quot;Venus&quot; figurines. Use/trade of obsidian &amp; bitumen in Middle East. Animism &amp; shamanism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neolithic (neo = new, lithic = stone)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Pottery</td>
<td>~10,000 YBP to 5000 BC</td>
<td><em>Homo sapiens</em>; beginnings of agriculture and domestication of animals. Animism, beginnings of polytheism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pottery</td>
<td>~5000 BC to present</td>
<td>Mesopotamian culture; irrigation, 1st cities, temple building, polytheism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chalcolithic (chalco = copper)</td>
<td>~4500 to 3200 BC</td>
<td>Metallurgy (copper), city-states, warfare between city states; &quot;Ice man&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bronze Age (use of bronze)</td>
<td>~3200 to 1200 BC</td>
<td>Metallurgy (bronze = copper + tin); boat-making; import and export of items; city-states consolidated into countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iron Age (use of iron)</td>
<td>~1200 to 600 BC</td>
<td>Manufacture of iron, larger-scale warfare. Biblical history well founded</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Some general comments about Table 7.1 are:

(1) As you go forward in time, more fossil and artifact evidence becomes available.

(2) Not all of the fossil record is shown on this chart – just the most well known hominid or *Homo* species.

(3) The span of dates in the date column represents anthropological or archaeological time periods, and are not necessarily all-encompassing for the hominid or *Homo* species listed in the far-right column. For example, *Homo erectus* is thought to have lived from about 1,500,000-1,000,000 years ago over a large part of Africa, Europe, and most of Asia, but not to have become extinct in Israel until about 600,000 years ago and in China until about 300,000 years ago.

(4) The abbreviation YBP = Years Before Present is used for ages greater than 10,000 years ago, whereas the abbreviation B.C. = years Before Christ is used for ages less than 10,000 years ago. To convert the two ages, simply add 2000 years to the B.C. age to get the YBP age (for example, 5000 B.C. + 2000 years since Christ = 7000 YBP).

**Pre-Paleolithic.** The fossil record for the Pre-Paleolithic Period is very sparse, and you would be correct in saying that “there are just a few old bones here and there.” Because the scientific evidence is based on only a few partial skulls or skeletons, interpretation and classification are always in a state of flux. It’s like trying to visualize the picture on a 1000 piece jigsaw puzzle when you have only 20 or 30 pieces. You may know relatively where some pieces go (a blue sky piece goes toward the top of the puzzle, a green grass piece goes toward the bottom), but you don’t know how they fit together as a composite whole. Therefore, the relationships of hominids to *Homo* are not clear, and “family trees” always seem to be changing.
Paleolithic. More evidence exists starting in the Paleolithic (Old Stone Age), where in the Lower Paleolithic fossil evidence of *Homo neanderthalensis* (Neanderthals) can be found all over Europe. Neanderthals are the brutish-looking cave men you see portrayed in movies, drawings, and cartoons. Fossils of Neanderthal are almost always found in caves because the cave environment is conducive to preserving human remains (Fig. 7.1). Over 100 Neanderthal sites have been found in Europe and the Middle East, from Portugal on the west to Uzbekistan on the east, and over 400 individuals, ranging from a few isolated teeth to complete skeletons have been excavated. Clearly more than just “a few old bones”! Included in the ritual burials of Neanderthal are flint tools, evidence of fire, spears, pendants, and carvings.

Figure 7.1. Neanderthal footprint in Vârtop Cave, Romania. The Vârtop individual lived in Romania sometime before 62,000 years ago, long before the appearance of *Homo sapiens* in Central and Eastern Europe, the earliest records of which date from around 40,000-35,000 years ago.¹ Photo by Bogdan Onac. HAVE PERMISSION

Later in the Paleolithic many fossils of our species *Homo sapiens* (modern man) have been found, and these fossils seem to overlap in time with Neanderthal in Europe. It is believed
by many anthropologists that the two species may have coexisted together in Europe from around 40,000 years ago, with Neanderthal becoming extinct at about 28,000 years ago. Recent DNA studies have shown that Neanderthal and *Homo sapiens* (us) are probably two separate *Homo* species incapable of breeding.\(^2\) *Homo sapiens* in Europe, sometimes referred to as *Cro-Magnon* man, are the people responsible for the fantastic cave paintings in Spain and France (Figure 7.2). Over 120 such sites have been discovered, and most of the paintings dated fall between about 32,000 to 12,000 YBP.\(^3\) These ancient Europeans not only created fabulous cave-art scenes, but they also created figurine sculptures, beadwork, textiles (woven cloth), spears, and many other items. Because their cave-wall scenes resemble those of some ancient and modern tribes of Africa who are known to practice animism in the form of shamanism, it is suspected that Cro-Magnon man in Europe may have been practicing some sort of animistic religion by about 30,000 years ago.\(^4\)

![Great Hall of the Bulls, Grotte de Lascaux, Vézère, France](https://example.com/figure72.jpg)

**Figure 7.2.** Great Hall of the Bulls, Grotte de Lascaux, Vézère, France. NEED PERMISSION.

**Mesolithic.** Within the time frame of the Mesolithic (Middle Stone Age) to early Neolithic (~20,000-10,000 YBP) there are hundreds upon hundreds of human occupied sites,
especially in the Middle East, but also in North America, South America, Australia, China, and many other places. Figure 7.3 is a map of only the sites in the eastern Mediterranean region.

Figure 7.3. Early Neolithic “Natufian” sites in the eastern Mediterranean area, ~12,000-10,000 YBP. The Neolithic site of Jericho is circled in red. NEED PERMISSION.

_Homo sapiens_ sites of this time include numerous cultures in Europe, the Near East, and Middle East. The use and trade of obsidian (volcanic glass) and bitumen (pitch) has been documented for the Middle East during this time. European cultures are known to have invented the bow and arrow in addition to producing a great many female carvings known as “Venus” figurines. These were all hunting and gathering societies centered in small villages. An animistic/shamanistic religion is also suspected for at least some of these cultures.

**Neolithic.** Archaeologists divide the Neolithic (New Stone Age) into two time periods: Pre-Pottery and Pottery. In the early Neolithic the first indications of agriculture and the domestication of animals in the Middle East emerge in the time frame of approximately 10,000-8000 YBP and spread out from there. The Mount Carmel area of Israel is thought to have been
one of the first places where a sedentary life style began through the cultivation of cereals. This shift from hunting and gathering to agriculture and husbandry significantly impacted human population size and culture. More food meant more people, more people began to congregate into larger villages and then into cities, and polytheism began to take root in these cities from its animistic origin.

It is into a late Neolithic time frame that Genesis places Adam and Eve and Cain and Abel. How do we know that the Bible places them there? Because Genesis 4:2 says so: *And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.* It also says in Genesis 4:17 that Cain *builded a city and called the name of that city, after the name of his son, Enoch.* It is very important that the Genesis chronologies place Adam and Eve at approximately the same time as does the anthropological and archaeological evidence (Table 7.1). As discussed in Chapter 3, gaps may exist in the Genesis chronologies so that these chronologies cannot be used as an absolute time scale. However, these gaps probably do not represent more than a few hundred years of time (at the most), and so these chronologies roughly place Adam in a time frame just before the Chalcolithic or just after it began (~5000-4000 B.C.; Table 7.1).

**Neolithic. Chalcolithic (~4200-3200 B.C.).** The Pottery sub-period of the Neolithic is broken down by archeologists into three more sub-divisions for the Near East and Middle East. In the Chalcolithic (chalco = copper), the mining, transportation, and metallurgical working of copper ore began in the Middle East. This was also the time when larger city-states arose in the region, and when foreign trade relations began to range far and wide. Raw materials were acquired from all over the Near East, and objects, techniques, and artistic styles of various origins flowed into Chalcolithic settlements. It was also the time period when the famous “Ice Man” lived in Europe about 5300 years ago in the mountainous border between Italy and
Austria. This man carried a copper axe and was tattooed at acupuncture points. The Bible places Tubal-Cain at about this same time, or perhaps nearer to the beginning of the Bronze Age, because in Genesis 4:22 it says that Tubal-cain was an instructor of every craftsman in bronze and iron. Sometimes “bronze” is translated as “copper” so the time of Tubal-cain cannot be absolutely fixed, but most probably he lived around 3200 B.C. when iron was beginning to be worked. All of the occupations mentioned in Genesis 4:20-22 are associated with a civilized mode of life, and not with a hunter-gatherer Paleolithic/Mesolithic society using stone tools. Therefore, these descendants of Adam could not have lived before the Neolithic (Table 7.1).

**Neolithic, Bronze Age (~3200-1200 B.C.).** Bronze is a metal composed of copper mixed with tin, the tin making the copper harder and more durable. It was at this time in the Middle East that boat making, warfare between city-states, and the import and export of goods began on a large scale. As discussed in Chapter 4, the Bible places Noah in this time frame, at about 2900 B.C. The Bible also places Noah’s descendents, including Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph, in the Bronze Age. The time of the Exodus from Egypt is controversial, but probably occurred late in the Bronze Age somewhere between 1450 B.C. and 1200 B.C.

**Neolithic, Iron Age (~1200-600 B.C.).** The Bible documents the Iron Age with great precision, as this was the time of Solomon and David. Biblical history is well founded during and after this time.

**Archeological Periods in Mesopotamia**

Genesis places Adam and Eve within the archeological framework of Mesopotamia, specifically with respect to southern Mesopotamia where the Garden of Eden was located (see Chapter 5). Scholars have broken up the ancient history of this region into nine periods. Table
7.2 shows how some of the main people and events in Genesis might fit within these archeological periods.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Archeological Period</th>
<th>Biblical Person/Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>~5500-3800 B.C.</td>
<td>Ubaid</td>
<td>Adam and Eve?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~3800-3100 B.C.</td>
<td>Uruk</td>
<td>Tubal-Cain, Jabal, Jubal?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~3100-2900 B.C.</td>
<td>Jemdet Nasr</td>
<td>Noah and the Flood?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~2900-2750 B.C.</td>
<td>Early Dynastic I</td>
<td>Tower of Babel?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~2750-2600 B.C.</td>
<td>Early Dynastic II</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~2600-2350 B.C.</td>
<td>Early Dynastic III</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~2350-2150 B.C.</td>
<td>Dynasty of Akkad</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~2150-2000 B.C.</td>
<td>Third Dynasty of Ur</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~2000-1600 B.C.</td>
<td>Old Babylonian</td>
<td>Abraham = ~2000 B.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Joseph = ~1800 B.C.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.2. Archeological Periods of Mesopotamia. If Adam was the first human to live in southern Mesopotamia, where the Bible says the Garden of Eden was located, then he would have lived in the Ubaid Period. Compare the archaeological time periods in this table with those in Table 7.1.

The Ubaid Period records the first human occupation of southern Mesopotamia. Eridu, Tell e’Oueili, and al’Ubaid (now all in ruins) are the oldest cities of this time period (~5000 B.C.). Archaeology has revealed the following aspects of this early Mesopotamian culture:

1. A fully developed agricultural way of life existed without local antecedents. This agricultural way of life was combined with fishing and the herding of domesticated animals. Stone hoes and clay sickles are common artifacts found at these early sites.

2. A fully developed style of pottery was used, even at the earliest Ubaid levels. “Ubaid” pottery displays a criss-crossed motif painted on light-colored clay. Ubaid pottery has not been traced to any other known ancient pottery type in the region, and no Pre-Pottery settlement has been discovered in southern Mesopotamia.
(3) Irrigation agriculture was based on canal construction. It was these canals, along which water was diverted from the Euphrates and Tigris Rivers, which allowed the early agricultural civilization of southern Mesopotamia to flourish.

(4) The first ziggurat temples were constructed, with bitumen (pitch) used in the construction of these temples, other buildings, and in the caulking of boats.

(5) A fully developed language (Sumerian) existed, a language that is not known to be related to any other language.

All of these items suggest a culture that arose “full-blown”. That is, the culture did not stem directly from a primitive hunting or gathering society, but from a more highly sophisticated culture surrounding the Mesopotamian area. However, what culture that might have been still remains a mystery. As mentioned in Chapter 5, Eridu is the most likely candidate for the Garden of Eden (Fig. 5.2), both from the locality specified by Genesis 2:10-14 and from Mesopotamian cuneiform texts. The descent of kingship from heaven was supposedly to the first city founded in Mesopotamia; that is, Eridu. It is possible from a biblical point of view that Adam and Eve could have been the first people to settle at Eridu after being dispelled from the Garden of Eden.

DNA Evidence and Human Migration

In the past ten years or so the science of DNA molecular biology has advanced to the point where scientists are now able to genetically determine which human populations are most closely related to other human populations, and where those populations came from and when. Since this science is probably unfamiliar to most readers, some terms will be briefly defined.

DNA. Deoxyribonucleic acid: an extremely long nucleic acid molecule that is the main constituent of chromosomes and which carries genes as segments along its strands. Each of the
46 chromosomes contains a single double-stranded DNA molecule composed of different sequences of the letters A, C, G, and T.

MtDNA = “mitochondrial DNA”. Unlike the DNA in the chromosomes of the cell’s nucleus, which is inherited from both parents, everyone gets their mitochondria from only one parent – their mother. Thus, MtDNA genetic information is passed down through the female line, but not through the male line. After tracing back genetic information several thousand generations, you come to “mitochondrial Eve” representing the root of a family tree of all modern humans.

Y-DNA. Y-DNA is genetic information that is passed down only through the male line. After tracing back genetic information for hundreds of generations, you come to “Y-Chromosome Adam”, representing a male root of human populations.

Mutations. Mutations are “glitches” in the DNA record, inherited markers that allow the ancestry of organisms to be traced back in time. Most mutations in mitochondria occur in a short stretch of DNA called “the control region”, thus making it relatively “easy” to trace genetic changes over time among closely related organisms (e.g., within a species).

DNA Clock. The “DNA clock” is based on the hypothesis that genetic mutations occur at a certain rate. However, natural mutation rates have been found to vary among lines of descent and between different times. These rates can only be defined in certain cases, contrary to radioactive decay rates, which are known to be invariant. The mtDNA clock values reported in the literature vary somewhere between 200,000 YBP and 100,000 YBP for “mitochondrial Eve”, but most seem to cluster around 150,000 YBP. The Y-DNA “clock” seems to indicate a younger date of about 50,000 YBP for “Y-chromosome Adam”.13
Dates for Ancient *Homo Sapiens*

How do scientists know when ancient *Homo sapiens* (such as “mitochondrial Eve”) and other *Homo* species lived? They do this in two ways: (1) by dating human bones and artifacts, and the rocks containing these items, using radioactive decay and other methods described in Chapter 3, and (2) by using mtDNA and Y-DNA clocks. It is significant that these two completely different types of dating methods roughly agree, even though the DNA clock method is new and not all of the “kinks” are worked out of it yet. However, from the fossil record the approximate 150,000 year date for mitochondrial Eve seems reasonable, as *Homo sapiens* (modern man) fossils dating back to about 195,000 YBP have been discovered in Ethiopia.\(^{14}\)

The science of DNA, and the DNA clock method just described, seem suspect to many Christians, and it is easy to pass this off as just another crazy theory perpetuated by secular scientists to disprove the Bible. However, before this genetics approach is automatically written off as being totally “flaky”, consider an article on the DNA testing of Arabs and Jews that links both groups to a common male ancestor several thousand years ago.\(^{15}\) While the exact DNA date of this common ancestor has not been determined, it could be that future DNA studies will confirm the biblical record of a common ancestor for the Arabs and Jews around 4000 years ago (the Bible says that it was Abraham). Furthermore, other Y-chromosome studies have confirmed a distinct paternal genealogy for Jewish priests,\(^{16}\) as claimed by the Bible in Exodus 40:12-16: *And thou shalt bring Aaron and his sons into the door of the tabernacle and wash them with water... for their anointing shall be an everlasting (hereditary) priesthood throughout their generations.* Such DNA studies support the biblical record and thus this method should not be labeled as “bogus” when applied to other human populations.
The Migration of Humans Around the World

From all of this anthropological, archeological, and DNA evidence it now appears that at around 150,000 years ago there was a “mitochondrial Eve” who was the “mother” of all humans living today. This woman lived in northeastern Africa along with a small tribe of ancient humans. There then appears to have been an early migration of humans out of Africa into the Middle East at approximately 100,000-80,000 years ago, and after this, a second, more extended, human migration from within and out of Africa, which migration led to all of the human races we have today. This migration is shown in Figure 7.4, and most likely started sometime around 60,000-50,000 YBP. The date of approximately 50,000 YBP is also significant in that there seems to have been a burst of creativity in human-occupied sites at this time. Instead of finding only primitive stone tools, archaeologists begin to find cave art, beadwork, sculptured figurines, and signs of animistic or shamanistic beliefs.

We are now going to follow the migration of humans around the world using Figure 7.4 as our guide. But before we start, two points need to be made:

(1) From the DNA tracing of thousands of people in different people groups around the world, it has been conclusively shown that all humankind belongs to the same species, *Homo sapiens*. Neanderthal and other *Homo* variations belong to different species. These findings correlate with what the Bible says about the unity of the human race (Acts 17:26): *From one blood (stock) He made every nation of men that they should inhabit the whole earth.* The King James Version uses the word “blood”, the New Jerusalem Bible uses the word “stock”, and both translations correspond to the Greek word *haima*, which implies one kindred.
Figure 7.4. The migration of humans throughout the world. The stippled area is the extent of the Table of Nations in Genesis 10. The arrows and times in YBP (e.g., 25,000) are explained in the text.
DNA data are not the only evidence on which this migration chart is based. The DNA evidence is also supported by archaeology and linguistics. For example, archaeological remains of humans in northern Australia have been dated to about 40,000-30,000 YBP,\(^1\) which dates roughly correlate with a beginning migration date of approximately 60,000-50,000 YBP out of Africa. Linguistic evidence has also been used to trace the migration of peoples. For example, linguists have hypothesized three separate waves of migration into the Americas based on the different languages of these peoples.\(^1\) These three waves based on linguistics have now been supported by DNA studies. However, archeological and linguistic evidence, by its very nature, can only hint at the past, whereas DNA genetics is by far the most important method for tracing past human migrations.

Let us now follow the human migration map of Figure 7.4. According to Bryan Sykes, author of *The Seven Daughters of Eve*,\(^2\) the DNA trail has been traced back to the !Kung people (San Bushmen) of Africa, some of whose ancestors are believed to have left northeastern Africa about 50,000 YBP. The !Kung people no longer live in this northeastern region of Africa because they were pushed into the more arid regions of southern Africa during the expansion of the Bantu farmer people from about 1000 B.C. to 1000 A.D. However, DNA tracing suggests that the !Kung are genetically the ancestors of all other human populations. The !Kung people use click sounds in their language (\(! = \text{click})\), and some linguists have speculated that this click-type speech may be the remnant of a very ancient language used by early humans.

It is thought that the peoples who left northeastern Africa about 50,000 YBP crossed the Red Sea and skirted along the coasts of Arabia, India, and Indonesia during the last Ice Age when sea level is known to have been much lower than it is today. Generations of these migratory peoples then made their way into Australia and New Guinea by about 40,000 years ago and into
Tasmania by about 30,000 years ago. This correlates with the fact that the Australian aborigines, New Guineans, and some Indian people groups look more alike, and are more closely related DNA-wise to, Africans than to other populations. But even at this early stage, the migration to Australia must have been partly by boat (rafts, canoes?) because the coastline then didn’t quite connect from Indonesia to Australia, despite a lowered sea level.

Also at about this time (~45,000-30,000 YBP), Negroid tribes were migrating to southern and western Africa from the “cradle” of northeastern Africa (Figure 7.4). The great Saharan Desert stopped most Negroid migration northward, and this area later became occupied by other human groups.

A “second wave” of humans settled in the Middle East around 45,000 YBP, and from there one segment migrated west and northwest into Europe, arriving there at approximately 40,000-35,000 YBP. It is thought that the Basque people in Spain and France may be part of this first ancient people group because they are genetically and linguistically distinct from surrounding populations. The Basque language is unrelated to other languages in Europe or anywhere else.

The other segment of humans migrated from the Middle East into China and Mongolia, reaching there at about 40,000-35,000 YBP. At a later date (~12,000 YBP) part of this population migrated to Japan (the Ainu), and then much later a larger population moved from Korea into Japan, replacing the ancient Ainu people except in the northernmost island.

From northwest Siberia, nomad Mongolian tribes (such as the present-day Chukska tribe who follow the migration of reindeer) moved across the Bering Straight into North America at about 20,000-18,000 YBP. These “New World” peoples spread out across North and South America, reaching Amazonia by about 10,000 YBP and the tip of South America by about 8,000
YBP. This 20,000 YBP migration across the Bering Straight happened during the “Last Glacial Maximum” when sea level was very low. This first wave of migration into the Americas is called the *Amerind* migration after the linguistic group of that name, and most of the Native American tribal groups of North America, and all of those in South America, come from this group.²⁴

The second migration of Native Americans was from Mongolia into Alaska and Canada at about 12,000 YBP, and from there into the western United States (Arizona, New Mexico) at about 1000 A.D. These are the *Na-Dene* peoples (the Navajos and Apaches). Na-Dene people do not speak the same language as the earlier Amerind tribes, except for some common root words traceable to Mongolia. For example, the Hopi, descended from the ancient Anasasi (Amerind) people, and Navajo (Na-Dene) people do not speak the same language even though they often live in close proximity to each other.

The Aleut-Eskimos are the third and most recent immigrants into the Americas (shaded area on Figure 7.4). However, all of these three migrations of native peoples have basically the same origin: they derived from Mongolian tribes of northeast Asia. That’s what the DNA genetic tracing of these populations shows, and that is who these people resemble. (The surprised remark of our Chinese “daughter” when she first arrived from China and saw Native Americans was: “Carol, these people are Asians!”).

The last major wave of human migration was from Micronesia and Melanesia to the islands of the Pacific.²⁵ Melanesians (darker-skinned people) reached Fiji by about 3200 years ago. The Micronesians (Polynesians) reached Samoa from Indonesia at about 3000 years ago, and then spread throughout the Pacific in all directions by canoe, reaching Hawaii by about 2000 years ago (Native Hawaiians), Easter Island by about 1700 years ago (Easter Islanders), and lastly New Zealand by about 1200 years ago (Maoris).
The Table of Nations

If the above migration scenario is correct, then what about the Table of Nations described in Genesis 10? Doesn’t the Table of Nations record all of the world’s peoples descended from Noah? How does this DNA human migration map fit with the Genesis record? This line of research is called ethnology, which is a branch of anthropology that deals with racial origins.

The Table of Nations traces the lineages of Noah’s sons Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Biblical scholars such as Speiser, Wenham, Hamilton, and Kitchen (and many others) have traced the people groups mentioned in the Table of Nations. These regions correspond roughly to the sons of Noah as follows (refer to the obliquely hatched area of Fig. 7.4):

*Japheth.* These ancient nations mentioned in Genesis 10 are Anatolia (western Turkey), Ionians (Greece, Crete, Italy?, Spain?), Aegean (Cyprus, Rhodes, Sardinia); in other words, the northern Mediterranean region.

*Ham.* These ancient nations mentioned in Genesis 10 are Cush (Ethiopia), Mizraim (Egypt), Put (Libya), Canaan (Phoenicia, Palestine, Lebanon); in other words, northern Africa and the Palestinian region.

*Shem.* These ancient nations mentioned in Genesis 10 are Joktan (various Arabian tribes such as Ophir and Havilah), Ashur (Assyria), Aram (Syria), Elam (Iran), Lud (eastern Turkey), and Uz (northwestern Mesopotamia); in other words the Arabic nations.

The last two regions speak what linguists call “Semitic-Hamitic” languages, where “Semitic” refers to the languages of peoples descended from Shem, and “Hamitic” refers to the languages of peoples descended from Ham. These languages include Egyptian, Hebrew, Arabic, and Aramaic, among others, plus a number of extinct languages such as Babylonian.
A Worldview Approach to the Table of Nations

Linguistic and people-group analyses by biblical scholars have shown that Genesis is correct in its tracing of the sons of Noah – but not over the entire planet Earth. Geographically, the Table of Nations list goes as far east as Persia (Elam), as far south as Ethiopia (Cush) and the Arabian Peninsula, as far north as Anatolia (Turkey), and as far west as Crete, Spain?, and Libya. By the time of the Tower of Babel (~2750 B.C.; Table 7.2) the major human racial groups had already spread around the world.

The Genesis 11:1 passage “And the whole earth was of one language, and one speech” may refer to the ancient Sumerian language, with “the whole earth” referring to the Mesopotamian alluvial plain, as it did for Noah’s Flood (see Chapter 4). The Tower of Babel dates from sometime after the Flood (~2900 B.C.) to perhaps around 2750 B.C. (Table 7.2). By about 2700-2600 B.C. the Sumerian language was gradually being replaced by Early Semitic and Old Akkadian dialects, and by about 2400 B.C. it had been entirely replaced as a “living language”, but still remained as a written language.27 This date of around 2600 B.C. for the division of languages story in Genesis correlates in time with other ancient Sumerian stories on the same topic.28 The Tower of Babel story may thus possibly be a different version of a tradition shared by both the early Mesopotamian culture and Genesis 11, but which story found a separate and distinct expression in the written forms left by these two cultures.

All of the evidence thus points to this conclusion: The Table of Nations includes only those nations familiar to the biblical author(s) – not all of the nations of the world. The intent of the Table of Nations in Genesis 10 was to show the relative kinship of all the known nations of the world and the position of what was later to become Israel in relation to them.29 This further
confirms the discussion we had in Chapter 4 on Noah’s Flood concerning a local flood covering only the region of Mesopotamia. “All” as used in Genesis 6-8 refers to all the known world of Noah’s time (~2900 B.C.) and not to the whole planet Earth. From the time of Noah’s Flood to the time of the Table of Nations (~2750 B.C.), the known world of the biblical author(s) had expanded some, but probably still revolved mainly around Mesopotamia, even though there was more contact with other surrounding nations by that time. The Genesis 11 text was probably written down in the patriarchal period (early second millennium), the text coming as a tradition with the patriarchs westward from Mesopotamia. By this time, the known world was nearly the whole Mediterranean and Near Eastern region, and therefore these are the regions mentioned in Genesis 11 as being occupied by the descendants of Noah’s three sons. Thus the Genesis 6-8 and Genesis 11 stories record different geographical extents for “the whole earth” because the whole known earth had expanded over this time period.

**Cheddar Man or Adam?**

All of the above evidence confirms that Adam and Eve were not the first people to live on planet Earth, and only some people like the Arabs and Jews can trace their ancestry back to Adam. To illustrate the problem that most of us have with connecting our ancestry to a historical Adam who lived about 6000 years ago, I will trace my lineage based on DNA analysis and genealogy records.

From analysis of my mitochondrial DNA along my mother’s line, it was found that I belong to a specific lineage of the human family called “haplogroup U”. A haplotype is an entire shared region of DNA. Share a haplotype, and you share an ancestor. From the study of haplotypes, it is possible to trace the origins of founder mutations and to track human
populations. Specific lineages are traced back in time through genetic mutations called “markers”. After a mutation occurs in the mitochondrial DNA of a woman, she then passes this marker on to her daughters and her daughters daughters, and so on. My lineage starts with “mitochondrial Eve”, who likely originated in East Africa about 150,000 years ago. Then at about 80,000 years ago, the female descendents of this woman left Africa and went first to the Near East, and then about 50,000 years ago, they moved northward toward northern Europe. Today members of haplogroup U make up about 7% of the population of Europe and the eastern Mediterranean.

My mother’s father’s side of the family is named Read. As far back as we can trace, they lived in Axbridge, a small town in the picturesque hills of Somerset, located in southwestern England. About three miles from Axbridge is the town of Cheddar, famous for its cheese and also for the caves in Cheddar Gorge – especially Gough’s Cave, where the Early Neolithic corpse of “Cheddar Man” was discovered in 1903. Cheddar Man is the most complete ancient skeleton ever found in Britain, and has been dated to about 9000 years ago. This man was part of a population of hunter-gatherers who first inhabited the British Isles about 12,000 years ago (Fig. 7.4). Cheddar Man again made news in 1998 when DNA was extracted from this ancient skeleton and genetically related to a modern man, Adrian Targett, who lives just a half a mile from Gough’s Cave (Fig. 7.6). Since my ancestors also came from this immediate area, it is quite possible that I too may be genetically related to Cheddar Man.
Figure 7.6. A modern man – Adrian Targett, who lives in the village of Cheddar, Somerset, England – has been found to be genetically related to the 9000 year old “Cheddar Man”, the skeleton of which is shown in this photo. NEED PERMISSION. January 1998, DISCOVER magazine. Article by Shanti Menor. © Robert Wallis/Saba.

My father’s mother’s name was Lillie Anna Sommers. Lillie’s mother Christiana Sinn immigrated to the United States in 1855 from Unterheimbach, Wurttemberg, Germany, a small town just north of the Switzerland border. The Sinns lived in this area for at least four generations (as far back as can be traced). Christianna Sinn married Phillip Adam Sommers, who had immigrated in 1876 from Prussia (then a part of Germany, now located in north-central Poland). Therefore, I may be related to Germanic tribes who inhabited Europe during and since the last Ice Age (~30,000-10,000 YBP). Perhaps I am even related to the Iceman himself, in a very roundabout way. What I do know is that I am not related to any of the people groups outlined in the Table of Nations, people who migrated in and around the Mediterranean and Middle East sometime after about 2800 B.C. (Fig. 7.4). I am also probably not related to the line of Adam – unless I consider that Adam and Eve lived 150,000 years ago (the Mitochondrial Eve view described in the next section).
Three Christian Views

Now that we have reviewed the scientific evidence, we are in a position to evaluate the different Christian views on Adam and Eve. These fall into three main categories:

| CHRISTIAN |
|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Young-Earth Creationist | Mitochondrial Eve | Special Creation |
| Adam & Eve; the first humans who lived ~4000 B.C. in Mesopotamia | Adam & Eve; the first humans who lived ~150,000 YBP in Africa. | Adam & Eve not the first humans; inserted into human history ~6000 YBP in Mesopotamia |

**Young-Earth Creationist View**

The Young-Earth Creationist position is that Adam and Eve were the ancestors of all other humans, and sin was *biologically* transmitted or imputed by them to the entire human race. These biological parents of us all lived about 6000 years ago in the region of Mesopotamia and were created on the sixth day of Genesis 1.

**Pros.** The pros to this position are similar to those mentioned in previous chapters for a Young-Earth Creationist position. First, this view is the simplest reading of the text. It also has been the traditional position of the church for centuries, and is included in most church confessionals, both Catholic and Protestant alike. This position is stated in the *Westminster Confessional* and is the official position of the Catholic church: “Roman Catholics should not believe that true humans existed after Adam who were not generated from him, since this position cannot be reconciled with regard to original sin, which proceeds from a sin actually committed by an individual Adam and…was passed on to all.”

Second, there are Old and New Testament Bible verses that seem to support this view; specifically, Genesis 3:20: *...Eve, the mother of all living*, and Acts 17:26: *From one blood He made every nation of men that they should inhabit the whole earth.*
Third, this position fits with the archeology of southern Mesopotamia, in that the Bible seems to place Adam and Eve within the Mesopotamian region about 6000 years ago (Tables 7.1 and 7.2). From the archeological record, the first humans appear “full blown” in southern Mesopotamia in an advanced state of agriculture, pottery, etc., at ~6000 years ago. These people also possessed the Sumerian language, an obtuse language not known to be related to any other.

**Cons.** The cons to this view are also typical of what are expected for a Young-Earth “literalist” position. This view denies all of the anthropological, archaeological, and genetic evidence discussed earlier in this chapter.

**Mitochondrial Eve View**

This view states that a real Adam and Eve were the ancestors of the whole human race, but that they lived sometime between 150,000-50,000 years ago in Africa, not 6000 years ago in Mesopotamia.

**Pros.** This view attempts to harmonize the church’s traditional position of Adam and Eve being the ancestors of the whole human race with the findings of anthropology and archaeology. In this view, the biblical Eve is equivalent to mitochondrial Eve, and the biblical Adam is equivalent to Y-chromosome Adam. This is the position that Hugh Ross takes in his book *The Genesis Question*, and it is the position of other Christians who are concerned about the conflicting record of Genesis with respect to the accumulating anthropological and archaeological evidence.

One argument for this position comes from the fact that there seems to have been a big burst of creativity and spirituality coinciding with the rise of *Homo sapiens* just before the migration of man began out of Africa at about 50,000 YBP (Fig. 7.4). This indicates that modern
man was different from other Homo species, even from Neanderthal, who is known to have used fire and spears. According to this view, humankind’s burst of creativity supposedly correlates with being created as a separate Homo species at this time.

**Cons.** There are many cons to the Mitochondrial Eve view. Most important: Can the “gaps” in the genealogies of Genesis possibly be stretched back this far? Gaps of a few hundred years (at the most) are justifiable from Scripture, but gaps stretching back 50,000 to 150,000 years? This is highly doubtful! And what about even earlier Homo and hominid species? Can the gaps be stretched back to millions of years? Some Christians have actually proposed this.35

Then there is the problem of the dispersal of humans at around 50,000 years ago. This migration of humans around the world does not correspond to the area encompassed by the Table of Nations (Fig. 7.4). Adam is not far removed in time from the Flood or the Table of Nations, and certainly not by tens to hundreds of thousands of years. Could the ark have possibly been constructed by a Paleolithic or Mesolithic Noah using stone scraper and chopper tools? This whole scenario simply does not fit with the timing specified by the Bible – the Bible places Adam and Eve in the Neolithic. Not only is the timing wrong, but the place is also wrong. Genesis indicates that the Garden of Eden was located in southern Mesopotamia, not in northeastern Africa.

Thirdly, since literary writing was not invented until about 2500 B.C. (at the earliest), this implies that the early Genesis stories had to have been transmitted orally for tens of thousands to hundreds of thousands of years – another unlikely scenario.

**Special Creation View**
This view holds that Adam was “inserted” into human history as a *special creation* among a population of pre-Adamite humans in Mesopotamia. There are essentially two sub-varieties of this view:

(1) Adam was a historical person literally created from the “dust of the ground” (Gen. 2:7). This sub-view would have Adam *physically* created *ex nihilo* from inorganic material, and would be somewhat analogous to Christ being miraculously inserted into human history by means of the virgin birth.

(2) Adam was a historical person, but the language used in Genesis is figurative. This sub-view would have God breathe *spiritual* life into an already existing Neolithic man who was contemporary with other people then living. That is, Adam was a “special creation” in the spiritual sense, not physical sense.

**Pros.** Both of these sub-views are compatible with the science presented earlier, and they are also compatible with certain aspects of the Genesis account. Adam had a fully developed language; in Genesis 2:19-20 he names all of the animals and in Genesis 2:23 he names Eve. The fact that Adam had language implies a pre-existing culture where language was learned from that culture. However, the Sumerian language has no known counterparts, so it is also possible that Adam was specially created with a unique language. In either sub-view, Adam and Eve appear to have been biologically compatible with other people around them, since their son Cain found himself a wife from the surrounding population (Gen. 4:17).

**Cons.** There are serious theological problems with the Special Creation view, and it is this theology that will be discussed for the remainder of this chapter, using a worldview approach as a basis of interpretation.
A Worldview Approach to Adam and Eve

A worldview approach tries to consider the culture and mindset of the author(s) that wrote the biblical text. From what has been discussed in previous chapters, consider the proposition that the author of the first four chapters of Genesis lived in southern Mesopotamia in the time frame of 2500-2000 B.C., at the dawn of narrative cuneiform writing. Let’s say that he was a scribe whose task it was to faithfully write down the oral sacred traditions of his ancestors and put them into narrative form. His main concern was the direct line of his ancestors, not with other people groups or lineages outside of that line. His main purpose was to relay the story of God’s interaction with, and revelation to, those ancestors. This ancient biblical author/scribe probably had no idea that God’s purpose for this genealogy was to trace the line of Adam to Christ, the “second Adam”. He was just being used by God for this purpose.

From this perspective, let us now examine some of the difficult theological passages of Genesis concerning Adam and Eve.

Genesis Uses Figurative Language

**Genesis 2:7.** The worldview or literary approach favors the second, figurative sub-view of the Special Creation view, because it is commensurate with the literary style of narrative writings of that time. *And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.* The expression “dust of the ground” is a poetic figure of speech, one used by the culture of that time. According to the worldview of the people of the ancient Middle East, among the materials used by the gods for the creation of man was the “clay” of the earth. Therefore in using this poetic expression, the biblical author was conjuring up the creation process in the minds of the people of that time. The expression that
humans are but “dust” (ʾāphâr) is also used poetically elsewhere in the Bible such as in Psalms and Ecclesiastes: *All go unto one place; all are of the dust and all turn to dust again* (Ec. 3:20). Similarly, the phrase “breathed into his nostrils the breathe of life” in Genesis 2:7 is to be taken figuratively, and man became a living “soul” is to be translated “spirit” as implied in 1 Corinthians 15:45, 47: *The first man, Adam, was made a living soul (spirit), the last Adam (Christ) was made a life-giving spirit... The first man (Adam) is of the earth, earthy (“dust”), the second man is the Lord from heaven.*

In addition, a literary approach makes sense for the fashioning of Eve, “the mother of all living” (Gen. 3:20), from the rib of Adam (Gen. 2:21). The Sumerian world for “rib” was *ti,* which could alternately mean “life”. In Sumerian literature, the “lady of the rib” came to be identified with the “lady who makes live” through what may be termed a play on words. This ancient literary pun in the biblical paradise story represents yet another “historical memory” in Genesis that attests to its early authorship. As discussed in Chapter 2, such a play on words was typical of the Mesopotamians’ literary style.

**Genesis Hints of Pre-Adamites**

*Genesis* doesn’t specifically state that other people lived in Mesopotamia alongside Adam, but it strongly hints at it. The *Genesis* author was not interested in tracing other human lineages besides Adam’s, and so only causally alludes to other people existing at that time.

**Genesis 4:17. Cain’s wife.** Where did Cain’s wife come from if there were no other people around? The Young-Earth Creationist view says that he married his sister, and that biblical exhortations (Lev. 18:9) forbidding incest did not apply to the start of the human race.
Genesis 4:17. **Cain builds a city.** Whereas villages contain tens to hundreds of people, cities need a population of thousands. Where did all of these people come from in order for Cain to have built a city? The Young-Earth Creationist view is that there was an exponential population explosion at this time because Genesis 5:4 says that Adam begot other sons and daughters over his life span of hundreds of years.

Genesis 4:14. **Who will slay Cain?** If there was no one else around, why was Cain worried that someone might slay him? Was he worried that one of Abel’s sons (if he had any before he was murdered) or one of his brothers would kill him? Or was he worried that someone outside of his family would kill him?

Genesis 3:24. **The cherubim guards.** Why were the cherubim commanded to guard the way to the tree of life? Guard it from whom? From other people who would try to get into the Garden to eat of the tree of life in order to live forever (Gen. 3:22)?

Genesis 4:16. **The land of Nod.** Throughout the Bible phrases like the “land of Canaan” or “land of Egypt” refer to an area populated by these particular people. Similarly, could the “land of Nod” have been populated by the “Nodites” who lived east of Eden? In Hebrew, “nod” means “vagrancy” or “wandering”, so could the people who Cain feared would kill him have been wandering bands of desert nomads?

Genesis 6:1-2. **The sons of God and the daughters of men.** *And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all whom they chose.* This is one of the most highly debated passages of all Scripture. The two most popular interpretations of this passage are: (1) the “sons of God” refer to angels, or (2) the “sons of God” refer to the godly line of Shem, whereas the “daughters of men” were from the ungodly line of
Cain. The main reason for favoring an angel interpretation is that Job 1:6, 2:1 and 38:7 mention angels as being the “sons of God”. The main reason for not favoring it is Luke 20:35-36: *For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are like the angels of God in heaven…for they are equal unto the angels, and are the sons of God, being the sons of the resurrection.*

A word study of all the “sons of God” and “sons of men” mentioned in the Bible leads to the following conclusions. Adam is called the “son of God” (Lk. 3:38), while Christ is the “Son of God” (Lk. 1:35). The term “Son of man” refers to an actual individual man; e.g., Ezekiel. God addresses Ezekiel about 90 times by this title. Daniel in his prophetic vision of Christ (Dan. 7:13) uses the term “the Son of Man” to show that an actual man (the Messiah) will come in the clouds of heaven to receive a world-wide kingdom. Jesus referred to Himself as “the Son of Man” nearly 80 times in the Gospels.

The term “sons of God” applies to believers. For example, John 1:12 says that: *But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name,* and Romans 8:14 says: *For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.* So the term “sons of God” apparently applies to all believers (including angels).

The term the “sons of men” applies to the human population in general. In Numbers, Psalms, Proverbs, Isaiah, Daniel, and Ecclesiastes the term “sons of men” refers to any person, be they Israelites or non-Israelites. It sometimes refers to ungodly men who are against the Lord’s people; i.e., in Psalm 57:4 King David says: *My soul is among lions, and I lie even among them that are set on fire, even the sons of men, whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword.* Other times, it refers to Israelites who are out of favor with the Lord, as in
Numbers 23:19: *God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man that he should repent.*

If this is the proper interpretation of the “sons of God” and “sons of men”, then a third option is possible besides the two traditional ones. The phrase “the sons of God” refers to the chosen line of Adam, while “the daughters of men” refers to the population of humans that lived alongside the line of Adam. That would explain why they took these women as wives, and also why the Flood account directly follows in Chapter 6. The unbelieving wives from the pre-Adamite population were turning their believing husbands away from God and toward wickedness and idol worship. Among the children of these unions were the giants (Nephilim) of Genesis 6:4, who seem to have survived Noah’s Flood, as they reappear in Numbers 13:33 (refer to the local flood discussion in Chapter 4).

**The Male and Female of Genesis 1**

We have already discussed the worldview approach to Genesis 1 in Chapter 2. Genesis 1:26-27, relating to the creation of humans, also fits within the Literary View of Table 2.1. But to whom does the “male and female” of Genesis 1:27 refer from the biblical author’s perspective? Is this phrase specifically referring to Adam and Eve, or does it refer to pre-Adamite humans? Even though the majority of biblical scholars over the years have favored a parallel structure between Genesis 1 and 2 – with Adam and Eve of Genesis 2 being the specific “male” and “female” of Genesis 1 – the text does not require this interpretation. Many other scholars have believed that Genesis 1 and 2 were written by different authors at different times, and that there does not necessarily have to be a direct correlation of “Adam and Eve” in Genesis 2 to the “male and female” of Genesis 1. Actually the idea of pre-Adamite humans is not a new proposition.
Isaac de La Peyrère in 1655 suggested that pre-Adamite people had been created during the first phase of Creation recounted in Genesis 1, while Adam and Eve did not appear until the next phase, recounted in Genesis 2.40

Let us now examine these and other Genesis verses more closely within the context of a Special Creation view.

**Genesis 1:26.** *And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.* This definitely sounds like the text is talking about humankind in general. Can this statement be applied to Pre-Adamites? Neolithic man certainly had dominion over the animals; they were hunters, fishers, and herdsman. Note that if this passage is talking about generic mankind (adam), rather than a specific man Adam, then generic man is created in the image of God as well as the specific man Adam and his descendants.

**Genesis 1:27-28.** *So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.* This gets a bit confusing. The verb tense goes from plural in Genesis 1:26, then to the singular (him) and back again to plural (them) in Genesis 1:27, and finally stays with the plural in Genesis 1:28: *And God blessed them.* According to the Hebrew scholar Cassuto, the true sense of these verses is that He created them (in the plural).41 He blessed them and named them man (male and female) when they were created. Cassuto also goes on to say that two different words for God are used in Genesis 1 and 2. In Genesis 1, ‘Elōhîm is used for God in the general sense of being the ruler of nature and source of all life, whereas in Genesis 2 YHWH is used for the personal character of God in His direct relationship with humankind. Since it is not clear that the “male and female” in these verses specifically refer to
Adam and Eve, they could instead refer to male and female humankind being created along with the rest of the natural world, which is the specific topic of Genesis 1.

**Genesis 2.4.** We have already discussed in Chapter 2 how the “generations” (tôlêdôt) of Genesis 2:4 points back to the Genesis 1:1 to 2:3 narrative and implies a longer period of creation than just seven literal days. In the context of our present discussion, the word “generations” could also imply a genealogy of humans before Adam. The specific discussion about Adam and Eve doesn’t start until Genesis 2:5, when the location for the Garden of Eden begins to be described.

**Genesis 5:1-2.** *This is the book of the generations of Adam in the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him. Male and female created he them; and blessed them and called their name Adam (Man) in the day when they were created.* The King James Version translation definitely sounds like the Genesis 2 Adam is equivalent to the “male and female” in Genesis 1, and thus “male and female” could not be referring to humans who lived before Adam. However, it is significant that a more exact Hebrew translation of “Adam” is “Man” (underlined in the above verse), which puts a different slant on things. The word “Man” has a collective meaning whereas “Adam” has a singular meaning. Why this difference in translations? Did the King James Version translators just suppose that Adam was the correct translation from their own worldview assumption of “Adam” being the first man?

**The Problem of Original Sin**

The concept of original sin is one of the hardest theological issues to explain if Adam and Eve are considered not to be the parents of the whole human race. “Original sin” is traditionally regarded by the church as a depravity, or tendency to do evil, that is innate in humankind and
which has been biologically transmitted to the entire human race as a consequence of Adam’s fall. Not only is Adam responsible for sin and the physical death of humans, but according to the traditional church view the results of his sin had even more far reaching implications – it also brought about a world of disease and disorder including the death of animals.

**Spiritual or Physical Death?**

In order to understand the nature and extent of Adam’s sin and fall, we must examine the story of Genesis 3. Of particular importance to the subject of death are the verses of Genesis 2:17 and Genesis 3:2-4: *But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shall not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die...And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die.*

Did Adam and Eve die in the day (yôm) that they ate the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil? No – they died many years later, but not as the immediate consequence of eating the fruit. So who was the liar, God or Satan? John 8:44 says: *He (Satan) was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him,* while Titus 1:2 says: *In hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began.* Christians must either go against Scripture and have God the liar and Satan not the liar, or they have to assume that this death was *spiritual,* not physical. 1 Corinthians 15:22 is key to a spiritual interpretation: *For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.* How are we made alive in Christ? We are “born again” – not physically but spiritually. We are born again to *eternal life.* Adam, as a human being, was destined to die physically, but from the Garden of
Eden onward in time a whole new kind of death and life enters the picture for humankind – spiritual death and eternal life. This same idea of spiritual, rather than physical, inheritance is also expressed in Galations 3:7 and 3:29: *Know ye, therefore, that they who are of faith, the same are the sons of Abraham...And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.* Are all believers the physical (genetic) sons or offspring of Abraham? No, believers are the *spiritual* offspring of Abraham and heirs to the promise made by God way back in Genesis. Such an interpretation of Adam being the *spiritual* father of us all (instead of the biological father) greatly mitigates the role of Eve in Genesis 3:20 and our understanding of the effects of the Fall.

**Genesis 3:20.** *And Adam called his wife’s name Eve because she was the mother of all living.* If Adam’s death was spiritual, as discussed above, then perhaps the phrase “mother of all living” refers to Eve being the spiritual mother of the whole human race. This verse also begs the question: How did Adam know that Eve would be the mother of all living? This future tense is understandable from the point of view of a scribe-writer of 2500-2000 B.C. who could see that the generations of *his* family lineage had come from Eve. The important point here is that the Bible is a book that traces a *specific* family lineage – the covenant line from Adam to Christ. Other people outside of this line (and even offshoots of this line, such as Cain’s) are pretty much ignored, with the story ever focusing in on the specific line leading to Jesus Christ. Adam was the father of that chosen line, and Eve was the “mother of all living” in that same family line. From the worldview of the biblical author-scribe this covenant line was the only one that mattered.

**Effects of Adam’s Fall**
The Young-Earth Creationist position on the Fall is that Adam’s sin in Genesis 3 brought about the death of all living creatures in the natural world. This theology has sometimes generated amusing, nit-picking arguments such as “Did Adam ever step on an ant?” Less amusing, it has alienated people who are educated with respect to Earth’s fossil record (see Chapter 5). Many Christians today believe that no animals died before the Fall, although the Bible does not explicitly teach this doctrine – in fact, it implies the opposite. Why did Abel raise flocks of sheep if not to eat them (Gen. 4:2)? Why did Noah take clean beasts onto the ark by sevens (Gen. 7:2), when clean beasts specifically refer to animals (and birds) that God says can be eaten without defilement (Lev. 20:25)?

From a theological perspective, why is it that animals should die because of the Fall? They did not eat of the Tree of Life. It was man who sinned, not animals (Rom. 5:12). Here also the Bible is not talking about physical death, it is talking about spiritual death, and about spiritual death after Adam’s Fall, not before it. Thus the Earth’s fossil record does not contradict the Bible because there is no theological reason why generations of animals and pre-Adamite humans could not have died before the fall of Adam.

**Imputed Sin**

This line of reasoning leads to an important question: If Adam’s sin wasn’t imputed physically to the whole human race, then how was it imputed? The very same question can be asked of grace: How is Christ’s grace imputed to the whole human race? Christ is not the biological father of any of us. Paul tells us in Romans 5:15: *For if through the offense of one (Adam) many are dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, has abounded unto many.* This leads to another question: Did grace exist before
Christ came to Earth? The Bible says yes. In Genesis Noah found grace (favor) in the eyes of the Lord (Gen. 6:8), Lot found grace (Gen. 19:19), Joseph found grace (Gen. 39:10), Moses found grace (Ex. 33:17), etc. Although grace (favor with God) was given to particular persons, a state of redemptive grace was not offered to the whole human race until Christ came. Likewise with Adam. Sin existed before Adam, but it was not until Adam sinned that a dispensational condition of sin became conferred on the whole human race.

Adam is made a type of Christ because of the similarity in the total spiritual effect of one man’s action on all humanity. Paul in Romans doesn’t tell us how this imputation of sin and grace to humanity happened – it just seems to appear as some kind of divine action of God who chose to deal differently with humankind over time. Does this mean that God changes His mind? No, only that God predetermined that his plan would change as humankind gained in capacity to comprehend Him. This “evolution” or progressive revelation of God’s plan is discussed next.

God’s Revelatory Program

This final section represents an attempt to harmonize Scripture and science with respect to human origins. It does not come from the position of manipulating science in order for it to fit with a “literal” view of Scripture (the Young-Earth Creationist position), not does it come from the view of trying to make Scripture fit with science (the Concordist position). Rather, it takes the position that science and Scripture are dual revelations that must be equally considered.

Pre-Adamite Humans

God’s revelatory program for humanity begins with a discussion of pre-Adamites (refer to Table 7.3). Throughout this discussion it is assumed that the “male and female” of Genesis
1:26-27 refers to populations of modern humans (*Homo sapiens*) that existed anywhere from about 200,000 YBP to the time of Adam at about 6000 YBP (~4000 B.C.), and that the religion of these ancient humans (at least from about 30,000 YBP onward) was probably animism/shamanism. The unity of the human race is also assumed, with the “blood” of Acts 17:26 interpreted as one *stock* of humankind rather than as one *man*, Adam. If we acknowledge the pre-Adam status of “male and female”, then we must also acknowledge that these humans were created in God’s image (Gen. 1:26).

What does it mean to be created in God’s image? Scholars have debated this question for centuries, but some type of consensus opinion might include self-awareness, intelligence, intellectual knowledge, rationality, reasoning ability, language ability, abstraction ability, ability to imagine the future, freedom of moral choice, dominion over animals, and capacity for fellowship with God. Most important, humans seem to be distinguished from animals in having a body, soul and *spirit*, whereas animals have a body or body and soul (“soulish” or *nephesh* animals such as referred to in Gen. 1:24). It is this *spirit* aspect that allows humans to innately

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Person(s)</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Covenant</th>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Holy Spirit</th>
<th>Man</th>
<th>Sin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;=150,000 YBP</td>
<td>Pre-Adamite</td>
<td>Entire Earth</td>
<td>No covenant</td>
<td>Animism, spirit world, shamans</td>
<td>Holy Spirit, no Spirit world, yes</td>
<td>Generic man (Homo sapiens)</td>
<td>Good &amp; evil, Yes Knowledge of sin, no Judgment of sin, no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~6000 B.C.</td>
<td>Adam</td>
<td>Mesopotamia</td>
<td>Adamic Covenant</td>
<td>Polytheism; monotheism starts with Adam, first of the chosen line</td>
<td>Adam is first person to encounter Holy Spirit</td>
<td>Adam + generic man</td>
<td>Knowledge of good and evil; spiritual death by sin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~3000 B.C.</td>
<td>Noah</td>
<td>Mesopotamia</td>
<td>Nauchoian Covenant</td>
<td>Flood: sent to wipe out polytheism from Adam’s chosen line</td>
<td>Holy Spirit of God protects Noah in the Flood</td>
<td>Generic man not wiped out by Flood</td>
<td>Judgment of sin of Adam’s line by the Flood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~2000 B.C.</td>
<td>Abraham</td>
<td>Mesopotamia to Palestine</td>
<td>Abrahamic Covenant</td>
<td>Monotheism; to be witness of one true God to the nations</td>
<td>Holy Spirit given to selected people in Old Testament</td>
<td>Line of Abraham + generic man (“Gentiles”)</td>
<td>Atonement for sin by blood sacrifice of animals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~1000 B.C.</td>
<td>Moses</td>
<td>Egypt to Palestine</td>
<td>Sinaic Covenant (The Law)</td>
<td>Monotheism; laws given to Israel to keep chosen line holy</td>
<td>Holy Spirit given to the Prophets + other selected persons</td>
<td>Israel + Gentiles</td>
<td>Israel judged for their sins by the law; Gentiles according to Rom. 1:19-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 A.D.</td>
<td>Christ</td>
<td>Palestine</td>
<td>New Covenant, Church age starts</td>
<td>Monotheism; Christ is the way to God</td>
<td>Holy Spirit comes on Day of Pentecost to all believers</td>
<td>Nother Jew or Gentile in Christ; Gentiles grafted into Adam’s line</td>
<td>Christ is the ultimate atonement for sin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.3. Proposed chart of God’s revelatory program to humanity over time.
perceive that the natural world has a creator, and which elicits a desire to be in communication with that creator (Rom. 1:19-20). Even animistic cultures have this innate recognition of God as a “Great Spirit”, except that without the direct revelation of God to man (as he did with Adam) this spirit aspect is expressed by worshipping the created instead of the Creator – that is, by worshipping idols, ancestors, animals, the sun and moon, etc. The “job” of Adam’s line was to reveal the one true God to those who practiced animism and polytheism.

Did pre-Adamite humans have a spiritual nature? Yes, because to be created in God’s image implies that they did, and because from the anthropological record it is very likely that humans were practicing animistic/shamanistic religions by about 30,000 years ago (Table 7.1). So then, what changed with Adam? It wasn’t that humans suddenly obtained a spiritual nature about 6000 years ago as proposed by some,42 it was because God decided that this was the time in human history to impart his Holy Spirit into a specific human, Adam, and then to continue His intercession through Adam’s specific line (Table 7.3). Did God impart his Holy Spirit into that genetic line? Yes, He gave his Spirit to Noah, Abraham, Joseph, Gideon, and David, among others. But, before Christ, the Holy Spirit was imparted only to specific persons, at specific times, and for specific reasons, and this impartation was removable, as shown by the plea of David: Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me (Ps. 51:11). After Christ, the Holy Spirit was poured out to all believers (Acts 2:17), and is not taken from us (Jn. 14:16, Eph. 4:30).

Did pre-Adamite humans sin? Yes, to sin is the nature of all humanity. Even animistic societies have codes to live by, with some people being considered good or evil by these societies. However, it was not until Adam sinned that a dispensational state of sin was conferred on the entire human race, and judgment for that sin: Wherefore, as by one man (Adam) sin
entered into the world, and death by sin, and so (spiritual) death passed upon all men, for all have sinned (Rom. 5:12). Therefore, under this new “world order” set up by Adam’s sin, people groups such as the Australian aborigines are accountable to God for their wrong doings, just as Adam’s direct biological line is accountable. Also, all peoples are accountable for accepting or rejecting the gospel of Jesus Christ preached to them in order to make atonement for their sins.

Adamic Covenant: Adam and Sin

The first covenant set up with humanity by God in the Garden of Eden initiated the following chain of cause and effect: sin, judgment of sin, blood-sacrifice atonement for sin, spiritual death or spiritual (eternal) life. That is why the story of the Garden of Eden and Adam’s sin is so crucial, because it heralds God’s salvation plan for all humankind, leading directly to Christ, both in the physical sense that Adam was the first in the direct lineage of Christ and in the spiritual sense that Christ is the final atonement for sin. It was only the first direct interaction of God with humankind, but all of the symbolism throughout the rest of the Bible hinges on this first covenant, even up to Revelation where it says in Revelation 2:7: To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God....

Adam’s sin started the chain of events and immediately we see it portrayed in the story of Cain and Abel. Why was Abel’s blood offering accepted but Cain’s grain offering was not? Because only a blood sacrifice is acceptable to God as an atonement for sin, which had come into the world through the knowledge of good and evil and which must therefore be judged. In Genesis 4:7 God essentially says to Cain: if you do well (make a blood offering) your offering will be acceptable to me, but if you don’t “sin lieth at the door” (sin will rule over you). Cain had the free will to accept or reject this blood atonement requirement, just as we today can reject or
accept by faith Christ’s blood atonement. Cain rejected it. Abel sacrificed a blood offering for his sins because of his faith in God (Heb. 11:4) and was thus held righteous (Mt. 23:35), and for his faith Abel became the first martyr (Lk. 11:51).

Essentially what we are talking about here is the institution of a new world spiritual order for humanity. A standard of right and wrong is being set up, a way to be judged and forgiven for that wrong, with eternal life offered by the grace of God. This new order is to be played out through the history of one specific human lineage (Adam’s) in the Old Testament, and end in the New Testament with Christ, when generic humans (the Gentiles) are grafted into Adam’s line (Rom. 11:17-24). The overall purpose of the Old Testament is to chronicle the history of God’s covenant with this one people group. This process of separation of God’s people from the rest of humanity began with Adam, and it wasn’t until much later that the separate ethnic and religious entity known as “Israel” specifically materialized with Abraham and his direct descendants Isaac and Jacob.

Noachian Covenant: Noah and the Flood

Next we trace the specific lineage of Adam to Noah. Generic humans (Homo sapiens not of the line of Adam) still existed outside of Mesopotamia in Australia, the Americas, Africa, and elsewhere (Fig. 7.4), but what had happened to God’s covenant line in Mesopotamia over the years since Adam? The descendants of Cain glory in violence and vengeance (sin rules over them), as is illustrated by Lamech’s boasting that if Cain shall be avenged seven-fold, then truly Lamech will be avenged seventy and sevenfold (Gen. 4:24). The earth also was corrupt before God and the earth was filled with violence (Gen. 6:11). The line of Adam had become corrupted by the animism and polytheism of generic humans with whom they had intermarried (Gen. 6:2).
But there was one man from Adam’s line who was just and perfect in the sight of God (Gen. 6:9), one man who still retained Abel’s kind of faith and who was not corrupted by the sin of the world around him, and that was Noah. So what should be done with this evil generation? To purge Adam’s line from sin took a drastic action: the Flood. The Flood did not have to be universal in scope because generic humans outside of Mesopotamia were not of Adam’s lineage. Thus, the “all flesh” of Genesis 7:21 included people in the line of Adam (except for Noah, his wife, and his sons and daughters-in-law); some “generic” humans not in the line of Adam who also lived in Mesopotamia at that time and who had intermarried into the line of Adam; and animals that lived in the flooded area.

At the end of the Flood God established another covenant with Adam’s chosen line: there will never be another flood that will wipe out this line, and the rainbow is a sign of that promise. Note that God’s promise was given to Noah, his sons, and descendants (Gen. 9:8-9), not to all people on planet Earth. Therefore, the rainbow of Genesis 9:13 does not imply a universal Flood, as claimed by Flood Geologists (see Chapter 5). This interpretation comes from assuming that “the earth” (Gen. 9:11) means the whole planet Earth, and that Adam and Eve’s descendants included all people living on Earth at the time of the Flood. Numerous local floods have occurred on Earth since Noah’s Flood, but they haven’t wiped out Adam’s entire line, so God’s promise has been kept.

But did the Flood stamp out evil? Hardly! In just a few generations the story of the Tower of Babel shows that Noah’s descendants were again building high places of worship (ziggurats) to pagan deities. But God kept his promise not to send another flood that would wipe out Adam’s line. Instead, He began to unfold another part of His plan – one intended to spread the news of the one true God to all nations and peoples.
Abrahamic Covenant: Abraham, Man of Faith

We now come to a turning point. God’s redemptive plan for humankind started with Adam. In Adam, sin entered the world, and (spiritual) death by sin. One branch of humans descended from Adam was God’s chosen line, but the interaction of this line with generic humans (by now called “Gentiles”) was highly susceptible to pagan cultural influences. Then God expanded his vision to include generic humans outside of the line of Adam. In Abraham all of the families (nations) of the world were to be blessed (Gen. 12:3), not because Abraham is the physical father of all people, but because he is the spiritual father by faith.

Abraham had a test of faith, and as with Abel it involved a blood sacrifice. God asked Abraham to sacrifice Isaac, the promised son of faith, and Abraham was obedient unto God by faith. Thus Abraham believed God and it was reckoned to him as righteousness (Gal. 3:6). Therefore faith became the cornerstone of the next covenant, and Abraham became the father of the faithful. The purpose of this covenant was for Abraham’s specific descendental line to eventually take the “gospel” to all nations: And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed (Gal. 3:8). This covenant promise of God to Abraham would extend through time and not be annulled by the future covenant of the law: And this I say, that the covenant that was confirmed before by God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot annul, that it should make the promise of no effect (Gal. 3:17).

Sinaic Covenant: Moses and the Law
Four hundred and thirty years after Abraham, the descendent of Abraham, Moses, is called upon by God to institute another covenant with the chosen line of Adam (by now the specific descendent line is called “Israel”). This covenant of the law did not negate the earlier covenants of God with Adam, Noah, or Abraham. It simply was added on to these earlier covenants.

Why then the law? There were a number of reasons why the law was added. One reason was to keep the children of Israel from sinning until the time when Christ would come (Gal. 3:19). Sin was rampant, and even though the Israelites’ sin was not exactly the same as Adam’s, they did grievous sin in the matter of idol worship. As Romans 5:14 says: Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come. Even as God was giving Moses the Ten Commandments, the Israelites were worshipping a golden calf (Ex. 32:1-6). The people of God were essentially exchanging the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles (Rom. 1:23). Thus, the righteousness of the law was intended to set Israel apart (Lev. 20:22-26), for Israel to be holy as God is holy (Lev. 11:44). Another reason for the righteousness of the law was so God’s “chosen people” would be a witness to other nations: I, the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the nations (Is. 42:6).

Yet another reason that the law was given is that through the law the Israelites would become more conscious of sin. The law very specifically spelled out what sin was, so that the Israelites would be aware of why they were being judged: For by the law is the knowledge of sin (Rom. 3:20). The law was the preparation for grace, for the coming of Christ. The law brought conviction of sin; it showed that redemption was needed.
Covenant of Grace: Christ, the Final Atonement

The focal point of the whole story, and the climax of the history of God’s interaction with humankind from Adam onward, was the atonement for sin that Christ gave on the cross of Calvary. Seven hundred years earlier Isaiah had prophesied of this final atonement, this final blood sacrifice: But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all (Is. 53:5-6).

This was God’s final New Covenant, one that would change the history of the world. Now there was neither Jew nor Gentile, for all are one in Christ Jesus. Through Christ, the Gentiles became grafted into the line of Adam by faith, and Abraham became their father by faith. There was no further reason to sacrifice animals because Christ became the final atonement for sin. There was no further reason to be in bondage under the law because His grace sets us free. Faith in Jesus Christ, God’s Son, is all that is required for the sins of the whole human race. In the fullness of time, God sent forth his Son to redeem those under the law and to adopt believing Gentiles into the line of Adam as the “sons of God”. Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation (Rev. 5:9).

NOTES


8R. Gonen, “The Chalcolithic Period,” ed. A. Ben-Tor, The Archeology of Ancient Israel, Ch. 3 (Tel Aviv: Open University of Israel, 1992) 41.


31 Analysis of my mitochondrial DNA was performed by the National Geographic Society genographic project. Roy Hill provided the genealogy for the Read, Sommers, and Sinn families.


