

# The Language of God and Adam's Genesis & Historicity in Paul's Gospel

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## INTRODUCTION

**D**RAWING UPON THE prestige and influence he acquired as longtime head of the Human Genome Project, Francis Collins established the

BioLogos Foundation with a commitment to theistic evolution.<sup>1</sup> His foundation sustains the endeavor of *The Language of God*, his book, that attempts to synthesize evolution with Christianity.<sup>2</sup> Collins believes the language of God in Scripture is not as clear as “the language in which God created life,” borrowing President Bill Clinton’s remarks during the unveiling of the completion of the mapping of the human genome.<sup>3</sup> It is understandable, then, that Collins extended the imagery of divine revelation with vaunted confidence: “It’s a

happy day for the world. It is humbling for me, and awe-inspiring, to realize that we have caught the

first glimpse of our own instruction book, previously known only to God.”<sup>4</sup> He refers to what he calls “The Language of God” decoded within the human genome. Collins is confident that, given the uncertainty raised by multiple interpretations of the Genesis account of creation and “the obvious truths of the natural world that science has revealed to us” in that context:

I find theistic evolution, or BioLogos, to be by far the most scientifically consistent and spiritually satisfying of the alternatives. This position will not go out of style or be disproven by future scientific discoveries. It is intellectually rigorous, it provides answers to many otherwise puzzling questions, and it allows science and faith to fortify each other like two unshakable pillars, holding up a building called Truth.<sup>5</sup>

Perhaps this bravado explains the stained glass image of the DNA double helix on the book’s dust jacket.<sup>6</sup>

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With the founding of The BioLogos Foundation Collins has launched a major campaign to challenge evangelicals to abandon belief that the Genesis account of creation and of Adam's origin requires belief in Adam's historicity. Collins asks,

But what about the Garden of Eden? Is the description of Adam's creation from the dust of the earth, and the subsequent creation of Eve from one of Adam's ribs, so powerfully described in Genesis 2, a symbolic allegory of the entrance of the human soul into a previously soulless animal kingdom, or is this intended as literal history?<sup>7</sup>

His answers are evident. After evolutionists have waged war against Christian faith for generations, Collins stakes his claim with evolution, establishes his outpost, issues his battle cry, and then calls out to extremists (on "both sides" of course): "It is time to call a truce in the escalating war between science and spirit. The war was never really necessary."<sup>8</sup>

This bold endeavor to reorient evangelical Christian beliefs concerning the origins of the universe and of Adam especially holds ramifications that extend far beyond calling into question the historicity of Adam. If Adam was not the first human and progenitor of all humanity, as Genesis and the apostle Paul affirm, then the gospel of Jesus Christ inescapably falls suspect—because the Gospel of Luke unambiguously traces the genealogy of Jesus Christ back through Joseph, who was thought to be his father, all the way back through Enos, to Seth, then to Adam, and finally to God (Luke 3:18). Several features call attention to this genealogy. Luke does not place it at the beginning of the Gospel, as Matthew does, but inserts it between Jesus' baptism and his temptation. Use of *ho uios mou* (3:22) followed by *ōn uios* (3:23) prepares for the descending order of the genealogy. So, unlike Matthew, Luke traces the lineage from Jesus back to Adam, thus placing Adam's name closer to the temptation account,

associating Jesus' temptation with Adam's. Tracking the genealogy back to Adam without stopping at Abraham, as Matthew does, draws attention to Luke's accent upon the universal aspect of Christ's mission, for humanity, not for Jews alone. Finally, tracing the lineage back to *tou theou* (3:37) reinforces the linkage between Jesus' baptism and temptation. Luke links the designation, *ho uios mou*, announced by the voice from heaven, with *ōn uios ... tou theou* (3:23, 37). By doing so, Luke does not simply bring the reader back to creation but draws tight association between Jesus and Adam, both designated "son of God," but in such a manner that by divine design Jesus reenacts Adam's role.<sup>9</sup> Without a doubt, Luke regards Adam to be the real first human ancestor of the Christ.<sup>10</sup>

What Luke's Gospel forthrightly asserts, Paul accepts as unequivocally factual. On the basis of the genealogical continuum between Adam and Christ, he proceeds to draw out the divinely invested theological significance concerning this relationship with regard to essential Christian beliefs bound up in the gospel. So, whenever occasion arises within his letters to refer to Adam, his argument invariably regards both Adam and Eve, his wife, as the historic first humans, directly formed by the Creator. For example, Paul asserts, "But death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who did not sin in the likeness of Adam's transgression, who is a type of the one to come" (Rom 5:14). Accordingly, the apostle affirms Adam's historicity and Adam's symbolic and typological function. He does not separate Adam's historicity from his symbolic function as though to insist upon his representative role nullifies his factual existence or vice versa. Christians have universally believed rightly that Adam's divinely appointed roles as humanity's seminal head and covenantal representative, through whom sin and death came, and as Jesus Christ's foreshadow, whose disobedience finds contrastive consummation in Christ's obedience, are grounded in his own historicity as the first human. However, with renewed intensity the siren song of

evolution rivals Scripture's prima facie portrayal of humanity's progenitor, even more, Christ's progenitor.

### **BIOLOGOS DECONSTRUCTS ADAM TO FIT EVOLUTION**

That large numbers of Christians persist in their belief that Adam was the actual first human and progenitor of the human race embarrasses many of the church's intelligentsia.<sup>11</sup> These theistic evolutionists complain that fellow Christians are obscurants.<sup>12</sup> Pointing to competing interpretations of Genesis 1-3, one prejudices his question against these poor benighted souls when he asks, is it "sensible for sincere believers to rest the entirety of their position in the evolutionary debate, their views on the trustworthiness of science, and the very foundation of their religious faith on a literalist interpretation, even if other equally sincere believers disagree, and have disagreed even long before Darwin and his *Origins of Species* first appeared?"<sup>13</sup> Francis Collins takes umbrage at non-scientists who reject evolution and BioLogos, his version of theistic evolution. Yet, far from being a biblical scholar, he utters remarkably bold, if not audacious, hermeneutical, exegetical, and theological assertions unbecoming adult Christians.<sup>14</sup> Because he thinks that he has harmonized evolutionary origins of humanity with Scripture's account of humanity's origin, by subjecting the latter to the former, he expects that other Christians should drop their resistance to evolution and join him.

Collins recruited Peter Enns to serve as Senior Fellow in Biblical Studies on the BioLogos team. Among his numerous articles addressing how belief in theistic evolution correlates with Scripture's account of creation, Enns published a sequence of articles that challenges Adam's historicity. He acknowledges, "The biblical description of human origins, if taken literally, presents Adam as the very first human being ever created."<sup>15</sup> Yet, he postulates that the text of Genesis calls for "reading the Adam story symbolically" over against "a literal reading

of the Adam story."<sup>16</sup> Because he accepts evolution as the only viable explanation for human origins available to modern Christians, Enns proposes that "Adam is the beginning of *Israel*, not *humanity*."<sup>17</sup> He rightly observes parallels between Adam's and Israel's stories.<sup>18</sup>

However, even though he acknowledges that in the Bible's narrative because the Adam story precedes the story of Israel it sets the pattern that Israel follows, he chooses to reverse the order historically. Enns does not accept the history of the biblical storyline beginning with Adam and progressing toward Israel as Paul does in Romans 4:14—"death reigned from Adam to Moses." Instead, Enns believes that the parallels call for a "symbolic reading" of the Adam story because, he claims, "Israel's history happened first, and the Adam story was written to reflect that history. In other words, the Adam story is really an Israel story placed in primeval time. *It is not a story of human origins but of Israel's origins.*"<sup>19</sup>

To support this conclusion, Enns points to the episode in Genesis concerning Cain after he murdered Abel, his brother.<sup>20</sup> Enns reasons, "If the Adam story is about the first humans, the presence of other humans [in Nod] outside of Eden is out of place. We are quite justified in concluding that the Adam story is not about *absolute human* origins but the beginning of one smaller subset, one *particular people* ... that particular people in mind are Israel. Adam is 'proto-Israel.'"<sup>21</sup> Accordingly, Adam is not a real person who existed in history. Rather, Adam is a literary creation, a mythic, a symbolic, an archetypal fiction to represent Israel.<sup>22</sup> Enns concludes, then, that the "Adam is Israel' angle is at the very least a very good one—and in my opinion a much better angle than seeing Adam as the first human and all humans are descended from him. Genesis does not support that reading."<sup>23</sup> The advantage Enns finds in this reading of Genesis 1 and 2 is that "if the Adam story is not about absolute human origins, then the conflict between the Bible and evolution cannot be found there."<sup>24</sup>

Israel <sup>25</sup>	Adam
Israel “created” by God at the exodus through a cosmic battle (gods are defeated and the Red Sea is “divided”);	Adam is created in Genesis 2 after the taming of chaos in Genesis 1;
The Israelites are given Canaan to inhabit, a lush land flowing with milk and honey;	Adam is placed in a lush garden;
They remain in the land as long as they obey the Mosaic law;	Law (not to eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil) is given as a stipulation for remaining in the garden;
They persist in a pattern of disobedience and are exiled to Babylon.	Adam and Eve disobey and are exiled.

So, according to Enns, because the narrative of Genesis 1-3 is not about origins of the universe and of humanity, the Book of Genesis poses no restraint to embracing evolution as the factual accounting of origins, including human origin. Two letters by Paul, however, do pose a dilemma. He acknowledges, “For people who take the Bible seriously, Paul’s understanding of Adam can be an insuperable obstacle to accepting what we know about the past from other sources.”<sup>26</sup> How does Paul read the Adam narrative? Is what Paul has written reliable? “Does Paul’s use of the Adam story actually *depend* on him not reading it literally?”<sup>27</sup> Enns frames what he calls the modern Christian’s dilemma.

There is really little doubt that Paul understood Adam to be a real person, the first created human from whom all humans descended. And for many Christians, this settles the issue of whether there was a historical Adam. That is what Paul believed, and for his argument to have any meaning, *both Adam and Jesus have to be real people*. If there was no Adam, there was no fall. If there was no fall, there was no need for a savior. If Adam is a fantasy, so is the Gospel.<sup>28</sup>

Enns suggests that at least two factors determine how Paul reads Genesis: (1) his training in “*Jewish interpretive techniques*, which were characterized by creative and imaginative engagement with the Hebrew Bible,” and (2) he “met the res-

*urrected Christ*, and now his creative imaginative training was geared toward drawing out Christological connections to the Old Testament.”<sup>29</sup> Thus, the “Adam” in Paul’s letters is the result of “a *creative handling of the story* to serve a larger theological purpose.”<sup>30</sup> Enns would have Christians believe that those who wish “to maintain a biblical faith in a modern world” have “*all left ‘Paul’s Adam’*” and “are all ‘creating Adam,’ as it were, in an effort to reconcile Scripture and the modern understanding of human origins.”<sup>31</sup> Archaeological and scientific evidence for evolution render it untenable for any Christian to “allow Paul (and other biblical writers) to settle for us the question of human origins.”<sup>32</sup>

Enns sums up the alleged dilemma Paul’s use of Adam poses for modern Christians:

- (1) that there is indeed a problem with seeing Adam as the progenitor of *all* human beings who lived a *few thousand years before Jesus* in that it is incompatible with what we know of the past, scientifically and archaeologically;
- (2) Paul seems to share such a view of Adam when he says “sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people” (Romans 5:12);
- (3) Paul’s view of Adam is of non-negotiable theological importance and so must be addressed.<sup>33</sup>

How does Enns respond to this dilemma? He wants to reassure evangelical Christians con-

cerning the trustworthiness of the Scriptures Paul both used and wrote as he explains, “Paul certainly assumed that Adam was a person and the progenitor ... of the human race. I would expect nothing less from Paul, being a first-century man.”<sup>34</sup> He explains that Paul’s writings are to be received as Scripture, but God accommodated the “categories ... available to human beings at that time.”<sup>35</sup> In other words, as God reveals himself and his deeds through Scriptures inscribed by humans with faith in him, he conforms his word-revelation to their ignorance of the facts concerning the origins of the earth and of humanity concealed in fossil records and in the human genome for long ages but now revealed to humans who can affirm with confidence, unlike Paul, that God did not directly form Adam from the dust of the earth or breathe life into him.

So, because Enns offers faint praise for Paul’s beliefs concerning Adam, without openly sneering at Paul, he teaches others to sneer. For, no one would reasonably expect historically disadvantaged Paul to know that the Human Genome Project would yield “essentially assured” scientific evidence concerning common human origins, not from one pair of humans but from thousands of ancestors.<sup>36</sup> Paul can hardly be blamed for holding a “first-century” benighted belief that God directly formed Adam from the soil several millennia past instead of holding the enlightened twenty-first century assured scientific knowledge that Adam evolved from as many as ten thousand ancestors around a hundred thousand years ago.<sup>37</sup>

If Paul unwittingly believed falsely that Adam was the progenitor of the incarnate Son of God and passed this false information on as truth in his letters, accepted as the church’s Scriptures, what about the theological connection he draws between Adam and Jesus? Enns is confident in his ability to recognize in which situations modernity’s severance of Christian faith from history is both right and necessary. So, he attempts to reassure Christians who still believe that God’s word-revelation in Scripture, which they access and

read for themselves in their own language, takes precedence over God’s deeds-revelation in nature and in the human genome interpreted for them by scientists who alone can access and decode what Collins calls the “most remarkable of all texts,” the human genome.<sup>38</sup> Does Paul’s belief that Adam is the progenitor of all humanity, Enns asks, “violate the theological point that Paul is making of connecting Adam and Jesus, and more importantly, does, let’s say, the non-literality of Adam affect the non-literality of Jesus?” He answers, “Absolutely not! The two are not connected in that way. In Paul’s mind there may be a more organic connection. But talking about ... the non-historicity of Adam, a person of antiquity, a story of antiquity ... and Jesus staring you right in the face, how you handle this [Adam] does not determine how you handle this [Jesus].”<sup>39</sup> Accordingly, Paul’s witness concerning Jesus is reliable even if flawed by false belief that Adam is the progenitor of the Christ.

In the end, even though Paul agrees with Luke that Adam, presented in Genesis as directly formed from the ground by God, is a real historic person who is also the progenitor of the human race and of Jesus Christ, according to Enns this has no impact upon how Christians should respond to the claims scientists make concerning the evolutionary origins of humanity, “essentially assured scientifically.” Modern Christians should know better than to believe as Paul falsely believed in the historicity of Adam. Because “Paul is a first-century man” with no access to the assured scientific conclusions modern scientists possess, “what he says about Jesus and Adam has to be understood in that context.”<sup>40</sup> Given archaeological and scientific evidence available today, “any version of #1 above [the view that allows ‘Paul (and other biblical writers) to settle for us the question of human origins’] is, at the end of the day, or even the beginning for that matter, unrealistic and *wrong*.”<sup>41</sup> Though Enns softens the harshness of his statement by not expressly reiterating his antecedent, as indicated with brackets, he means that archaeologists and scientists have

proved that *Paul was wrong about Adam's origin and historicity*. Nevertheless, Enns wants readers to understand that even though Paul's beliefs about Adam, restricted by virtue of being a "first-century man," have been proved false by modern historians and scientists, this does not at all jeopardize the trustworthiness of Paul's doctrinal use of Adam in relation to Christ.

### **IS THE HISTORICITY OF ADAM ESSENTIAL TO PAUL'S GOSPEL?**

It is difficult to comprehend how BioLogos's advocates for evolution, who dispute the reliability of Scripture's plainspoken narrative concerning God's creation of the universe and his formation of all earthly life, especially human life, and who subject the authority of Scripture's testimony to the self-proclaimed authority modern archaeologists and evolutionary scientists assert concerning origins, can with sincerity claim that they affirm either Scripture's authority or inerrancy as historically confessed by Christians. Nevertheless, Giberson and Collins announce,

[W]e do not believe that God would provide two contradictory revelations. God's revelation in nature, studied by science, should agree with God's revelation in Scripture, studied by theology. *Since the revelation from science is so crystal clear about the age of the earth, we believe we should think twice before embracing an approach to the Bible that contradicts this revelation.*<sup>42</sup>

Is it not evident that this disputes Scripture's reliability and authority concerning the beginnings? Is this not sufficiently egregious to give pause to everyone tempted by the lure of both their scientific and theological claims?<sup>43</sup> Have they not put their confidence in creaturely interpretations and declarations made by evolutionists about the origins of the universe and of humanity that at minimum succumbs to the age-old question, "Yea, hath God said?" concerning the authoritative claims of God's Word on origins,

whether from Genesis itself or from Scripture's uses of Genesis as in Paul's letters?<sup>44</sup> If Paul holds and advocates wrong beliefs concerning Adam's origin and historicity, how is he to be trusted doctrinally, since the doctrines he affirms and teaches are entirely inseparable from biblically stated origins and historicity?

### **GOD'S REVELATORY "LISPING" AND INESCAPABLE KNOWLEDGE OF THE CREATOR**

To synthesize evolution with Christianity BioLogos advocates depend heavily upon the Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment misconstrual of the classic "doctrine of divine accommodation" to explain inclusion of error and of myth in Scripture, particularly in the creation account of Genesis, which Paul reads and believes depicts Adam as both historical and as progenitor of all humanity and the Christ. Peter Enns and Kenton Sparks wrongly appeal to John Calvin as though he supports their historical-critical view of Scripture.<sup>45</sup>

For who even of slight intelligence does not understand that, as nurses commonly do with infants, God is wont in a measure to "lisp" in speaking to us? Thus such forms of speaking do not so much express clearly what God is like as accommodate the knowledge of him to our slight capacity. To do this he must descend far beneath his loftiness.<sup>46</sup>

With Jack Rogers and Donald McKim, Enns and Sparks claim that their view of God's lisp is in concert with that of early church fathers and Calvin but is lost on recent evangelicals.<sup>47</sup>

In order to communicate effectively with human beings, God condescended, humbled, and accommodated himself to human categories of thought and speech. This was not a matter of deception, but of necessary adaptation on God's part if humans were to be able to understand His

will for them. In the incarnation, God humbled himself and became a weak and helpless baby in order to identify with and communicate with human beings. This incarnational principle had always been God's style according to the early Christian theologians. In revealing himself God had always accommodated himself to humans' limited and sinful capacities.<sup>48</sup>

Enns defends the idea that Scripture's inclusion of factually wrong ancient myth concerning creation and of Paul's erroneous beliefs, as a "first-century man," concerning origins are positive not negative elements that exhibit "what it means for God to speak to his people."<sup>49</sup> Sparks agrees, "Scripture is a casualty of the fallen cosmos."<sup>50</sup> Consequently, "God does not err in Scripture ... but Scripture does reflect the errant views of the ancient biblical audience."<sup>51</sup>

The accommodation theology of the Church Fathers and Calvin holds that Scripture is God's word expressed by human beings and that, where errors exist, these are not God's but rather his accommodation or condescension to the finite, fallen human condition. If we then set to one side these instances of accommodation, we can embrace the rest of Scripture as truth that leads to a coherent understanding of God and God's voice. This is the accommodationist approach, in a nutshell.<sup>52</sup>

Sparks fails to realize that when Calvin says that God "accommodates knowledge of him to our slight capacity" he refers to the whole of God's revelation, not just to portions corrupted by the "fallen human condition" to be "set to one side" so that we can embrace "the rest of Scripture as truth."<sup>53</sup>

Given this construal of divine accommodation as including accommodation of error, Paul's "direct reading of the text" of Genesis, which led him incorrectly to believe that Adam was a real person and the progenitor of all humanity includ-

ing the Christ, is a tolerable error committed by a "first century man." Modern readers, however, but especially theologians who follow Paul's lead, are guilty of an insufferable error and need to be schooled concerning how John Calvin accounted for God's accommodation of error in Scripture.

God speaks to his people in ways they are able to understand. He "comes down to their level," or as John Calvin put it, God "lisps" so that humans can understand. This, it seems to me, is the best way to show respect for Scripture. So, again, what objection do you have to reading Genesis 1 this way? Does it not show respect for God while also avoiding the unnecessary conflict between science and the Bible that a literal reading creates?<sup>54</sup>

This appeal to Calvin's doctrine of "God's lisping" exposes an erroneous foundational supposition that Enns and Sparks share with others who precede them when they assume that God occasionally uses accommodative language because of human sinfulness and that this requires the corollary that the biblical text entails errors.<sup>55</sup> Consequently, they stand in agreement with Faustus Socinus and Hugo Grotius (and later Johann Salomo Semler) who "began to fashion a doctrine of accommodation different from the one proposed by Augustine and Calvin" in an attempt to account for what they believed were genuine discrepancies between what Scripture affirms and what scientists accept as true.<sup>56</sup> It is hardly surprising that in their effort to synthesize evolution and Christianity, Sparks and Enns advocate a doctrine of divine accommodation that finds less in harmony with the classical doctrine of accommodation than with that of historical-criticism, if not the "history of religions" approach to Scripture, which views the Old and New Testaments as the evolving record of human religious experience entailing long and often complex development within their cultural milieu including interfacing with other religions of the time and region.<sup>57</sup> Their approach regards Paul's beliefs concerning

the origins of the earth and of Adam as deriving from culturally evolved and conditioned religious beliefs, a view of Scripture that accepts scientific evolution and is not in agreement with biblical revelation that the Creator directly formed the real man, Adam, from the dust of the ground.

Many have shown that the classical doctrine of divine accommodation refers to the *manner* of communication, using human words and concepts, not to the *integrity* or *quality* of revelation itself.<sup>58</sup> Accuracy does not require precision. Imprecision is not to be confused with inaccuracy or error. Scripture's account of creation which is geocentrally referential is not accommodative of ancient erroneous cosmology nor contrary to science's heliocentricity.<sup>59</sup> Phenomenological description hardly betrays myth.<sup>60</sup> Rather, it accents the Creator's revelatory condescension to the realm of reference his creatures inhabit. Thus, to distinguish the classical doctrine of accommodation from that of Socinus, Grotius, and Semler, many Christian theologians have devoted careful attention to "divine accommodation" because,<sup>61</sup> in reality, of course, that God accommodates his revelation to humans in human terms and concepts is essential to Christian belief in and understanding of the Creator, a thesis essential to Calvin's theology as demonstrated in Book One of the *Institute of the Christian Religion*.<sup>62</sup>

The doctrine of analogy that flows from Augustine, through Calvin, Turretin, and the Princetonians, now articulated by many contemporary theologians, derives from the biblical doctrine of creation entailing proper distinction between Creator and creature. Advocates of modern historical-criticism have tried to divert the flow of this doctrine by cutting a channel to the Reformers in an effort to claim historical viability for their version. Their endeavor constrains Christian theologians to rearticulate the doctrine because the modern rival doctrine is inseparably enmeshed with its concomitant doctrine of Scripture that entails factual errors on that claim that Scripture is the product not only of finite but of

fallen humans.

Ascendency of Enlightenment skeptics transmuted the classical doctrine of analogy because they believed that all language concerning God and his works is either *univocal* or *equivocal* but not *analogical*.<sup>63</sup> They abandoned the substance of the doctrine of analogy which Herman Bavinck succinctly expresses:

It follows that Scripture does not merely contain a few anthropomorphisms; on the contrary, *all* Scripture is anthropomorphic. From beginning to end Scripture testifies a condescending approach of God to man. The entire revelation of God becomes concentrated in the Logos, who became "flesh." It is as it were *one* humanization, *one* incarnation of God. If God were to speak to us in divine language, no one would be able to understand him; but ever since creation, he, in condescending grace, speaks to us and manifests himself to us in human fashion.<sup>64</sup>

Those who transmogrify the classical doctrine shift its use from accounting for all of God's communication to humanity, given the gulf that distinguishes the Creator from the creature, to salvaging Scripture as divine revelation for religious use despite its alleged numerous fallen human defects which God accommodates and which modern historians, archaeologists, and scientists have supposedly exposed as erroneous. Consequently, when Enns, Sparks, and other BioLogos advocates appeal to "God's lisping," their interest is not a thoroughly integrated doctrine of *God's analogical communication* to humans through human writers in Scripture. They have neither the fullness of Scripture nor the incarnation of God's Son in view. Instead, their concern is to account for those portions of Scripture such as the creation and flood accounts of Genesis, among others, that cause embarrassment because they do not conform to modern scientific belief in the generative forces of extensive ages of time to explain the beginnings as well as the geologic and



fossil records. Because they invest heavily in evolution, they apply their historical-critical method to Genesis and to Paul's letters in their effort to synthesize evolution with Christianity. Thus, they identify in Scripture what is of fallen human origin and what is of God, segregating what ought to be accepted as true for theological and religious purposes from what has been discredited by modern scholarship.

Contrary to theistic evolution's proposal that God invested already existing humanoids, who evolved from thousands of ancestors around a hundred thousand years ago, with his image and likeness, Scripture affirms and Paul believes that when God formed Adam he made humans to be his earthly analogues.<sup>65</sup> This means that Paul believes that the Creator analogously reveals himself and his deeds to us because we are his analogous creatures, not because we are fallen. God reveals himself anthropomorphically, which is to say, *"Because God formed Adam from the 'dust of the earth' and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, making him in his own image and likeness, God makes himself known to his creatures in their likeness, as if he wears both their form and qualities, when in fact they wear his likeness."*<sup>66</sup>

Divine revelation to humans is made possible because God made us in his likeness. Hence, our knowledge of the Creator and of his works is possible, is true, but is always analogical.<sup>67</sup> "Man was created as an analogue of God; his thinking, his willing, and his doing is therefore properly conceived as at every point analogical to the thinking, willing, and doing of God."<sup>68</sup> Because we are ectypes of God, who is the Archetype or Original, we are both similar and dissimilar to him. So, as the image is not an exact reflection of the Creator, our analogically acquired knowledge of God and of his creation, though true and asymptotic or approximate, is never exhaustive nor univocal knowledge, which means that our knowledge is not identical to God's knowledge.

Thus, how we understand God's revelation, whether given through Scripture or any other

means, including the incarnation of God's Son, is inseparable from how we believe we acquire true knowledge. Earthly analogical correspondence to things heavenly is the inescapable means by which the Creator reveals himself and his deeds to his creatures, not because we are fallen but because we are creatures. Thus, knowledge of God and relationship with him through Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son of God, "are ours only in terms of analogies that derive from the fact that God made man in his own image."<sup>69</sup>

Far from accounting for the inclusion of alleged human errors in Scripture, "God's lisping" accommodation to creaturely frailty renders every human without excuse for their sinful rebellion against the Creator (Rom 1:18ff).<sup>70</sup> From the beginning of creation (*apo ktisōs kosmou*; Rom 1:20), through all his revelation, including showing himself and his invisible attributes—his eternal power and divine nature—in the things he has made, universal knowledge of our Creator has been instinctive because God indelibly imprinted his image upon everyone, shutting our mouths as condemned before him without any excuse. Through the aperture of God's likeness "an immediate awareness of the fact that God is the creator and sustainer of this world" arises within human consciousness.<sup>71</sup> Yet, in every human apart from Christ Jesus, concurrent with this inborn knowledge of God is the sinful inversion of the Creator-creature distinction, denying the undeniable, suppressing the irrepressible truth of God's revelation, and deluding themselves that their reasoning is the ultimate not the proximate point of reference (Rom 1:18ff).<sup>72</sup> This rebellious effort to enthrone self as the referential starting point of all reasoning and to suppress God's plainly revealed truth that is both within them and round about them exposes their greatest folly. Refusal to glorify the Creator betrays the fact that they know him but will not live in keeping with their inherent knowledge.

Against this foolishness, Paul says, God reveals his wrath. Despite sinful humanity's efforts

to suppress this innate knowledge of God, the invisible qualities of God, his eternal power and divine nature, incessantly display themselves in and round about every human, within their own self-conscious thoughts, even in their instinctive discontentment with their exclusion of God from their varied explanations of the origins of the world and of themselves. Nevertheless, humans stubbornly refuse to acknowledge what they innately know to be true concerning the origin of the world and of themselves. So, against inborn knowledge atheists daily disaffirm God's existence while he gives them breath. To suppress this instinctive knowledge that rebukes, evolutionists reassert Creator-denying assumptions. Likewise, evolutionists in the church exhibit innate knowledge of creation's origins in their attempts to synthesize Christianity with evolution.

**CREATION EX NIHILO, RESURRECTION  
FROM THE DEAD, AND JUSTIFICATION  
BY FAITH**

Indeed, Paul was a first-century man, but this hardly means that he was ignorant of beliefs akin to modern evolution that foment diminution of the Creator and elevation of the creature. As shown above, Paul understood that God plainly reveals himself through the things he has made so that everyone has intrinsic knowledge of God and that he created all things. Paul knew that the Creator endowed humans with imagination capable of grasping the fact that their thoughts cannot grasp or apprehend God, for they intuitively know that they derive from God who made them. Paul also knew that apart from the saving power of God in the gospel every human invariably suppresses the truthfulness of this inborn knowledge. Therefore, Paul was keenly aware that unbelief is rebellion against the Creator entailing rejection of creation *ex nihilo* and God's formation of the one man from the ground. Such a belief system of unbelief did not intimidate him nor embarrass him.

As he spoke to the Athenian philosophers, formidable as they may have been, Paul did not cower

or attempt to synthesize his gospel with their belief system. Instead, he unabashedly proclaims:

The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything. *And he made from one man every nation of mankind* to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, that they should seek God, in the hope that they might feel their way to him and find him (Acts 17:24-27a).

Paul recognizes that even though these pagan philosophers do not know the Genesis account of creation, they bear inborn knowledge of God and of creation's origins that the Genesis account portrays. Paul exploits their altar inscribed "To the unknown god" as a point of contact for the gospel because while they possess knowledge of God they suppress it. Thus, he says, "What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you" (17:23). He does not hesitate to point them to the Creator of all things but particularly of all mankind, who formed one man and from him he brought forth all humans in all nations. Foolish and offensive as Paul's teaching of creation *ex nihilo* and of the formation of one man as the progenitor of all humanity surely was to the philosophers, it was his preaching of imminent judgment by a God-appointed man whom he approved by raising him from the dead that incited their scorn. Luke states, "Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked" (17:34).

With their response, these ancient philosophers in Athens rebuke modern philosophers, those who embrace evolution as fact but who also profess faith in the resurrected Christ. Though these ancient philosophers had their belief system concerning "beginnings," they had no direct observation or experience by which they could

dispute Paul's claims with regard to beginnings. So, they fastened their scorn upon what their own direct observation and experience convinced them never happens, namely, resurrection from the dead. These ancients responded with more consistent logic to Paul's sermon than do evolutionists in the church today. For, if BioLogos evolutionists insist that Paul begins his proclamation of the gospel with a myth from Genesis, the one man formed directly by God, why do they believe Paul when he culminates his preaching of the gospel with the one man God raised from the dead? After all, what Paul claims concerning the beginnings, which they cannot test scientifically by direct observation or experience, they nonetheless reject because they suppose that their present focused study delineates laws by which they can deduce how the present emerged from the past. Yet, what Paul claims concerning resurrection from the dead, which they also cannot access to assess scientifically by direct observation and experience, they nonetheless do not reject.<sup>73</sup>

That the scorn for resurrection by the philosophers of Athens entails more consistent reasoning than engaged by modern evolutionists in the church is confirmed by the inseparability Paul insists upon, in his gospel, between creation *ex nihilo* and resurrection from the dead. In his letter to the Romans, Paul reminds believers that God's promise of a son to Abraham met at least two humanly insurmountable obstacles: (1) Abraham's body "was as good as dead (since he was about a hundred years old)" and (2) "the barrenness of Sarah's womb" at ninety years old (Rom 4:19). Paul accepts the account from Genesis and explains that Abraham reasoned that God, who is known as the one who gives life creates *ex nihilo*,

surely could deliver on his promise: "I have made you the father of many nations" (4:17). Thus, Paul affirms and teaches that the faith by which Abraham was justified before God was faith in God "who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist" (4:17). Therefore, everyone "who shares the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all" (4:16), also believes as he did, which is why Paul argues that Abraham is not alone, for "the words 'it was counted to him' were not written for his sake alone, but for ours also. 'It will be counted to' us who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification" (4:23-25).

Paul recognizes that Abraham, the man in history, and the domestic affairs within his household bear representational functions. They symbolically represent things to come, things that, though rooted in Abraham's experiences, are far greater and much vaster because they foreshadow corresponding features that come to pass only in Abraham's singular seed, Jesus Christ who is raised from the dead, and in his vast seed who are united with this Christ.

Here, in his letter, Paul is expounding for Roman Christians the same good news from God he proclaimed at the Areopagus in Athens. Belief in the good news that God raised his Son from the dead is inseparable from belief in the creation account of Genesis that God created the heavens and the earth *ex nihilo* and formed Adam, a living creature, from the ground. Paul's gospel, then, inextricably entangles his teachings concerning creation, resurrection, and justification. Therefore, if Paul's teachings concerning creation *ex nihilo* and the formation of Adam as the first human are

### Abraham As Type

"But the words 'it was reckoned to him' were not written for him alone but also for us" (Rom 4:23-24a).

Abraham	Abraham's Seed
God promised a son to a husband and wife who were as good as dead.	God promised to raise his Son from the dead.
Abraham believes God's promise.	Abraham's seed believe God's promise.
God justifies Abraham.	God justifies believers.

wrong, then his teachings concerning resurrection and justification are equally unreliable.

#### **REALITY AND SYMBOLISM: ADAM IN PAUL'S LETTERS**

True as it is that no single understanding of the whole creation account of Genesis has gained dominant ascendancy among Christians, some necessary foundational beliefs concerning the account have, namely, God created the heavens and the earth *ex nihilo* and God formed the man from the ground and the woman from the man. Since Charles Darwin, however, Christians have faltered in these agreements while many individuals have gained notoriety, whether fame or infamy, either by embracing evolution or by opposing it. Since Darwin, the Genesis creation account has become, lamentably, an apologetics battleground. A significant downside to this is the tendency among evangelicals to use the narrative for apologetic purposes, some arguing for a so-called “literal interpretation” as they contend that creation occurred over six twenty-four hour days, and others contending for a so-called “symbolic interpretation” as they attempt to account for extensive eons of time needed to accommodate evolutionists’s claims concerning the age of the earth and of humanity.<sup>74</sup>

Lost in this debate is the fact that both appellations—“literal interpretation” and “symbolic interpretation”—are, at best, misnomers, but even worse, they pose a false polarity. This antithesis entails the tendency to suppose, speciously, that things portrayed in the creation-fall narratives cannot be simultaneously corporeal and symbolic.<sup>75</sup> People often proceed on the incorrect assumption that if narrative features bear representational significance, those features should be understood not as actually existing but simply as literary devices. If held consistently, this flawed polarity would render nearly all in Scripture, certainly the Old Testament given its typological or foreshadowing nature, little more than literary symbolism without real existence.

Furthermore, both sides of this antithesis suppress the fact that all of God’s revelation is analogical in character.<sup>76</sup> They incline to think that God’s revelation is either *univocal* (God shows himself as he is in himself) or *equivocal* (God is ineffable because he is only dissimilar from his creatures). The error is to exclude the fact that God’s revelation is *analogical*. Scripture’s first statement begins the telling of history—“In the beginning God created”—by revealing God *analogically*, neither as he is in himself (*univocally*) nor wholly unlike his creatures (*equivocally*). It is analogical in that it is anthropomorphic because the text represents God’s acting in history in human terms. As demonstrated above, because God bequeaths his likeness to us, all of God’s revelation comes to us with reference to his likeness in us. Thus, God spans the Creator-creature chasm of distinction to disclose himself and his deeds anthropomorphically in foreshadowing the consummation of his revelation in the flesh through the incarnation of the Son.

#### *Distinguishing Symbolism and History in Scripture*

Theistic evolutionists would have modern Christians believe that because Paul was a first-century man who had no access to knowledge that only modern people possess, he understandably but wrongly accepted the historicity of the Genesis account concerning God’s direct formation of the real man, Adam, in his image and after his likeness. Against this misconstrual, Paul, the first-century man, just as Jesus, another first-century man, understood the difference between symbolism embedded in narratives that entail historical things and symbolism embedded in narratives that are fictional creations designed to instruct but not intended to represent the factual, corporeal world.

In Scripture, fictional stories that are laden with features invested with symbolism regularly instruct readers concerning great spiritual realities.<sup>77</sup> Such is the nature of Jesus’ parables. To claim that the master of the house, in the Par-

able of the Laborers in the Vineyard (Matt 20:1-16), symbolically represents the Spirit of God is to impose symbolic representation extraneous to the fictional story. Nothing within the parable suggests such a representation and to do so is to engage in a flawed interpretation of the text called “allegorical interpretation,” a variation on “symbolic interpretation.”<sup>78</sup> On the other hand, no one demands that the master of the house has to be a known, real, historic individual in order to accept the spiritual teachings Jesus invests in the story. Though it offers a credible portrayal of life and events in first-century Israel, the story is fictional, featuring actions designed to surprise because they are unlikely to occur in the real world. Though fictional, it teaches great truths concerning the kingdom of God.<sup>79</sup>

The creation-fall episodes in Genesis are not like Jesus’ fictional stories nor like any other parable in Scripture. Parables are fairly brief analogical stories that cohere around recognizable unifying features, are punctuated with symbolic representation, and are designed to disclose instruction with frugality.<sup>80</sup> The creation-fall narratives of Genesis, though punctuated with symbolic representation, hardly bear the other characteristics of parables. The narratives are extensive, and the instruction is variegated. Everything about these narratives distinguishes them as realistically portraying God’s actual creation of the actual world which consists of actual things, real places, significant individual persons, and historic events that God invests with symbolic representations made apparent within the narrative itself.

Chief among the narrative’s symbolism saturated features is man—male and female—made as God’s analogues, imbued with God’s image and likeness (Gen 1:26-27). From the biblical portrayal of Adam, the first human, head of all humanity, formed from the ground but whose wife was formed from his side not the ground, whose act with regard to the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, Paul recognizes that Adam bears symbolic significance. This is why he expressly

identifies Adam as “a type of the one who was to come” (Rom 5:14). It is vital to understand that Scripture is replete with “types,” one form of symbolic representation in the Bible.

Interpreters of the Bible do not cast biblical types. God, who reveals himself and his deeds in Scripture, casts the Bible’s types. God invested things with foreshadowing significance—institutions (e.g., the Levitical priesthood), places (e.g., Eden, the tabernacle), things (e.g., the ark, sacrifices, kingship), events (e.g., creation, the flood, the exodus, events in the wilderness, entry into the land), and individuals (e.g., Adam, Abraham, Melchizedek, Moses, David). God invested these with significance to prefigure corresponding features of the coming age.<sup>81</sup>

Additionally, it is important to recognize that Scripture invariably presents all these “types” as corporeally existing as they foreshadow greater things to come. Furthermore, it is crucial to comprehend that Paul recognizes but does not cast Adam as a type of the Christ. Adam’s role as “a type of the one who was to come” in the divine drama of redemption was cast by the Creator, the story’s author, not by Paul, the story’s expounder.

Paul’s explicit use of Adam as type in his argument in Romans 5:12-19 but also in 1 Corinthians 15:20-28 and 15:45-49 makes clear that the apostle understands Adam just as Genesis presents him, as the first human, formed from the dust of the ground by the direct act of God, yet disobedient to God. Paul understands this and develops his argument by citing Genesis 2:7 with two clarifying interpolations, (1) “the first man, Adam, became a living being” (*egeneto ho protos anthrōpos Adam eis psychēn zōsan*, 1 Cor 15:45) in contrast to stating, (2) “the last Adam became a life-giving spirit (*ho eschatos Adam eis pneuma zōpoioun*, 15:45b). So essential is this distinction between “Living being” and “Life-giving spirit” (earthly-heavenly) to the Adam-Christ typology that Paul reinforces it by stating, “The first man was from the earth, a

man of dust; the second man is from heaven. As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven" (15:47-49).

This makes it clear that Paul takes Scripture's genealogies to be historically truthful just as when he states, "Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come" (Rom 5:14). Paul is in full agreement with the history of redemption presented from Genesis 1:1 and throughout Scripture which treats the portrayal of God's creation of the actual world in the early chapters of Genesis as integral to Scripture's unfolding drama of redemption that climaxes in Christ, Adam's eschatological son. Thus, while it seems indisputable that biblical genealogies are abbreviated, what is also incontestable is the fact that the Bible's genealogies, which Paul accepts as authentic, treat all who are listed as real historical people including the first man, Adam (cf. Gen 5:1-5; 1 Chron 1:1; Luke 3:38). Adam's presence at the head of the biblical genealogy distinguishes him as a type of the coming Christ just as the absence of any mention of genealogy with the introduction of Melchizedek marks him as "resembling the Son of God" and distinguishes him as a type of Christ (Gen 14:18-20; Heb 7:1-10). Adam, the first man, appearing at the beginning of creation, foreshadows Christ Jesus, the second man, appearing at the beginning of new creation to bring the first creation to its consummation.

### *Historical Typology*

By analogy, is it not reasonable to infer that Paul recognized that what is narrated in Genesis 1-3 *took place typologically* but *were written down for our instruction* just as he states concerning Israel's passing through the sea, being guided by the cloud, eating manna and drinking water from the rock, and rebelling numerous times (1 Cor

10:1-12)? Paul states, "Now *these things happened typologically* to them, but they *were written down for our instruction*, upon whom the end of the ages has come" (*tauta typikōs synebainen*, 10:11). As under the controlling providence of the Lord, Israel's experiences were divinely imbued with figurative significances to foreshadow things to come, so it is with Adam. The Creator imbued Adam with unique figurative significance that foreshadows his unique son, God's Son, who would come in the last days to set right everything that Adam would corrupt. Likewise, as Israel's symbolically suffused experiences were written down in Scripture for our instruction, so also, Adam's typologically endowed role in the garden with reference to a tree and his act of disobedience *is written in Scripture for our instruction* concerning Christ's role in the end of the ages in another garden leading to a different tree where his act of obedience delivers many from death and sin into which the first man plunged them (Rom 5:15-17).<sup>82</sup>

Therefore, Paul understands that Adam was a historical man formed from the earth, the first human character in God's great drama leading to new creation, a man whom God endowed with symbolic significance that prefigures one greater than himself, the man from heaven (*ho prōtos anthrōpos ek gēs choikos; hō deuterōs anthrōpos es ouranou*, 1 Cor 15:47). For Paul believes Adam was a historic person just as Abraham was. And, just as Paul recognizes that Scripture invests Abraham and historical events within his household with allegorical significance that finds its fulfillment in Christ Jesus, so Paul understands that God invested Adam, as the first man, and his disobedience with symbolic import that contrastively prefigures the last Adam, Jesus Christ, the obedient man.<sup>83</sup>

How did Paul come to understand Adam's typological function? Surely, the grace of God through the revelation of Christ Jesus to Paul on the road to Damascus banished his suppression of the truth as it is in Jesus and put him into his right mind with right reasoning (cf. Gal 1:13-17;

1 Cor 2:11-16). Redemptive revelation of Christ Jesus put an end to Paul's suppression of innate knowledge of the Creator, of creation's and Adam's divine origin, and of creation's teleological design. He came to acknowledge and to proclaim Christ Jesus as God's creating agent, providential sustainer, and eschatological redeemer of creation (Col 1:15-20).

God's acts to create and his explanatory word-revelation in Genesis concerning his creative deeds are teleological, pointing forward to the last days and finding consummation in Christ Jesus. That Paul believes and teaches that God's creative acts are teleological saturates his teaching and is evident throughout his letters. For example, Paul seems to form a composite citation consisting of Genesis 1:3 and Isaiah 9:2, with allusions to the light of Christ he saw on the road to Damascus (Acts 26:13), as he links God's command on the first day of creation, "Let there be light!" (Gen 1:3,) with God's command in the dawn of his new creation in Christ, "Let light shine out of darkness." Paul explains: "For God, who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor 4:6; cf. John 1:4-5).<sup>84</sup> Paul's use of Genesis requires us to recognize that he understands God's creative commands to be speech-acts, performative utterances, by which God imprinted significance upon all creation in such a manner that things created point away from themselves as earthly symbols analogically point to heavenly realities. Creation reflects the Creator's glory.

Thus, light as a universal symbol bears abiding testimony to everyone concerning the Creator of light, exposing humanity's sinful corruption (cf. John 3:20).<sup>85</sup> This universal symbolism derives from God's performative utterance when he said, "Let there be light" (Gen 1:3).<sup>86</sup> At God's word light shined out of original darkness, distinguishing day from night. Now the light of God's Incarnate Word shines forth out of spiritual darkness bringing the dawn of the Day of Salvation which

darkness cannot overcome (cf. John 1:4-5; 2 Cor 6:1-2).

According to Paul, just as the heavenly light called forth on the first day of creation, invested as it was with teleological foreshadowing, attains its designed fulfillment in Christ Jesus, so also Adam, who was made in "the image of God" (Gen 1:27), finds his symbolic realization in Christ "who is the image of God" (2 Cor 4:4).<sup>87</sup> In fact, 2 Corinthians 4:4-6, coming at the climax of Paul's argument begun in 3:1, is pregnant with Old Testament allusions: light, image of God, the glory of God, and the face of Christ. Mention of "the face of Christ" (4:6) recalls the glory of Moses' face veiled and the "unveiled face" of the Christian (2 Cor 3:7-18).<sup>88</sup> "As the resurrected 'Lord' (4:5) encountered by believers with 'unveiled faces,' Christ is not merely reflecting the glory of God as Moses did, he *is* the glory of God."<sup>89</sup>

Paul's use of Scripture throughout his argument in 2 Corinthians 3:1-4:6, particularly his use of literary elements from the Pentateuch—God's calling forth light, the image of God, and the contrastive connection between Christ and Moses—depends upon the *reality* of each. That they are real, however, does not strip them of symbolic significance as literary features so imbued by the Creator. Rather, each one bears symbolic significance precisely because each is real. God, the Creator and Revealer, assigns his creative speech-acts and the things he creates with symbolic representation.<sup>90</sup>

What has been presented above concerning the Creator's design of humanity from Genesis 1:26-27 as his earthly analogue should invite keen attention to the Genesis narrative to recognize its literary and symbolic richness without a hint of suppressing or dismissing its historicity. Besides the calling forth of light on the first day, other features of the creation-fall accounts that entail obvious symbolic significance are the garden, the Tree of Life, the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, Adam's formation from the ground, Adam's naming of the animals, God's direct formation

of woman from a portion of the man's side, the couple's nakedness without shame, the talking serpent, eating of the forbidden fruit, the couple's hiding their nakedness, God's reference to the seed of the woman, his cursing of the serpent, and God's cursing of the ground, the earth. Nothing in or about the Genesis narrative suggests that these are either mythical or fictional literary devices. The account forthrightly presents a cohesive narrative that treats the whole and individual parts it portrays as corporeal and as historical.<sup>91</sup>

#### **COROLLARY TEACHINGS WITHIN PAUL'S GOSPEL**

Paul's belief that Genesis portrays the actual progression of God's creative activity including the formation of Adam on the sixth day is essential to the gospel of Jesus Christ which he proclaims. The one man, Adam, as a historic person is integral both to humanity's impaired dominion and subjection to death and sin bound up in his disobedience and to the proclamation of God's gracious gift of righteousness that restores dominion in life through the obedience of one man, Jesus Christ (cf. Rom 5:17). All that has been stated already bears significance upon various corollary teachings within Paul's gospel including but not limited to (1) the relationship between the curse of death and creation's groaning, (2) the organic continuity between creation and new creation (the heavens and the earth and the new heavens and new earth), and (3) the sequence of creation: Adam first, then Eve. Each of these warrants full individual treatment but space permits only brief comments.

#### *Adam's Sin, Death's Entrance, and Creation's Groaning*

According to evolutionists, life needs death, for without death there would be no evolutionary progression over time that would involve upward adaptations. The only way this could happen would be through many generations of dying. Death, then, has been and remains an essential ingredient to evolutionary theory concerning the

adaptation of all living species. Consequently, every evolutionist who, for whatever reasons wants to retain a reasonably credible profession of faith in Christ, finds it necessary to account for Scripture's testimony that death entered through Adam's sin.<sup>92</sup> In their effort to harmonize death as necessary to the theory of evolution with Scripture's presentation of death as unnatural intruder and enemy by way of God's curse upon his creation on account Adam's disobedience, it is not unusual to find mischief.

So, BioLogos advocates attempt a clever maneuver to take possession of biblical Christianity's "concurvive theory of inspiration" articulated by the best evangelical theologians and scholars to validate their exegetical legerdemain.<sup>93</sup> They do an end run by associating belief that Adam's disobedience brought about the curse of death upon all living creatures, whether animals or human, with belief in the divine dictation theory of Scripture's inspiration, a fringe belief even to fundamentalism. Thus, with doctrinaire cleverness they dictate:

In this discussion, we emphasize that many Christians believe the Bible is God inspired and thus contains a meaningful human dimension. The belief that the Bible is God dictated—which reduces the human contribution to insignificance—is popularly known as fundamentalism or biblical literalism. In articulating the implications of the former view, where the biblical authors play a meaningful role, we note the apostle Paul, although inspired by God, wrote his letters within the context of his own time and culture.... If Paul, along with his original audience, knew nothing of the scientific evidence for human death before the Fall, it stands to reason that Paul would believe likewise. If human death did precede the Fall, Paul's use of Adam's curse in first Corinthians 15 is still perfectly understandable given his cultural context.<sup>94</sup>



George Murphy ipso facto asserts that there is “no scriptural warrant” to believe that “there could have been no ‘death before the fall’” because there “is overwhelming scientific evidence against such a view.”<sup>95</sup> As though his next assertion effectively severs the curse of death upon all creation from Adam’s disobedience, with equal factual certainty he adds, “Texts to which appeal is sometimes made—Genesis 3:19, Romans 5:12, and 1 Corinthians 15:21-22—have only humanity in view.”<sup>96</sup> Yet, he concedes that the real dilemma concerns human death, “For Paul did indeed say that ‘all die in Adam’ (1 Cor 15:22).”<sup>97</sup> So, he asks, “How are we to understand this in connection with the fossil evidence that our pre-human ancestors and early humans were, like other animals, mortal?”<sup>98</sup> Murphy concedes, “When Paul speaks of death coming through Adam, it seems clear that he meant physical as well as spiritual death.”<sup>99</sup> Consequently, “From a scientific perspective, he was wrong about physical death itself having originated with the first humans, just as the writer of Genesis 1 was wrong about the dome of the sky, but the Holy Spirit accommodated revelation to Paul’s culturally conditioned idea.”<sup>100</sup> The BioLogos staff agrees with Murphy, “There are no scriptural reasons to deny the presence of animal death before humans appear. And the most reasonable interpretation of Scripture is that the death referred to in Romans and first Corinthians is spiritual death, not physical death.”<sup>101</sup> This, of course, means that they agree that Paul was wrong to believe and to preach that physical death originated with Adam, the first man, formed from the ground.

Their admission that Paul was wrong, in a sense, renders what follows somewhat superfluous, because they have already judged the apostle’s doctrine concerning the entrance of death and sin through Adam’s disobedience to be wrong. Hence, their quarrel is with the authority and veracity of Scripture, God’s revelation. Nevertheless, a few comments are warranted on two issues: (1) entrance of death through Adam; and (2) the

relationship between Adam’s sin, the entrance of death, and creation’s groaning.

Because God’s threat—“but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die”—seems not to have had any immediate physical effect upon Adam and Eve, it may be tempting to take it to refer to “spiritual death” exclusively. Consequently, many not only distinguish between “spiritual death” and “physical death” but separate them, as though this were possible. Certainly, the Scriptures distinguish the two and may accent one or the other in various contexts, but they never treat them as divisible but always as two aspects of a whole.<sup>102</sup> With many uses of “die” and “death” it is impossible to discern with confidence that the words refer to one or the other. Such is the case when Paul states, “Though they know God’s decree that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them” (Rom 1:32). Mention of death as warranted divine punishment alludes to Genesis 2:17 and 3:19 but also to knowledge everyone has in the constitution of their nature.<sup>103</sup> God instituted death as punishment, executed by governing officials (cf. Gen 9:5-6; Rom 13:3-5), as an earthly shadow of the far greater punishment, eternal death, which invariably entails both physical and spiritual death (Gen 2:17; Matt 25:46). It is as unwise to try to separate “physical death” from “spiritual death” as it is to divide “physical life” from “spiritual life” or “eternal life.”

In Paul’s reasoning concerning Adam’s typological role in relation to Christ, it would be a mistake to restrict his multiple references to death (*thanatos*) either to spiritual or physical death, for “the context clarifies that death is both.”<sup>104</sup> In Paul’s argument, “condemnation” substitutes for the “death” Adam’s disobedience brought (Rom 5:16, 18), “were made sinners” also substitutes for this “death” (5:19), and “eternal life” contrasts with “death” (5:21). Even when Paul states, “death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those

whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam” (5:14), it is unwise to emphasize one aspect of death to the exclusion of the other, as some do, as though Paul were referring only to “the physical death of Adam’s descendants.”<sup>105</sup> This is so because through “Adam’s sin death entered the world and engulfed all people; all people enter the world alienated from God and spiritually dead by virtue of Adam’s sin.”<sup>106</sup> Consequently, when Paul states that “death reigned from Adam to Moses,” he means that death reigned in the fullest sense, for he refers to death as a whole, with both physical and spiritual aspects.

True as it is that Genesis 2:17; 3:19; Romans 5:12; and 1 Corinthians 15:21-22 all refer specifically only to human death, it would be a grave mistake to reason that Scripture says nothing that links creation’s subjection to frustration and death with Adam’s disobedience. Christians have biblical warrant for drawing such a connection between Adam’s sin and death of animals, animals preying upon one another, earthquakes, tsunamis, hurricanes, tornadoes, and all other kinds of natural calamities that inflict great loss, dire distress, and suffering.<sup>107</sup> When God, who creates, announces to Adam the punishment for his disobedience, he does not isolate upon Adam alone by saying that he will “return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return” (Gen 3:19). God also declares, “cursed is the ground because of you” (3:17).<sup>108</sup> It is hardly insignificant that Genesis narrates that Lamech “fathered a son and called his name Noah, saying, ‘Out of the ground that the Lord has cursed this one shall bring us relief from our work and from the painful toil of our hands’” (Gen 5:28-29). This passage, which speaks of a mitigation of the curse, seems to make it clear that God actually cursed the ground, not just a curse upon humans resulting in poorly exercising dominion over the earth, as some claim.<sup>109</sup> Likewise, Paul seems to draw a connection between Adam’s sin and the curse upon the natural world, both the earth and animal life, when he states:

For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now (Rom 8:19-22).

It is wholly inadequate to explain these statements by claiming that from the beginning, when God created the heavens and the earth, he designed creation to work just as it does so that only:

we humans are out of kilter, and unable properly to perform our function of ruling on behalf of God (all our leadership is defiled; and sometimes we express our sinfulness more specifically by exploiting and abusing the creation). In that respect the creation groans with us as it awaits the glorification of believers, who will then rule it properly and purely.<sup>110</sup>

Paul is not neo-Platonic, for indeed, creation, though cursed, has never forfeited God’s benedictory approval—“very good” (Gen 1:31, cf. vv. 10, 12, 18, 21, 25). Paul affirms this, “For everything created by God is good” (1 Tim 4:4). Nevertheless, Paul’s statements in Romans 8:19-22 exempt nothing in the entirety of creation—the heavens and the earth and all non-human creatures that inhabit them—from subjection to futility (*mataiotēs*), which involves bondage to corruption (*ē douleia tēs phthoras*). The Creator’s teleological design for creation is evident in the way Paul indicates that God subjected creation to futility in hope (*eph elpidi*, 8:20), hope of liberation from bondage to corruption.<sup>111</sup>

#### *Continuity between Creation and New Creation*

Just as in several other portions of his letters, in Romans 8:19-21, Paul is manifestly drawing

out implications from the creation-fall narratives of Genesis and subsequent portions of the Old Testament Scriptures. He believes and accepts the creation accounts of Genesis 1-2. Thus, when God created all things, first he formed the heavens, the earth, and all that fills the earth, then last of all he formed Adam on the sixth day (Gen 1:26-31). However, with his new creation, God reverses the order. He begins with the last Adam (1 Cor 15:45), also called the Second Man who is not from the earth but from heaven (15:47), who is a life-giving spirit (15:45). As God brought forth humanity from the first man Adam, so God is creating a new humanity in Christ (Eph 2:10) who will “reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ” (Rom 5:17).

In Christ, God is already forming a new humanity to inhabit his new creation which is not yet renewed as it awaits the regeneration of all things (Matt 19:28). God’s new creation is already underway, for “if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come” (2 Cor 5:17). The cross of Christ marks the end of the old era and the dawn of the new creation (Gal 6:14-15). So, all who are in Christ find themselves crucified to the world and the world crucified to them so that, while dwelling in the first creation, as Adam’s descendants, they are already transformed by God’s creative powers of the coming age.

God’s crowning act of his new creation is already commenced for believers are new creatures in Christ. Yet, God’s new creation is incomplete, made evident by Paul’s admonition “to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self [man], created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness” (Eph 4:24; Col 3:10). New creation will come to completion only when the entire creation which “has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now” as it eagerly longs “for the revealing of the sons of God” when it “will be set free from its bondage to corruption” and will share in “the freedom of the glory of the children of God” (Rom 8:18-22). Creation’s groans will cease only when Christ, the last Adam, returns to bring full redemption of our bodies when he calls

believers to rise from their tombs (8:23).

The play on words in Genesis correlates the ground to Adam, for Paul believes that Adam (*ha’adam*), who was formed from the ground (*min-ha’adamah*; Gen 2:7) is accountable for God’s curse upon the ground (*ha’adamah*; 3:19). So, this relationship between Adam’s sin and creation’s curse is integral to Paul’s whole doctrine concerning new creation for it correlates to Christ’s obedience and the creation’s liberation from the corruption of bondage. So, Paul teaches that obedient Christ, from heaven, as “last Adam” and “second man” (1 Cor 15:45) will redeem “creation” from its being subjected to futility by the Creator which came about by the disobedience of Adam, the “first man” who was from the earth (15:47). Paul affirms real continuity between the creation Genesis 1 portrays and the new creation redeemed by Christ.

#### *The Sequence of Creation: Adam First, Then Eve*

These few comments are wholly inadequate.<sup>112</sup> Nevertheless, it is proper to accent a few matters concerning Paul’s appeals to the first woman as a historical person alongside Adam, which evolutionists reject.

Genesis 1-3 provides Paul with the necessary foundation in revealed reality for his teaching concerning the complementary role relationships for males and females. Thus, whenever Paul has occasion to recall the formation of the first woman, her divinely appointed role, or her seduction to sin, he presupposes her real, historic existence (e.g., 1 Cor 11:2-16; 14:34-35; 2 Cor 11:1-3; 1 Tim 2:8-15). Thus, not only does Paul regard the whole narrative of creation but also of human rebellion against God to entail historical events, he takes seriously the historical sequence within the Genesis account when he states, “For man was not made from woman, but woman from man. Neither was man created for woman, but woman for man” (1 Cor 11:8-9). Paul derives significant Christian teaching from historical sequence in

the Pentateuch, the time span between Abraham's sojourns and the giving of the law of Moses to Israel (Gal 3:17), and historical sequence within Genesis itself, that Abraham's being justified by faith precedes his being circumcised (Rom 4:10-11). Just as Paul's attention to these details concerning historical sequence is crucial to establish the truthfulness of the gospel, so, with attention to details within the creation-fall narratives, Paul bases his teaching concerning relationships between males and females in the church on Genesis. From the sequence of creation, Adam first then Eve, Paul derives instructions concerning how males and females should conduct themselves in public worship.<sup>113</sup> Likewise, to instruct men and women concerning who should teach in the church, Paul states, "For Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor" (1 Tim 2:13-14). Again, Paul's appeal to such fine detail as historical sequence reinforces the fact that he believed in the historicity of the persons and events of Genesis 1-3. If Paul believed wrongly that Genesis 1-3 portray real people and places, actual events, and historical sequences, then his gospel and his teaching concerning how men and women ought to conduct themselves in relation to one another in the church is dubious and should be rejected. For Paul roots his beliefs and his teachings in history, written in Scripture.

## CONCLUSION

This essay has shown that BioLogos advocates want to accept the God to which the creation and fall accounts of Genesis 1-3 bear witness, but they do not want to accept what those accounts testify concerning God's creative acts, his formation of Adam, and on account of Adam's rebellion God's curse of death, physical and spiritual, for humans and for the creation subjection to frustration and bondage to corruption. They want to accept the last Adam whom Paul preaches, but they do not want the first Adam whom Paul, without question, takes to be the first ancestor to all human-

ity, including the last Adam, the Christ. BioLogos advocates want to embrace the Scriptures as the authority for their faith and practice, but they also want it known that what the Scriptures affirm concerning origins of the universe and of humanity are, simply stated, wrong. Of course, they are not content to hold these gravely qualified affirmations alone. Hence, they established the BioLogos Foundation to propagate their message.

Christians need to examine carefully the BioLogos Foundation's effort to make it safe for evangelicals to embrace evolution, to affirm faith in Christ, and to avow confidence in Scripture as "inerrant." Is belief in evolution compatible with the Christian faith? Is evidence documented from various sources and interpreted by modern scientists so crystal clear that contrary evidence documented in Scripture and interpreted by Christians throughout the centuries should be rejected as wrong by Christ's followers? Should lowly and unschooled Christians, who read and interpret the Scriptures for daily spiritual sustenance, trust expert geneticists and their seminary-trained expert apologists who claim, with vaunted confidence, that both the writer of Genesis and Paul wrongly believed that Adam was the first human, that God did not directly form him from the ground, and that God also did not form the woman from a portion of Adam's side? Is the so-called "language of God" decoded within the human genome by these expert geneticists so unambiguous that the "language of God" through which the Creator reveals himself and his deeds of creation in the Scriptures yield to the evolutionist's explanation of origins?

Whose word should be received as "the language of God"? Shall Christians receive as truth the Scriptures that came by way of Paul who proclaims the gospel of Jesus Christ, "according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith" (Rom

16:25-26)? Or, should Christians embrace the Scriptures as true only to the degree that they do not conflict with the revelation that comes through BioLogos evolutionists to whom “the language of God” concerning the origins of the earth and humanity which were kept secret in fossil records and in the human genome for long ages but now have been revealed and through highly educated experts have been made known to all, according to their self-assured confidence, that God did not directly form Adam from the dust of the earth or breathe life into him?

“The language of God” is clear concerning origins and destinies. God’s revelation is clear. Christians need no highly educated experts to access Scripture’s evidence for the historicity of the Genesis accounts of creation and the fall or for the historicity of Adam and Eve essential to the incarnation of the Christ. No doubt lingers long in the heart of the believer whether Paul is correct concerning the origin of Adam, formed by the hand of God from the ground, or whether Adam acted as humanity’s representative when he sinned by disobeying God’s command. Christians who believe in God who raised his Son from the dead also believe that this same God called into existence things that did not exist and that the Creator formed Christ’s progenitor, Adam, from the dust of the earth. Believers realize that in order to receive grace and the gift of righteousness through union with the one man Jesus Christ, they must acknowledge that through real union with the one man Adam, they entered this world engulfed by sin and death and in dire need of salvation because of the first man’s trespass. They know that they cannot believe in the historicity of Christ Jesus without also believing in the historicity of Adam. God’s work of new creation in and through the last Adam is inextricably linked with his creation *ex nihilo*, when he called into existence the heavens and the earth and with his formation of Adam from the ground. This is what Paul believed. This is what everyone must believe who embraces the Christ preached by Paul.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup>See online: <http://www.biologos.org> [cited 11 April 2011].

<sup>2</sup>Francis Collins, *The Language of God: A Scientist Presents Evidence for Belief* (New York: Free Press, 2006).

<sup>3</sup>Collins cites President Bill Clinton’s comments upon the completed mapping of the human genome, “Today, we are learning the language in which God created life. We are gaining ever more awe for the complexity, the beauty, and the wonder of God’s most divine and sacred gift” (June 26, 2000). See Collins, *The Language of God*, 2.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>5</sup>Collins, *The Language of God*, 209-10. He is fully confident that the “scientific construct” called evolution is so factually proved that, unlike numerous other “scientific constructs” that have been proved false, no future scientific discoveries will ever be able to prove evolution false. On the distinction between and limitations of science as “technique” and science as “construct,” see James B. Jordan, *Creation in Six Days: A Defense of the Traditional Reading of Genesis One* (Moscow, ID: Canon, 1999), 119ff.

<sup>6</sup>Despite the image of the double helix stained glass window on the book’s dust jacket, Collins wonders, “Will we turn our backs on science because it is perceived as a threat to God, abandoning all of the promise of advancing our understanding of nature and applying that to the alleviation of suffering and the betterment of humankind? *Alternatively, will we turn our backs on faith, concluding that science has rendered the spiritual life no longer necessary, and that traditional religious symbols can now be replaced by engravings of the double helix on our altars?*” (Collins, *The Language of God*, 210-11; emphasis added).

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, 206-207.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, 233.

<sup>9</sup>See also, Darrell L. Bock, *Luke 1:1-9:50*, (Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994), 349.

<sup>10</sup>“Clearly Luke’s universalistic perspective must be seen here. Jesus is the fulfillment not just of Jewish hopes but of the hopes of all people, both Jew and Gentile. For out of Adam the whole human family has

come (cf. Acts 17:26), and Jesus is the son of Adam. Luke (like Paul in Rom 5:12-21; 1 Cor 15:22, 45-49) obviously thought of Adam as a historical person” (Robert H. Stein, *Luke* [New American Commentary; Nashville: Broadman, 1992], 142).

<sup>11</sup>“Deconstructs,” in the division head, applies the meaning that arises from the theory of literary criticism to question traditional presuppositions and beliefs concerning truth and seeks to deconstruct so-called “virtual texts,” in this case, allegedly constructed by Christians who, according to BioLogos advocates and sympathizers, in their quest for meaning and certainty have re-created the biblical Adam of Genesis to conform to an anti-evolutionary creation model. Thus, from their own evolution-based presuppositions and beliefs, BioLogos advocates endeavor to discredit and to dismantle what they believe is a modern creation by Christian fundamentalists within that past fifty years, a belief system called Young Earth Creationism, which is an anti-science and anti-intellectual movement that has usurped domination over evangelicals. See, for example, Collins, *The Language of God*, 171-79.

<sup>12</sup>See, for example, the earlier complaint by Hugh Ross: “Nearly half the adults in the United States believe that God created the universe within the last 10,000 years. What reason do they give? ‘The Bible says so.’” (Hugh Ross, *Creation and Time: Biblical and Scientific Perspective on the Creation-Debate Controversy* [Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1994], 7).

<sup>13</sup>Francis Collins, *The Language of God*, 209-10. That he resorts to caricature tends to obscure the fact that his complaint is that Christians take Scripture seriously and embrace the authority of God’s Word over that of scientists. Collins further states, “I do not believe that the God who created all the universe, and who communicates with His people through prayer and spiritual insight, would expect us to deny the obvious truths of the natural world that science has revealed to us, in order to prove our love for Him.”

Collins brackets out the role and authority of Scripture from these statements, as though Christians who reject the scientific construct called evolution as the explanation of origins do so on expe-

riential grounds, “prayer and spiritual insight,” rather than on God’s special revelation that discloses his direct acts of creation. Notice how Collins expresses the rationale for his belief in theistic evolution. He does not say, “I find theistic evolution ... to be by far the most scientifically consistent and *scripturally satisfying* of the alternatives.”

Exclusion of Scripture’s authority shows up again, for example, when Collins proposes his term, BioLogos, to “rename theistic evolution” (203). He states, “Unlike Intelligent Design, BioLogos is not intended as a scientific theory. Its truth can be tested only by the spiritual logic of the heart, the mind, and the soul” (204).

<sup>14</sup>For example, Collins reasons, “There are AREs [ancient receptor elements] throughout the human and mouse genomes that were truncated when they landed, removing any possibility of their functioning. In many instances, one can identify a decapitated and utterly defunct ARE in parallel positions in the human and the mouse genome.

Unless one is willing to take the position that God has placed these decapitated AREs in these precise positions to confuse and mislead us, the conclusion of a common ancestor for humans and mice is virtually inescapable. This kind of recent genome data thus presents an overwhelming challenge to those who hold to the idea that all species were created *ex nihilo*” (Ibid., 136-37).

That Collins would offer such an argument seems to betray how little he understands what Christians believe concerning God’s formation of the various animal species and of humanity. What child, reared in a Christian home and receiving regular Bible instruction in Sunday School, could not embarrass Francis Collins by explaining that Scripture does not teach that God created Adam or Eve out of nothing (*ex nihilo*) but that God directly formed Adam from the ground, from already existing material, and that he directly formed Eve from a portion taken from Adam’s side while he was in a deep sleep? No reputable Christian who believes, on the basis of Scripture, that God directly formed Adam would ever contend that God created Adam and all the animal

species *ex nihilo*. If God formed Adam from the dust of the ground, does one not properly infer that God did the same for the animal species? Indeed, the physical bodies of Adam and of animals have a common designer, God, and a common source, the ground (Gen 1:24; 2:7).

<sup>15</sup>Peter Enns, "Paul's Adam (Part 1)" [cited 12 April 2011]. Online: <http://biologos.org/blog/pauls-adam-part-i/>. Though BioLogos hosts videos and a written exchange between John Walton and Vern Poythress, this essay does not engage Walton's, *The Lost World of Genesis One* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2009). His attempt to synthesize evolution with Christianity is distinctively nuanced, calling for its discrete response. Nevertheless, to the degree that Walton seems motivated to find a way to make it "safe" for evangelical Christians to embrace evolution, exegetical and theological arguments in this essay apply to his efforts also.

<sup>16</sup>Enns, "Paul's Adam (Part 1)" [cited 12 April 2011]. Online: <http://biologos.org/blog/pauls-adam-part-i/>.

<sup>17</sup>Peter Enns, "Adam is Israel" [cited 13 May 2010]. Online: <http://biologos.org/blog/adam-is-israel/>.

<sup>18</sup>That Enns points to correlations between Adam and Israel is not at all objectionable, for after all, the apostle Paul draws upon these connections. For example, concerning the distinctiveness of Adam's and Israel's trespass, see Romans 5:14, 22-23—"Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come.... Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

C. John Collins observes, "The way that Genesis presents the call of Abraham (Gen 12:1-3) indicates that God's intention was that through this man and his family, the rest of humankind was to find blessing. Genesis presents Adam in such a way that we can see Abraham, and Israel, as a 'new Adam'" (C. John Collins, "Adam and Eve as Historical People, and Why It Matters," *Perspectives in Science and Christian Faith* 63 [2010]: 153).

Without expressly stating so, Paul and other New Testament writers understand Israel as reenacting

Adam's representative role and failing as he did. See, for example, A. B. Caneday, "'They Exchanged the Glory of God for the Likeness of an Image': Idolatrous Adam and Israel as Representatives in Paul's Letter to the Romans," *The Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 11 (2007): 34-45 (hereafter *SBJT*).

<sup>19</sup>Enns, "Adam is Israel," [cited 13 May 2010]. Online: <http://biologos.org/blog/adam-is-israel/> (emphasis original). Enns argues too much from the order of event and its being written. Is he prepared to conclude that Abraham was not an individual, historic man because significant events in Israel's history happened before the Abraham story was written?

Given his commitment, Enns reasons in the same article, "Every commentator notes that sometimes 'adam' represents *humanity* (so I will use the lower case); other times it is the name 'Adam' (upper case) representing one *man*. What does this back and forth mean? It means that Adam is a special subset of adam.

The character 'Adam' is the focus of the story because he is the part of 'adam' that God is really interested in. There is 'adam' outside of Eden (in Nod), but inside of Eden, which is God's focus, there is only 'Adam'—the one with which he has a unique relationship.

The question in Genesis is whether "Adam" will be obedient to 'the law' and stay in Eden, thus continuing this special relationship, or join the other 'adam' outside in 'exile.' This is the same question with Israel: after being 'created' by God, will they obey and remain in the land, or disobey and be exiled?"

Giberson and Collins use this affirmatively (*The Language of Science and Faith*, 211-212). It is misleading for Enns to claim, "There is 'adam' outside of Eden (in Nod)...." The text of Genesis 4, the only biblical reference to Nod, uses 'adam' only in 4:1 and 4:25, both times with reference to the first man, Adam, never with reference to other humans "outside of Eden (in Nod)" as Enns states. He inverts the Bible's history by arguing that the Adam narrative is really an Israel narrative "placed in primeval time" so that it is actually a story of Israel's origins and not human origins.

<sup>20</sup>Enns, "Adam is Israel" [cited 13 May 2010]. Online:

<http://biologos.org/blog/adam-is-israel/>. Enns actually embellishes the biblical text: “If we see Adam as a story of *Israelite* origins, it will help us make sense of at least one nagging question that begins in Genesis 4:13—one that readers of Genesis, past and present, have picked up on. After Cain kills Abel, he is afraid of a posse coming after him, which casually presumes the existence of other people. So God puts a mark on Cain and exiles him to Nod, a populated city to the east. There he takes a wife and they have a child, Enoch, and Cain proceeds to build a city, named after his son, in which others can live.” By interpolating elements into the biblical text that are not actually there, Enns creates and solves the problem that he thinks eliminates taking the narrative as the account of human origins. Genesis neither states nor implies that Nod was “a populated city,” nor does the text state or imply that Cain found his wife in Nod. It is entirely warranted to turn Enns’s own words back upon his solution of his own interpolated problem: “this explanation is completely made up,” for Genesis neither says nor hints that there were any residents in the place called Nod before Cain settled there, and Genesis implies and readers properly infer that Cain married his sister.

Cf. Collins, *The Language of God*, 207. Collins adds, “Some biblical literalists insist that the wives of Cain and Seth must have been their own sisters, but that is both in serious conflict with subsequent prohibitions against incest, and incompatible with a straightforward reading of the text.” It is curious to claim that “a straightforward reading of the text” would lead one to conclude that Cain and Seth found their wives among “other humans present at the same time” who had not descended from Adam and Eve as Cain and Seth had. The so-called “biblical literalists” actually read the text in a “straightforward” manner, which leads them to their conclusions.

<sup>21</sup>Enns, “Adam is Israel” [cited 13 May 2010]. Online: <http://biologos.org/blog/adam-is-israel/>. Enns does not explain where in the biblical text he discerns indicators that he should transition from his “symbolic reading” of the Adam story in Genesis 1-3 to his “literalistic reading” of the Cain story in Genesis

4. That his interpretation of the text undergoes transition from “symbolic” to “literal” is evident because he refuses to accept the Adam narrative as the account of the first real humans but he accepts the Cain narrative as entailing “the existence of other people,” evidently real humans, which he exploits to prove that Adam was not the progenitor of all humans.

There is a chasm of difference between *interpolation* and *inference*. To interpolate is to introduce elements that are neither present nor implied in the text. To infer is to draw reasonable and warranted conclusions based upon what the text states. Yet, where Genesis is silent Enns happily interpolates elements into the text when it advantages his own argument concerning the non-historicity of Adam, but he begrudges others who draw inferences from Genesis unless the text states the matter explicitly.

This approach, however, poses problems for his understanding of Paul who, according to Enns, wrongly reads the Genesis account to mean that Adam is humanity’s progenitor but still correctly interpolates theological correspondence between Adam and Jesus. “Paul’s Jesus/Adam parallel does *not* stem from a ‘plain reading’ of Genesis. It is selective and theologically driven. Paul is not simply ‘reading Genesis’ or his Old Testament. He *focuses* on one aspect of the Adam story—disobedience leads to death. Death is the problem that grabs Paul’s attention” (see, for example, Pete Enns, “Paul’s Adam [Part 3]” [cited 13 May 2010]. Online: <http://biologos.org/blog/pauls-adam-part-3/>).

<sup>22</sup>Enns uses these terms positively to characterize the Genesis account in the comments segment at “Adam is Israel” [cited 13 May 2010]. Online: <http://biologos.org/blog/adam-is-israel/>.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

<sup>25</sup>The tabular rearrangement is for ease of reading, but the wording in this table belongs to Enns, “Adam is Israel” [cited 13 May 2010]. Online: <http://biologos.org/blog/adam-is-israel/>.

<sup>26</sup>Enns, “Paul’s Adam (Part 1)” [cited 13 May 2010]. Online: <http://biologos.org/blog/pauls-adam-part-1/>.



- <sup>27</sup>Peter Enns, “Paul’s Adam (Part 2)” [cited 13 May 2010]. Online: <http://biologos.org/blog/pauls-adam-part-2/>.
- <sup>28</sup>Enns, “Paul’s Adam (Part 1)” [cited 13 May 2010]. Online: <http://biologos.org/blog/pauls-adam-part-1/> (emphasis original).
- <sup>29</sup>Peter Enns, “Paul’s Adam (Part 4)” [cited 13 May 2010]. Online: <http://biologos.org/blog/pauls-adam-part-4/> (emphasis original). See also idem, “A Christotelic Approach to the New Testament Use of the Old in Its First-Century Interpretive Environment,” in *Three Views on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (ed. Kenneth Berding; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008), 167-217. See also, idem, *Inspiration and Incarnation: Evangelicals and the Problem of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005). For an extensive critique of Enns’s *Inspiration and Incarnation*, see D. A. Carson, *Collected Writings on Scripture* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2010), 255-283.
- <sup>30</sup>Enns, “Paul’s Adam (Part 4)” [cited 13 May 2010]. Online: <http://biologos.org/blog/pauls-adam-part-4/> (emphasis original).
- <sup>31</sup>Enns, “Creating Adam” [cited 13 May 2010]. Online: <http://biologos.org/blog/creating-adam/>.
- <sup>32</sup>Ibid. Enns adds, as will be addressed below, that Paul’s acceptance of Adam as a historic person and as the progenitor of all humans is “unrealistic and wrong.”
- <sup>33</sup>Enns, “Paul’s Adam (Part 2)” [cited 13 May 2010]. Online: <http://biologos.org/blog/pauls-adam-part-2/>.
- <sup>34</sup>Transcription of the video at Peter Enns, “The Apostle Paul and Adam” [cited 13 May 2010]. Online: <http://biologos.org/blog/the-apostle-paul-and-adam/>. Elsewhere Enns explains, “This is what it means for God to speak to a certain time and place—he enters *their* world. He speaks and acts in ways that make sense to *them*. This is surely what it means for God to reveal himself to people—he accommodates, condescends, meets them where they are” (*Inspiration and Incarnation*, 56).
- <sup>35</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>36</sup>Ibid. Enns cites Francis Collins who claims that “studies of human variation, together with the fossil record, all point to an origin of modern humans approximately a hundred thousand years ago, most likely in East Africa. Genetic analyses suggest that approximately ten thousand ancestors gave rise to the entire population of 6 billion humans on the planet” (*The Language of God*, 209).
- <sup>37</sup>Here, to resist temptation to cite C. S. Lewis is futile: “Chronological snobbery is the uncritical acceptance of the intellectual climate common to your own age and the assumption that whatever has gone out of date is on that account discredited. You must find why it went out of date. Was it ever refuted (and if so by whom, where and how conclusively) or did it merely die away as fashions do? If the latter, this tells us nothing about its truth or falsehood. From seeing this, one passes to the realization that our own age is also a ‘period,’ and certainly has, like all periods, its own characteristic illusions. They are likeliest to lurk in those widespread assumptions which are so ingrained in the age that no one dares to attack or feels it necessary to defend them.” (*Surprised by Joy: The Shape of my Early Life*, [San Diego: Harcourt Brace, 1955], 207-208).
- <sup>38</sup>On the requirement of specialists to interpret evolutionary evidence for commoners, see Karl Giberson, “Would You Like Fries With That Theory?” [cited 13 May 2010]. Online: <http://biologos.org/blog/would-you-like-fries-with-that-theory>. “Unfortunately, only trained specialists can be familiar with scientific data.... To suggest that this ‘data’ can be simply handed over to non-specialists so they can make up their own minds is profoundly [*sic*] miss the point of science.” Elsewhere, Giberson, who is not a biblical scholar, nonetheless exploits the same kind of argument in the opposite direction as he claims that it takes specialists to be able to expound the creation account of Genesis properly. He joins Francis Collins to claim that the leading proponents of Young Earth Creationism “are not, in fact, biblical scholars and have limited training in the relevant biblical scholarship. Their expositions of Genesis are almost entirely based on English translations of Genesis with little consideration of what the words and concepts meant in the original Hebrew” (Karl Giberson and Francis

Collins, *The Language of Science and Faith* [Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2011], 69).

<sup>39</sup>Transcription of the video at Enns, "The Apostle Paul and Adam" [cited May 13, 2010]. Online: <http://biologos.org/blog/the-apostle-paul-and-adam/>.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid.

<sup>41</sup>Enns, "Creating Adam," [cited 13 May 2010]. Online: <http://biologos.org/blog/creating-adam/>

<sup>42</sup>Giberson and Collins, *The Language of Science and Faith*, 69-70; (emphasis added). Giberson and Collins are fond of citing C. S. Lewis (e.g., pp. 91, 213), who is popular among evangelicals, to enhance their scientific claims with greater credibility (see also, Collins, *The Language of God*, 208-209). Yet, they seem to have neglected what Lewis has to say concerning how Christians need to be prepared to address scientists's posture toward Christianity: "If you know any science it is very desirable that you should keep it up. We have to answer the current scientific attitude towards Christianity, not the attitude which scientists adopted one hundred years ago. Science is in continual change and we must try to keep abreast of it. For the same reason, we must be very cautious of snatching at any scientific theory which, for the moment, seems to be in our favour. We may mention such things; but we must mention them lightly and without claiming that they are more than 'interesting'. Sentences beginning 'Science has now proved' should be avoided. If we try to base our apologetic on some recent development in science, we shall usually find that just as we have put the finishing touches to our argument science has changed its mind and quietly withdrawn the theory we have been using as our foundation stone. *Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes* ["I fear the Greeks even when they bear gifts," Virgil, *Aeneid*, II.49] is a sound principle" (C. S. Lewis, *God in the Dock: Essays on Theology and Ethics* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995], 92).

<sup>43</sup>Cf. Noel Weeks, *The Sufficiency of Scripture* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1988), 85-118.

<sup>44</sup>The suitability of drawing analogy to the serpent's question (Gen 3:1) is prompted by its use in a similar debate by Kenneth L. Gentry and Michael R. Butler, *Yea, Hath God Said? The Framework Hypothesis/Six-*

*Day Creation Debate* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2002).

<sup>45</sup>The expression belongs to Enns, "Synthesizing evolution and Christianity is not a matter of starting with what Paul is 'obviously' saying. Paul's Adam is challenging, and was so long before evolution ever entered the mix" (Enns "Paul's Adam, [Part 3]" [cited 13 May 2010]. Online: <http://biologos.org/blog/pauls-adam-part-3/>).

<sup>46</sup>John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, (trans. Ford Lewis Battles; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1960), 1.13.1.

<sup>47</sup>Cf. Jack B. Rogers and Donald K. McKim, *The Authority and Interpretation of the Bible: An Historical Approach* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1979), 9-11, 53-54, 77-79, 169-71, etc.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., 10. Take note of two things. First, Rogers and McKim add "sinful capacities" which betrays their misunderstanding of Calvin's argument. Second, even though Enns does not credit Rogers and McKim, it seems evident that he derives his dominant imagery of "incarnation," his preferred expression for divine accommodation, from Rogers and McKim when he claims that "*as Christ is both God and human, so is the Bible*" in which God accommodates ancient myth and factual error (*Inspiration and Incarnation*, 17; [emphasis original]). Concerning continuity between Enns and Rogers & McKim, see G. K. Beale, *The Erosion of Inerrancy in Evangelicalism: Responding to New Challenges to Biblical Authority* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2008), 46ff. John Woodbridge's devastating critique of the Rogers/McKim appeal to divine accommodation has yet to be overturned (*Biblical Authority: A Critique of the Rogers/McKim Proposal* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982]). See pages 21-23 for his concise summary of the Rogers/McKim proposal. Enns and others seem to step over Woodbridge without acknowledgment to embrace the Rogers/McKim accommodation theory in their effort to lay claim to the church fathers and the Reformers to authorize their beliefs that the Scriptures include factual errors. Another who joins Enns in this already discredited pursuit is Kenton Sparks, *God's Word in Human Words: An Evangelical Appropriation of Criti-*

*cal Biblical Scholarship* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008).

<sup>49</sup>When he argues that Genesis shares the ancient mythic context with Israel's Mesopotamian neighbors, Enns states, "The biblical account, along with its ancient Near Eastern counterparts, assumes the factual nature of what it reports. They did not think, 'We know this is all "myth" but it will have to do until science is invented to give us better answers.' We do not protect the Bible or render it more believable to modern people by trying to demonstrate that it is consistent with modern science" (*Inspiration and Incarnation*, 55).

"To argue ... that such biblical stories as creation and the flood must be understood first and foremost in the ancient contexts, is nothing new. The point I would like to emphasize, however, is that such a firm grounding in ancient myth does not make Genesis less inspired; it is not a concession that we must put up with or an embarrassment to a sound doctrine of Scripture. Quite to the contrary, such rootedness in the culture of the time is precisely what it means for God to speak to his people.... This is what it means for God to speak at a certain time and place—he enters *their* world. He speaks and acts in ways that make sense to *them*. This is surely what it means for God to reveal himself to people—he accommodates, condescends, meets them where they are.... And if God was willing and ready to adopt an ancient way of thinking, we truly hold a very low view of Scripture indeed if we make that into a point of embarrassment" (56).

<sup>50</sup>Kenton Sparks, "After Inerrancy: Evangelicals and the Bible in a Postmodern Age, (Part 5)" [cited 13 March 2011]. Online: <http://biologos.org/blog/after-inerrancy-evangelicals-and-the-bible-in-a-postmodern-age-part-5/>.

<sup>51</sup>Kenton Sparks, "Scripture, Evolution and the Problem of Science, (Part 1)" [cited 13 March 2011]. Online: <http://biologos.org/blog/scripture-evolution-and-the-problem-of-science-pt-1/>. Sparks manifestly fails to understand John Calvin's concept of divine accommodation in the example he cites. Despite the fact that Calvin contends, "For, to my mind, this is a certain principle: that nothing

is treated here except the visible form of the world," anyone willing to read the larger context from which Sparks pulls the selection out of Calvin's commentary on Genesis will readily recognize that Sparks incorrectly claims that Calvin was willing "to admit that the biblical cosmology was wrong." No, Calvin states only that God reveals his creative works in keeping with how things appear to humans upon the earth. Every day meteorologists indicate when the sun will set and rise the next morning. It would be impudent to assert they are wrong. Cf. Sparks, *God's Word in Human Words*, 231, 241, 256. He confidently asserts, "The voices of accommodationists from the first century to the present are on this point unanimous: God does not err in the Bible when he accommodates the errant views of Scripture's human audiences" (255ff). Sparks seems to think that he has recovered this doctrine lost to evangelicals until recently (258). For recent rebuttal of the resuscitation of the Rogers/McKim proposal by Enns and Sparks, see Mark Rogers, "Charles Hodge and the Doctrine of Accommodation," *Trinity Journal* 31 (2010): 225-42.

<sup>52</sup>Sparks, "After Inerrancy, (Part 5)" [cited 13 March 2011]. Online: <http://biologos.org/blog/after-inerrancy-evangelicals-and-the-bible-in-a-postmodern-age-part-5/>. Sparks observes, "recent developments in the 'open theism' debate have brought accommodation yet again to the fore of evangelical interpretation" (*God's Word in Human Words*, 231). He continues, "In light of these theological developments, which presume the larger problem of Scripture's theological diversity, I would suggest with Donald A. Carson that a restatement of accommodation 'would be salutary today'" (231). Nowhere in his book does Sparks indicate awareness of two significant essays that do what D. A. Carson called for in *The Gaggling of God: Christianity Confronts Pluralism* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 130. See the two essays that predate Sparks's book by five years: Caneday, "Veiled Glory: God's Self-Revelation in Human Likeness—A Biblical Theology of God's Anthropomorphic Self-Disclosure," in *Beyond the Bounds: Open Theism and the Understanding of Biblical Christianity* (ed. John Piper, Justin Taylor, and Paul Kjoss Helseth; Wheaton: Crossway,

2003), 149-199; and Michael Horton, "Hellenistic or Hebrew? Open Theism and Reformed Theological Method," in *Beyond the Bounds: Open Theism and the Understanding of Biblical Christianity*, (ed. John Piper, Justin Taylor, and Paul Kjoss Helseth; Wheaton: Crossway, 2003), 201-234. See also Horton, *Covenant and Eschatology: The Divine Drama* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002) which also predates Sparks's book and which extensively addresses the issue of accommodation as essential to all of God's revelation.

<sup>53</sup>This is the same distortion of Calvin's understanding of God's accommodation that Sparks indulges in *God's Word in Human Words*, 235. Because Sparks draws incorrect conclusions from his appeals to Calvin, he claims "Calvin believed that the cosmology of Genesis was accommodated to the errant views of its ancient and uneducated audience, but Calvin certainly did not believe that all Scripture was accommodated to humanity in this way. Instead, he believed that accommodation applied only in certain discrete cases, where it was difficult to avoid the conclusion that Scripture seemed to speak falsely. Moreover, in such instances Calvin did not believe that accommodation was the work of God alone" (245).

<sup>54</sup>Enns, "How Should BioLogos Respond to Dr. Albert Mohler's Critique: Pete's Response" [cited 5 March 2011]. Online: <http://biologos.org/blog/how-should-biologos-respond-to-dr-albert-mohlers-critique-petes-response/>. Albert Mohler's brief critical reference to the BioLogos Foundation prompted Enns to instruct Mohler concerning divine accommodation of error and to reject his appeal to a "direct reading of the text" which Enns disparages as "a literal reading of Genesis 1."

<sup>55</sup>On exposure of this fallacy, see John D. Woodbridge, "Some Misconceptions of the Impact of the 'Enlightenment' on the Doctrine of Scripture," in *Hermeneutics, Authority, and Canon* (ed. D. A. Carson and John D. Woodbridge; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986), 241-70.

<sup>56</sup>Woodbridge, *Biblical Authority*, 193, n. 53. See also p. 189, n.1. See also the careful historical research done by Mark Rogers, "Charles Hodge and the Doctrine of

Accommodation," 234-38. He convincingly demonstrates that Charles Hodge was keenly aware of two competing doctrines of accommodation, one flowing from early church fathers through Calvin and its rival which is what "Rogers, McKim, and Sparks present as the historic understanding of accommodation, Hodge and others have criticized as an innovation introduced in the modern era by Socinus, Semler, and others" (238).

The notion that divine accommodation necessitated use of time-bound and erroneous assertions has "no relation to the position of the Reformers" but came about through thinkers like Johann Salomo Semler and his contemporaries during the eighteenth century. See Richard A. Muller, *Dictionary of Latin and Greek Theological Terms* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1985), 19. See also idem, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics: The Rise and Development of Reformed Orthodoxy, ca. 1520 to ca. 1775* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003), 2:187, 301, 305.

<sup>57</sup>"At the turn of the century the problem of myth in Christianity was posed in a new form by the History of Religions School. Already at the time of [David] Strauss the growing awareness of other religions had brought home the significance of the fact that in laying claim to various miracle stories Christianity was not at all unique. Even before Straus the conclusion had been drawn that if these other stories are to be judged unhistorical myths, the same verdict cannot be withheld from the biblical accounts of creation, virgin birth, etc. But in the latter part of the nineteenth and early twentieth century various influential scholars came to the conclusion that not only did Christianity have its own myths, but in fact Christianity had been significantly influenced at its formative stage by particular myths of other religions; indeed, the plainly mythical thinking of other systems had decisively shaped Christian faith and worship at key points" (James D. G. Dunn, *Demythologizing—The Problem of Myth in the New Testament*, in *New Testament Interpretation: Essay on Principles and Methods* [Exeter, England: Paternoster; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977], 292).

<sup>58</sup>For example, Patrick Fairbairn distinguished

between true and false accommodation. The church fathers held to true accommodation “as an adaptation in the *form* of Divine communications ... while the *matter* not the less remained true and divine” (*Hermeneutical Manual: Introduction to the Exegetical Study of Scripture of the New Testament* [Philadelphia: Smith, English, 1859], 107).

<sup>59</sup>Cf. Jordan, *Creation in Six Days*, 194.

<sup>60</sup>D. A. Carson aptly recounts a newspaper column in which the “writer was inveighing against all those stupid Christians who believe the Bible is the word of God, when it speaks so ignorantly of the sun ‘rising’ in the east: any schoolboy knows that the sun does not rise, but that the earth rotates on its axis. My father asked me what I thought of the argument. I looked at him rather nonplused. He grinned, and calmly turned to the front page of the paper, and drew my attention to the line, ‘Sunrise: 6:36 am’” (Carson, *Collected Writings on Scripture*, 272).

<sup>61</sup>See, e.g., Horton, *Covenant and Eschatology*, 7-9, 75-76, 183-191. See also idem, “Hellenistic or Hebrew? Open Theism and Reformed Theological Method,” in *Beyond the Bounds*, 201-234. In the same volume, see Caneday, “Veiled Glory” 149-199.

<sup>62</sup>Martin Klauber demonstrates that the same is true for Francis Turretin: the “concept of biblical accommodation served as a basis for his entire theological system and explained the very nature of God’s communication to man” and that his concept was in “essential continuity with Calvin” (“Francis Turretin on Biblical Accommodation: Loyal Calvinist or Reformed Scholastic?” *Westminster Theological Journal* 55 [1993]: 86). Also see Richard A. Muller, “Scholasticism Protestant and Catholic: Francis Turretin and the Object and Principle of Theology,” *Church History* 55 (1986): 193-205.

See also Paul Kjos Helseth, “Right Reason” and the *Princeton Mind: An Unorthodox Proposal* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2010), 186-187, who shows that “the Princetonians were convinced that although ‘true human theology’ is possible, it is never more than what Richard Muller calls ‘an ectype or reflection resting on but not commensurate with the divine self-knowledge [or archetype],’ for they acknowledged a vast ‘epistemic

gulf’ separating creatures from the Creator” (186).

<sup>63</sup>Could it be that the reason many evangelicals agree with Enns and Sparks is that “Many conservatives like Carl Henry apparently share with liberal theology the assumption that language must be either univocal or equivocal, setting the bar of ‘truth’ so high that at some point a crisis must inevitably arrive in interpretation?” Henry sets the bar: “The key question is: are human concepts and words capable of conveying the literal truth about God?” If so, these words and concepts must directly mirror the divine being, or they represent *untruth*.” Horton, *Covenant and Eschatology*, 189. He cites Carl F. H. Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority* (6 vols.; Waco, TX.: Word, 1979), 4:119. Earlier, in the context, Henry notes, “The main logical difficulty with the doctrine of analogy lies in its failure to recognize that only univocal assertions protect us from equivocation: the very possibility of analogy founders unless something is truly known about both analogates” (*God, Revelation, and Authority*, 4:118).

On the negative influence of Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment philosophers on the necessity of anthropomorphism or analogy to human knowledge of God, see Caneday, “Veiled Glory,” 155ff.

<sup>64</sup>Herman Bavinck, *The Doctrine of God* (trans. and ed. William Hendriksen; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1951; Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1977), 85-86.

Cornelius Van Til says that all revelation is not only analogical but anthropomorphic: “It is an adaptation by God to the limitations of the human creature. Man’s systematic interpretation of the revelation of God is never more than an approximation of the system of truth revealed in Scripture, and this system of truth as revealed in Scripture is itself anthropomorphic. But being anthropomorphic does not make it untrue. The Confessions of the Church pretend to be nothing more than frankly approximated statements of the inherently anthropomorphic revelation of God” (*A Christian Theory of Knowledge* [Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 1969], 41).

Cf. A. Berkeley Mickelsen, *Interpreting the Bible*, 307-308. “To say that certain language is figurative does not mean that the event is unreal. In fact, when the language of the earthly realm ... is used

to describe the beginnings of all that exists and the climax of all that exists, the figurative language best conveys that which is most real, abiding, and certain. Earthly language from a known sphere of existence is used to describe what took place or will take place in a sphere of existence that no mere human creature has ever entered. God must attest to that which took place in creation and that which will take place in the climax.... God disclosed his truths in language taken from the life experiences of the Hebrews and the early Christians to describe for them that which far transcended all that they ever knew.... When we consider the materials in the light of all that the Scriptures have revealed about God, we are impressed even more with the use of figurative language. Without it, little or nothing could have been disclosed. With it God was able to indicate how much more there is yet to be known. Man now knows in part.”

<sup>65</sup>See John Stott, *Understanding the Bible* (London: Scripture Union, 1972), 238, who coins the expression, *homo divines*, to describe the first evolved humans God invests with his image.

<sup>66</sup>Caneday, “Veiled Glory,” 161; (emphasis original). See that essay for fuller explanation concerning the significance of how God reveals himself and his words to humans to work out its implications concerning appeal to divine accommodation by BioLogos advocates. Besides adopting the modern historical-critical doctrine of accommodation under the mistaken notion that it is the classical doctrine, BioLogos advocates engage the same fallacy Open Theists commit: “The fallacy is to forget that we are analogues of God and to regard ourselves as the fundamental reference point for ascriptions concerning God. The error is to project back upon God our creaturely restrictions of qualities received from him who made us in his image and likeness” (“Veiled Glory,” 153).

Giberson and Collins borrow significantly from John Polkinghorne, a British Open Theist, and show his influence when they invert the analogical order God established by creating Adam in his own image and after his likeness (*The Language of Science and Faith*, 116-23). Instead of correctly observing that humans relate to and engage the world analogous to

the way the Creator does, Giberson and Collins state that God’s relationship with and activity in the world is analogous to how humans relate to the world: “We make plans every day: we choose clothes to wear, food for breakfast, a route to work and the first task of the day. These human intentions emerge in our minds, somehow, via processes that we don’t understand, and then we rearrange the world around us to make these intentions a reality; we make things happen that would not otherwise occur, but we do this without ‘breaking the laws of nature.’ ... We suggest therefore that God’s interactions with the world might be analogous to our own, just more substantial. Christians have always affirmed that God has intentions and that the providential course of history is influenced by God realizing these intentions. We thus suggest that God’s interaction with the world, in analogy with ours, need not require that the laws of nature be constantly ‘broken’” (119-20).

Giberson and Collins apply these affirmations by stating, “We can speculate, for example, that God creates a world where certain free things happen, but happen along channels that have a high degree of predictability. By analogy, the water in the Niagara River definitely goes over the Falls, but we cannot chart its path accurately. Perhaps God creates a world where his foreknowledge allows him to see unfolding channels of history without needing to control or even know certain small details. Or perhaps God knows all the details without actually determining them. We all have foreknowledge of what will happen to a brick if we drop it on our toe, but this foreknowledge hardly causes the brick to fall or the pain to appear” (120-21). After they reduce acceptable “models for how God interacts with the physical world” to those compatible with the evolutionary model they embrace, Giberson and Collins want to close off further discussion or disagreement: “Our goal should be to avoid narrowing down the range of possibilities by putting God in boxes of our own devising” (122-23).

<sup>67</sup>“Scripture ... has no hesitation in speaking anthropomorphically of God. It ascribes all manner of activity to him. Of this activity we cannot think otherwise than spatially and temporally. So we are face to face

with the choice either of thinking of God as altogether like unto ourselves, or of thinking ourselves the finite analogues of the fullness of his being. As we cannot do the first without wiping out the difference between Creator and creature, we are compelled to do the latter” (Cornelius Van Til, *An Introduction to Systematic Theology*, [Nutley, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed, 1976], 212).

<sup>68</sup>Cornelius Van Til, “Nature of Scripture,” in *The Infallible Word* (ed. N. B. Stonehouse and Paul Woolley; Philadelphia: Presbyterian & Reformed, 1947), 273.

<sup>69</sup>Caneday, “Veiled Glory,” 163. “Here is the essence of anthropomorphism. God reveals himself to us in human terms, yet we must not compare God to us as if we were the ultimate reference point. God organically and indelibly impressed his image upon man so that our relationships to one another reflect his relationships with us. We do not come to know God as creator *ex nihilo* because we know ourselves to be creative and imagine him to be greater. Instead, man creates because we are like God. God is the original; we are the organic image, the living copy.”

<sup>70</sup>Despite Carl Henry’s insistence that revelation is univocal (see also note 63 above), he is correct to say, “When Calvin goes further, and declares the biblical forms of speaking to ‘not so much express what God is like, as accommodate the knowledge of him to our slight capacity’ (*Institutes*, I, xiii, 1) or that God’s method was ‘to represent himself to us, not as he is in himself but as he seems to us’ (*Institutes*, I, xvii, 13), we should carefully note that Calvin is here dealing with anthropomorphic representations, and that in no case does Calvin imply that scripture teaching is fallacious” (*God, Revelation, and Authority*, 4:376).

<sup>71</sup>Van Til, *Introduction to Systematic Theology*, 90.

<sup>72</sup>Cf. Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 1.1.1-2.

<sup>73</sup>Cf. Rudolph Bultmann who states, “*The mythical eschatology* is untenable for the simple reason that the parousia of Christ never took place as the New Testament expected. History did not come to an end, and as every schoolboy knows, it will continue to run its course. Even if we believe that the world as we know it will come to an end in time, we expect the end to take the form of a natural catastrophe, not of a mythical

even such as the New Testament expects” (“New Testament and Mythology: The Mythological Element in the Message of the New Testament and the Problem of Its Reinterpretation,” in *Kerygma and Myth: A Theological Debate* [ed. Hans Werner Barstch; trans. Reginald H. Fuller; London: SPCK, 1953], 5). What lies behind Bultmann’s denial of the New Testament eschatology is his denial of a real physical incarnation and a real physical resurrection. For Bultmann, the resurrection is a myth. “The real purpose of myth is not to present an objective picture of the world as it is, but to express man’s understanding of himself in the world in which he lives. Myth should be interpreted not cosmologically, but anthropologically, or better still, existentially” (10-11).

<sup>74</sup>Enns indulges in this confusion of “literal reading” versus “symbolic reading” in several of his BioLogos essays. See, e.g., “Paul’s Adam (Part 1)” [cited 13 May 2010]. Online: <http://biologos.org/blog/pauls-adam-part-i/>.

<sup>75</sup>On the one hand, those who advocate “literal interpretation” of the creation account for apologetic purposes tend to emphasize its correspondence to the reality of the things, places, persons, and events throughout the narrative and simultaneously they tend to mute without completely effacing the symbolic significances the biblical text assigns to all these features of the actual world created. Many who advocate for “literal interpretation” do so with fear akin to that which resided with the Antiochenes against the Alexandrian school of interpretation, namely, the notion that if an Old Testament narrative entails allegory then it is not historical (Cf. A. B. Caneday, “Covenant Lineage Allegorically Prefigured: ‘Which Things Are Written Allegorically’ [Galatians 4:21-31],” *SBJT* 14 [2010]: 53.). Thus, advocacy of “literal interpretation” of the creation narrative does some injury to Christian faith with its tendency, particularly in its popular forms, to suppose that if the creation account is laden with symbolic design by the Creator, then it does not present the corporeal world. They wrongly tend to dichotomize symbolic representation from reality. To do so actually concedes ground to those they oppose apologetically. On the other hand, those

who advocate “symbolic interpretation” of the creation account tend to minimize, even dismiss, the creation account’s correspondence to the actual corporeal world as though the biblical text were portraying beginnings symbolically. Despite protests to the contrary, the “symbolic interpretation” approach, poses threats to Christian faith with its tendency to suppose that if the creation-fall accounts are laden with symbolic design by Scripture, then they portray the world symbolically with literary devices so that it would be a mistake to understand the things, places, persons, and events presented as corresponding to the actual world. After all, the claim is, everyone knows that snakes don’t talk.

<sup>76</sup>As argued above, it is correct to say that God’s revelation is analogical, but to speak of “analogical interpretation,” as with “literal or symbolic interpretation,” is to confuse the reader’s role with the author’s role. For example, Sparks confuses these when he asserts, “For these kinds of difficulties, Calvin tells us that whenever it appears that the Bible speaks ‘falsely,’ this reflects an accommodation to the false views of humanity. In this sense *accommodation was for Calvin* what allegory was for the church fathers: *a ready-made hermeneutical tool* for solving the problem of diversity in the Scriptures. If Calvin’s principle of *accommodation is a legitimate and important aspect of Scripture’s divine speech*, we should anticipate that it was not some kind of radical theological innovation but a long-standing assumption about the nature of Scripture” (*God’s Word in Human Words*, 236; emphasis added). The level and magnitude of Sparks’s misunderstanding of Calvin’s teaching concerning accommodation requires far more attention and space than this essay can provide.

<sup>77</sup>See, for example, Jotham’s Parable of the Trees (Judg 9:7-20).

<sup>78</sup>On the early church fathers’s “allegorical interpretation” of this parable, see Robert H. Stein, *The Method and Message of Jesus’ Teachings* (rev. ed.; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1994), 44-45.

<sup>79</sup>See also A. B. Caneday, “The Parable of the Generous Vineyard Owner (Matthew 20:1-16),” *SBJT* 13 (2009): 34-45.

<sup>80</sup>See, for example, Craig L. Blomberg, *Interpreting the Parables* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1990), 171-288.

<sup>81</sup>A. B. Caneday, “Can you Discuss the Significance of Typology to Biblical Theology?” in “The SBJT Forum: Biblical Theology for the Church,” *SBJT* 10 (2006): 96-97.

<sup>82</sup>For further discussion concerning the import of 1 Corinthians 10:11, see Caneday, “Covenant Lineage Allegorically Prefigured,” 61, 66, 72.

<sup>83</sup>Concerning Abraham and allegory, see *ibid.*, 50-77.

<sup>84</sup>Cf. J. Paul Sampley, “The Second Letter to the Corinthians” in *The New Interpreter’s Bible* (12 vols.; Nashville: Abingdon, 2000), 11:75.

<sup>85</sup>Light also testifies by positive disclosure: “But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God” (John 3:21).

<sup>86</sup>The relationship between light as symbol and that which it signifies is organic and natural, not capricious nor arbitrary, precisely because the Creator invested his created things with significance and he formed us in his own image so that we have instinctive sense that a pattern exists between the sign and the thing signified.

<sup>87</sup>See Seyoon Kim, *The Origin of Paul’s Gospel* (Tübingen: Mohr (Siebeck); Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981), 137-268 for development of Paul’s Christology, summarized, “*Paul saw the exalted Christ as the eikōn tou theou and as the Son of God on the Damascus road. This perception led him to conceive of Christ in terms of the personified, hypostatized Wisdom of God ... on the one hand, and in terms of Adam, on the other. Thus, both Paul’s Wisdom-Christology and Adam-Christology are grounded in the Damascus Christophany*” (267; emphasis original).

<sup>88</sup>“Paul’s reference in 2 Cor 4:6 to the ‘glory of God on the face of Christ’ indicates that, as the ‘image of God,’ Christ is the very embodiment and revelation of God himself, even as Phil 2:6 can speak of Christ as existing ‘in the form of God’ (*en morphē theou*) and Col 1:15 can speak of Christ as the ‘image of the invisible God, the first born of all creation’ (*eikōn tou theou tou aopatou prōtotokos pasēs ktisōs*)” (Scott J.



Hafemann, Paul, *Moses, and the History of Israel: The Letter/Spirit Contrast and the Argument from Scripture in 2 Corinthians 3* [Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1995], 416).

<sup>89</sup>Ibid. Hafemann explains, “The comparison throughout 2 Cor 3:7-18 is not between Moses and Christ as mediators of the glory of God, but between Moses and Paul, with Christ equated with YHWH himself as the glory of God.”

<sup>90</sup>Cf. Caneday, “Covenant Lineage Allegorically Prefigured, 50-77. “*Paul reads Scripture’s story of Abraham as historical narrative invested with symbolic representations embedded within the characters and the two contrasting births of two sons—one by natural order, the other by divine promise. Hence, the Genesis text itself, not Paul’s interpretation of the text, is allegorical while simultaneously upholding the historical authenticity of those characters and events*” (51; emphasis original).

<sup>91</sup>For greater elaboration concerning symbolic significances in the creation-fall account, see Caneday, “Veiled Glory,” 161-67.

<sup>92</sup>For example, see George Murphy, “Evolution, Sin, and Death” [cited 12 April 2011]. Online: <http://biologos.org/blog/evolution-sin-and-death/>; idem, “Human Evolution in Theological Context” [cited 23 March 2011]. Online: [http://biologos.org/uploads/projects/murphy\\_scholarly\\_essay.pdf](http://biologos.org/uploads/projects/murphy_scholarly_essay.pdf); BioLogos Staff with Peter Enns and Jeff Schloss, “Was there Death Before the Fall?” [cited 23 March 2011]. Online: <http://biologos.org/questions/death-before-the-fall/>.

<sup>93</sup>For an excellent articulation of the concursive theory of inspiration, see Stephen J. Wellum, “The Inerrancy of Scripture, in *Beyond the Bounds: Open Theism and the Understanding of Biblical Christianity* (ed. John Piper, Justin Taylor, and Paul Kjoss Helseth; Wheaton: Crossway, 2003), 237-74.

<sup>94</sup>BioLogos Staff with Peter Enns & Jeff Schloss, “Was there Death Before the Fall?” [cited 20 March 2011]. Online: <http://biologos.org/questions/death-before-the-fall/>.

<sup>95</sup>Murphy, “Human Evolution in Theological Context” [cited 23 March 2011]. Online: <http://biologos.org/blog/evolution-sin-and-death/>; 5.

<sup>96</sup>Ibid.

<sup>97</sup>Ibid.

<sup>98</sup>Ibid.

<sup>99</sup>Ibid., 6.

<sup>100</sup>Ibid.

<sup>101</sup>BioLogos Staff with Enns & Schloss, “Was there Death Before the Fall?” [cited 20 March 2011]. Online: <http://biologos.org/questions/death-before-the-fall/>. The BioLogos staff agrees with George Murphy’s view cited above. However, for people who cannot find a way to disconnect physical death from the fall, they offer another scenario in their effort to synthesize evolution with Christianity:

“To connect human physical death to the Fall, we must be clear about what it means to be human. It is argued that bearing *God’s* image is not a matter of our physical appearance but a matter of our capacity to love both God and others, to have dominion over the Earth and to have moral consciousness. In this way we might distinguish between *Homo sapiens* and the image-bearing creatures that we might call *Homo divinus*. While *Homo sapiens* might have a similar body structure or physical capabilities of *Homo divinus*, the latter exists in God’s image.

With this critically important distinction, BioLogos is thus compatible with the belief that part of Adam’s curse was the onset of physical death for the human race, because the human race in the full *Imago Dei* really began with Adam. Although many human-like creatures lived and died before the Fall, these *Homo sapiens* did not yet bear the image of God. After the bestowal of God’s image, there was no death of *Homo divinus* until after the Fall. As soon as image-bearing humanity fully emerged through God’s creative process of evolution, no member of that species experienced death until after the Fall.”

<sup>102</sup>For example, Paul uses the verbs, “I die” (*apothnēskō*) and “I cause to die” (*thanatoō*), as well as the noun, “death” (*thanatos*), for the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ (e.g., Rom 5:6-8, 10; 6:3-5, 8-10; 8:34) but also for death of ordinary humans (e.g., 7:2-3; 8:36, 38; 14:7-9). With reference to Jesus’ sacrificial death, apart from effacing his sacrifice, it is impossible to

separate the physical and spiritual aspects of his death. Other passages accent spiritual death (e.g., 6:16, 21, 23, 7:5, 9-11, 13, 24; 8:2, 6).

<sup>103</sup>Cf. Douglas J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans* (New International Commentary on the New Testament; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 121-22.

<sup>104</sup>Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans* (Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998), 272.

<sup>105</sup>C. John Collins, "What Happened to Adam and Eve? A Literary-Theological Approach to Genesis 3," *Presbyterian*, 27 (2001), 42.

<sup>106</sup>Schreiner, *Romans*, 272.

<sup>107</sup>If one fails to take note of earlier comments in the essay, it is not entirely clear what Collins means by "the will of God" when he states, "[W]e must make a careful definition of 'evil.' The Bible would not support the contention that the natural processes of the creation themselves—including animal predation, and natural phenomena such as earthquakes and hurricanes—are contrary to *the will of God*" ("What Happened to Adam and Eve?," 41; emphasis added). However, clarity comes by way of two earlier statements in the text and one in a footnote. First, Collins's only other mention of the "will of God" in the essay is as follows: "The condition for its [covenant's] continuation is stated clearly in 2:16-17, obedience to *the divine will*. The punishment for breaking the command is 'death'" (21; emphasis added). It seems that Collins equivocates with his uses of "the will of God" and "the divine will," the former referring to God's *decretive will* and the latter to God's stated *moral will*. Second, Collins makes clear that he rejects any linkage between Adam's disobedience and natural disasters and does not accept any causative connection between Adam's sin and death coming to animals. Concerning Genesis 3:17—"cursed is the ground because of you"—Collins asks: "Does this lead to the doctrine of a 'fallen' natural realm? ... In no case does this imply that somehow the actual functioning of the natural elements is distorted due to human sin: rather, it emphasizes that agricultural production is to be the arena of God's chastisement" (36-37). To this he adds in a footnote, "It is necessary to

point out that the Genesis passage nowhere suggests that animal death (or carnivorous behavior) is in any way a consequence of the 'curse'" (37, n. 80). It is curious that one who takes a "literary-theological approach to Genesis 3" seems to read the text rather woodenly.

Surely, Paul's affirmations concerning creation's groaning, subjection to frustration, and liberation from bondage to corruption, in Romans 8:19-22, has in view Isaiah's vision (Isa 11:6-9). Adam's rebellion against the Creator invoked the curses, including, animal predation, which will end with the redemption of God's sons. Christians, who understand this and see a wolf prey upon a lamb, tearing and devouring its flesh, cry out, "Come, Lord Jesus!" (Rev 22:20). Ponder the even clearer allusion to the serpent of Genesis 3 in this portrayal of the new earth: "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind. The wolf and the lamb shall graze together; the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and dust shall be the serpent's food. They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain," says the Lord" (Isa 65:17, 25).

<sup>108</sup>Ibid., 36. Collins's explanation of the curse of the ground is quite inadequate. See the previous note, 107.

<sup>109</sup>Ibid., 37.

<sup>110</sup>Ibid., 43.

<sup>111</sup>Cf. Schreiner, *Romans*, 435f.

<sup>112</sup>For greater elaboration, especially on the significance of the text, see Ray Ortlund, Jr., "Male-Female Equality and Male Headship: Genesis 1-3," in *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, (ed. John Piper and Wayne Grudem; Wheaton: Crossway, 1991), 95-112.

<sup>113</sup>Doubtless, Paul's observations bear out other implications also. For example, the woman was not made from the ground as was Adam, for she is not another species. She was formed from a portion of Adam's side, so dignity is hers intrinsically.