

Adam and Eve – For Real!

Acts 17:25-29

Introducing God, Part 7

The more you discover about God, the more you come to appreciate the fact that He not only is, but must be – in order to be God – omnipresent, omnipotent, omniscient, transcendent, eternal . . . and on and on.

God never had a beginning. The Great I AM never began.

And He never adds anything to His knowledge, for He knows all things at all times – both that which is possible and that which is reality – from eternity past to eternity future.

In other words, you would never want to challenge Him in a game of chess. Every option and every move is known already.

To put it another way, God has never, ever learned anything. He has never discovered one truth – not one red blood cell in your body is ever out of His sight; and no galaxy of spinning stars is beyond His immediate control.

He created all that is and we're only beginning to discover a little portion of it.

And part of the problem of humanity is the attempt to take what little they know, and then attempt to define who God is – to discover something and then define God on that basis.

That's like a mortician defining God's power over death based only on what he's seen throughout his career at the Funeral Home.

Ignore the biblical revelation of God, the unbeliever is bound, Paul says, to grope around in the dark – *having their eyes blinded by the god of this world to the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ (2 Corinthians 4:4).*

Apart from God's revelation and self-disclosure, we really have no idea where or how anything began and certainly, no way of knowing who He is.

In 1872, John Saxe wrote an English poem about a group of blind men who decided to visit an elephant and determine by their powers of observation what an elephant was truly like.

His poem goes like this – remember it was written in 1872 English:

It was six men of Indostan
To learning much inclined,
Who went to see the Elephant
(Though all of them were blind),
That each by observation
Might satisfy his mind.

The *First* approached the Elephant,
And happening to fall
Against his broad and sturdy side,
At once began to bawl:
"God bless me!—but the Elephant
Is very like a wall!"

The *Second*, feeling of the tusk,
Cried:"Ho!—what have we here
So very round and smooth and sharp?
To me 'tis mighty clear
This wonder of an Elephant
Is very like a spear!"

The *Third* approached the animal,
And happening to take
The squirming trunk within his hands,
Thus boldly up and spake:

"I see," quoth he, "the Elephant
Is very like a snake!"

The *Fourth* reached out his eager hand,
And felt about the knee.
"What most this wondrous beast is like
Is mighty plain," quoth he;
'Tis clear enough the Elephant
Is very like a tree!"

The *Fifth*, who chanced to touch the ear,
Said: "E'en the blindest man
Can tell what this resembles most;
Deny the fact who can,
This marvel of an Elephant
Is very like a fan!"

The *Sixth* no sooner had begun
About the beast to grope,
Than, seizing on the swinging tail
That fell within his scope,
"I see," quoth he, "the Elephant
Is very like a rope!"

And so these men of Indostan
Disputed loud and long,
Each in his own opinion
Exceeding stiff and strong,
Though each was partly in the right,
And all were in the wrong!ⁱ

On a windy hill in Athens, the Apostle Paul stood before the Supreme Court of Athens and effectively says, "You've got some things partly right – there is a divine power; there are good and evil immortal beings; the origin of mankind was the work of deity – but you're all completely wrong.

Don't depend on your own powers of observation or subjective feelings . . . Paul says, "I am going to introduce to you, this Unknown God."

As we pick up our study in *Acts 17*, let me organize our thoughts around two statements – these statements summarize what Paul says next about God.

1. The first statement is this: God is the Creator of Humanity.

We began in our last discussion noting that whenever you deliver the gospel to a pre-Christian

world – an important place to begin is Genesis chapter 1.

And by the way, the message Paul delivers to this Court in Athens, is now a critical message for people in America – and every other country, for that matter. God is the Creator of humanity.

Notice the middle part of verse 25. . . . He Himself gives to all life and breath and all things; and He made from one, every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth.

These are staggering claims in the opening lines of that sentence. God is the original source of all life, all breath and all things.

Notice again – ***He made from one, every nation of mankind.*** This prepositional phrase means that all of mankind has one common ancestor – every nation, came from one man.

Darwin taught that man evolved from apes and continued evolving as various races, with some races more developed than others. I'm frankly shocked that our world doesn't bring Darwin's horrific racism into the open and expose his belief that the dark skinned races developed slower than the lighter skinned races. For instance, he believed that Africans were not nearly as evolved as the European, white race, because of their dark skin.

Even Stephen J. Gould later admitted, "Biological arguments for racism may have been common before 1859, but they increased [incredibly] following the acceptance of evolutionary theory."ⁱⁱ

This is one of the ugly secrets about evolution that never quite makes it into the secular science text books.

Ken Ham writes, "Darwin's error was later exposed through the field of genetics. What Darwin didn't know was that everyone has the same brown-colored skin pigment called melanin.

A person's genetic makeup – received from his parents – determines his potential to produce a certain level of melanin, which is why we see a range of skin shades in people from light to middle brown to dark."ⁱⁱⁱ

Ken Ham goes on to write, After the scattering of the Tower of Babel (where God created language distinctions among all the people), groups of people migrated according to their language and thus became isolated, allowing for a concentration of certain physical variations within those groups.^{iv}

The development of lighter or darker skin in certain demographic groups has nothing to do with

evolution, but the decreased genetic potential for variation in isolated populations. Our differences are only skin deep.^v

Paul effectively announces to the Supreme Court of Athens that humans are not split into various races because of higher and lower stages of evolution. In fact, no matter what our skin color or ethnic background, we all belong to one race – one blood – one human race.

And we all came from the first human beings created – Adam, and his wife, Eve.

Evolutionists don't like the idea of one literal man who became the father of the human race – and I think that it's because the gospel is communicated through it.

Listen to what Paul writes to the Romans – that *sin came through [this] one man (Romans 15:12).*^{vi}

Again, this takes you back to *Genesis chapters 1 and 2*. Adam is the father of all human beings – and Adam sinned; his wife was deceived, but Adam wasn't – he purposefully, knowingly, defiantly – without being deceived by the false promises of Satan – took and ate of the fruit in disobedience to God.

And thus passed to the human race his fallen nature – the nature of Adam – and the human race is now condemned in sin.

But the gospel informs us that a second Adam, or the last Adam, came to create a new race through faith in His atoning work on the cross (*I Corinthians 15:45*).

Paul writes in Romans 5 again; *For if by the transgression of the one [man] many died, much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many (Romans 5:15)*

What Paul does is contrast the gospel in the sin of the first Adam – a literal man, by the way – and the atoning work of the sinless second Adam – Jesus Christ – a literal human being – both fully God and fully Man.

In other words, Adam's blood unites humanity in sin; but Jesus Christ's blood unites us in salvation.

So the world contains one fallen human race – and the church represents one redeemed, brand new race – *all members of one body (I Corinthians 12)*.

So it's very important that there is both a literal, historical first Adam – and a literal, historical last Adam.

But here's where evolution has invaded the church. Now the church is becoming more and more

filled with theistic evolutionists – that is, they believe God started it all, but then over millions of years, the human race evolved.

Part of their problem, of course, is to somehow erase or at least redefine the Biblical account of Adam and Eve and spiritualize it away.

I am deeply saddened by church leaders, seminary professors and pastors today who are continuing to compromise the Genesis account along with their denial of a 6-day creation; and they also then must deny a literal Adam and a literal Eve.

But since they know that the Bible so clearly speaks of Adam as a literal man and Eve his literal wife, they have to perform gymnastics with the text in order to make some sort of compromise that allows for both God and evolution.

For instance, N.T. Wright, professor of New Testament at University of St. Andrews in Scotland writes;

“I do think it matters that something like a primal pair getting it wrong did happen, but that doesn't mean I'm saying that therefore Genesis is kind of a literal, clunky history over against myth.”^{vii}

In other words, don't take it all in a literalistic manner – Adam and Eve don't have to be the first couple on the planet – and Genesis 1 and 2 are a bit clunky if you take them literally.

Denis Alexander, another scholar in religion and science, asserts that Adam and Eve were one of many couples living at the time. He writes:

“I would see Adam and Eve not as the first human beings on the earth. I think there were plenty of human beings around . . . Adam and Eve were farmers that God chose to come into fellowship with Himself, and to understand what fellowship with God was all about . . . who then fell.”^{viii}

What he's really trying to do is allow for evolutionary millions of years before God ever chose a human couple named Adam and Eve to have fellowship with.

But of course, in the meantime, he ends up destroying the credibility of the Genesis text and opens the door to disbelieve all of it. I mean if Adam and Eve weren't really created by God as the text clearly says, how do we know they really had fellowship with God or that they even fell into sin?

Alister McGrath, professor of theology at King's College, London (by the way, I'm quoting some of the most popular authors living today, and read by seminarians, pastors, church leaders and scholars). He writes “There are those who will say that Adam

and Eve in some way designate specific historical figures. I can understand why people say that. I think it makes quite a lot of sense.

But for me it makes even more sense to say that in some way Adam and Eve are stereotypical figures and in some way they encapsulate [represent] the human race as a whole.”^x

In other words, it makes more sense to him that Adam and Eve weren’t even a literal couple – they just represent the human race – a race that evolved over millions of years, rather than a race that descended from of a literal couple who were both created by God.

Karl Giberson, a former professor at Eastern Nazarene College along with Francis Collins wrote: “We make no claim that the description provided in Genesis is how God created us. Neither science nor the Bible answers that question (oh?). The Genesis account says little about how God created. Adam was created from dust and God’s breath. Eve was created from Adam’s rib. None of these explanations can possibly be actual descriptions. It’s simply not reasonable to try to turn the brief comments in Genesis into a biologically accurate description of how humans were formed.”^x

Really?! The problem I have with this quote is that this isn’t coming from the science department of NC State, but the science department of a Christian college by a Christian professor.

He says, “There’s just not enough information.” No, the problem is, he doesn’t like what little information we’ve been given because it doesn’t mesh with the world of evolution.

By the way – I wonder if this professor would have a problem with the fact that we have even less Biblical information on how God is going to recreate our eternal bodies to last forever in heaven.

I wonder if he thinks God won’t create for us new literal bodies for a literal heaven. He probably doesn’t have a problem believing that.

William Dembski, a professor at Southern Evangelical Seminary in Matthews, North Carolina, correctly makes the connection between a literal understanding of a literal Adam and Eve as the first human parents to a young-earth view of Creation.

The genealogies we have from Adam – beginning in Genesis 5, reveal a young earth – not a billions-of-years-old-earth.

And for Dr. Dembski, he admits this is the critical problem. He writes: “The young-earth solution to reconciling the order of creation with

natural history makes good exegetical and theological sense. Indeed, the overwhelming consensus of theologians up through the Reformation held to this view. I would adopt it in a heartbeat except that nature seems to present such a strong evidence against it.”^{xi}

Which is a tragic error, by the way, He’s saying what we need to evaluate scripture in light of nature; not evaluate nature in light of scripture. And this from an evangelical seminary professor.

By the way, what would the evidence of nature tell you about the new heaven and the new earth?

- I mean, how long would it take to create a city of translucent gold and gemstones the size of train cars?
- Where’s the refinery for that gold?
- Where are the quarries for those gem stones?
- Where did those huge pearls come from that serve as the gates to the city – Revelation 21:21 says specifically that each gate is one pearl . . . so where are those monster oysters who produced those gigantic pearls?

What would the evidence of nature suggest?

The normal processes of nature cannot explain the miraculous.

Consider this – Jesus Christ told His disciples that He had prepared a heavenly city – the Father’s House – for them and one day He was gonna come back and take us all there (*John 14*).

Among other miracles, wouldn’t that mean Jesus is going to defy the natural laws of gravity? I hope so!

The problem is our world of theologically compromising Christianity today is trying to somehow make the Bible fit an evolutionary schematic.

Even Dr. Dembski admitted, “A young earth seems to be required to maintain a traditional understanding of the Fall. And yet a young earth clashes sharply with mainstream science.”^{xii}

Paul is introducing God to the Athenians by effectively introducing Adam and by virtue of a literal Adam, a young earth – to the Athenians.

To Paul – in several additional passages – Adam was the literal, first created man and from him, Eve.

He even wrote to Timothy, *For it was Adam who was first created, and then Eve. (I Timothy 2:13)*.

Dr. Peter Enns, a professor for years at Westminster Theological Seminary, retiring in 2004, wrote with an open frustration about this emphasis by the Apostle Paul; listen to this: “It’s not so much that Genesis talks about an Adam; it’s the fact that Paul talks about an Adam. That’s the heart of the tension [concerning Genesis and evolution]. If Adam just stayed in the Old Testament where he belonged, we wouldn’t have this problem. But Paul draws him out . . . and for Paul, Adam is the first human being.”^{xiii}

Well, shouldn’t we listen to the Apostle Paul? By the way, that happens to be the gospel message of Paul to these Athenians. Notice ***Acts 17 and verse 26 again – and He (God) made from one man, every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth.***

This isn’t clunky – it’s descriptive. Paul confirms in the New Testament what happened in the Old Testament. And by the way, it isn’t any more popular in Athens that it is in America.

The Athenians thought Zeus was the originator of life – in fact, the Greek word for life is zoe; Paul is effectively saying, “Zeus didn’t create Zoe . . . God created Zoe”

And God created all the variations of color and physical attributes within one race – there is only one human race.

The Athenians didn’t like that either – they thought the Greeks were the master race, like Hitler’s Germany would believe centuries later.

Not so; all of mankind are members of one race, descending from one man – a literal first man by the name of Adam.

So, no matter what color you are, when it comes to the gospel, God is color blind;
No matter what part of the family tree you came from, when it comes to the gospel God is socially blind;

No matter how much money you have; God is economically blind.

No one has an inside track – ***for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23).***

Listen, we thank God for Adam and the human race, but we must not cling to the human race, but by faith become a member of God’s chosen race – a redeemed people – a prized possession of God – ***those who have been called out of darkness into a marvelous light (1 Peter 2:9).***

In just a couple of sentences, Paul literally confronts the Athenian theories of origins, and

Darwin’s along with them and theistic evolutionists along with them as well.

God is the Creator of humanity.

2. Secondly, God is the Controller of history

Notice ***verse 26 again; and He made from one man, every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times, and the boundaries of their habitation***

In other words, every nation and the borders of every nation and the length of the history of every nation are under the sovereign control of our Creator God.

Which means, it isn’t the role of the Christian to save his nation from perishing any more than it is your role to save this planet from perishing.

We do not take the place of God, whom Paul here clearly says is in total control of it all.

Our mission is not to save America – it is to save Americans, by the gospel and the grace of God. Our mission isn’t to save this planet – in fact, the Bible tells us in 2 Peter 3 that this planet is heading for a great fireball when God’s judgment is poured out and He eventually creates a new earth and a new heaven.

Now that doesn’t mean that you’re not supposed to take care of this planet or that you’re not supposed to care about your country.

It’s one thing to be responsible and even patriotic citizens, which I happen to be, with great joy – it’s another thing to assume sovereign ownership and believe that if you don’t save it, God’s purposes will somehow be shortchanged or short lived.

Paul clearly states here – the nations belong to God. He is the Lord of history. ***Paul goes on to add, in verse 27 that these nations – should seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us;***

Now that doesn’t mean they can find God on their own. Paul wrote to the Romans, ***how can they believe in one they’ve never heard and how shall they hear without a preacher/messenger? (Romans 10:14)***

Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God. People must hear the gospel in order to be saved (***Romans 10:17***).

What Paul means here is that the Athenians are close to the truth in that they know there are deities and immortalities and spirit beings.

But like the blind men of Indostan, they are partly right, but entirely wrong.

Paul is also using a key word here to describe their searching – you may have noticed it – he wrote, *if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him.*

The word means *to feel around* – it’s actually like the groping of a blind man who has difficulty finding the object he wants to hold.^{xiv}

This is so strategic here; Paul is using the same verb *to grope* that one of Athens most famous citizens used – Homer, the author of the best-selling work entitled *The Odyssey*. Homer told the story of Odysseus, the Greek champion warrior who is trapped with his soldiers in a cave by the one eyed giant, Cyclops. Odysseus is able to blind the giant’s eye with a spear and then he and his men try to avoid this blinded and enraged giant who is groping around for them with his hands – and they escape.

Paul selects this same verb to describe the Athenians in their blind groping after the true and living God.

But he also implies in this description that the true and living God wants to be found; He desires fellowship and companionship with us. He doesn’t need us – but He delights in us.

Mankind was created for worship and companionship with the Creator God. In his book, John Lennox explains the inability of reason alone; science alone; to grasp the answer to the most basic issues of life.

A study of mythical origins and all the theories actually can’t answer the question that the biblical record of origins spells out – mankind was made to enjoy the glory of God.

Lennox illustrated it this way. Aunt Matilda has a made a beautiful, luscious three-layered cake. The cake is taken to be analyzed by a group of the world’s top scientists, nutritionists and biochemists.

The nutrition scientists finish their examination and are able to tell us the number of calories in the cake and each specific nutritional element and effect upon the human body. The biochemists are able to determine the structure of proteins, and fats found in the batter and icing. The physicists are able to analyze the cake in terms of fundamental particles. The mathematicians are able to determine the behavior of those particles with sets of elegant

equations and how they correspond and to what degree with each other.

They present an elaborate description of how the cake was made and how its various ingredients relate to one another and how the cake will affect the body and on and on.

But suppose you ask the expert’s one final question – Why was that cake made by Aunt Matilda. What is the purpose of the cake’s existence? Why was this cake made?

The only person in the room smiling would be Aunt Matilda because she alone knows its purpose. And listen, it isn’t an insult on any scientific discipline to be unable to answer the question “why” – for they simply cannot.

In fact, the only way we will ever get an answer is if Aunt Matilda reveals it to us. [She has to tell us, it’s a birthday cake – and it’s to celebrate the birthday of her niece].

Listen, without her disclosing the answer to us, no amount of scientific analysis will ever be able to enlighten us.^{xv}

The study of origins has enough trouble with the question, “How” . . .

- How did the origin of life take place;
- How did all the elements that we can dissect and analyze and observe – how did they come together to form life?

But even if they can come close to the answer “How?” – they will never be able to come within a million miles of the answer to the question, “Why? Why is there life? Why does planet earth seem so rare in our galaxy?

And even more importantly – Why do we exist? Analyze the chemicals in your body but you cannot determine the purpose of being alive.

Why does this planet exist – Why this universe? Measure it, study it, explore it, but you will never be able to answer the question, WHY?

David wrote in Psalm 19 that the universe exists to declare the glory of God; as a gift to those who believe to marvel and enjoy and explore – one day the new earth and heavens forever.

And you, beloved, exist to serve and represent and worship and love and enjoy and one day return to an eternal garden of a new earth and talk with and walk with and enjoy and worship and serve our Creator God forever.

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- i John Godfrey Saxe —1816-1877
- ii (Stephen J. Gould, *Ontogeny and Phylogeny*, 1977).
- iii Ken Ham, *Foundations*
- iv Ibid
- v Ibid
- vi Eckard J. Schnabel, *Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament: Acts* (Zondervan, 2012), p. 734
- vii N.T. Wright quoted by Ken Ham, *Six Days: The Age of the Earth and the Decline of the Church* (Master Books, 2013), p. 166
- viii Ibid, p. 167
- ix Ibid, p. 169
- x Ibid, p. 173
- xi Ibid, p. 175
- xii Ibid, p. 176
- xiii Ibid, 183
- xiv Schnabel, p. 735
- xv Adapted from John C. Lennox, *God's Undertaker* (Lion, 2009), p. 41