

Adam and Eve in the Old Testament

C. John Collins

TRADITIONALLY CHRISTIANS, LIKE the Jews from whom they arose, have read the story of Adam and Eve in the opening chapters of the Bible as describing the first human beings, from whom all other humans descend. They have also

taken the account of the “disobedience” in Genesis 3 as narrating the origin of all human sin: that is, these readers have supposed that God first made humans morally innocent, and that the events of Genesis 3 transformed the moral condition of Adam and Eve, and thus of all mankind after them.¹

At first glance, it may seem that “Adam and Eve” as significant persons do in fact play only a very small role in the whole Hebrew

Bible (as distinct from the Apocrypha and New Testament). Victor Hamilton observed:

Apart from its uses in Gen 1-5, the only other unambiguous occurrences of the proper name “Adam” in the OT is 1 Chron 1:1. It may occur in Deut 32:8; Job 31:33; Hos 6:7. This is surpris-

ing, given the fact that OT literature does not hesitate to recall early heroes of Israel’s past such as Noah, Abraham, Jacob, and Moses, and thus link the past with the present in one corporate continuum.... Unlike the OT, inter-testamental literature and the NT have numerous references to Adam. For the former, compare Sir 17:1; 49:16; Tob 8:6; Wisd 2:23; 9:2. For the latter, compare Luke 3:38; Rom 5:12-21; 1 Cor 11:12; 15:22, 45-49; 1 Tim 2:13-14.²

Hamilton has, as a matter of fact, overstated the situation with Noah, especially as compared with the many references to Abraham, Jacob, and Moses.³ All the same, if the citational statistics were all that there is to the discussion, it would be hard to warrant the traditional Christian emphasis on Adam and Eve. But, as I hope to show, these statistics are potentially misleading, and should not control our discussion.

Many contemporary scholars are casting doubt on both these aspects of the conventional understanding—that is, of the origins both of humans and of sin. For example, James Barr (1924-2006), a biblical scholar of considerable influence in the

C. JOHN COLLINS is Professor of Old Testament at Covenant Theological Seminary.

Dr. Collins received his Ph.D. from the University of Liverpool. He is the author of a number of books, including *Genesis 1-4: A Linguistic, Literary, and Theological Commentary* (P&R, 2006), *Science and Faith: Friends or Foes?* (Crossway, 2003), and *Did Adam and Eve Really Exist? Who They Were and Why You Should Care* (Crossway, 2011).

twentieth century, asserted that the conventional way of reading Genesis “derives essentially from St Paul,” while a close reading of Genesis on its own terms will lead to different conclusions.⁴ Further, Claus Westermann (1909-2002), another influential scholar, made this claim about Genesis 3 (taken as a “fall” story):

First of all, it must be stated that in the Old Testament the text did not have [an] all-embracing meaning. It is nowhere cited or presumed in the Old Testament; its significance is limited to primeval events.⁵

Several factors in the modern climate of thought make it attractive to lessen the importance of Adam and Eve. First, there is the perennial question of just *how* deeds done by someone else so long ago—even if that someone is my ancestor—can have such a major impact on life here and now. Second, there are parallels between the stories in Genesis and the tales that come from other parts of the ancient Near East (most notably from Mesopotamia). Perhaps Genesis is doing something similar to what these other tales do, and if we do not accord “historicity” to the other tales, why should we suppose that it matters for Genesis? And third, many take current biological theories to imply that humans arose by way of an evolutionary natural process, rather than by the special action of God; these theories make it difficult to speak of the *first* members of a new species. I will be able to address these climatic factors only in a very cursory way here, and must defer the larger discussion to another venue.⁶

Here is what I intend to accomplish in this essay. Since the explicit references to Adam and Eve occur primarily in Genesis 1-5, I will begin by showing how chapters 1-11 of Genesis have a clear literary unity in their current form (regardless of their compositional history). If the rest of the Bible treats this material as a whole, then echoes of one part may well be evoking the whole. Second, I will examine specific issues within Genesis 1-5,

to see how the text portrays Adam and Eve and their significance. Third, I will show how the rest of the Old Testament either refers to, evokes, or presupposes the story of Adam and Eve. Finally, I will consider a sampling of Jewish writings from the Second Temple period (outside of the New Testament), which show that these authors, from the mainstream of Judaism, saw Adam and Eve in much the same way I do. Throughout my discussion I will attend to how the whole Old Testament story presupposes the historical significance of Adam and Eve as the fountainhead of humanity and as the doorway by which sin came into God’s world.⁷

THE UNITY OF GENESIS 1-11

Scholars commonly assign the different pericopes in Genesis 1-11 to separate sources. In particular, we often read that Genesis 1-2 present two *different* creation accounts (1:1-2:3 and 2:4-25), which may even be difficult to reconcile with each other.⁸

If we can establish that the current form of Genesis invites us to read Genesis 1-11 as a coherent whole, then we can say that any reading that fails to incorporate such coherence is inadequate—and this is so regardless of what we think about the prehistory of the individual pericopes.

THE SETTING OF 1-11 IN GENESIS

The first line of argument is the fact that Genesis 1-11 is now part of the whole structure of Genesis. The organizing function of the *toledot* (ESV “generations”) in Genesis is well-known. These appear in Genesis 2:4; 5:1; 6:9; 10:1, 32; 11:10, 27; 25:12, 19; 36:1, 9; 37:2. According to the *toledot*, then, Genesis 1 (really 1:1-2:3) stands as a kind of preface or prelude to the whole book, while Genesis 2-4 (2:4-4:26) is the next section, and so on.⁹

I shall soon argue that Genesis 1-11 (1:1-11:26) has its own coherence, and we can see that it stretches over several sections marked by *toledot*. At the same time, as Moberly has noted, there is no real grammatical break from Genesis 11 to Gen-

esis 12.¹⁰ The story as a whole progresses smoothly.

Further, consider how Genesis 1:28 records God's "blessing" on the human couple, urging them to "be fruitful and multiply." These themes run throughout Genesis and beyond. In Genesis 9:1, Noah is a kind of new Adam: "And God *blessed* Noah and his sons and said to them, '*Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth.*'" (emphasis added).¹¹

In Genesis 12:2-3, the Lord will bless Abram and make him a channel of blessing for his own descendants, and for the rest of the world. These promises are repeated to Abraham's heirs: to Ishmael (17:20), Isaac (26:3-4), and Jacob (28:3; 48:3-4). The book of Exodus opens by telling us "the people of Israel *were fruitful* and increased greatly; they *multiplied* and grew exceedingly strong, so that the land was filled with them" (Exod 1:7; emphasis added). Deuteronomy promises that the people of Israel, when they are faithful, will continue to enjoy this blessing (30:16, compare 7:13):

If you obey the commandments of the Lord your God that I command you today, by loving the Lord your God, by walking in his ways, and by keeping his commandments and his statutes and his rules, then you shall live and multiply, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to take possession of it.

All of this allows us to see that Genesis has focused on the ways in which God has made new starts after Adam and Eve: with Noah, and then with Abram and his offspring. We can then say that Noah and Abram are "new Adams," which shows how fully Genesis 1 is integrated into the narrative whole.

I take God's calling of Abraham to be, not simply for himself, but also for the rest of the world.¹² I also see one of the chief themes of Old Testament Messianic hope to be the expectation that under the leadership of the Messiah, the people of God will succeed in bringing God's light to the Gentile world. The shape of this biblical story assumes that

all human beings have a common origin, a common predicament, and a common need to know God and have God's image restored in them: this assumption comes from including Genesis 1-11 in the story, with some version of the conventional reading of the "fall" of the whole human family.

PARALLELS BETWEEN GENESIS 1-11 AND ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN "MYTHS"

A second avenue for establishing that we should read Genesis 1-11 together comes from the parallels with materials from other ancient Near Eastern peoples, particularly from the Mesopotamians.¹³

I noted that we intuitively see a transition between Genesis 1-11 and the rest of Genesis. Even though there is no grammatical shift, nevertheless our intuition finds support in how the narrator slows down in the Abraham story: he has been covering large stretches of time in brief narratives, whereas now he is taking more narration time to cover less elapsed time in more detail.

These other stories from the ancient Near East provide a further confirmation for our intuition. I see no reason to quarrel with the way in which specialists on the ancient Near East find the chief parallels with Genesis 1-11 to be:

- (1) the Sumerian King List;
- (2) the Atrahasis Epic; and
- (3) the Eridu Genesis / Sumerian Flood Tale¹⁴

(Another story, *Enuma Elish*, or the *Babylonian Epic of Creation*, once seemed a promising venue for comparisons as well, and some biblical scholars still turn to it. Assyriologists, however, seem less willing to endorse much of a comparison than formerly.¹⁵)

Kenneth Kitchen lays out the connections between these sources in the table below.¹⁶ There is much to say about the connections, and about the ways in which Genesis 1-11 is both similar and dissimilar to these other sources, which space forbids me to do right here. The point of interest for now is that this overarching pattern from Mesopota-

Sumerian King List	Atrahasis Epic	Eridu Genesis	Genesis 1-11
1. Creation assumed; kingship came down from heaven	1. Creation assumed, gods created humans to do their work	1. Creation; cities are instituted	1. Creation (Gen 1-2)
2. Series of eight kings in five cities	2. Noisy humans alienate deities	2. [Alienation]	2. Alienation (Gen 3), genealogies (Gen 4-5)
3. The flood	3. The flood; ark	3. The flood; ark	3. The flood; ark (Gen 6-9)
4. Kingship again; dynasties follow, leading to—	4. New start	4. New start	4. New start, then genealogies, down to—
5. “Modern times”	(5. “Modern times,” implied)	(5. “Modern times,” implied)	5. “Modern times”

nia provides a literary and ideological context into which Genesis 1-11 speaks, and it is reasonable to conclude that it does so *as a whole*.

And what does this parallel tell us about the function of Genesis 1-11? The Mesopotamian sources provide what Assyriologist William Hallo calls “prehistory”—the period of human existence before there are any secure written records—and “protohistory”—the earliest stages for which there are records.¹⁷ Another way to put this is to recognize that these materials provide what we can call the front end of the official Mesopotamian worldview story. Further, it appears that the Mesopotamians aimed to accomplish their purpose by founding their stories on what they thought were actual events, albeit told with a great deal of imagery and symbolism. Thus it is reasonable to take Genesis 1-11 as having a similar purpose in Israel, expecting similar attention to history without undue literalism.¹⁸

LITERARY AND LINGUISTIC LINKS ACROSS GENESIS 1-11

My third line of argument for the propriety of reading Genesis 1-11 together comes from the literary and linguistic links between these pericopes.

Well-known links for the whole of Genesis 1-11 include those between Adam and Noah, presenting Noah as a kind of “new Adam” (as already

noted). Further, there are clear links between Genesis 1 and Genesis 5, such as 1:26-27 and 5:1-5 (the life of Adam), and between Genesis 4 and 5, such as 4:25-26 and 5:3-11 (Seth and Enosh). There may be a link between the genealogy descended from Cain (4:17-22) and that from Seth (5:6-32), especially in the names Enoch, Methushael/Methuselah, and Lamech (cf. 4:18 with 5:18, 21, 25), though this is not entirely certain.¹⁹

Genesis 9-11 are coherent with the previous pericopes, since these chapters record the sequel to the Great Flood, with the descent of various peoples from the family of Noah (cf. 10:1), as linked by the genealogies (cf. 11:10, picking up the line of Shem), with 11:10-19 paralleling 10:21-25 (through Peleg), and 11:20-26 bringing the line down to Abram, Nahor, and Haran (who, with their descendants, will feature in the rest of Genesis).

Within Genesis 1-4 there are also clear linkages. First, Genesis 2-4 are commonly assigned to the J-source, with a few redactions; that is, their overall unity is not controversial.²⁰ Second (see below), Genesis 2:4-25 serves to elaborate the sixth “day” of Genesis 1. Third, the common assertion that the P creation story (Genesis 1) is free of anthropomorphisms is mistaken:²¹ this story actually depends on an anthropomorphism, namely the portrayal of God as one who goes through his

work week and enjoys his Sabbath rest.²² Genesis 2 contributes its own anthropomorphism to this pattern, depicting God as if he were a potter “forming” the first man (2:7), and a worker who “builds” the first woman (2:22, see ESV margin).

Finally, several verbal links show that, whatever separate origins the individual pericopes might have had, they have been edited in such a way as to exhibit coherence. For example, in 1:28 we read,

And God *blessed* them. And God said to them,
“Be fruitful and *multiply* . . .”

In Genesis 3 the “blessing” has turned to “curse,” the proper antonym. And whereas the blessing was for them to *multiply* by having children, after the disobedience God says to the woman that he will “surely *multiply* your pain in childbearing”—the arena of blessing has turned into one of pain and danger. The genealogical chapter 5 (verse 29) also refers to God’s “curse” on the ground (3:17):

. . . and [Lamech] called his name Noah, saying,
“Out of the ground that the Lord has *curse*d this one shall bring us relief from our work and from the *painful toil* [cf. *’itsabvoni*, 3:16, 17] of our hands.”

Further, three “enigmatic” first person plurals, where God addresses “us,” appear through Genesis 1-11: 1:26; 3:22; and 11:7. Many suppose that these (or at least the first) are God addressing his angelic council, though I judge the best explanation to be a “plural of self-address.”²³ The specific conclusion here does not matter for my purpose: the point is that this is a distinctive feature of this stretch of material, from supposedly separate sources.

Once we recognize how Genesis 1-11 is integrated into the whole flow of the book of Genesis, and how these chapters parallel basic worldview-shaping materials from Mesopotamia, it is no surprise to find that whoever put these chapters

together did so in such a way that they display their unity at the literary and linguistic level.

DO GENESIS 1 AND 2 REALLY GIVE US TWO CREATION ACCOUNTS?

Now let us focus more narrowly on the two pericopes, Genesis 1:1-2:3 and 2:4-25. Do these passages not indeed foil every attempt to read them coherently?

As for whether they come from separate sources, the arguments for and against such sources will forever be indecisive, since none of these putative sources is actually known to exist. The only text that we have is the one that places these two passages together. Further, we have no reason to expect that the author was a blockhead (or a committee of blockheads), who could not recognize contradictions every bit as well as we can. Even James Barr—who accepted the common critical breakup of Genesis into putative sources, and a late date for its final composition—points out, it is reasonable to expect an editor to have smoothed out genuine contradictions between his sources, and tensions that remained would have invited ancient audiences to seek ways to “recognize the truthfulness of *both* narratives.”²⁴ (Barr himself did not explain how he thought this smoothing actually worked.) Therefore, if literary and linguistic studies point to a way to read the whole production coherently, we do well to pay heed.

My own literary and linguistic studies have led to just such a coherence. I support a version of the traditional Rabbinic opinion, namely that, far from finding two discordant accounts, we should see Genesis 1:1-2:3 as the overall account of God creating and preparing the earth as a suitable place for humans to live, and Genesis 2:4-25 as elaborating the events of the sixth day of Genesis 1.²⁵ This traditional reading lies behind, say, the way Haydn’s oratorio *Die Schöpfung* (*The Creation*) weaves the two narratives together: on the sixth day, God created man in his “own image” (Gen 1:27), and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life (Gen 2:7).²⁶ More importantly, it also underlies the way

that Jesus read the two passages together, in Matthew 19:3-9 (Mark 10:2-9), combining Genesis 1:27 with 2:24.²⁷ My work supplies a grammatical justification for this traditional approach, by showing how Genesis 2:4-7 links the two stories. Further, the validity of this reading does not rest on any view of the authorship and date of Genesis.²⁸

The English Standard Version of Genesis 2:4-7 reflects my conclusions:

These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens. When no bush of the field was yet in the land and no small plant of the field had yet sprung up—for the Lord God had not caused it to rain on the land, and there was no man to work the ground, and a mist was going up from the land and was watering the whole face of the ground—then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.²⁹

The purpose of Genesis 1:1-2:3, in my understanding, is to celebrate as a great achievement God’s work of fashioning the world as a suitable place for humans to live. “The exalted tone of the passage allows the reader to ponder this with a sense of awe, adoring the goodness, power, and creativity of the One who did all this.”³⁰

The chiasmic structure of 2:4 looking back to the first pericope and forward to the second, invites us to read the two passages in union:

a heavens
 b earth
 c when they were created
 c’ in the day that the Lord God made
 b’ earth
 a’ heavens

The change in divine name, from “God” (*elohim*) in 1:1-2:3 to “the Lord God” (*Yhwh ’elohim*) in 2:4-3:24, functions rhetorically to identify the

universal, majestic, transcendent Creator (God) with the covenant God of Israel (the Lord), which in turn grounds God’s purpose for Israel to be a particular people called to be a vehicle of blessing to the whole world.

The action of Genesis 2:7 parallels that of 1:27. The ESV of 2:5-7 shows how verses 5-6 provide the setting for the event of verse 7: in a particular region (“the land,” verse 5), at a particular time of year (at the end of the dry season, before it had begun to rain, when the rain clouds [“mist”] were beginning to rise)—that is when God formed the man. In other words, we read Genesis 1 and 2 together when we take 2:4-25 as filling out details of the “sixth day,” amplifying 1:24-31.³¹ Specifically, it explains how it was that God created mankind as male and female, and equipped them to be fruitful and multiply. We can see this further from the way “it is not good that the man should be alone” in 2:18 jars with the “very good” of 1:31. Reading them together in this way shows us that chapter 2 has not reached the point of 1:31 until the man and the woman have become one flesh. Once we get to 2:25, with the man and woman naked and not ashamed, we breathe a sigh of relief: we are now at the point where it is all “very good.”

Hence we have every justification to read Genesis 1-11 as a coherent story, with Genesis 2 serving as an elaboration of Genesis 1, and chapters 3-11 describing the events that followed the making of the world. Genesis 1-11 thus provides a coherent front end of the Bible’s worldview story for the people of God.

ADAM AND EVE IN GENESIS 1-5

ADAM AND EVE AS THE FIRST HUMAN PAIR

The figure named “Adam” appears unambiguously in Genesis 2-5. The proper name Adam transliterates the Hebrew word for “human being, mankind,” *’adam*.³² In Genesis 2:20 (according to the received Hebrew text), “the man” is first called “Adam.”³³ Genesis 2:5 says there was no *man* (*’adam*) to work the ground, and thus in 2:7 the Lord God formed *the man* using dust from the

ground. In 2:18 *the man* is alone, and the Lord God sets out to make a helper fit for him. Throughout 2:4-4:26, whether he is called *the man* or Adam, he is presented as one person. The man's one wife is simply called either "the woman" or "his wife" throughout—although when she receives her name Eve in 3:20, that name becomes another option (cf. 4:1, where both are used together). The name Adam appears also in the genealogy of 5:1-5.

The divine plan to "make *man* in our image, after our likeness" (1:26) may refer to mankind in general (as most commentators think),³⁴ or it may refer to *the man* in particular (as James Barr argued).³⁵ Whichever we prefer, we can see that 2:4-25 fills in the details of how mankind came to be composed of male and female members, both of whom are in God's image. Both the title "the Human," (ESV "the man") and the proper name Adam ("Human") are fitted to someone whose actions are in some sense *representative* of all mankind.³⁶

But he might "represent" mankind either as a personification, or as a particular member, or perhaps as both. Which sense is fitted here? James Barr—rightly, I judge—argues the following in regard to 5:1-2: "This text, just here at the start of the genealogy, seems to me to make sense only if the writer intends one human pair, from whose descendants the world will gradually come to be populated."³⁷

This reading, that Adam and Eve are presented as a particular pair, the first parents of all humanity, is widespread in the exegetical literature, both from writers who have some kind of traditionalist commitment to the Bible's truthfulness, and from those who do not (such as Barr).³⁸ At the same time, this does not exclude Adam from being a *representative* in the sense of being a kind of paradigm through which we learn something about how temptation works.³⁹

At any rate, the man who was once "alone" (2:18), now has a wife; these two disobey God and leave the garden of Eden. They have children, who also have children (chapter 4). The genealogy of

Genesis 5 links this pair to subsequent people, leading up to Noah (5:32), from whom came Abraham (11:10-26), the forefather of Israel. It makes no difference for our purposes whether the flood is thought to have killed *all* mankind (outside of Noah and his family); nor does it matter how many generations the genealogies may or may not have skipped. The genealogies of Genesis 1-11 link Father Abraham, whom the people of Israel took to be historical, with Adam, who is otherwise hidden from the Israelites in the mists of antiquity.

Prehistory and Protohistory

I say "the mists of antiquity" to remind us that we are dealing with "prehistory" and "protohistory." And, as Kenneth Kitchen argues, in the nineteenth century B.C., people "*knew already* that their world was old, very old."⁴⁰ Therefore the phrase "mists of antiquity" represents the perspective the ancients themselves would have held. I have already indicated that Israel's narrative of prehistory bears a relationship with the narratives of prehistory found in Mesopotamia. This implies that, like those other stories, Genesis aims to tell the true story of origins; but it also implies that there are likely to be figurative elements and literary conventions that should make us wary of being too literalistic in our reading.⁴¹ That is, the genre identification for Genesis 1-11, prehistory and protohistory, does *not* mean that the author had no concern for real events; far from it, it implies that real events form the backbone of his story.

At the same time, as is widely known, there are important differences between Genesis 1-11 and the Mesopotamian prehistories. The way the stories are told conveys very different stances toward the divine, the world, and man's calling. The Mesopotamian prehistories do in places suggest that the gods created a *group* of first humans. Barr mentions this feature of the Mesopotamian stories but then shows that it does not of itself entail that Genesis does likewise:

The creation of humans should be [so the argument goes] analogical [with the origin of the other animal kinds as a whole in Genesis 1]: therefore he creates the human beings as a whole, all humanity. Some support for this view may come from Mesopotamian parallels: in important examples the gods do not create individual humans, but the human race. And this is a good argument, but it is not fully coercive. Perhaps the Hebrew writer had reasons that persuaded him just at this point *not* to continue with large categories but to consider humanity on a more individual basis.... Moreover, even if Mesopotamian sources think of humanity as a class, we have certain proof that the individual view of human creation was deeply embedded in Hebrew culture: namely the narrative of Genesis 2-3 itself, the story of Adam and Eve.⁴²

Barr mentions “reasons” that persuaded the Hebrew author of Genesis to tell a story different from those the Mesopotamians told; these reasons have to do with the radically differing ideologies of these prehistories.

Umberto Cassuto saw this clearly. After describing the similarities and differences between the other stories and those of Genesis, he observes:

In another respect, too, the Pentateuchal account differs from those given in the aforementioned texts, namely, in that it speaks of the creation of only one human pair, a fact that implies the brotherhood and equality of man, whereas the pagan texts refer to the mass creation of mankind as a whole.⁴³

The ideology of the Genesis prehistory-protostory is clear from its own literary context as the front end of the book of Genesis: that is, Genesis 1-11 is the backcloth of the Abraham-Isaac-Jacob story, which is the backcloth of the Exodus story. This prehistory grounds the call of Abraham by showing how all human beings are related, and therefore equally in need of God’s blessing, and

equally reachable with that blessing. Abraham is God’s answer to this universal need (Gen 12:1-3): he is to be the vehicle of blessing to “all the families of the earth,” starting the family through which all mankind, which is now estranged from God, will come to know the true God.

Once we recognize this, we might also recognize that the telling of Genesis 1-11 is deliberately shaped with this purpose in mind. Many, for example, have noticed the way in which the garden of Eden becomes a pattern for describing the Israelite sanctuary, and even the land of Israel.⁴⁴ That is to say, the Old Testament views Eden as the first sanctuary, where God is present with his covenant partners (Adam and Eve); the tabernacle, and later the temple, reinstate this Edenic blessing. What makes the Promised Land special is that it too is to be like a reconstituted Eden, whose fruitfulness displays to all the world the presence of God.⁴⁵ There is every reason to expect that the portrayal of Adam in Genesis had goals like this in mind; that is, he is “like” an Israelite, so that each member of God’s people will see himself or herself as God’s “renewed Adam” in the world. These considerations help us to see that the author may well use such devices as anachronism if it serves his purpose; “historical verisimilitude” (aiming to get all the details of life exactly as the characters would have known them, even if the audience did not live that way) is not strongly claimed by the text itself.⁴⁶

The marriage of Adam and Eve (Gen 2:23-25) becomes the paradigm for any sound future marriage of human beings. The comment in 2:24 makes clear that this is programmatic for human life: “Therefore [because of the events of verses 21-23] a man [Hebrew *’ish*, any male human being] shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.”

And what shall we make of the “death” that God threatens in Genesis 2:17? I maintain that the primary reference is “spiritual death” (alienation from God and one another) as exhibited in Genesis 3:8-13. But that is not all: it would appear

(to me at least) that this is followed by their physical death as well (3:19). At this point I will simply observe that we should be careful about letting the *distinction* between spiritual and physical death, which is proper, lead us to drive a wedge of *separation* between the two kinds of death: it looks like the author presents them as two aspects of one experience. In other words, physical death is not any more “natural” for human experience than is spiritual death.⁴⁷

In Genesis 3:20 the woman receives a name, “Eve.” This is connected in some way to the Hebrew word for “live,” and the Septuagint renders it as *Zoë*, “Life.” The form of the Hebrew name, however—*Khawwâ*, from the root *kh-w-h*, “to live”—probably indicates a causative significance, i.e., “she who gives life,” “Life-Giver” (see ESV footnote).⁴⁸ This supports the interpretation found in the ancient Jewish Aramaic translation called Targum Onkelos (no later than fourth century A.D.): “the mother of all the children of man.”⁴⁹ That is, this Targum asserts that all humans descend from her.

GENESIS 2-3 AND “FOLKLORE”

Some scholars refer to “folkloristic” elements in Genesis 2-3, such as the etiological purpose (e.g., the origin of marriage), a talking snake, and the “magic trees.” However, calling these elements “folkloristic” stems from several mistakes. I have discussed these points at length elsewhere, so I will simply summarize my arguments here; endnotes will show where I have dealt with the issues in greater length.

I begin by noting that an etiological narrative might actually give the *true* origin of some feature of contemporary life; simply calling it “etiological” settles no questions at all.⁵⁰ I have a large scar on my left knee, and I can tell you a true story of how it got there. The story is interesting to me, and to my children, because it involves a nearly fatal situation that I got into through a lack of foresight, and a dramatic deliverance. That true story is an etiology.

Further, the fact that the snake talks is a clue to its function in the narrative. The commentator Hermann Gunkel (1862-1932) finds this to be a feature of fairy tales and legends, where we expect to read of talking animals; oddly enough, he actually refers to Balaam’s donkey in Numbers 22: “Hebrew legends also know of the talking donkey.”⁵¹ I call this odd, because the narrator in Numbers 22:28 says that the Lord “opened the mouth of the donkey,” which is what enabled it to speak. In other words, the writer of this passage did *not* portray a world in which donkeys speak; he instead recounted what he thought was a *miracle*.⁵² Hence, the only other example of a talking animal in a biblical narrative attributes that speech to some kind of interference with the animal’s proper “nature.” Besides, when we observe the serpent’s knowledge of what God said in Genesis 2:17 (in 3:4 the serpent echoes the divine “surely die”), in addition to the evil that the serpent speaks (he urges disobedience to God’s solemn command, calls God a liar, and insinuates that God’s motives cannot be trusted), we perceive that the Jewish and New Testament interpretive tradition (e.g., Wis 1:13; 2:24; John 8:44; Rev 12:9; 20:2) that sees the Evil One (“Satan” or “the devil”) as using this serpent as its mouthpiece is on a firm footing.⁵³ In fact, to deny this by insisting that Genesis never mentions the Evil One is actually a poor reading, because it fails to appreciate that biblical narrators generally prefer the laconic “showing” to the more explicit “telling,” leaving the readers to draw the right inferences from the words and actions recorded. If we read the story poorly like this, we will miss a crucial part of the story.⁵⁴

Gunkel makes another mistake when he interprets Genesis 3 as giving a lesson in natural history, to the effect that the curse of verse 14 (“on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life”) explains why all serpents travel as they do and why they eat soil.⁵⁵ I recall hearing this when I was young; it was probably not in church, for I was not well church-ed as a youth. I still remember my delight in learning, as a teen-

aged herpetologist, that boa constrictors have vestigial legs (just like Genesis said!). But this is another failure to read the text well: the curses of Genesis 3:14-19 are rhetorically high (set as poetry in modern Bibles), which leads us to expect vivid figurative language. And an expression close to “eat dust” is used elsewhere as a figure for humiliation and defeat (e.g., Isa 49:23; Mic 7:17; Ps 72:9). I suspect that most Israelites would have known that serpents do not “literally” eat dust anyhow; it does not take much time in the desert to discover that they eat mice, lizards, other snakes, and so on (cf. Exod 7:10-12).⁵⁶ Besides, a good reader already knows that the serpent is not acting for itself; it is a tool of a Dark Power that intends harm for man. Therefore it makes for better reading to take “dust you shall eat” as describing the humiliation the Dark Power will undergo, and “on your belly you shall go” as a similar figure for how that Power will always cringe before the mighty God.

There is no reason to describe the two trees, the “tree of the knowledge of good and evil” and the “tree of life,” as “magic” without any nuance.⁵⁷ The nature of the “knowledge of good and evil” has given rise to many competing interpretations; I hold that this tree is the means by which the humans were intended to acquire a knowledge of good and evil—if they stood the test, they would know good and evil from above, as those who have mastered temptation; sadly, they came to know good and evil from below, as those who have been mastered by temptation. This explanation fits well with the fact that God acknowledges that the humans have actually gained some knowledge (3:22); it also fits with the other uses of the expression, “to know good and evil” (and phrases like it), in the rest of the Hebrew Bible, to express the idea of discernment (which is often gained through maturation).

In fact, this interpretation also helps us to appreciate what is going on in the temptation. In my own work I have argued that the humans were created morally innocent (so long as “innocence” does not mean naiveté or moral neutrality), but

not necessarily “perfect.” Their task was to mature through the exercise of their obedience, to become confirmed in moral goodness. We cannot say that they were *at this point* necessarily “immortal”; but the narrative does not dwell on what might have been. This, as it turns out, has some similarities to Irenaeus’s reading of Genesis 1-3. By his understanding, the innocence of Genesis 2 was more like that of a child than of a full adult; God’s goal for them was their maturity (a possible sense of “knowing good and evil,” see Deut 1:39). Their fall broke the process of growth.⁵⁸

But what of the “tree of life”? Does it work “automatically,” which is what most mean by calling it magical? Genesis says very little about it. What it does say (3:22, where God fears that the man might live forever if he takes of it) should be put together with the other passages that use the same idea. In Proverbs 3:18; 11:30; 13:12; 15:4, various blessings are likened to a tree of life: all of these blessings, according to Proverbs, are means to keep the faithful on the path to everlasting happiness. In Revelation 2:7; 22:2, 14, 19, the tree is a symbol of confirmation in holiness for the faithful. This warrants us in finding this tree to be some kind of “sacrament” that sustains or confirms someone in his moral condition: that is why God finds it so horrifying to think of the man eating of the tree in his current state. I call it a “sacrament,” because I do not know how it is supposed to convey its effects, any more than I know how the biblical sacrifices, or the washing ceremonies, or baptism, or the Lord’s Supper work. But they *do* work.⁵⁹ Only in this sense may the tree be called “magic,” but this sense has moved us away from folklore.⁶⁰

HISTORICAL CONSEQUENCES OF ADAM AND EVE’S “FALL”

The disobedience of Adam and Eve has historical import, as its consequences make clear. The hiding from God in Genesis 3:8; the fear and blame game of 3:10-13; the solemn sentences of 3:14-19; the evil deeds of chapter 4: all of these are

in jarring discord with the idyllic scene of blessing and benevolent dominion (1:28-29) and innocent enjoyment (2:8-9, 18-25). Some have suggested that, because there are no words for “sin” or “rebellion” in Genesis 3, therefore the text does not “teach” that Adam and Eve “sinned.”⁶¹ Of course this is absurd: the question of 3:11 (have you done what I told you not to do?) is as good a paraphrase of disobedience as we can ask for. Some have also suggested that, since the text of Genesis does not say that humans “fell” by this disobedience, therefore Genesis does not “teach” such a thing.⁶² But the jarring discord we have just noticed is instruction enough on that point. These objections stem from a reading strategy that prefers *telling* and does not account for *showing*.

The descendants of Adam and Eve (Genesis 4 and onward) exhibit sad and shameful behavior, which contrasts with the exuberant expectation of Genesis 1:26-31: the average Israelite’s experience is probably more like Genesis 4 than it is like Genesis 1 or 2. This cries out for an explanation, and we need some version of the traditional reading of Genesis 3 to make sense of these facts.

I have heard people object that the disobedience of Genesis 3 is pretty tame in comparison with the violence of Genesis 4. How, then, can the one be the cause of the other? I would not put the relationship between the two sins that way, as simply “cause” and “effect.” Rather, I would say that the sin of Genesis 3, under the influence of a Dark Power that has the goal of ruining human life, has opened the door to all manner of evil in the world, and that evil has come rushing through. I might further query whether the disobedience of Genesis 3 is really all that “small.” After all, it came after God had loaded human beings with blessings and delights, and it resulted from yielding to a subtle and despicable assault on the character of the God who had shown himself so overflowing with goodness. Let Israel, and all who read this, take warning, and never underestimate the power of even the apparently smallest sins.

Does Genesis give us any clues—showing,

if not telling—as to *how* sin was transmitted to Cain, to Lamech, and on to others? The details are sketchy; it is surely not enough to say that Adam and Eve set a bad example for their children. Probably the best answer is that of Paul, who uses the expression “in Adam,” implying a way in which human beings are somehow “included” in Adam.

CONCLUSIONS

In sum then, we have plenty of reasons from the text itself to be careful about reading it too literally; and at the same time we have reasons to accept an historical core. The genealogies of Genesis 5, 10, and 11, as well as those of 1 Chronicles 1:1 and Luke 3:38, assume that Adam was a real person. Similarly, although the style of telling the story may leave room for discussion on the exact details of the process by which God formed Adam’s body, and how long ago, we nevertheless can discern that the author intends us to see the disobedience of this couple as the reason for sin in the world. It explains why the Mosaic covenant will include provisions for the people’s sins: Mosaic religion, and Christianity its proper offspring, is about redemption for sinners, enabling their forgiveness and moral transformation to restore the image of God in them. This story also explains why all mankind, and not just Israelites, need this redemptive, healing touch from God.

ADAM, EVE, EDEN, AND THE FALL IN THE REST OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

For an interpretation of Genesis 1-5 to be adequate, it must account for the details of the Hebrew narrative, the similarities and differences between that narrative and its possible parallels from elsewhere in the ancient Near East, and the location of that narrative as the front end of the whole book of Genesis—indeed, of the whole Pentateuch, which therefore means of the whole Old Testament.⁶³ In this section I will show how the themes of Genesis 1-5 are played out in the rest of the Hebrew Bible.

I have already mentioned Claus Westermann’s

claim that the story of Genesis 3 is “nowhere cited or presumed in the Old Testament.” This claim suffers from several difficulties. For example, what exactly constitutes a citation, presumption, or echo? Further, does an allusion to any part of Genesis 1-5 count as one of these echoes? And there is still more: has this perceived rarity of allusion become part of a circular argument—that is, once we think that there are no allusions, do we then dismiss possible allusions because we “know” that such an allusion is unlikely since it is so rare? Finally, does not the presence or absence of allusions depend on the communicative intentions of the biblical writers and their perceptions of the needs of their audiences? That is, a later writer may or may not find an echo of this passage useful to what he is trying to do with his later text—which means that the (perceived) rarity of citation hardly implies that this story has no bearing on the rest of the Hebrew Bible.

I will be mindful of all these factors. However, the literary unity of the current text of these chapters (as already described) gives us a warrant for qualifying the claim of rarity: after all, there are numerous references to creation (e.g., Ps 8, 104) and to marriage (e.g., Mal 2:15, using Gen 2:24). Human rest on the Israelite Sabbath imitates God’s rest after his work of creation (Exod 20:11, echoing Gen 2:2-3).⁶⁴

Genesis 1-5 is well integrated into Genesis 1-11, and into the whole of Genesis. I have already mentioned how the genealogies of Genesis 5 and 11 connect the primal pair to subsequent generations, particularly to Abraham. Further, the connection with Mesopotamian stories of prehistory and protohistory comes from the pattern of creation, early generations of people, flood, further generations of people, leading to “modern times”; this makes the first five chapters an inherent part of this pattern, which includes *all* of Genesis 1-11.

We have seen that Genesis presents Noah to us as a kind of new Adam, as the representative who receives God’s covenant on behalf of his descendants and also of the animals (6:18-19;

9:8-17). The call of Abraham is another fresh start on God’s plan to bring his blessing to the human race. The “blessing” idea is explicit in 12:2-3 and is combined with being fruitful and multiplying in 17:20; 22:17-18; 26:3-4, 24; 28:3, 14: these echo God’s blessing on the original human pair (1:28). Another theme that ties Genesis 1-5 with the rest of Genesis is the repeated word “seed” (best translated “offspring,” as in the ESV).⁶⁵ Especially pertinent is the apparent individual offspring referred to in 3:15; 22:17-18; 24:60—who, by the time of Psalm 72, is identified as the ultimate heir of David through whom God’s blessing will finally come to the whole earth (Ps 72:17, echoing Gen. 22:17-18).⁶⁶

The call of Abraham to be the vehicle of blessing to the rest of the world presupposes that the other nations need the blessing of God’s light. The story of Genesis 3, and the progression into further moral and spiritual darkness in Genesis 4-11, explains *why* the other nations are so needy.

I have also already mentioned the way in which the garden of Eden is the pattern for the Israelite sanctuary. Gregory Beale has a book-length treatment of the theme that this sanctuary in Genesis was intended to be the pattern for the whole earth as a sanctuary.⁶⁷ The expulsion of Adam and Eve from the garden interrupted the plan but did not deter God from carrying it out eventually. Israel’s sanctuaries, the tabernacle and then the temple, were God’s down payment on the accomplishment of his plan; the Christian church furthers it, and the description of the final state of the world (Rev 21-22) is the completion. There are details in Beale’s development that I might say another way; but his overall case is sound and persuasive. This means that the image of the sanctuary from Genesis 2-3, from which humans are exiled and to which they need to return—a return that God provides purely by his grace—is a controlling image for the entire Bible story.

Outside of Genesis 1-5, explicit references to Eden as a prototypical place of fruitfulness occur in Genesis 13:10; Isaiah 51:3; Joel 2:3; and Ezekiel

28:13; 31:8-9, 16, 18; 36:35. In particular, Ezekiel 28:11-19 portrays the king of Tyre as having once been in Eden, blameless, who nevertheless became proud and violent. That is, Ezekiel has a “fall story” based on Genesis 3. I count it a mistake to call this another version of the Eden story; rather, we should think of it as a rhetorically powerful application of that story to the Phoenician king, or, better, to the city that he represented. That we are dealing here with personification becomes clear when we read the prophet’s mention of “your trade” and “your midst” (Ezek 28:16): “you,” the king, personifies the city. And when the prophet says that his addressee was “an anointed guardian cherub,” we can recognize that we are reading imagery here, not a literal description. The point is that “the extravagant pretensions of Tyre are graphically and poetically portrayed ... along with the utter devastation inflicted upon Tyre as a consequence.”⁶⁸ The rhetorical power derives from reading Genesis 3 as a fall story; there would be no such power in another reading.⁶⁹

Another likely echo of Genesis-3-read-as-a-fall-story is Ecclesiastes 7:29: “See, this alone I found, that God made *man* (Hebrew *ha-’adam*, mankind) upright, but *they* (Hebrew *hemmâ*) have sought out many schemes.” As the Israeli commentator Yehudah Kiel suggests, this is best taken as an allusion to the foolish behavior of Adam in Genesis 3:10.⁷⁰ We do well to appreciate what the text says: it gives an historical sequence, in which mankind was once (namely, at the time that God made them) “upright” (which need not be the same as “perfect in every way,” though it does describe moral innocence). But, through their own “seeking out of many schemes” became other than upright—probably, in context, came to have the character described in verse 20: “Surely there is not a righteous man on earth who does good and never sins” (cf. 1 Kgs 8:46; Prov 20:9). It also makes good sense to read the phrase “return to the dust” (Eccl 3:20; 12:7) as a deliberate echo of Genesis 3:19 (“for you are dust, and to dust you shall return”).

Two other passages deserve our attention, but

they are both highly disputed. The first is Hosea 6:7, which the ESV renders: “But *like Adam* they transgressed the covenant; there they dealt faithlessly with me” (emphasis added).⁷¹

Others prefer to interpret the words rendered *like Adam* in the ESV as “like any human beings,” or even “at (the place called) Adam.” The ESV is the simplest interpretation of the Hebrew words, *ke’adam*, as Vasholz summarizes:

The hard issue is: to whom or to what does “Adam” refer? Many commentators suggest a geographical locality. The difficulty is that there is no record of covenant breaking at a place called Adam (Josh 3:16), and it requires a questionable taking of the preposition “like” (Hb. *ke-*) to mean “at” or “in.” “There” represents the act wherein Israel was unfaithful to the covenant (cf. Hos 5:7; 6:10). “Mankind” is another suggestion for “Adam,” but that would be a vague statement with no known event indicated, and therefore it would not clarify the sentence. It is best to understand “Adam” as the name of the first man; thus Israel is like Adam, who forgot his covenant obligation to love the Lord, breaking the covenant God made with him (Gen 2:16-17; 3:17). This also implies that there was a “covenant” relationship between God and Adam, the terms of which were defined in God’s words to Adam, though the actual word “covenant” is not used in Genesis 1-3.⁷²

This reading makes sense in light of the way that Hosea stresses the abundant generosity of God, who had loaded Israel down with all manner of good things—and Israel had simply repudiated the Giver (cf. Hos 2:8-13; 7:15; 11:1-4; 13:4-6).

Another possible allusion to Adam as transgressor is Job 31:33, which reads in the ESV: If I have concealed my transgression *as others do* [margin: *as Adam did*], by hiding my iniquity in my bosom.” There is no really good way to decide between the interpretation of the text (“as others do”) or the margin (“as Adam did”); the Hebrew, *ke’adam*, can go either way.⁷³ What we must not

do is enforce circular reasoning, to the effect that since references to Adam are so rare, therefore one is unlikely here. We will instead leave this one as an open question.

Finally, we have seen that the tree of life receives further mention in the rest of Bible (Prov 3:18; 11:30; 13:12; 15:4; Rev 2:7; 22:2, 14, 19).

ADAM AND EVE IN SECOND TEMPLE JEWISH LITERATURE

The Second Temple period, which technically began with the Jews' building of a new temple after their exile to Babylon (c. 516 B.C.) and ended when the Romans destroyed that temple (A.D. 70), was one of severe foment among Jews, as they sought to explain their situation in light of their understanding of the covenants with Abraham, Moses, and David. There were still parts of the Hebrew Bible to be produced (such as Ezra and Nehemiah), and many other writings as well (some Christian churches include some of this other material in their canon, though no one includes it all). One must use great discretion in reading this other material, since there is no single form of Judaism, and many of these writings are from very sectarian groups (such as the Qumran community, who produced what we call the Dead Sea Scrolls). At the same time, if there is widespread consistency among these various writings, that will give us some idea, both of how people read the Old Testament material they had, and of what features of the Jewish world the New Testament writers faced.

What we know as Judaism today is dominated by the influence of the Pharisees, who survived the Roman suppression of the Jewish revolt (A.D. 66-70), and became the leaders of Judaism afterwards. In fact, the Pharisees were already more or less the "mainstream" of Judaism before then, at least if we are to believe Josephus (A.D. 37 to some time after 100), who tells us that the Pharisees were the "sect" with the most influence on the people at large (*Antiquities*, 13.10.5 [13, 288]; 18.1.3 [18, 12]). Although the New Testament authors

could be very critical of the Pharisees's attitudes, they generally sided with them in matters of doctrinal dispute, as we can see in Acts 23:6-9 (see also Mark 12:18-34)—except, of course, on the question of whether Jesus was indeed the Messiah. For example, when Jesus asks his Jewish audience whether they would rescue one of their sheep if it fell into a pit (Matt 12:11), he is assuming that they would rescue the animal. But he is commending them for that, as over against the regulation of the Qumran community that forbade such a rescue, instructing their followers to keep the animal safe until the next day.⁷⁴

Of the Second Temple material available to us, the books we call the Apocrypha, together with the writings of Josephus, come the closest to being in the Jewish mainstream. It is therefore worthwhile to give them most of our attention.

The clearest and fullest statement about Adam and Eve from the Apocrypha comes in the book of Tobit (from somewhere between 250 and 175 B.C.).⁷⁵ The character Tobias is taking Sarah to be his wife, and the angel Raphael had instructed him on how to protect himself and his wife from a demon that threatened harm. Following the angel's instructions, Tobias prays these words: "[O God of our fathers,] You made Adam and gave him Eve his wife as a helper and support. From them the race of mankind has sprung. You said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone; let us make a helper for him like himself'" (Tob 8:6). As was common in Jewish prayers, Tobias begins with an historical recital of God's good deeds in the past as the basis for hope. This recital agrees with what I find in Genesis itself.

Other books in the Apocrypha also refer to the creation and fall of Adam and Eve. For example, consider the Wisdom of Solomon (from some time after 200 B.C. and before the New Testament), whose aim was to relate Jewish faith to the higher elements of Hellenistic culture in Alexandria, Egypt. Alexandria was one of the most highly cultured cities in the Greco-Roman world, and it looks like the writer wanted to fortify Jews against

assimilating, and perhaps also to draw cultured Gentiles to Jewish faith. After describing the schemes of wicked people against the “righteous” (presumably faithful Jews), he tells us that the wicked are ignorant of God’s secret purposes, and do not discern the prize blameless souls receive: “for God created mankind for incorruption, and made him in the image of his own character, but through the devil’s envy death entered the world, and those who belong to his party experience it (Wis 2:23-24).

Most readers suppose that the author is recounting the story of Genesis 3, seeing the serpent as “the devil’s” mouthpiece. He takes it as an historical event that shapes contemporary life (cf. 1:13-14; 7:1; 10:1).⁷⁶

Jesus Ben Sirā was a scribe and wisdom teacher in Jerusalem, who finished his book in Hebrew somewhere between 196 and 175 B.C., and whose grandson translated the book into Greek around 132 B.C. (see his translator’s prologue to the Greek), giving us the book called Ecclesiasticus (or Sirach, or Ben Sirā).⁷⁷ This author mentions the creation of man, and the fall with its consequences, mostly in passing (Sir 14:17; 15:14; 17:1; 33:10 [Hebrew 36:10]; 40:1).

In one passage (25:16-26) he makes use of the “fall story” to explain a current malaise, namely the situation in which one’s wife is evil. In 25:24 he says: “From a woman sin had its beginning, and because of her we all die.” This sounds misogynistic, and it may be; but Ben Sirā does go on to allow that a woman can be virtuous, and a blessing to her husband (26:1-4, 13-18), so we should take his words as portraying evil women as followers of Eve at her worst.⁷⁸ The simplest reading of this is that he took the event as historical, although one cannot be absolutely certain.

Sirach 49:16 makes it clear that Ben Sirā did take Adam to be an historical person. He is recalling worthies from the history of Israel in chapters 44-49 (“let us now praise famous men,” 44:1), leading up to his contemporary Simon (II), son of Onias (high priest c. 219-196 B.C.). He begins with

Enoch and Noah as the first named “famous men,” then goes on to Abraham and so forth through biblical history. Just prior to his extended praise of Simon, he finishes with Nehemiah (49:13), and then returns to Genesis, naming Enoch and Joseph (49:14-15). He completes the run-up to Simon in 49:16: “Shem and Seth were honored among men, and Adam above every living being in the creation.” The way he mentions all these men in this context indicates that he took all of them as historical figures. There are other references, in books called 2 (or 3 or 4!) Ezra and 2 Baruch, all of which follow the same lines.⁷⁹

Two Jewish writers who are partly contemporary with the New Testament are Philo of Alexandria (roughly 20 B.C. - A.D. 50) and Josephus. Philo, with his interest in philosophical allegory, does not say clearly whether he thought Adam to have been historical. In his discussion of Genesis 2:7, he seems to distinguish the man of Genesis 1 from the man of Genesis 2: the heavenly and the earthly man, he calls them (*Allegorical Interpretation*, 1.31).⁸⁰

Josephus has a way of writing that is far more accessible to educated Westerners. At times he is literalistic, perhaps writing to connect the Genesis account with the received world picture of the Greco-Roman world (since he aimed to commend Judaism). He calls Adam “the first man, made from the earth” (*Antiquities*, 1.2.3 [1, 67]). He also says that the gracious God of Israel is the one source of happiness for all mankind (*Antiquities* 4.8.2 [4, 180]), which is connected to his view that all people descend from Adam. This conviction of common humanity doubtless underlies his notion that all people should worship the true God, and his explanation for the admission of Gentiles into Jewish worship (*Against Apion*, 2.23, 37 [2, 192; 261]). Josephus is more representative than Philo of the Judaism we find in the other Second Temple sources.

Finally, from the Mishnah (compiled in Hebrew, c. A.D. 220), we have the same sentiment, in Sanhedrin 4:5:

But a single man was created [first] ... for the sake of peace among mankind, that none should say to his fellow, "My father was greater than your father," Again, [a single man was created] to proclaim the greatness of the Holy One, blessed is he; for man stamps many coins with the one seal and they are all like one another; but the King of kings, the Holy One, blessed is he, has stamped every man with the seal of the first man, yet not one of them is like his fellow.⁸¹

Thus, in the period that bridges the Old Testament and the New, the Jewish authors most representative of the mainstream consistently treat Adam and Eve as actual people, at the head of the human race.

When the New Testament authors, and Christian theologians following them, have based their arguments on the presupposition that the human race began with an actual Adam and Eve, and that God made this couple morally innocent, and that evil came into human experience by way of this couple's sin, they were basing themselves upon a good reading of the Old Testament: both as to the specific texts, and as to the logic of the story. Whether (as I think) this position is defensible any more, and whether the literary features of the narration allow room for any discussion of details, is matter for another study.

ENDNOTES

¹I take up many of these issues more fully in my *Did Adam and Eve Really Exist? Who They Were and Why You Should Care* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2011). In 2009 I participated in a forum on historical Adam and Eve at the annual meeting of the American Scientific Affiliation—with Daniel Harlow and John Schneider arguing that we should *not* take them as historical persons. Our revised papers were published in the journal *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith* 62.3 (2010). In particular, my entry is "Adam and Eve as Historical People, and Why it Matters," 147-65; and I will take Harlow's as a conversation partner: "After Adam: Reading Genesis in an Age of

Evolutionary Science," 179-95.

²Victor P. Hamilton, "אָדָם," *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis* (ed. Willem A. VanGemeren; 5 vols; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997) 1:262-66. Generally speaking, I agree with his assessment of the proper name, and am happy to consider the common *ben / benê 'adam* as properly "son of man" / "children of mankind" (agreeing with the normal LXX rendering *uios anthrōpou / oi uioi tōn anthrōpōv* (except for Deut 32:8, which renders *benê 'adam* as *uioi Adam*; ESV "mankind").

³Outside of Genesis 6-10, Noah only appears in 1 Chronicles 1:4; Isaiah 54:9; Ezekiel 14:14, 20 (but see Tob 4:12; Sir 44:17; 4 Macc 15:31 in the Apocrypha), comparable to Adam.

⁴James Barr, *The Garden of Eden and the Hope of Immortality* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), 4. Harlow, "After Adam," 187, follows Barr on this point.

⁵Claus Westermann, *Creation* (London: SPCK, 1974), 89, as cited with approval in W. Sibley Towner, "Interpretations and Reinterpretations of the Fall," in *Modern Biblical Scholarship: Its Impact on Theology and Proclamation* (ed. Francis A. Eigo; Villanova, PA: Villanova University Press, 1984), 72.

⁶Most fully in my *Did Adam and Eve Really Exist?*

⁷The shape of the biblical story is a major theme of my "Adam and Eve as Historical People, and Why it Matters."

⁸From a scholarly source, see Daniel Harlow, "Creation According to Genesis: Literary Genre, Cultural Context, Theological Truth," *Christian Scholars Review* 37 (2008): 163-98. From a non-specialist, see Francis Collins, *The Language of God: A Scientist Presents Evidence for Belief* (New York: Free Press, 2006), 150, presumably following someone else.

⁹See discussion in C. John Collins, *Genesis 1-4: A Linguistic, Literary, and Theological Commentary* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2006), 229.

¹⁰R. W. L. Moberly, *The Theology of the Book of Genesis* (Old Testament Theology; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 121.

¹¹See, for example, William Dumbrell, *Covenant and Creation: A Theology of the Old Testament Covenants* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 1997), 27; Tremper Long-

man III, *How to Read Genesis* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2005), 117-18; Bruce Waltke and Cathy J. Fredericks, *Genesis* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 127-28.

¹²Agreeing with, e.g., Christopher Wright, *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2006), 194-221, as over against Moberly, *Theology of the Book of Genesis*, 141-61. Wright's position does better justice than Moberly's to: (1) the likely sense of the passive or reflexive verb in Genesis 12:3 ("all the families of the earth shall be blessed / shall find blessing for themselves," rather than "shall bless themselves"); (2) the context of Genesis 12:1-3 in Genesis, with its evocation of 1:28 and the other "blessing" texts addressed to Abraham's descendants; (3) the biblical themes of blessing coming to the Gentiles by way of Abraham's family; (4) the way that Psalm 72:17 echoes Genesis 22:18. On points (2) and (4), see further C. John Collins, "Galatians 3:16: What Kind of Exegete was Paul?" *Tyndale Bulletin* 54 (2003), 75-86; T. D. Alexander, "Further Observations on the Term 'Seed' in Genesis," *Tyndale Bulletin* 48 (1997), 363-67. As for the sense of "in you," Moberly makes no place for covenant inclusion; but this seems to me to be the best explanation of the Hebrew term: people are "in" someone when they are members of the people that the someone represents.

¹³I have a much fuller discussion of this topic in Appendix 1 of my *Did Adam and Eve Really Exist?*

¹⁴See, for example, David T. Tsumura, "Genesis and Ancient Near Eastern Stories of Creation and Flood: An Introduction," in *I Studied Inscriptions from Before the Flood: Ancient Near Eastern, Literary, and Linguistic Approaches to Genesis 1-11* (ed. Richard S. Hess and David T. Tsumura; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1994), 27-57 (especially pages 44-57); Richard Averbeck, "The Sumerian Historiographic Tradition and its Implications for Genesis 1-11," in *Faith, Tradition, and History: Old Testament Historiography in its Near Eastern Context* (ed. A. R. Millard, James K. Hoffmeier, and David W. Baker; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1994), 79-102; Kenneth A. Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids:

Eerdmans, 2003), 423-25; Anne Drafkorn Kilmer, "The Mesopotamian Counterparts of the Biblical Nephilim," in *Perspectives on Language and Text* (ed. Edgar W. Conrad; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1987), 39-43. Richard S. Hess, "The Genealogies of Genesis 1-11 and Comparative Literature," *Biblica* 70 (1989), 241-54 (reprinted in Hess and Tsumura, *I Studied Inscriptions*, 58-72), adds some helpful cautions about the differences between the biblical genealogies and the king lists. Tikva Frymer-Kensky, "The Atrahasis Epic and its Significance for our Understanding of Genesis 1-9," *Biblical Archaeologist* 40 (1977): 147-55, supports the parallel between the biblical flood story and Atrahasis over, say, Gilgamesh; at the same time, with her helpful observations about the contrast between the biblical and Mesopotamian accounts, I do not find all of the specific exegetical points on Genesis to be compelling.

¹⁵W. G. Lambert has argued for a reduced interest in *Enuma Elish*; see his article, "A New Look at the Babylonian Background of Genesis," *Journal of Theological Studies* 16 (1965): 287-300. He contends (291), "The first major conclusion is that the *Epic of Creation* is not a norm of Babylonian or Sumerian cosmology. It is a sectarian and aberrant combination of mythological threads woven into an unparalleled compositum. In my opinion it is not earlier than 1100 B.C." See also Alan R. Millard, "A New Babylonian 'Genesis' Story," *Tyndale Bulletin* 18 (1967): 3-18; Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament*, 425. Nevertheless, Bruce Waltke finds important parallels in *Enuma Elish* and the *Adapa* stories: Waltke and Fredericks, *Genesis*, 23. A further argument that the notion of *Chaoskampf* (such as that found in *Enuma Elish*) is absent from Genesis 1 comes from Gordon H. Johnston, "Genesis 1 and Ancient Egyptian Creation Myths," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 165 (2008): 178-94. Johnston contends that the Egyptian stories are a promising backcloth for Genesis. While I do not doubt the relevance of the Egyptian material, I find the pattern of the Mesopotamian material to provide the best overall parallel. Similarly John H. Walton, "Creation in Genesis 1:1-2:3 and the Ancient Near East: Order Out of Disorder After *Chaoskampf*," *Calvin Theological Journal* 43 (2008): 48-63,

rejects both *Chaoskampf* and “theomachy,” but goes on to argue that Genesis 1 is a “temple cosmology,” as in his popular *The Lost World of Genesis One: Ancient Cosmology and the Origins Debate* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2009). See my review of this latter, which can be accessed online at: <http://www.fileden.com/files/2009/4/9/2397423/Collins%202009%20Review%20Walton%20Lost%20World%20Genesis%20One.pdf>

¹⁶This table is based on Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament*, 424 (Table 34).

¹⁷William W. Hallo, “Part I: Mesopotamia and the Asiatic Near East,” in *The Ancient Near East: A History* (ed. William W. Hallo and William K. Simpson; Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt Brace, 1998), 25.

¹⁸I make this point more fully in “Adam and Eve as Historical People,” 150-53, and even more fully in chapter 2 and Appendix 1 of *Did Adam and Eve Really Exist? As an example, Harlow, “After Adam,”* 185-87, notices symbolic and pictorial elements in both Genesis and the Mesopotamian stories, and pronounces them both unhistorical. He is confusing historicity with a literalistic scheme of interpretation, without argument.

¹⁹See my *Genesis 1-4*, 201, where I suggest that perhaps the contrast between the two families is prominent. Perhaps as well this indicates that the decline we see in Cain’s family was not an inevitable outcome of being human; rather it flowed from the moral orientation of the members, which in turn is influenced by the orientation of the head member of the list. We might also suspect that the author saw the orientation of Cain’s line as becoming dominant, and perhaps drawing Seth’s descendants away from God, so that “the wickedness of man was great in the earth” (Gen 6:5).

²⁰See Richard Elliott Friedman, *The Bible with Sources Revealed: A New View into the Five Books of Moses* (New York: HarperCollins, 2003), and my discussion in *Genesis 1-4*, 227-28.

²¹E.g., Friedman, *Bible with Sources Revealed*, 12; S. R. Driver, *The Book of Genesis* (Westminster Commentary; London: Methuen, 1904), xxv.

²²I have argued this in a number of places, e.g., in *Science and Faith: Friends or Foes?* (Wheaton: Cross-

way, 2003) and *Genesis 1-4*, 77. For more detail on the refrain, see my essay, “The Refrain of Genesis 1: A Critical Review of Its Rendering in the English Bible,” *The Bible Translator* 60 (2009): 121-31.

²³For discussion see Collins, *Genesis 1-4*, 59-61. More recently, Lyle Eslinger, “The Enigmatic Plurals Like ‘One of Us’ (Genesis i 26, iii 22, and xi 7) in Hyperchronic Perspective,” *Vetus Testamentum* 56 (2006): 171-84, argues that these plurals reflect a heightened focus on the divine-human difference. I am not convinced, and retain what I find to be a simpler, and more exegetically-based, explanation.

²⁴James Barr, “One Man, or All Humanity? A Question in the Anthropology of Genesis 1,” in *Recycling Biblical Figures: Papers Read at a NOSTER Colloquium in Amsterdam, 12-13 May 1997* (ed. Athalya Brenner and Jan Willem van Henten; Studies in Theology and Religion; Leiden: Deo, 1999), 6. Speaking frankly, as a traditional Christian I am wary of any exegetical “gift” that Barr might offer; see my critical discussion of his famous 1984 letter to David Watson in Collins, *Science and Faith: Friends or Foes?*, 364-66. At the same time, Barr’s contributions to linguistic rigor in biblical studies are substantial, and we ought to acknowledge his positions when he presents arguments to show their validity.

²⁵See my *Genesis 1-4*, 108-12, 121-22. For examples of the traditional Jewish opinion, see the Hebrew commentary of Yehudah Kiel, *Sefer Bereshit* (Genesis), Da’at Miqra’ (Jerusalem: Mossad Harav Kook, 1997), page 77 n. 7.

²⁶Franz Joseph Haydn, *Die Schöpfung* (Hob. xxi:2), §§23-24.

²⁷Harlow, “After Adam,” 189, asserts that *Paul* “is the only writer to appeal to the story of Adam, Eve, and the serpent,” and he denies that the Gospels or Revelation appropriate the story. This is an astonishing claim, but addressing it is not within my scope here. I refer the reader to chapter 3 of my *Did Adam and Eve Really Exist?*

²⁸I argue for my own view, that the material is substantially Mosaic, in *Did Adam and Eve Really Exist?*, Appendix 3.

²⁹Jack Collins, “Discourse Analysis and the Interpreta-

tion of Gen 2:4-7,” *Westminster Theological Journal* 61 (1999): 269-76. The Holman Christian Standard Bible is similar, except for the water source in verse 6.

³⁰Collins, *Genesis 1-4*, 78-79. Moshe Weinfeld has declared that the passage is “liturgical” in its origin: see “Sabbath, Temple, and the Enthronement of the Lord—the Problem of the Sitz im Leben of Genesis 1:1-2:3,” in *Mélanges Bibliques et Orientaux en l’Honneur de M. Henri Cazelles* (ed. A. Caquot and M. Delcor; *Alter Orient und Altes Testamen* 212; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1981), 501-12. While I do not agree with all that lies behind Weinfeld’s statement, I do think that it captures the celebratory tone of the passage.

³¹On the specific question of Genesis 2:19 and the order of events, see my discourse-oriented grammatical study, “The Wayyiqtol as ‘Pluperfect’: When and Why,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 46 (1995): 135-40. Harlow, “After Adam,” 185, refers to the NIV (and by implication, the ESV) rendering with a pluperfect at Genesis 2:19 as “translational sleight of hand,” but gives no evidence of being aware of the grammatical issues.

³²It is common to connect “man” (*’adam*) with the “ground” (*’adamâ*, 2:7) from which he was formed. However, since the account goes on to say that the other animals were also formed from the ground (2:19), this wordplay seems less likely. The first-century Jewish writer Josephus (*Antiquities* 1.1.2, line 34) connected the word with the Hebrew for “red” (*’adôm*), which is as likely an explanation as any other (assuming that we have to find a wordplay).

³³The usual rule is that the form with the definite article, *ha-’adam*, is “the man,” the newly formed human being of 2:7. In the received Hebrew text the form in 2:20 lacks the article, so it is rendered “Adam.” Some prefer to insert the article at 2:20 (which would only be the change of a vowel, from *le’adam* to *la’adam*), thus deferring the first instance of the proper name to 3:17 (or even to 4:25).

³⁴See Richard Hess, “Splitting the Adam,” in *Studies in the Pentateuch* (ed. J. A. Emerton; *Vetus Supplementum*; Leiden: Brill, 1991), 1.

³⁵Barr, “One Man, or All Humanity?” 9, based on the wording of 5:1-2. Harlow, “After Adam,” 185, insists

that Genesis 1 and 2 differ in this respect, without really interacting with any effort to read the two together.

³⁶See Hess, “Splitting the Adam,” 12; cf. also Kiel, *Sefer Bereshit*, אָ (at Gen. 4:1); and Dexter E. Callender, Jr., *Adam in Myth and History: Ancient Israelite Perspectives on the Primal Human*, (Harvard Semitic Studies; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2000), 32: “There is an obvious and understandable awareness that Adam stands between God and humanity.”

³⁷Barr, “One Man, or All Humanity?” 9.

³⁸*Ibid.*, 5: “We no longer believe that all humanity originated in one single human pair. In respect of our beliefs about humanity the narrative of chapter 1 is closer to what we actually believe”—i.e., under the reading that “man” is just a collective for all humanity, which Barr proceeds to reject.

³⁹Harlow, “After Adam,” 187, engages in an unnecessary contrast: “not reporting historical events but picturing paradigmatic ones.” Why can it not do both?

⁴⁰Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament*, 439.

⁴¹Cf. the remark of A. R. Millard on the topic of excessive literalism in general: “The writers were describing unusual riches in phrases that convey the thought clearly enough, *without demanding a literal interpretation*.” A. R. Millard, “Story, History, and Theology,” in *Faith, Tradition, and History: Old Testament Historiography in its Near Eastern Context* (ed. A. R. Millard, James K. Hoffmeier, and David W. Baker; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1994), 49 (emphasis added).

⁴²Barr, “One Man, or All Humanity?” 10. As John Walton observed, in the other ancient Near Eastern accounts “there is no indication of an original human pair that became the progenitors of the entire human race (monogenesis). This is one of the distinctives of the Genesis account” (John H. Walton, *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament: Introducing the Conceptual World of the Hebrew Bible* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 2006], 205).

⁴³Umberto Cassuto, *From Adam to Noah: Genesis I-VI.8* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1961), 83. This remark has an extra poignancy when we recall that Cassuto was an Italian-born Jew who emigrated to Israel and wrote this commentary in Hebrew during the Holocaust. It

is not entirely clear how Cassuto wanted to reconcile this insight with his general demurral from historical reading, except that he appears to have been looking for timeless lessons (“brotherhood and equality”).

⁴⁴This is the thesis of, for example, Martin Emmrich, “The Temptation Narrative of Genesis 3:1-6: A Prelude to the Pentateuch and the History of Israel,” *Evangelical Quarterly* 73 (2001): 3-20. Not all of his points are persuasive, but his suggestion that “the garden of Genesis 2-3 wants to be viewed as the archetype of the land of Israel” (5) is sound. Harlow, “After Adam,” 185, notices this but then concludes that therefore Genesis is not historical. Again, he is confusing historicity with literalistic reading.

⁴⁵See, for example, Wright, *The Mission of God*, 334.

⁴⁶Indeed, historical verisimilitude in literary compositions did not arise, at least in the West, until the modern period. This, by the way, is one of the arguments in favor of seeing ancient tradition, rather than free composition, behind the stories of the patriarchs (Gen 12-50): their manners and customs reflect accurate recollections of the time in which the events occurred, not simply the time of whoever wrote the stories down. On this last point, see A. R. Millard, “Methods of Studying the Patriarchal Narratives as Ancient Texts,” in *Essays on the Patriarchal Narratives* (ed. A. R. Millard and Donald J. Wiseman; Leicester: Inter-Varsity, 1980), 43-58.

⁴⁷See further my *Genesis 1-4*, 116-19; 160-62.

⁴⁸See Collins, *Genesis 1-4*, 154, n. 22, drawing on Scott C. Layton, “Remarks on the Canaanite Origin of Eve,” *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 59 (1997): 22-32.

⁴⁹See Kiel, *Sefer Bereshit*, יב (on Gen 3:20).

⁵⁰On this point see Millard, “Story, History, and Theology,” 40-42.

⁵¹Hermann Gunkel, *Genesis* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1997), 15.

⁵²On this point see my discussion in *The God of Miracles: An Exegetical Examination of God’s Action in the World* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2000), 96-97.

⁵³See further my *Genesis 1-4*, 171-72.

⁵⁴On the ideas of “showing” and “telling” as established concepts in literary studies, see V. P. Long, *The Reign and Rejection of King Saul: A Case for Literary*

and Theological Coherence, (SBL Dissertation Series; Atlanta: Scholars, 1989), 31-34. See Collins, *Genesis 1-4*, 173, n. 66 for another example of a leading commentator’s (Westermann) failure to account for showing over telling.

⁵⁵So Gunkel, *Genesis*, 20.

⁵⁶The Hebrew word for “serpent” here is *tannin*, while Gen. 3:1 uses *nakhash*. Nevertheless, since Exod 4:3, the precedent of Exod 7:10-12, uses *nakhash*, the point I am making stands. On the terminology, see further United Bible Societies, *Fauna and Flora of the Bible* (London: United Bible Societies, 1980), 73.

⁵⁷See further my *Genesis 1-4*, 115-16.

⁵⁸See Anders-Christian Jacobsen, “The Importance of Genesis 1-3 in the Theology of Irenaeus,” *Zeitschrift für antikes Christentum* 8 (2005): 302-303. It appears to me that Harlow, “After Adam,” in finding an ally for his reading in Irenaeus, has misrepresented Irenaeus’s actual view of what happened. Further contra Harlow, I do not know that Western Christianity has uniformly held that Adam and Eve were created “spiritually mature,” so much as morally innocent.

⁵⁹I will take up the question of “sacramental realism” in the biblical ceremonial system in a forthcoming book.

⁶⁰See C. S. Lewis, *Prayer: Letters to Malcolm* (London: Collins, 1966), 105. Lewis describes the sacrament of communion as “big medicine and strong magic,” and then defines his term: “I should define ‘magic’ in this sense as ‘objective efficacy which cannot be further analysed.’”

⁶¹E.g., James Barr, *The Garden of Eden and the Hope of Immortality*, 6. For more on this matter, see Collins, *Genesis 1-4*, 155.

⁶²See, for example, Harlow, who argues “Genesis itself, however, does not propound a doctrine of the fall or original sin.” Harlow, “Creation According to Genesis,” 189; also his “After Adam,” 189. See also Towner, “Interpretations and Reinterpretations of the Fall,” 59: “Nowhere is it said [in Genesis] that human nature was irrevocably altered in a fundamental way that afternoon in the garden.... That is all that the Biblical account says—it has never said any more than that.”

⁶³In light of this, there are numerous proposed read-

ings of this story, or parts of it, that I need not spend time assessing: for example, Lyn M. Bechtel, "Genesis 2.4b-3.24: A Myth about Human Maturation," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 67 (1995): 3-26, finds here a myth about the process of growing up; but she has not taken account of the story's themes of obedience and disobedience, the meaning of the "curses," or of the sequel in Genesis 4, which depicts the increase of sin. Further, her reading does not fit into the rest of Genesis, nor does it explain what later biblical authors have found in the story. When, Harlow, "After Adam," 189, says that "Genesis 2-3 can be read on a certain level as a coming-of-age story," he too is failing to take enough account of the details of the literary presentation in Genesis itself.

⁶⁴I discuss many such "reverberations" in my *Genesis 1-4*.

⁶⁵cf. Genesis 3:15; 4:25 with 12:7; 13:15-16; 15:3, 5; 17:7-9, 19; 22:17-18; 26:3-4; 48:4.

⁶⁶On the matter of the "offspring" in Genesis, see T. Desmond Alexander, "From Adam to Judah: The Significance of the Family Tree in Genesis," *Evangelical Quarterly* 61 (1989): 5-19; idem, "Genealogies, Seed and the Compositional Unity of Genesis," *Tyndale Bulletin* 44 (1993): 255-70. On the individual offspring, see Jack Collins, "A Syntactical Note on Genesis 3:15: Is the Woman's Seed Singular or Plural?" *Tyndale Bulletin* 48 (1997): 141-48; Alexander's development in "Further Observations on the Term 'Seed' in Genesis," *Tyndale Bulletin* 48 (1997): 363-67; and further development from Collins, "Galatians 3:16: What Kind of Exegete Was Paul?" *Tyndale Bulletin* 54 (2003): 75-86.

⁶⁷Gregory Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission: A Biblical Theology of the Dwelling Place of God* (New Studies in Biblical Theology; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2004).

⁶⁸David J. Reimer, note on Ezek. 28:11-19 in Lane Dennis et al., eds., *The ESV Study Bible* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2008), 1542. See also Moshe Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21-37* (Anchor Bible; New York: Doubleday, 1997), 590.

⁶⁹For a similar take, see Daniel Block, *Ezekiel 25-48* (New International Commentary on the Old Testament; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 105-106; A. B. Davidson, *Ezekiel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1906), 205.

⁷⁰Kiel, *Sefer Bereshit*, עז (commenting on Gen 3:10). Commenting on Ecclesiastes in the same series (written by Israelis who are traditional Jews), Mordecai Zar-Kavod seems to agree, contrasting the 'adam that God created, in his image and after his likeness (Zar-Kavod himself uses the terms from Genesis 1), to the children of man (plural *they*) who have gone astray: see Zar-Kavod, "Qohelet," in P. Meltzer et al., *Khamesh M'gillot* (Da'at Miqra'; Jerusalem: Mossad Harav Kook, 1973), בור-כו.

⁷¹My former student Brian Habig has promised a full discussion of this passage defending this interpretation; but as his work has not yet appeared in print, I will say enough here to show why I think it is correct.

⁷²Robert I. Vasholz, note on Hosea 6:7 in Dennis et al., eds., *The ESV Study Bible*, 1631. For a fuller discussion see Thomas McComiskey, "Hosea," in *The Minor Prophets, Vol. 1* (ed. Thomas McComiskey; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992), 95. Yehudah Kiel, "Hosea," in *T're 'Asar* (Da'at Miqra'; Jerusalem: Mossad Harav Kook, 1990), בח, prefers the "like any human beings" interpretation, but notes a number of esteemed Jewish interpreters who had taken the "like Adam" reading.

⁷³The "like Adam" option appears, e.g., in a grammatical-historical commentary by the Israeli Amos Hakham, *Sefer 'Iyyob* (Da'at Miqra'; Jerusalem: Mossad Harav Kook, 1984): "the first man, who sinned, and sought to cover over his sin and hid from before God." John Hartley, in a traditional Christian grammatical-historical commentary, *Job* (New International Commentary on the Old Testament; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), notes another Jewish author (Robert Gordis) who agrees; while Hartley gives a linguistic reason (the mention of the "bosom") for "like a human being."

⁷⁴*Damascus Document*, xi, 10-15. See Geza Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English* (4th ed.; London: Penguin, 1995), 109.

⁷⁵Ordinarily I will use the dates suggested in David A. deSilva, *Introducing the Apocrypha: Message, Context, and Significance* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002). I cannot say that I agree with all of his assessments, but this will do for our purposes. Ordinarily I will cite

the English of the Apocrypha from *The English Standard Version Bible with Apocrypha* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), though I have checked the original.

⁷⁶Thus the claim that Harlow makes in “After Adam,” 189, that Paul and the church fathers are the earliest to talk about the fall and original sin, needs some nuance.

⁷⁷Parts of the Hebrew text have been discovered, but textual difficulties still remain.

⁷⁸Stanley Porter, “The Pauline Concept of Original Sin, in Light of Rabbinic Background,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 41 (1990): 3-30, denies that Ben Sira is referring to Eve. But his reading seems to me inadequate; cf. the Hebrew commentary of Moshe Segal, *Sefer Ben Sira Hashshalem* (Jerusalem: Mosad Bialik, 1958), קגח, for the connection.

⁷⁹The book called 2 Esdras in the ESV is called 4 Ezra in the Latin Vulgate (where it is an appendix), and 3 Esdras in the Slavonic Bible. It is thought to have been written originally in Hebrew around the end of the first century A.D., then translated into Greek; but neither the Hebrew nor the Greek is extant. It has several passages about the fall of Adam as the means by which sin and suffering came into the world, e.g., 3:4-11, 21-22; it is hardly a treatise on “original sin,” however. A translation and commentary are available in Michael E. Stone, *Fourth Ezra* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990); see pages 63-66 for an excursus on Adam’s sin.

⁸⁰On the other hand, apparently Philo can deal with Genesis 1:27 as the creation of the first, earthly, man: cf. his *On the Creation*, 25; 69; etc. See Jarl Fossum, “Colossians 1.15-18a in the Light of Jewish Mysticism and Gnosticism,” *New Testament Studies* 35 (April 1989), 187-88.

⁸¹Cited from Herbert Danby, *The Mishnah* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1933), 388, with comparison of the Hebrew. In the Talmud, see Sanhedrin 38a.