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Launching Our Forum

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https://peacefulscience.org/articles/join-the-conversation/

Peaceful Science does not fit into any of the existing "camps" in origins. We want to find common ground for everyone who wants to find a Christ-centered and non-confrontational relationship with mainstream science. We hope to serve the Church with an accurate account of science, a high view of Scripture, and a genuine bid for peace.

In service of this mission, I'm please to announce the official launch of the Peaceful Science discussion forum at http://discourse.peacefulscience.org/. Come join a conversation, an uncommon community, on common ground. Come to understand and be understood. Wonder with us about the grand questions of origins.

There is a growing community regularly participating in conversations about origins. The moderators include a young earth creationist (YEC), an old earth creationist (OEC), and myself, a scientist that affirms evolutionary science. I invited these two to be moderators because they too are seeking peace in the Creation Wars, and are finding Jesus to be greater than all we find in science.

We are finding a community and common ground that does not require agreement; this is a rare and beautiful thing in our fractured society.

Everyone is welcome to consider, with us, the Grand Questions:

How did we arise?

What does it mean to be good?

How do we seek peace?

What does it mean to be human?

Some recent highlights from the Forum give a sense of the large range of topics we are covering. Much more to come.

1. A summary of three Veritas Forums I did the week my dad died, this last January, and also a Forum from Delaware earlier in the year. One of these forums was with **Hugh Ross**, the founder of *Reasons to Believe,* and one of the Forum participants (**Guy Coe**) drove down from another state to join in the fun for three days.
2. A proposal for how a Genealogical Adam could make sense with Catholic doctrine, in conversation with **Ann Gauger** (from the DI), **Vincent Torley** (The Skeptical Zone), and **Antoine Suarez**.
3. An analysis that shows Adam and Eve could be our sole-*genetic* progenitors if they lived before 700 thousand years ago, the key highlights of the dialogue between **Richard Buggs**, **Denis Venema** (of BioLogos), and myself. This analysis was also recently covered by others.
4. Some thoughts about why confession of the Resurrection in the public square is a foundational value for me, and why it is important to ask leaders whether they believe Jesus rose from the dead.
5. There are growing number of people with interest in a *Genealogical Adam,* recently *de novo* created, and ancestor of us all. **Jon Garvey** has now published 37 articles on a *Genealogical Adam*, and is one of the most thoughtful theological voices on here. We, also, have been refining a common vocabulary together: e.g. the difference between *Adam* in Genesis 2 versus *adams* in Genesis 1.
6. Engagement with **Kenneth Kemp's** proposal on Adam and Eve, showing how it can be improved with a Genealogical Adam, and how his proposal be better separated from polygenesis. Critically, his use of the word "*monogenesis*" is very similar to how we are using "*sole-progenitorship*," providing further evidence that traditional theology is entirely consistent with evolutionary science.

As we prepare for the ASA workshop on Adam in July, and the Dabar Conference in June, the forum has been an effective microblog for me, where discussion is refining my thoughts, language and message. Take a look, for example, at this graphic which shows how Scripture might teach the story of Adam (black line), while being silent about those outside the garden (grey line). This picture, we find, is theologically coherent, and consistent with mainstream science. Evolutionary science just tells us the story of those outside the Garden, while Scripture tells us the story of Adam and his descendants, who are all of us.

On the Forums, we are finding out, with even more clarity, that traditional theology of Adam is not threatened by evolutionary science. As I wrote last June,

> Evolution gives no reason to doubt, as Jack Collins puts it, that Adam and Eve sit at the "headwaters" of all mankind. Genomes give no reason to doubt, as John Walton puts it, "Adam and Eve are historical figures–real people in a real past."**A Genealogical Adam and Eve in Evolution**

As Vincent Torley puts it:

> Your suggestion certainly merits very serious consideration, Josh. I have to say I find it infinitely preferable to Kemp's proposal. I've been reading and re-reading your responses, and I think, upon

> reflection, that **you've answered the *philosophical* and *theological* objections to your proposal for a recent genealogical Adam.**

A leading Evolutionary Creationist writes to me:

> **I have lived with such uncertainly about what to do about Adam and Eve** and I've never read anything that I couldn't find many reasons for me to be skeptical. Most schemes just don't provide an explanatory framework that can find a place for good science and a high view of scripture at the same time. **Reading your material is the closest I have every come to feeling comforted rather than agitated.** I'm not all the way there but you have hit upon several strands of thought that I have been mulling in my own mind in recent years. You have brought those thoughts, some of which were not well-formulated yet for me, and made them far clearer than I could ever express.

There is still an invitation to theology, as we think of those outside the garden, those about whom Scripture is silent. Come join the fun, and be comforted too. It is an exciting moment. We are mapping a new way forward.

References

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