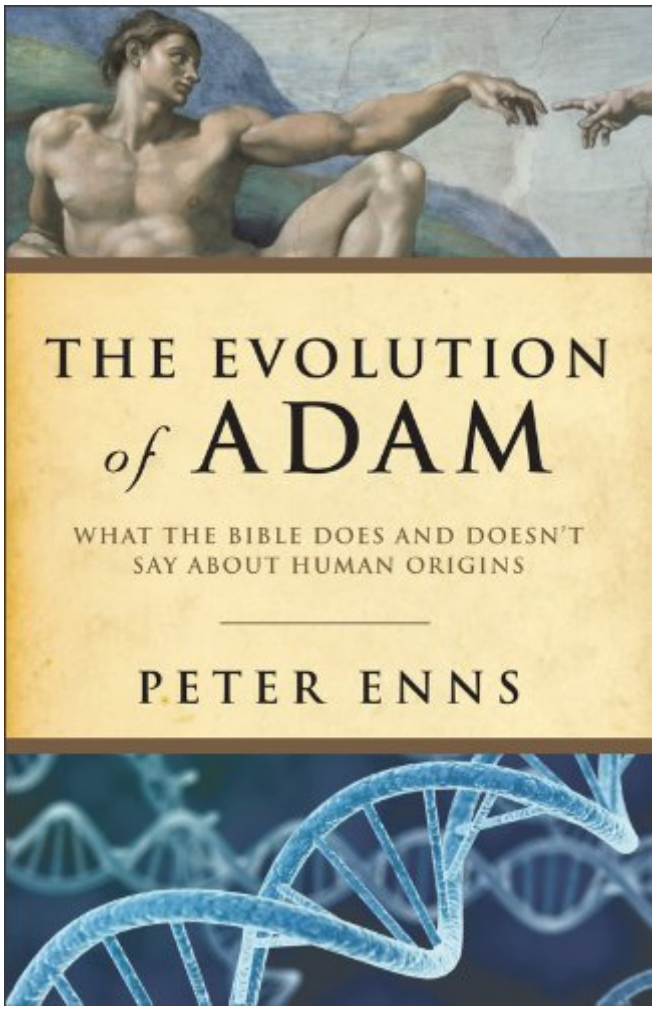
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The Evolution Of Adam, What The Bible Does And Doesn't Say About Human Origins



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Synopsis

Can Christianity and evolution coexist? Traditional Christian teaching presents Jesus as reversing the effects of the Fall of Adam. However, an evolutionary view of beginnings doesn't allow for a historical Adam, making evolution seemingly incompatible with what Genesis and the apostle Paul say about him. For Christians who accept evolution and want to take the Bible seriously, this presents a faith-shaking tension.Peter Enns, an expert in biblical interpretation, offers a way forward by explaining how this tension is caused not by the discoveries of science but by false expectations about the biblical texts. Focusing on key biblical passages in the discussion, Enns demonstrates that the author of Genesis and the apostle Paul wrote to ask and answer ancient questions for ancient people; the fact that they both speak of Adam does not determine whether Christians can accept evolution. This thought-provoking book helps readers reconcile the teachings of the Bible with the widely held evolutionary view of beginnings and will appeal to anyone interested in the Christianity-evolution debate.

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Customer Reviews

As the title suggests, Peter Enns is not afraid to address some tough questions. Yet, the book is not sensationalistic. That is, Enns is not jumping into the controversy for the sake of controversy. Nor does Enns claim to have the answers to the questions. Though concerning our understanding of Adam in scripture, he certainly suggests some solutions that must be seriously considered.If you are at all interested in finding a synthesis between the mounting evidence for evolutionary theory and a Christian thought (rooted in Scripture), then this book should be on your list -- near the top.Not only does Enns carefully elucidate the key biblical passages in Genesis and Paul's writings, he also presents a helpful summary of the development of biblical scholarship in the modern period. In other words, he sets the current questions in the context of a long and ongoing conversation. It is a good review of the discipline for those of us who are familiar with it and a good introduction for those who are new to the history of the discipline.One need not agree with all of Enns's conclusions (he does not expect you to) to appreciate the careful thought that has gone into this book. While Enns's has a specific audience in mind, I know from conversations with others that Enns's approachable and charitable style makes this book accessible and welcome by a broader audience than Enns's has immediately in mind.Ian Panthwww.popchrist.com

The Evolution of Adam is a thought-provoking work by Peter Enns, particularly for those trying to harmonize Creationism and its implications (such as a literal Adam) with the mounting evidence in support of Evolution. In this book, Enns lays the groundwork for contemplating a figurative Genesis rather than the literal version that is commonly-defended and considered to be non-negotiable within more Conservative Evangelical communities. While he doesn't spend a lot of time contemplating evolution itself, he discusses the archaeological and historical evidence that suggests the need to rethink Adam and Genesis, followed by how this rethinking might look. Rather than providing a case-closed, final decree, he gives the reader some possibilities to examine and explains his theology for understanding how Paul's Adam functions within a figurative role without losing his importance to the biblical narrative.I would not expect to walk away from reading this book with all the answers (indeed, you may have more questions than when you started), but it is an excellent place to begin the discussion and analysis of this contentious topic that has plagued the church for decades.

This book was a great resource in my search for understanding how to reconcile the Theory of Evolution with the scriptural accounts of creation. As a believer in salvation through the Lord Jesus

Christ, this book resonated with me. I am glad the author had the conviction to share his findings. It helped bring me to an understanding of the issue despite the many traditional voices that think otherwise.

I know this book was meant to help bridge the gap between evolution and Genesis, but since I don't have a problem accepting evolution while also holding a belief in God, I was curious what it could offer me. I was pleasantly surprised. This book was very informative in what cultural factors influenced early parts of Genesis (creation/fall/sin/flood) and Paul (use of OT scripture). For example, I was surprised to learn how many similarities the creation stories share with the Babylonians and Assyrians, but also how different they are on key elements. Or how Paul used Hebrew scripture passages very liberally, sometimes even re-interpreting the message in light of Jesus. Great read for anyone looking to get a fuller understanding of Scripture's influences and of course, can help you bridge the gap between evolution and a historical Adam.

bought this for my husband, and he very much enjoyed it.i've read excerpts while studying, and it's a very interesting take on Adam and Israel.we have both found it helpful in conversations that tend towards, 'if you don't have a historical Adam than you don't have a historical Jesus"...church people can be exhausting, this book helps lessen our (di)stress in answering them :)although we still occasionally get the evil eye.love it like all the other PE's books we've read.

The Bible is replete with parables, metaphors, and symbolic language. It should be no surprise to us (and it is certainly no cause for alarm) that the creation stories were not intended to be taken literally. The use of mythology implies neither a misunderstanding of reality nor an attempt to deceive. It was simply a literary device intended to convey important (but in some regards complex, particularly for ancient populations) concepts regarding God's sovereignty and humankind's relationship to Him and His creation.Now, with the skill and depth of knowledge afforded a world-renowned Bible scholar, Dr. Peter Enns has courageously and convincingly explained why we need not understand the Bible's creation stories to be a literal history of events for them to be valid and important. Indeed, the creation stories, along with the entire book of Genesis, establish the foundation for all that follows in the Bible. Dr. Enns provides a detailed account of the historical context within which these essential Scriptures were recorded and how they, through the work of the Apostle Paul, affect the very foundational principles of Christianity.For anyone wishing to better understand the history, the literary character, and ultimately the relevance of Biblical Scripture to

Christianity and to the entire world, Dr. Peter Enns' The Evolution of Adam is a must read.Bruce Glass--author of Exploring Faith and Reason: The Reconciliation of Christianity and Biological Evolution

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