

FROM CREATION TO BETHLEHEM

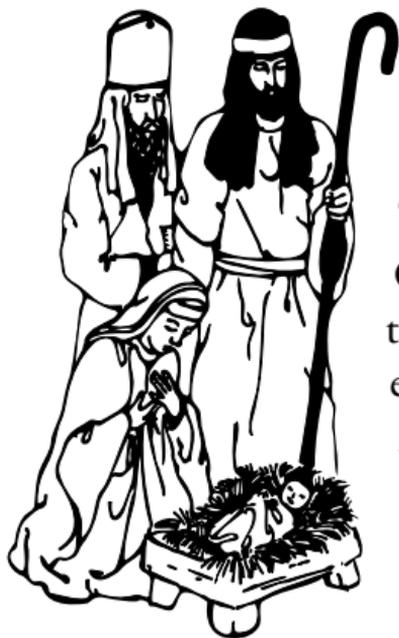
Who were the two Adams?

By Ken Ham

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In December, many Christians celebrate a holiday called Christmas.¹ During this season, there is particular emphasis on

an event that occurred around 2,000 years ago in the town of Bethlehem in Judea (today called Israel).



Christmas commemorates the birth of a baby—an event recorded in the Bible in such New Testament passages as Luke 2:1–20 and prophesied about in

Old Testament passages such as Isaiah 7:14. The name given to this baby was Jesus.

During Christmas time, many churches display nativity scenes. These exhibits show the newborn Jesus in a stable surrounded by various animals, shepherds and Mary and Joseph. Such nativity scenes traditionally have also been displayed in public places (shopping centers, public schools, parks, etc.) in much of our Western world.

Also at Christmas, people sing special songs known as “carols.” The words of many of these carols outline the events surrounding the birth of Jesus.

Because of the influence of Christianity and the birth of baby Jesus, history is divided into two basic divisions—AD (*Anno Domini*, Latin for “in the year of the Lord,” Jesus) and BC (“before Christ”). As evidenced by the fact that Western calendars and historians count the number of years from this time, this was a very significant event even apart from religious aspects.

Christmas is changing

In much of the Western world today, nativity scenes are no longer displayed in public places. Such displays are now banned from many public parks and schools.

Whereas Christmas carols used to be sung in public (i.e., government) schools, many times such songs have been replaced by ones that do not mention anything about Jesus and His birth.

Furthermore, more and more people are now calibrating their calendars with BCE (Before the Common Era) and CE (Common Era), rather than “before Christ” and “in the year of our Lord (Jesus).” The year-counts are the same, but the name of Christ has been removed.

In public schools in America, teachers and students are



being urged or required by administrators and lawyers fearful of lawsuits to use phrases like “Happy Holidays” instead of “Merry Christmas” or “Happy Christmas.”

Many advertising pieces during the Christmas season now delete the “Christ” part of the word Christmas.

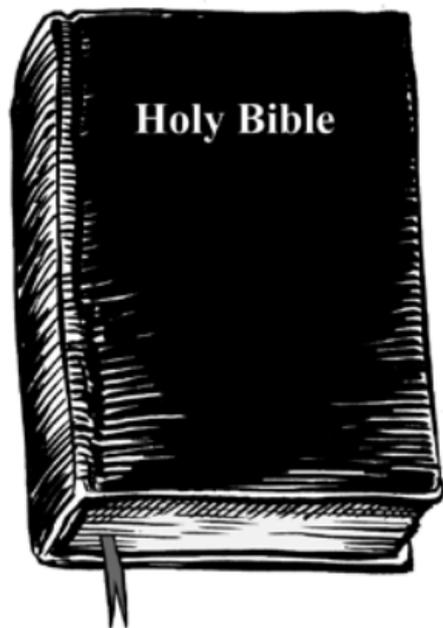
Why was the birth of the baby Jesus considered so significant in the first place? And why is Christmas being viewed differently today? What has happened to cause an event which has so influenced the modern world to be slowly erased from people’s thinking?

The history

To understand the significance of the birth of this baby, we need to understand the history that led up to this event. The only compilation of books in the world that gives a detailed history that enables us to fully comprehend the significance is the Bible.

Over three thousand times the Bible claims

to be the revealed Word of the God who created the universe and all life, and who has made Himself known to man. If this book really is God's Word, then it should explain the meaning of the universe and



life—and it does. Not only that, but observational science continues to confirm the Bible's history as true. (See the inside back cover of this booklet for a list of other booklets in our series on the accuracy and authority of the Bible.)

Genesis (which basically means “origins”), the first book of the Bible, gives an account of the origin of life and the universe. It tells of the origin of matter, light, earth, sun, moon, stars, plants, animals, humans, marriage,

clothing, death, languages, nations and so on. In Genesis 1:27 and 2:7, we read of the creation of the first man called “Adam.” Interestingly, in 1 Corinthians 15:45, the one born in Bethlehem is called “the last Adam.” To understand the reason for the “last Adam,” you have to understand what happened to the “first Adam.”

The first Adam

The Bible records that on the sixth day of creation, God made the first man and woman:



So God created man in His own image;
in the image of God He created him;
male and female He created them
(Genesis 1:27).

We read more of the details concerning the creation of the first man in Genesis 2:7:

And the LORD God formed man
[Adam] of the dust of the ground, and
breathed into his nostrils the breath of
life; and man became a living being.

We are later told in Genesis 2:21–23 that God created the first woman from the first Adam's side. From elsewhere in the Bible, we learn that all humans who have ever lived descended from these two people (Genesis 3:20, Acts 17:26, etc.). Therefore, all humans today are related because we have the same first ancestors.

God's instruction

When God created Adam, He didn't make him to be a puppet; Adam had the ability to choose and make decisions. God gave Adam

an instruction to obey in Genesis 2.

Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die” (Genesis 2:15–17).

Adam’s Fall

Adam, however, chose to disobey God by eating the fruit of the one tree God had told him not to eat from (Genesis 3:6).

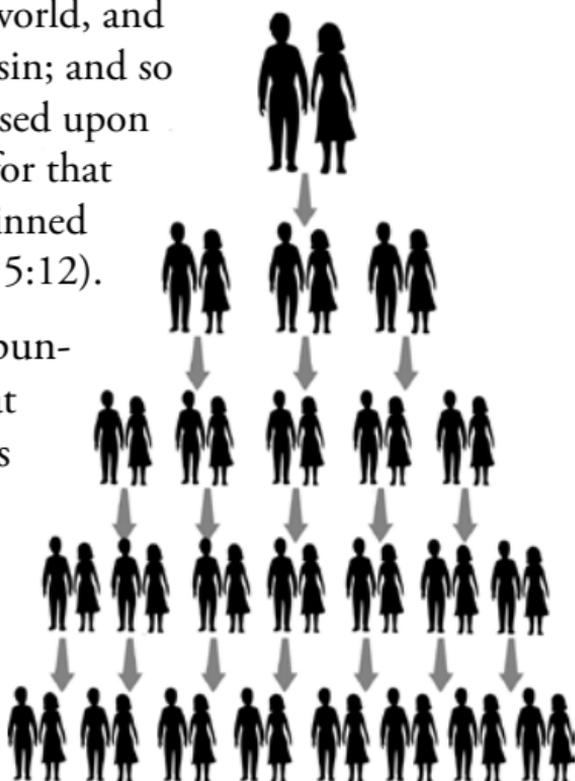
Because Adam was the first or “head” of the human race and all humans ultimately have



come from this first man, what Adam did affected all of humanity. When Adam disobeyed his Creator's instruction (resulting in his "fall" from his state of perfection), that was the first sin. And just as God had warned, the punishment for Adam's sin was death—not only for Adam, but for all his descendants (including you and me) as well:

Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned (Romans 5:12).

Why are we punished for what Adam did? As the head of the human race, Adam represented each of us



and because we all come from Adam, we have his nature, inherited from him. He sinned (disobeyed God), so we sin (disobey God). If it had been any of us faced with the decision to eat or not eat from the forbidden tree instead of Adam, the result would have been the same.

Oh! The nakedness

After Adam and Eve sinned, Genesis 3:7 states that “they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings.”

In sewing fig coverings, it wasn't just that they recognized that they had no outer clothing—they also saw that they were destitute of righteousness. Their innocence was lost. Adam and Eve were no longer perfect but were now polluted creatures in their hearts and their flesh. They were



naked before the justice of God's law, and the fig leaves were attempts to cover what they had done.

However, no man or woman can hide their sinfulness from the sight of a holy God by their own doings. God sees us in *all* our nakedness and knows our impure, sinful, rebellious hearts.

The Bible says our attempts at covering ourselves (our "righteousness") are but "filthy rags" to the Creator (Isaiah 64:6). No ceremonies, rites or attempts at keeping the law can change this. Our works cannot take away our sin because our hearts are impure (Jeremiah 17:9). We cannot make ourselves acceptable before a holy, pure God because of the gross imperfection of our very nature—just as Adam and Eve's fig leaf coverings could not help them.

How can we ever be reconciled with a holy God? This is an important question since we are made in the image of God (Genesis 1:27), and as such, even though our bodies

die because of sin, our soul (the “real us” that inhabits our bodies) lives forever. As sinners, we can not live with a holy and righteous God, nor can we make it to heaven by our own works—we would be separated from God forever and live in our evil, sinful states for eternity. What a horrible existence that would be. As the Apostle Paul says in Romans 7:24, “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”

The promise of the “last Adam”

In Genesis 3:15, God made a statement that actually sums up the message of the entire Bible and provided hope to Adam and Eve and their descendents (us!) that there was a way to be saved from the effects of sin. This declaration summarizes what the Babe of Bethlehem is all about; in fact, it is the whole meaning of “Christmas”:

And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head,

And you shall bruise His heel.

What does this mean?

Genesis 22:18 gives us further clues about the identity of the promised “seed” of the woman who will bruise the head of the serpent:

And in thy **seed** shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice. [emphasis added]

And Paul clarifies things in Galatians 3:16:

Now to Abraham and his **Seed** were the promises made. He does not say, “And to seeds,” as of many, but as of one, “And to your Seed,” who is Christ. [emphasis added]

Paul builds upon the use of the singular “seed” in Genesis 22:18. Here we see the extent of the infallibility of Scripture, down to the use of singular and plural words.

The words “her seed” are actually a prophecy concerning the One who, conceived by God Himself, would be born of a woman (actually

a “virgin”): the baby who was born in Bethlehem—the last Adam.

The “head” and the “heel” of Genesis 3:15

It is a great mystery to fallible, created human beings like us that the Creator God (Colossians 1:16) became flesh (John 1:14) so that as a perfect Man, He could become “sin for us” (2 Corinthians 5:21) by dying on a cross to suffer the penalty for sin (the meaning of “bruise his heel”). But,

because He is the infinite Creator, He has ultimate power, and thus He rose from the dead, overcoming the curse.

“Bruising the serpent’s head” speaks of the mortal wound Satan received



through Christ's victory over him at Calvary. He is a defeated foe. His operation now is like the pockets of Japanese soldiers of World War II fighting after the surrender in August 1945—they could still instill casualties and do much harm, but they could not win the war.

Jesus came to take away sin and conquer the power of the grave—death.

Clothed by God

God illustrated what needed to be done to Adam and Eve by a particular act. In Genesis 3:21 we read:

The LORD God made garments
of skin for Adam and his wife, and
clothed them.

God killed at least one animal—the first blood sacrifice—to provide the garments as a covering for their sins. It was a picture of what was to come in Jesus, who is the “Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29).

It is only the covering provided by God which can cover man's "filthy rags." The righteousness that enables a sinner to stand "just" in the sight of God is from God. No human being can put on the righteousness of Christ, for this can only be done by God (1 Corinthians 1:30). We can't rely on our good works (our "aprons of fig leaves") or on sacraments (e.g., communion, baptism) to stand just before God. It is only what God does for us that enables us to be clean before our Creator.

How can we be clothed?

Now, if it is only God who is able to clothe us in righteousness, how can we obtain that clothing?

The Bible makes it very clear in Romans 10:9:

...that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

When we acknowledge that we are sinners before God, repent of our sin and confess the Lord Jesus, acknowledging that He died and

rose from the dead, we receive the free gift of salvation from our Creator and will spend eternity with Him.

The two Adams

The first Adam gave life to all his descendants. The last Adam, Jesus Christ, the Babe of Bethlehem, communicates “life” and “light” to all men, and gives eternal life to those who receive Him and believe on His name—giving them “power to become the sons of God” (John 1:1–14).²

The first Adam experienced the judgment of

Jesus Christ
“The Last Adam”

1 Cor. 15:45



For as in Adam all die,
even so in Christ shall
all be made alive.

1 Cor. 15:22



“The First Adam”

1 Cor. 15:45

God. He eventually died and his body turned to dust. Because of his sin, death came upon all men, “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23).

The last Adam, Jesus Christ, also experienced the judgment of God—not for His own sins (He lived a perfect life), but for the sins of mankind. He died on the Cross to atone for sin (Isaiah 53:5; 1 Peter 3:18; Hebrews 2:9). But He did not stay dead, nor did His body “see corruption” (Acts 2:27; 13:35–37). On the third day, He rose again, thereby overcoming the devil and the power of death for all people who believe in Him (Hebrews 2:14), and bringing resurrection from the dead (1 Corinthians 15:22–23).

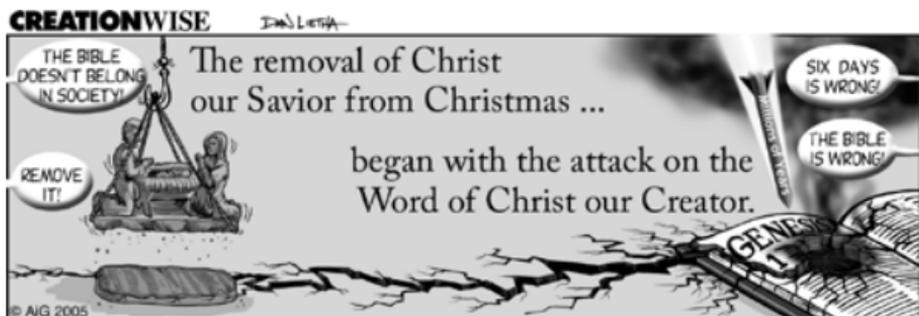
This is the message of the Babe born in Bethlehem. It starts with the creation of a perfect world, and then, because of our sin in Adam, leads to our need of a Savior—which is why Jesus stepped into history to become flesh 2,000 years ago.

What is happening to Christmas?

Throughout the world, generations of young people are being educated in schools, colleges and by the media with evolutionary ideas about our origins.

Sadly, they are being brainwashed into believing that the history in Genesis concerning the first Adam and the entrance of sin is not true. Logically then, they begin rejecting the truth of the last Adam, Jesus Christ.

If the history in Genesis concerning our origins is not true and therefore the birth of Jesus is insignificant, then why should nativity scenes be allowed in schools and public places? Why should students sing carols about a meaningless event?



The erosion of Christianity in society is directly linked to the attack on the history of Genesis and the increasing indoctrination in a false history that has permeated the culture: that man is a result of millions of years of evolutionary processes.

Whatever the month of the year, the event that Christians celebrate in a very special way at Christmas is a message of hope for all people.

The message of the two Adams is what life is all about. But if we want people to understand this message, we need to ensure that we show them clearly that the history in Genesis is true, for otherwise, they will not understand or listen to what is said about the Babe of Bethlehem.

HERE'S THE GOOD NEWS

Answers in Genesis seeks to give glory and honor to God as Creator, and to affirm the truth of the biblical record of the real origin and history of the world and mankind.

Part of this real history is the bad news that the rebellion of the first man, Adam, against God's command brought death, suffering and separation from God into this world. We see the results all around us. All of Adam's descendants are sinful from conception (Psalm 51:5) and have themselves entered into this rebellion (sin). They therefore cannot live with a holy God, but are condemned to separation from God. The Bible says that "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23) and that all are therefore subject to "everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power" (2 Thessalonians 1:9).

But the good news is that God has done something about it. "For God so loved the world, that He gave his only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

Jesus Christ the Creator, though totally sinless, suffered, on behalf of mankind, the penalty of mankind's sin, which is death and

separation from God. He did this to satisfy the righteous demands of the holiness and justice of God, His Father. Jesus was the perfect sacrifice; He died on a cross, but on the third day, He rose again, conquering death, so that all who truly believe in Him, repent of their sin and trust in Him (rather than their own merit), are able to come back to God and live for eternity with their Creator.

Therefore: “He who believes on Him is not condemned, but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God” (John 3:18).

The baby in Bethlehem ... what a wonderful Savior ... and what a wonderful salvation in Christ our Creator!

(If you want to know more of what the Bible says about how *you* can receive eternal life, please write or call the *Answers in Genesis* office nearest you—see inside front cover.)

¹ The origin of the actual term “Christmas” is not the subject of this booklet.

² This section excerpted from “First Adam—Last Adam” by Russell Grigg at www.AnswersInGenesis.org/First_Adam

