

# GENESIS ACCEPTED



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# Why Seth?

There's a popular American television programme, which we like in our house, called CSI. CSI stands for Crime Scene Investigation and it is about forensic work at a crime scene. Sometimes they go in for graphic realism, and often I say to Barbara, "Why would anyone do a job like this, especially in the scenes developed around post-mortem examinations?" And they seem to enjoy their work, chopping off heads and boiling them so they can examine in detail the nature of the blow/blows which killed the victim. The horrors of what they are looking at seem to make no impression on them at all as they look for clues to bring the real culprits to justice.

With Sherlock Holmes it was cigarette ash – he could identify 105 different types and not a Woodbine in site - but with CSI their favourite piece of incriminating evidence is a hair, which nobody else would possibly note under any circumstances; a hair, plus DNA and fingerprint evidence too, of course. Even at the scene where the criminal has cleaned up, they try to spot the tiny incriminating evidence which will convict. So they notice things, minute things not obvious to lesser mortals like you and me, and construct a case from it, based on sound scientific principles, of course, not from ill-founded, wild imagination.

Sometimes I feel like a biblical CSI investigator. I find myself coming to Genesis in particular like a forensic expert looking for clues, not because I am bereft of the obvious to deal with but because the text demands such an approach, and I like to do it since it fascinates me. There is so much hidden there for us to consider, using sound biblical reasoning to do so, of course, and thereby building up a picture we might never have suspected was there. The deeper I look the more there seems to be under the surface which I had never noticed before but now do, because my mind is being trained to examine in this manner.

Recently (Number 5) we looked at Noah's wife, and what we could possibly say about her. And as I looked I was amazed at what emerged. I did not at all anticipate the picture that finally broke free as I began that study. I fed it to Barbara and she presented it to our Ladies' Class. It may have seemed to some like speculation, and indeed it was, but it was definitely based on sound biblical reasoning. Well, I'm going to do the same here with an entirely different character, who flits enigmatically on to the biblical stage and then flits off it never to be mentioned or thought about again. This time it's a man and his name is Seth. Be prepared once more to come with me on a biblical journey down some lanes you might not have realised were

there!

## Judah and Tamar

Let's begin our journey, oddly enough, much further down the Book of Genesis, in chapter 38, no less. There we encounter a most unsavoury story about Judah and Tamar and their family dealings. Poor old Tamar was married to Judah's eldest son, who was no good, so God slew him. They had no children so, following the custom of the day, she was given to the second son so she could have a child by him on behalf of the older brother, and thus preserve his inheritance for his line. He, Onan, decided that he didn't like that idea and took steps to prevent her becoming pregnant. God lost patience with him over it and slew him too. There was only one more son left and he, poor lad, was promised to this now older woman to be a stud for his older brothers, but he was very young indeed. Tamar would have to wait for him until he grew up. Well, she got tired of waiting because Judah seemed disinclined to go through with the arrangements after the lad had grown up, so she took matters into her own hands and tricked Judah into fathering twins by her himself. Since one of these twins was on the genealogical line of Jesus and all of the Jewish kings, it was necessary to recount the story for posterity.

So what's this got to do with Seth? I think it may unlock quite a little mystery about what went on way back in those very early days of the world's history. Let's see what Genesis tells us about Seth.

## Seth's Conception

After some very treacherous dealings by the sons of Cain in chapter 4, we read 'And Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and called his name Seth, for she said, "God has appointed for me another offspring instead of Abel, for Cain killed him."' (Gen. 4:25). That's all we get and we seldom think much about it at all, so let's ask why, 'Why did this happen? Why did Adam and Eve think it necessary to provide a special replacement son for Abel?' Okay, we know he came into the



Cain kills Abel

godly line leading away from Adam and down to Noah. That's what happened, but just what is going on here?

## Adam's other children

As far as the children of Adam and Eve are concerned we focus on the names of three boys only: Cain, Abel and Seth because that's all we are given. However, in Genesis 5:4, as with all of these patriarchs apart from Noah, we are told that he had 'other sons and daughters'. Adam and Eve produced very many children of both sexes so why did they feel the need for a special replacement for Abel? Obviously some of their other sons and daughters would have turned out to be 'good' and some no doubt were not – just like many families ever since. Cain, you remember, was worried about being hunted down and slain himself as revenge for Abel's death. From this we learn that by the time he did the dastardly deed there were plenty of others around for him to fear them, else he would have had no fear. In fact because of all of this I am going to suggest that Adam and Eve had already finished having their children by this time and that Seth was a necessary extra to plug the gap left by Abel. This tells us something surprising about Abel too, which we will unfold later.

## When was Abel killed?



Adam, we are told, was 130 when Seth was born so we are looking at many years and an awful lot of childbearing for Eve later when the lad appeared. We can assume then that the murder took place not too long before Seth was born, possibly only a year or so at the most. We are not told how old Adam was when Cain, his firstborn, was born but it is not at all unreasonable to assume that Cain must have been well over 100 when he killed Abel, and that Abel too must have been no spring chicken either, by our standards – though not by theirs. Cain, we do know, was married and when he took his family away from the Eden area he went into the land of Nod, east of Eden. He built himself a ‘city’ and for ‘city’ read ‘fortified settlement’, since, as we noted, he was afraid of reprisals. Cain and his wife were fecund and had many offspring, though they were often like their father in character. So who was Cain’s wife? Where did she spring from?

#### Cain’s wife and Abel’s widow!

The answer, of course, is easy; she was one of his sisters. She had to be. If Cain had a wife when he killed Abel it is not unreasonable to assume that Abel too had a wife, who then became the world’s first widow. Indeed, in order to explain the peculiar set up over Seth, it is necessary to recognize that he did leave a widow.

#### Legends and truth

Behind most legends there is more than a grain of truth. Yes, the details may be obscured somewhat down the mists of time and with the retelling of the story, but scratch the surface and don’t despise the possibility that lurking beneath that surface is a true story. I am convinced that there was a ‘Robin Hood’ character even if we will never now fathom out the details of his life. So what is the legend which could have a bearing on this study?

Well, it is said that every time Eve gave birth, in order to get the population going, she had twins, a boy and a girl. That brothers had to marry sisters at this time need not shock us because it had to be so and the gene pool was not at all corrupted, so genetically such unions were quite safe. However, so the legend has it, twins were not allowed to marry their twin. Consequently, Cain had to marry Abel’s twin and Abel married Cain’s. This, I believe, is possibly where the grain of truth lies in the legend but not as it then develops. From here on in it gets more far-fetched. Cain’s twin, it is said, was very beautiful but Abel’s was not and Cain resented his having to wed the ugly one while Abel got the smasher, hence his jealousy, which led to the murder. The story of the murder contains not even a whiff of this sort of reason behind Cain’s actions, therefore I don’t believe it at all; it’s just legend. That Adam and Eve produced equal numbers of boys and girls, whether they were twins or not, seems a very reasonable assumption. To kick

-start the population some such arrangement must have occurred miraculously by God’s grace, of course.

#### When Abel was murdered

Now when Abel was murdered several things must have happened: the population balance was upset; Adam and Eve had finished having children but came together again deliberately for the last time to redress this imbalance and produce a son for Abel’s widow; and consequently that Abel and his wife were childless. If it is true that Adam and Eve always produced twins, this would be the only occasion that they had a single child. This has to be why Seth is said to be a replacement son for Abel. He was deliberately sired for this purpose, a purpose which would have no point if they had other sons and daughters in abundance and not necessarily in pairs or equal numbers. They would have had plenty of replacement sons so why did they need this special one? Hence we have to look at Tamar to see a possible answer.

#### Levirate marriages and the godly line

It is interesting to note that when Boaz married Ruth, though he was preserving Mahlon’s inheritance through his levirate marriage, he himself gets the credits in the genealogy. Seth too is the one who gets the genealogical credit because he is the sire. Taking godly Abel’s godly wife they produced the godly line which is traced down to Noah. This does not mean that all of Adam’s other sons and daughters were like Cain and ungodly; no doubt they were mixed in their responses as we said, but Seth and his wife carried on the tradition of great godliness in which Abel had so tragi-



Ruth gleaning in the field and spotted by Boaz

cally led. I do not believe that it is insignificant that the story of Seth continues in Genesis 4:26: ‘To Seth also a son was born, and he called his name Enosh. At that time people began to call upon the name of the Lord’. There is no necessary need to presuppose that Enosh was Seth’s firstborn but he was the one who carried on the faithful line and it was in godly Seth’s time that the name of the Lord was recognized and He was called upon as He had not been beforehand – but that’s another study!

One final point worth noting, when the story of Tamar breaks on the scene in Genesis 38, we are not told anything about where the custom came from for younger sons to be expected to father children for their older, dead, childless brothers. It had to come from somewhere. What better place than right at the beginning of time when Seth was provided as a replacement son for Abel? If you think I am speculating idly, just ask yourselves why he was sired deliberately as a replacement for Abel. Make sense of that and you might well be able to answer the question: ‘Why Seth?’

# Calling on the Name of the Lord

The Fall, as detailed in Genesis 3, was a terrible event. No, just eating fruit from a tree they'd been told not to, hardly seems like much of a problem to us today but to God it was cataclysmic. All the ills of the world were then let loose and, of course, He had to put Plan A into action to redeem the world because He loved it. His Son would have to come and die on a cross so that those who love Him could and would have eternal life.

Terrorist murders and suicide bombers, 9/11, 7/7, paedophiles preying on children, homosexual lust and behaviour, robbery, murder, rape, adultery, the list goes on and on in our minds today, and seems a far cry from the gentle sadness of the account of the Fall in Genesis. There two rather ashamed and miserable creatures called Adam and Eve did a little something they should not have done and were duly punished by expulsion from the Garden of Eden, the paradise into which they had been placed by their loving heavenly Father.

## The 'Gentleness' of the Curse

Adam was told that from then on he would have to work hard for his living; Eve was told she would have pain in childbirth

and yet her desire would be to serve her husband in this fashion despite the pain, but it all seems a little low-key to us in our day. After all many men love having to work; they get lots of job satisfaction from what they do. I know that I hate it when I have nothing to do and I also know of many men who find it almost impossible to give up work, and virtually have to be dragged, kicking and screaming, away from the work-place once they reach retiring age. My uncle, who was a policeman and who absolutely adored his job, was forced to retire at 60 when he was fit and well, and definitely on top of the job. He pleaded to stay on to 65, or even less, but just to stay on because his work was his life. He hated retirement and soon developed all sorts of illnesses, which I believe were brought on by the stress of being forced into idleness where he had no hobbies and nothing to do. He'd lived for his work and he lived on until his early 80s but he hated every minute of retirement and never came to terms with it. His work was no curse to him.

Then I know plenty of women who love having babies. Yes, there is amazing pain in childbirth, as all mums no doubt

will testify quite forcibly, but all of you women who have had children know that there are wonderful blessings once the pain of the birth is over. Being a mum is truly a marvellous thing. Most girls want it and many believe it is their right to have children, almost seeming to demand it today, often even when they are not married, so great is the nature within them that desires motherhood despite the cost of pain in childbirth. It may be a curse but it's not an overwhelming curse.

In both cases of the male and the female curses, a gracious God built in blessings too. They were punished but not crushed; they were chastized but still loved. My children, Sarah and Arthur, will tell you that on the rare occasions I had to smack them - and, yes, I firmly believed, and still believe in the 'laying on of hands' when necessary - I always gave them a kiss and a cuddle afterwards because I never wanted them to feel that my love had been withdrawn, because they had done wrong and I was punishing them. They learned that my love was, and still is, unconditional and that punishment does not show a lack of love but rather, in my case at least, it was done, paradoxically, because I loved them. They probably did not

**From this**

**To this**

**And this**

**And this**

**And this**

**One small mess for a man, one giant mess for mankind**  
(The consequences of the 'little' sin in the Garden of Eden)





This also led to...

THIS; which in turn led to...

**THIS!**  
(The empty tomb)

## God's solution to the problems of sin, evil and suffering

appreciate the subtleties of this when they were young and a little chastened, but they do now. God, I believe, did exactly the same to Adam and Eve. Though punished, and punished fairly and justly, they knew that He still loved them. We all need the assurance of love in our lives.

### The Curse begins to bite

Then the story moves forward from the sadness of Chapter 3 into the awfulness of Chapter 4. The real price of sin swung into action not by God's punishment but by their own sinful, fallen wills. He could not be blamed for Abel's murder - indeed He gave Cain a loving warning that he must stop harbouring those evil thoughts or there would be serious consequences; yet even after the murder, God showed mercy and blessing to Cain. I suggested in the previous article that Abel's death probably happened some 100+ years after Creation because Seth was a replacement son for Abel, and Adam was 130 when Seth was born. Cain was definitely married and had children, and I suggested that Abel probably was married too, though he had no children.

### Cain's sinfulness bounds along

From the murder of Abel, the story goes even deeper into human wickedness. There is an account of Cain's genealogy, which is very interesting. His family were obviously abundantly talented and there is no need to suppose that because Cain was wicked, and his great-great-great-grandson, called Lamech, was wicked too, that they all were. Like our families, black sheep can produce godly offspring just as godly families can produce evil children. Lamech was the first recorded polygamist, having two wives: Adah and Zillah. This broke the one-man-one-woman regulation for marriage. Adah produced Jabel, who was the first nomadic herdsman. She also had Jubal, who was the first musician. Zillah had Tubal-cain who was the first smith. Jubal and Tubal-cain were definitely talented and inventive, and

Jabel was at least enterprising.

Lamech, however, was just like Cain, only worse. He was obviously very wicked and ruthless, as we read:

*'Lamech said to his wives:  
Adah and Zillah, hear my voice;  
you wives of Lamech, listen to what I say:  
I have killed a man for wounding me,  
a young man for striking me.  
If Cain's revenge is sevenfold,  
then Lamech's is seventy-sevenfold.'* (Gen 4:23-24)

For minor injuries, Lamech rises up and kills a man, who would not have been a perfect stranger to him, and then he boasts about it to his wives. He seemed to be proud of what he had done.

Now, I did a very rough calculation and it would appear that this happened around 450 years after Creation and about 350 years after Abel was murdered. Adam, and presumably Eve too, were very much alive. Adam was approximately half-way from Creation to death, being middle-aged. I think we can say that it occurred when Kenan had not long been born. No doubt this was not an isolated incident and brought Adam and Eve great sorrow. In fact they were slowly to witness the breakdown in morals and standards from what God had given them, and they had taught their children. Lamech was positively defiant and maliciously evil, and it was when these sorts of things began to bite that the Curse really struck home and godly people began to take stock. How do we know?

### What is religion about at rock-bottom?

I once did some study on the question: 'What is a religion?' It's a lot like the question: 'What is a game?' We can all recognize a game when we see one, just as we can all recognize a religion too but finding a useful definition of both is somewhat elusive. Games in particular defy neat definitions because there isn't one single,

unifying, characteristic of games, which all games share.

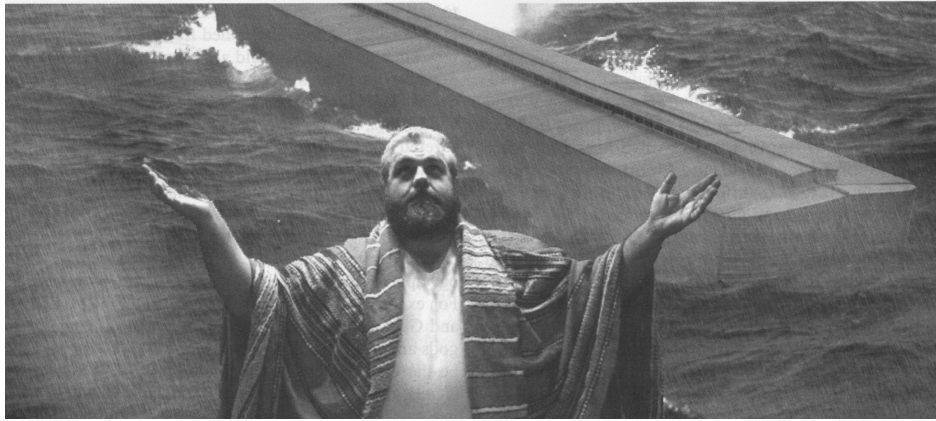
Religions, however, do have one underlying characteristic common to all, and it's not a belief in a god, gods or supreme being. On a very broad definition of a religion, Communism could fall into being one, and so could belief in Evolution. Whether we would accept this or not doesn't really matter, there is no doubt that we would accept Buddhism as a religion and in most forms of it they don't recognize a god. No, the one underlying characteristic of a religion is that it tries to help people understand, or provide answers to, the problem of evil, pain and suffering in the world. That's what religions do, they provide, or try to provide, palliatives for suffering and evil, and suggest ways to the faithful of coping.

### When people first got religion, and why

So what's this got to do with Genesis chapter 4? Well, significantly right at the end of the chapter, after detailing all the horrors of evil in the early world, we read: *'At that time people began to call upon the name of the LORD.'* (Gen 4:26). Is it any wonder? Adam and Eve, and later their children, were not overwhelmed by their punishment for sin, because God had been gracious to them. They could learn to cope and even find blessings in their cursed situations: Adam in his work and the fruits of his labours: Eve in raising her children and being a mum. And like lots of people today they could easily have been content with coping and not give God too much thought. Some might give Him more and some none at all. Many would nod towards Him, paying their religious dues because they'd been taught to do so. These offspring did not do it with any enthusiasm, no doubt feeling that the ritual attendance at worship services was enough to keep God happy with them, so they could get on with their lives without too much disruption. I believe that Adam and Eve actually taught their children faithfully. The



way she named her boys and the fact that Cain and Abel went out to sacrifice to God, indicates a high level of godly thinking having been taught to them. They could only have got that from their parents. But other children, grand-children, etc. of Adam could easily have developed spiritual sloth.



**The man and the event most people deny today**

*predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Saviour through your apostles, knowing this first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires. They will say, Where is the promise of his coming? For ever*

Then came the murder of Abel; then the thumbing of the nose at God's wishes and standards, and finally more murders. No doubt we can rest assured that this was simply the tip of the iceberg and we by no means are getting the full picture here, just a sufficient hint to allow us to grasp the underlying problems of the day. And as time rolled on and wickedness increased, that sense of self-satisfaction, and that sense that this isn't really a bad old world, began to wear thin. Their comfort zone began to evaporate. They began to recognize that they were not coping, that there were forces, malevolent forces, which were outside their control and capacity to deal with. On realising this they looked elsewhere for an answer to their problem – the problem of evil, pain and suffering - and saw that the only answer was to be found in God. He is greater than man. He has the answers and supplies their needs. He is always there for them to guide and bless. He will not let them down for he loves them even though He punished them when they sinned. His love is not conditional. Once they recognized that they could not cope with life's problems alone, they fell on their knees and called on the name of the Lord. Religion had begun.

were saying and doing. It sounds familiar. The story staggers on for another 1300 or so years. There were moments of great faith and faithfulness, particularly in the lives of Enoch and Noah, but evil did not go away; it got worse. The loving God who was patient and gracious finally said that enough was enough.

**God's patience will run out one day**

This is the self-same God we worship today. He hasn't changed a bit. Those who see their need, and know that they can't cope without His help, call on the name of the Lord. They worship Him, abide by His laws and find their answers in Him. But like the people of Adam's day, the world we live in generally does not listen either and definitely is not improving with time. One day our patient and gracious God will once again say that enough is enough. The curtain will come down, this time for good. He has warned us, and warned us. Those who responded in Adam's day to the wickedness they were seeing around them had no precedent to fall back on and no lessons to learn from history. There was hardly any history to learn from anyway.

*since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation."For they deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God, and that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished. But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.*

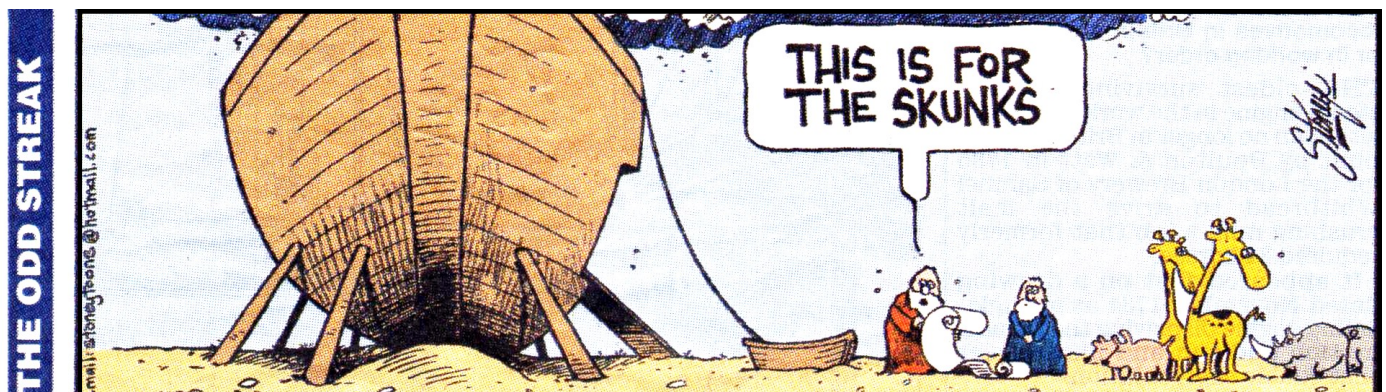
*'But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slow to fulfil his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.'* (2 Peter 3:1-10).

Sadly, not all embraced the concept or saw their need. They were doing fine on their own so why worry? They may not have mocked their religious relatives and friends but they were largely indifferent to what they

The apostle Peter wrote this in chapter 3 of his second letter:

*'This is now the second letter that I am writing to you, beloved. In both of them I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, that you should remember the*

If we look around us and see a world going worse, and if we feel a sense of our own inability to cope, it is time for us to call on the Name of the Lord and not simply play around with religion but really mean it. In Adam's day some did but sadly most did not and, you know, it's exactly the same in our day too! Unlike them, however, we know what is going to happen.



**THE ODD STREAK**

Daily Mail 6.5.02



# Women and the Eternal Picture

One of today's big debating points is the position and rôle of women in the leadership of the church, or churches. The Anglicans have capitulated to the current social pressures to conform and are even now going through spiritual convulsions over it worrying just how far to take it; the Roman Catholics are adamantly holding out; the Methodists and Baptists gave in years ago. The instrumental Churches of Christ have already gone under but, to my knowledge, the *a cappella* churches have not. However, just how many in the *a cappella* churches are thinking that it is about time that 'we' do something about it too, I do not know.

This may appear to be a peculiar topic for a magazine like *Genesis Accepted*; however, I believe that it is quite significant that as the authority of Genesis has been undermined by liberal, evolutionary-based theology over the past 100 years or so, so the concept of male headship and leadership has been put under threat. The two are not unconnected. The rise of the general acceptance of the Theory of Evolution as fact has seen the rise of the Feminist agenda and the fall the male headship rôle in society, the family, and, as is our particular interest here, in the church. You see, the rôle of women in the church is firmly tied to the story of Adam and Eve, their temptation and fall (see 1 Timothy 2:11-15 for example), and if one is jettisoned as being a spiritual myth so the other will follow just as night follows day. A biblical view of Genesis is a most necessary base from which to assess this matter. Unfortunately, in today's debate, few if any bother even to make passing reference to it let alone build their opinions on its foundation. That's why we have lost, or are losing, the point.

## Social Constructs and Equality

The debate focuses on two major concepts: social constructs and equality. Those in favour of women's ordination and leadership in the churches today maintain that the biblical position of women in the New Testament was a social construct reflecting the prevailing attitudes of the society in which the Gospels and Epistles were written. However, they say, in the enlightened days of modern society such notions are archaic and should be scrapped. In today's context, with our ideas of equality and the emancipation of women and their new-found social status, in the Western, Christian world at least, keeping them out of church leadership is an unnecessary anachronism at best, and sinful at worst so the argument goes.

## Biblical Equality

There is no doubt that, in Christ, both male and female are equal. The obvious reference to this is found in Paul's Letter to the Galatians: *'For as many of you as were*



**Dr Katharine Jeffers Schori, Bishop of Nevada (July 2006). (First woman in the Anglican Communion to be elected as a Bishop)**

*baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.'* (Gal. 3:27-28). So what is the argument? There it is. Male and female are equal in Christ.

Paul is making the point that Christians are all equally valuable to Christ. He takes no notice of ethnic origins (a massive difference from the Jewish attitude). He takes no notice of social status (a massive difference especially to Greeks/Gentiles). He takes no notice of gender (a massive difference to both Jews and Greeks where women were vastly undervalued). We are all precious souls in His eyes and will be judged and valued as such. All are equally heirs of the promise and children of God.

So what has this got to do with rôles in society and the church? Absolutely nothing. Paul was not talking about what we do when we worship and how we function within the church. Indeed when he famously does mention such things he emphasizes our equal worth to the body but that we function differently according to the gifts given to us AND according to how God chose to arrange them in the body:

*'For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body — Jews or Greeks, slaves or free — and all were made to drink of one Spirit.*

*'For the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot should say, Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body, that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear should*

*say, Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body, that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, yet one body.*

*'The eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of you, nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.' On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and on those parts of the body that we think less honourable we bestow the greater honour, and our unpresentable parts are treated with greater modesty, which our more presentable parts do not require. But God*

*has so composed the body, giving greater honour to the part that lacked it, that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together.*

*'Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?' (1 Cor 12:12-30, emphasis added).*

We are indeed equal in worth but there is no way God ever viewed equality as meaning sameness in either form or function.

## Social ideas of Equality

Our society, however, does seem to view the concept of equality as meaning sameness and that to emphasize differences is wrong. Thus we now have to teach all pupils in the same classes whether they are bright or slow; some would have boys and girls playing with the same toys; we now see the 'ladette' culture amongst young women where they try to behave like men to prove they are as good as men. Why Feminists encourage females to behave like men so they can emphasize that they are superior, defeats me. They are not striving to get men to behave like women, thereby unintentionally actually conceding that the male way is the better way. Unfortunately for them, biologically, women are just not the same as men, and it's not just about reproductive

organs and processes. They are not as strong physically. They do not think in the same way, using different aspects of their brains from the parts men use. They have different emotional and psychological needs, which is hardly surprising since God did not create them to be the same but rather to complement and complete men. So we are back to Creation and Genesis 1 and 2 again.

### Social Constructs

There is no doubt at all that there are certain social constructs in the Bible and particularly in the New Testament when it comes to Christianity. The question is, 'Is the rôle of women in the church one of them?' By 'social constructs' I mean things which were developed by mankind over the years and in particular contexts but which were not part of God's eternal plan or purpose. Some are debatable and some are obvious.

Amongst the obvious ones are the way we greet one another. Four times at least in the New Testament we are told to greet one another with a holy kiss, or similar words which mean the same (1 Cor. 16:20, 2 Cor. 13:12, 1 Thess. 5:26, 1 Pt. 5:14). Some societies do indeed do this but in the Western world we usually greet one another with a handshake. It is a symbol of love and peace since the open hand cannot, and does not, contain weapons, so a handshake signals trust, friendship and peace.

The way we dress as men and women sends out signals about our attitudes, but fashions change over the years. Modest dress can be very different in different times. For example, all the Christian sisters I know are seemly and modest, and definitely in a godly relationship to their husbands, yet they would have been labelled as 'loose hussies' in times past for showing an ankle to the world let alone a calf and stocking. Dresses which come below the knee but which do not sweep the floor would have been thought immodest in certain days of yore.

On the broader front the social institution of slavery was an obvious social construct. This is an important consideration in the debate over women since it is drummed into service to demonstrate the point that the rôle of women in the church needs to change. It is possible to make a biblical case out for slavery and it is difficult to make a biblical case for its abolition because the Bible nowhere clearly condemns it. Arguments turn on our notions of the love of God, and whether slavery is consistent with the nature and character of Christ. The equality passage in Galatians 3:27-28 also featured prominently in the argument too. It took a long time to convince people that slavery was indeed something to be overthrown and anathema to the concept of humanity, love, freedom and the dignity of the human being. Is it correct to use the slavery argument in the 'Women's Rôle' debate? Are we comparing like with

like here and making valid arguments?

### Equality in the Godhead

Earlier we made the point that the biblical view of equality had nothing to do with rôle or function. It does not remotely imply sameness. Nowhere is this demonstrated better than in the revelation of the triune nature of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Father, Son and Holy Spirit are equally God but they definitely do not have the same rôle. We are told that there is a positive headship relationship as a fundamental facet of this unit of equal but different parts. The Father is the head of the unit and the Son and Holy Spirit, though equal, nevertheless humbly bow to His headship so they can all function perfectly.

We see this point being made in several passages. It is expressly stated in Philippians 2:5-8: *'Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.'* The Son was prepared not to assert His equality but to bow to His Father's wishes regarding our salvation.

Over in 1 Corinthians we read of Christ's eternal submission to the Father. The passage in Philippians might indicate a temporary submission to the Father's headship so He could come to save us, but this is not so. It is an eternal, everlasting relationship of equality in love which will become evident at the end of time. In chapter 15:22-28 we read: *'For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. For God has put all things in subjection under his feet. But when it says, All things are put in subjection, it is plain that he is excepted who put all things in subjection under him. When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things in subjection under him, that God may be all in all.'*

At the end of time the Son will deliver the kingdom back to the Father and will be subjected to Him in love. Being in a loving



### Jesus did not count equality a thing to be grasped

relationship of subjection has nothing to do with superiority as opposed to inferiority and everything to do with recognizing God's eternal intentions for us and demonstrated in Himself. Even in the Godhead there is a headship rôle and a submissive rôle. It is how God is; how God works, and is an integral part of His nature.

### Back to Eden

It is said that when God created woman He took her from Adam's side; not from his head so she could rule over him; not from his feet so he could trample on her but from his side so she could stand alongside him and help him. The narrative tells us that *'... for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him.'* (Gen. 2:20). Eve was created to be a helper for Adam not for Adam to be a helper for her. He had the headship rôle, which was reflected in the curse on them both when they fell. To Eve He said, *"Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you."* And to Adam he said, *Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you..."* (Gen 3:16-17).

Eve was to be in subjection to Adam and Adam was castigated because he had failed to act as the head of the family and had *'listened to the voice of [his] wife'* instead of guiding her away from the wrong she wanted to commit. Because Adam failed in his headship rôle, he takes the overall blame for the Fall despite the fact that it was Eve who committed the initial sin (see *Genesis Accepted* Number 2, 'Sins of Omission'). Nevertheless the headship rôle was still to be his,



and, of course, through him to all men as head of the family. Paul picks up on the Edenic situation in Timothy where he is definitely instructing on the woman's rôle in the worship of the church: *'I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet. For Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor.'* (1 Tim 2:12-14).

### Loving submission in the family

Headship and loving submission such as Christ willingly gives to the Father is reflected in the godly family. In Ephesians we read the beautiful outworking of this as Paul explains how wives and husbands should interact:

*'Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, be subject to your husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Saviour. As the church is subject to Christ, so let wives also be subject in everything to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that he might present the church to himself in splendour, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. Even so husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no man ever hates his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.'* *"This mystery is a profound one, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church; however, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.'* (Eph 5:21-33, RSV).

The RSV rendering of this passage has verse 21 as a prefix to the rest. Some have it as the last thought of the previous paragraph but I prefer it telling me that husbands and wives should 'be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ.' We love each other because He loves us and we live as He would have us live and as He lives with His Father. The relationship of love, with the wife submitting to her husband and her husband loving her enough to die for her, is a beautiful outworking of a relationship of equality but recognising godly differences in function. It is not a case of the husband lording it over his wife, because he loves her as he loves himself. He is the head of the family, nourishing her and cherishing her, which he does willingly as she respects him and honours him. There could be no divorces if husbands and wives lived like this in their marriages since both would be blissfully happy.

But did you notice the reference back to

Eden? The end result of this loving bond between two people, male and female, in a right relationship brings a 'one flesh' result. It is when the two interact as God intended that such a bond exists. The relationship described by Paul here is a figure of Christ and the church.

### Submission in the church

We have noted the biblical, heavenly concept of equality and submission. It exists in the trinity of the Godhead. It exists in the family, if the family is being run along the godly lines which are outlined for us especially in Ephesians, but in other places too. It is a picture of what God wants in the church. That's why Paul links his teaching on the family to that of the church.

The church is supposed to be a reflection of the God whom we love and serve. When people look at the church they should be able to see 'God' in every aspect and fibre of its being. It should reflect His love, His grace, His patience and forgiveness, and every other thing about Himself which He has revealed to us. It should also reflect the divinely appointed, eternally existing, relationships of loving equality under godly submission to the ultimate authority: the Father Himself.

This is no social construct; this could only come by revelation. Social constructs from that day, and indeed from most other days, have men dominating women in unloving ways with little or no regard for their wellbeing. No society could ever have dreamed up the passage from Ephesians which Paul wrote concerning marriage, and definitely no Jew of the First Century could have done so. This so overturns social convention that it is laughable to suggest that the biblical teaching here is nothing more than the expected norm of the day. Christianity revolutionised all forms of human relationships breaking free of the shackles of the Law and the conventions of the day. This was new, very new, and definitely of divine origin.

Now the church is the body of Christ. And in the body there are many members but each is not the same. It needs different parts for it to function properly just as our bodies need eyes, a nose, ears, a mouth, feet, toes and little fingers. Some seem to us to be more important but to God, even the littlest toe is vital to the perfect functioning of the whole. I'm saying nothing original, of course, I'm merely paraphrasing what we read in 1 Corinthians 12 and have quoted earlier.

Stuck in the middle of that section is the following statement: *'God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose.'* Who chose each member and said how they should function? God did.

Where do we learn about His wishes in this regard? We can only learn them from the record He has chosen to leave us, namely in the New Testament writings.

### The eternal pattern

By now we should have grasped just what the eternal pattern is. Equality does not mean that there is no head. Even in the Trinity there is a head: the Father. In the family there is a head: the father. In the church there is a head; it's Christ and He has designated that *'some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the cunning of men, by their craftiness in deceitful wiles. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every joint with which it is supplied, when each part is working properly, makes bodily growth and upbuilds itself in love.'* (Eph 4:11-16, RSV)

The leadership at first was in the hands of apostles, whom He hand-picked, and all were men. Then the church was to appoint elders, who were to be men, husbands and godly heads of families with believing children and godly wives, reflecting the godly family of Ephesians 5, which reflects the church, which reflects the triune God whom we serve and worship. There is equality; there is headship; there is submission beautifully intertwined in a perfect whole and this picture is only sustained by male headship of the family and male leadership in the church. If the church is to reflect the One whom it is supposed to love, honour and serve, it cannot do so under female leadership which is specifically forbidden in the Scriptures.

A woman praying on behalf of the congregation, teaching or usurping the place of the male, is demonstrating rebellion and the fact that she refuses to be under authority. She is not under the authority of her husband (or father); she is not under the authority of the elders; she is not under the authority of God since she chooses to ignore His wishes in this area of the faith.

The problem all stems from denying the reality of Adam and Eve and their story in Eden. Erase that and you erase the problem of headship, the terms of the curse and, of course, the reason why, in 1 Timothy 2:12-14, her rôle in the worship of the church was to be restricted. When you lose the foundation, you lose the eternal picture.

# Evolutionary Treadmills

The Creationist believes that 'In the beginning God created...' (Genesis 1:1). In other words it was a supernatural event. The Evolutionist, on the other hand, believes that creation was a natural event which can be explained by the normal laws of science. Unfortunately for him, the normal laws of science are not, in fact, on his side when considering origins. They argue positively in favour of a supernatural creation because Evolution, if true, would defy them. Either some force or power suspended these laws or this was not the way that the world began.

Evolutionary theories ultimately lead up to the production of humankind. Usually when we use the term 'evolution' we are thinking of the 'amœba-to-man' scenario; however, there has to have been plenty of non-biological evolution taking place before we get to the amœba. We can recognize three stages of evolution for our purposes: Astronomical, Chemical and Biological. All three defy the natural laws under which they are supposed to operate.

## The Astronomical Treadmill

We have already touched on some of the problems associated with the evolution of the universe via the Big Bang Theory (*Genesis Accepted* Number 2, page 4). Let us re-emphasize the creation of matter and antimatter to demonstrate this particular 'evolutionary treadmill'.

We appear to live in a universe composed almost entirely of matter. Nevertheless the scientific law of pair production would expect matter and antimatter to have been created in equal quantities. Where has all the antimatter gone? This is a question which greatly puzzles the scientist. The answer sometimes given is that there must exist anti-galaxies, or even whole anti-universes, made of antimatter, which have not yet been detected (faith being the 'assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen' - Hebrews 11:1, emphasis added).

The 'faith' of the atheistic scientist can be as deep and profound as that of any Christian believer. Faith in the existence of anti-galaxies is even more remarkable when we realize that if matter and antimatter were created simultaneously, as they should be according to science's own laws, there should be no galaxies at all. The reason for this is that matter and antimatter cannot co-



**The spiral galaxy M51. 31 million light-years from the Earth, with its classical arms, which hold newborn stars and defies the Big Bang creation myth.**

*The Daily Telegraph* (Tuesday 26th April 2005)

exist together since they would annihilate each other the instant they were created; yet here we are.

To get around this problem the assertion is made that more matter must have been created than antimatter, but that defies the law of parity. If it were true, a scientific miracle must have occurred; however 'miracles' are supposed to be the last refuge of the believer when he has nowhere else to go, according to many critics of the notions of religious faith.

This is the Astronomical Treadmill. The universe simply should not, and could not, have gotten going by the evolutionary method of the Big Bang. Instead of a Big Bang it should have been a 'Big Puff'.

## The Chemical Treadmill

Next we turn to the Chemical Treadmill. This relates to the Earth and its evolution and is all tied up with ozone layers, reducing atmospheres and ultraviolet radiation.

The problem is oxygen. Oxygen is actually a poisonous gas and if the chemicals of life are exposed to it, or to oxidizing conditions, they lose their reduced state (the opposite of oxidized) and decompose to their member chemicals, namely into carbon dioxide, water and nitrogen.<sup>1</sup> The fact that the chemicals of life, biochemicals, decompose in the presence of atmospheric oxygen has been known for quite some time and is cited as the reason why life is not spontaneously forming now.

Consequently Evolutionists have to postulate that the early atmosphere of the Earth was a reducing one, i.e. one without oxygen in it. In other words it was composed of methane, carbon monoxide, hydrogen, ammonia, nitrogen and water as opposed to carbon dioxide, water, nitrogen and oxygen.

There is some evidence to suggest that the early atmosphere might have been a reducing one, however, all serious indications are the opposite. For example, early rocks have ferric iron in them, which is iron in an oxidized state. Nevertheless, even if we allow - for the moment - that the early atmosphere was a reducing one, the problems refuse to go away, indeed they are actually compounded.

Without oxygen in the early atmosphere, ozone, the gas produced by oxygen and found surrounding the Earth about 15 to 30



**The Ozone Layer: vitally necessary to preserve life**



miles high, would likewise not have been present. Ozone shields the Earth from ultraviolet rays. Ultraviolet rays are lethal to life. In fact if the ozone shield were removed today, most organisms would die in seconds. This not only presents quite a problem for the 'Primordial Soup' theorists, it also knocks on the head the notion that life could have been seeded from cosmic spores from outer space. These rays abound out there and there is no ozone shield for protection.

Thus we have a conundrum: If oxygen were in the primitive atmosphere, life could not have arisen because the chemical precursors would have been destroyed through oxidation; if oxygen were not in the primitive atmosphere, then neither would have been ozone, and if ozone were not present to shield the chemical precursors of life from ultraviolet radiation, life could not have arisen. *The Evolutionist is in the position of "not being able to live with it and not being able to live without it!"*<sup>2</sup> (emphasis mine).

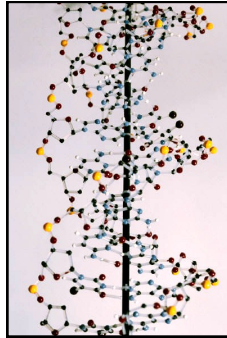
The solution from the Evolutionists to this conundrum has been to suggest that life began under water, which shielded it from harmful ultraviolet radiation. This still won't do because the chemical precursors of life need energy to react and form more complex molecules, and proteins cannot form under water because water favours their breakdown and disintegration, not their synthesis. Furthermore there is nothing at all to prevent currents in the water from bringing the chemical precursors to the surface where they would be destroyed by the ultraviolet radiation.

The chemical scenario demands an integrated, finely balanced ecosystem completely intact and up-and-running from day One. This speaks for a Creator, who designed it thus. The Evolutionist might well say that the current impotence of science to explain these problems betokens the need for more research, not a belief in Creation by God, but if he does, he has entered a world he does not wish to acknowledge: namely one of a faith system, which is a religion not a science. So, whose 'religion' provides the best explanation of the facts?

#### The Biological Treadmill

If the Chemical Treadmill was bad

enough for the Evolutionist, the Biological one is even worse! This time it is a 'chicken-and-egg' problem - which it would have to be in a Biological Treadmill, wouldn't it? (Actually the problem of 'Which came first the chicken or the egg?' may be old hat but it is still a perfectly valid one to put to the Evolutionist. The Creationist 'knows' it was the chicken; Genesis chapter 1 tells him.) We are not going to look at chickens and eggs, however, but rather at DNA and proteins.



**DNA Double Helix**

'Life depends upon the simultaneous existence of DNA and protein. Enzymes (proteins) are an absolute prerequisite to the linking of nucleotides into DNA helices... If life evolved by chance, protein enzymes must have formed spontaneously before DNA... On the other hand, though, functional enzymes could only have been produced by DNA... Hence we have the situation whereby DNA is dependent for its formation on the very chemicals it alone can produce:

1. Proteins depend upon DNA for their formation.
2. But DNA cannot form and, therefore, exist without pre-existing proteins. (*Carl Sagan called this dilemma a "biological treadmill"*)

'... The interdependence between DNA and proteins creates a seemingly insoluble problem for Evolutionists:

1. The existence of (A) is necessary for the formation of (B).
2. But (A) can only exist if (B) has already formed.
3. How then could (A) and (B) evolve independently?<sup>3</sup>

The answer, of course, is that they couldn't. Both had to be created and working together perfectly from the beginning. This, however, demands a Creator. By denying the 'chicken-and-egg' scenario, the Evolutionist finds the chickens coming home to roost!

#### The Second Law of Thermodynamics

This is one of *the* best attested scientific laws. Put simply it says that, in a closed system, the law of entropy prevails and things move from order to chaos. Energy, though remaining constant, moves to lower potential and thus cannot do as much work. In other words the universe is moving towards heat death.

If the universe was infinitely old, it would have arrived at heat death. The fact that we see order in the galaxies, Solar System, Earth and nature in general, indicates that there was a beginning and there will be an end. - even if the Lord does not bring the world to an end supernaturally and allows it to run its natural course. (That would ruin His stature as a prophet, which would have theological consequences, but the physical result would be the same.)

Evolution requires entropy to decrease and order to come out of chaos, systems to become more complex - without the input of energy from an intelligent, external source - and that things wind up, not down. Since nowhere outside the mind of the Evolutionist can we find this happening, and it only 'happens' to bolster the Theory of Evolution, the conclusion must be that that is precisely where it happens: in the mind of the Evolutionist and nowhere else.

#### Conclusion

There is no better answer to the Theory of Evolution than to be able to demonstrate that it defies established natural laws or experimental findings. Evolution is not just taught and believed on the biological front alone; it requires support on the astronomical and chemical fronts as well. From the Big Puff, through the ultraviolet, to the DNA/enzyme problem, Evolution cannot be sustained scientifically. To argue that what is needed are simply more discoveries, which will confirm the evolutionary hypothesis, is clutching at straws and chasing shadows.

<sup>1</sup> Wysong, R.L., *The Creation/Evolution Controversy*, p. 210.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, p. 212.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, p. 116-117.

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