

They Had Been Images of God – Brief Study of the Antediluvian World

Merri at The Pillarist

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Introduction

For in the disobedient stirring which arose in the flesh of the disobedient soul, by reason of which Adam and Eve covered their shameful parts, one death was indeed experienced: namely, that which occurs when God forsakes the soul. This was signified by the words which God spoke when the man, demented with fear, had hidden himself: ‘Adam, where art thou?’ For God certainly did not ask this in ignorance of Adam’s whereabouts, but to admonish him to reflect upon where he was, now that God was no longer with him.¹

Mankind at first numbered two, then three, and at last they became innumerable. They had been images of God; but after the Fall, they became images of self, which images originated in sin. Sin placed them in communication with the fallen angels. They sought all their good in self and the creatures around them with all of whom the fallen angels had connection; and from that interminable blending, that sinking of his noble faculties in self and in fallen nature, sprang manifold wickedness and misery.²

Who was the first man, Adam? When did he live? What was the world like, not merely before the Flood, but before even the Fall? Is his life relevant to us, who live not merely in a modern world, but in a world whose redemption has already been guaranteed by Our Lord’s Holy Sacrifice at Calvary?

When it comes to Genesis, there is a small but growing body of Catholic study that aims to make more known the relevance of the first eleven chapters of world history. Dismissed as ‘Young Earth Creationists’, whether the description is appropriate or not, by both the secular world and a shamefully large portion of the practicing faithful, those skeptical of modern Scriptural interpretation have been sidelined even by mainline Catholicism.

The reasons for this sidelining vary; doing so helped distinguish Catholicism from various (niche) Protestant Evangelical circles so ridiculed by the mainstream secular press, which has allowed the Church to maintain some mild sense of legitimacy-by-contrast to those outside of her. Catholics also have historically had a better relationship with science as it is properly understood. The contemporary mutation of pop-science into a religious ideology, however, has gone largely unnoticed and unmentioned by both Catholics and, perhaps appropriately, by the secular press.

¹ Augustine, *The City of God against the Pagans*, trans. R. W. Dyson (Cambridge University Press, 1998), 556-557.

² Emmerich, Anne, *The Life of Our Lord Jesus Christ and Biblical Revelations*, Vol 1, trans. ‘an American Nun’: 1917 (Rockford, TAN Books: 2004), 18.

In any case, extreme skepticism toward scientific claims regarding religious subjects is not something that tends to come naturally to the average Catholic. We're more than happy to leave the argumentation of what's actually true in the details to people we presume to be experts. And there's value to that; as Father Robert Spitzer's books on creation have demonstrated, framing contemporary scientific research within theistic frameworks certainly helps in evangelist efforts to bring lost souls into communion.

On the other hand, dismissing creationist claims leads to difficulty squaring the first eleven chapters of Genesis—held to be inerrant, as all of Scripture is—with the rest of Genesis, as well as the rest of the Bible. While it cannot be said that the secular scientific framework is wholly incompatible with certain interpretations of Genesis, such frameworks nonetheless remain stumbling blocks for many Catholics. Too many of us are ill-equipped to deal with how Scripture can be reconciled with evolutionist models that rely on the ideologies of people like Charles Darwin and Charles Lyell.

This means that you're either approaching Scripture with a Catholic perspective—one informed by and drawing from the rich tradition of the Church and her many Saints, Doctors, and Fathers—or you're coming at it with the oversimplified dogmas of naturalistic evolution that were supplied to you by your fourth grade science teacher. Either starting point offers a lot of room for leeway; the Church, after all, has never definitively ruled out the possibility of certain tenants of the broadly-evolutionist framework.

We will not know, on this side of death, what prompted God to create what He has. We may not even know on the other side of it, either. The stars and planets above our heads and the world beneath our feet are things each that we can come to understand in their material and formal causes, but never completely in their final causes. Why did God decide to make man? Or even the angels? Why, if He knew ahead of time how great the risk was of rebellion and rejection? We may never know. But He did make them, and He did make us, and He made you reading this unique and distinct from everyone you know. The reality of our existence prompts us to ask what we were born for. The reality of the unpleasantries, hardships, and sufferings to be found in the world prompts us to ask why the world is so unkind and why our beings are so frail. Both questions strike at the heart of our origin: what is the point to living, firstly, and what is the point to suffering, secondly.

The Purpose of This Analysis

This endeavor started because I scratched an itch: “what was Adam like, and who exactly was he?” One thing led to another, and it became clear that attempting to understand Adam required putting him in the context he deserved. As Scripture is appropriately succinct on Adam, his personality, his nature, and the events of his life, I pursued as many avenues I had access to in order to better understand this first man.

The original plan had been to address each of the major Patriarchs in turn: Adam, Seth, Noah, and Abraham, with special one-offs about Enoch, Melchizedek, and Job. Each post would have been somewhat brief and only touched on aspects of their life in order to bring these ancient figures into clearer focus for a contemporary audience. This plan changed as it became clear how gargantuan a task this really is, even for someone who was merely looking to do a cursory, entry-level study.

The antediluvian world is a mysterious place. It's a period of history that we not only don't know, it's one that we *can't* know, for reasons that are touched on in part four of this piece. The wickedness of men before the Flood was so great that God willed their destruction by water, going so far as to partially change the shape of the planet. Several theories regarding what the Flood actually was pervade creationist circles, and I avoid going into too much depth on any one of them here, but they all tend to share similar features: the Flood was a global cataclysm, it resulted in the scarring of the Earth, the floodwaters are still visible today, and the world prior to it was so radically different in geography and fauna as to be utterly unrecognizable. This is all, by the way, Scriptural, and not simply things that creationists have agreed on arbitrarily.

In this way, the Flood is an historical brick wall. It's such a hard reset that secular historians don't even believe that it happened, satisfying themselves instead with incomplete theories of evolution and inconceivably ancient earths. The evidence for the Flood, which they will insist is beyond the limits of reasonable belief, is in fact right in front of them; accepting it, however, usually entails a moral dimension to accepting creationist claims that the secular mindset is naturally hostile to.

The opaqueness of the antediluvian period thus makes it difficult to ascertain what our earliest patriarchs were like. On one hand, we can rest assured in the understanding that this knowledge is indeed beyond the purview of our curiosity, at least in terms of certainty. On the other, we know they existed as they are recorded in Sacred Scripture, and the mystery that sits between reconciling the incomprehensibility of the antediluvian world with the assurance of its existence is worth speculation.

This project is the first attempt at my own speculation on the subject. It's an informal study, drawing from a variety of different sources—some admittedly far more credible than others. Despite our earliest Patriarchs being, in a certain sense, utterly mysterious, there is value to be had in attempting an abstract study of their lives. If nothing else, it grants a context to the modern world in a way that a sterile catechesis on the Fall or the Flood may not. My hope here is that others, too, can come to better appreciate both Scripture and practical living by entertaining what I've included in this study. The end of all religious study should be, after all, a better development of one's interior life and more precision in personal prayer.

I offer this with no pretenses as to my status or credentials. I have none. This is the work of a Catholic convert who had access to the internet, to books, and to a word processor, nothing more.

On Reading Genesis

Adam was made, depending on your Biblical chronology, a little over six thousand years ago, at the end of the first week. While there has always been some disagreement between the Church Fathers over the nature of the first week's chronology—namely how exactly time was measured during that period—several things have always been agreed upon: the events described in the first chapter of Genesis exist to provide *both* a spiritual account to assist in the development of our own interior lives, and an historic record of the beginning of the world. “All divine scripture is twofold,” St. Augustine reminds us,

in accounts of things done, what one asks is whether they are all to be taken as only having a figurative meaning, or whether they are also to be asserted and defended as a faithful account of what actually happened. No Christian, I mean, will have the nerve to say that they should not be taken in a figurative sense, if he pays attention to what the apostle says: All these things, however, happened among them in figure (1 Cor 10:11), and to his commending what is written in Genesis, And they shall be two in one flesh (Gn 2:24), as a great sacrament in Christ and in the Church (Eph 5:32).³

St. Augustine elucidates a matter of Scriptural interpretation that had been a fundamental part of early Christian and ancient Hebrew tradition since Scriptural writing began. What's important in his comment here, however, isn't simply the latter part—that “no Christian . . . will have the nerve” to suggest that Scripture lacks a “figurative sense”; it's also that what is literally written is so clearly relevant that it barely warrants mentioning. A ‘literal’ interpretation of Genesis is to be presumed, it's the default approach, and the saint's most authoritative work on the subject deals explicitly with this issue.

[The USCCB goes a bit further in explaining this:](#)

There are two basic senses of Scripture: the literal sense and the spiritual sense. The literal sense refers to the sense of the words themselves; it is “that which has been expressed directly by the inspired human authors.”² It has been variously described as the verbal or grammatical sense, the plain sense, the sense the human author intended, the sense the divine author intended, the historical sense, and even the obvious sense. Underlying these various descriptions is the notion that “the literal sense is the meaning conveyed by the words of Scripture.”³ The literal sense is discovered by careful and attentive study of the biblical text using all interpretive tools available, such as grammatical aids, archaeological evidence, historical and literary analyses, sociological and anthropological studies, and whatever else can be called upon to expand one's knowledge of the historical and literary context of the text and thereby gain a better understanding of the literal sense of the biblical text.⁴

This same article goes on to explain the other three senses of Scripture, with special emphasis on the spiritual sense—one that's often called the allegorical sense. It is of tantamount importance, however, to remember that the literal and spiritual senses are completely congruent with one another; something pertaining to a moral lesson cannot be true under a spiritual reading at the expense of what is understood by a literal reading and vice-versa. These are not alternative means of reading Scripture; they are additional means of studying it, like subjecting foreign rock samples to various different and more intensive tests in order to better understand them.

³ Augustine, *On Genesis: The Literal Meaning of Genesis*, trans. Edmund Hill, O.P. (Hyde Park, New York: New City Press, 2002), 168.

⁴ Viviano, Pauline A., “The Senses of Scripture,” *Catechetical Sunday 2008* (Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2008), 1.

This is, of course, a vast subject all on its own, and not one intended to be covered at any length for the current endeavor. It's worth touching on just to orient ourselves with relation to what have come to be some of the most controversial parts of the Old Testament: the origin of creation and the making of the first man.

The Church has no standard method of interpreting the first eleven chapters of Genesis, but secular world most certainly does: it's fundamentally mythological and any truths we can glean from Adam and his progeny are psychological, anthropological, or political in nature. In short, Genesis is about as real or historical as a very popular fairy tale. While no one can both call himself a Catholic and believe this, too many prelates in the public eye hold beliefs that stray dangerously close to such secular nonsense—and too many lay Catholics are in danger of embracing it. Many forget St. Augustine on the matter: “No one, then, forbids us to understand Paradise according to [metaphors], and perhaps other, more appropriate allegorical interpretations, *while also believing in the truth of that story as presented to us is a most faithful narrative of events.*”⁵

With that said, we will not dwell on the creation of the world here, as rather than the world, our interest is in its first created rational inhabitant: Adam. Nor will we dwell on unsubstantiated hypotheses regarding Adam's formulation out of some evolutionary line of primates. Although *Humani Generis* grants Catholics the liberty of believing this theory, it can by no means be used to indicate that it is the official teaching of the Church. It can certainly be said such a belief is very much against the norm of Biblical interpretation, and it can find no support among the commentaries of the Church Fathers—nor indeed, any credible theologian of note all the way up through until about a single century ago. So while it is not within our purposes today to broach the subject of evolution, it's worth noting that attempts to reconcile Darwin's belief system with that of Scripture and Tradition creates far more problems than it actually solves.⁶

Sources Used

As far as sources go, this piece will draw primarily from the Church Fathers, with additional input from medieval writers, and excerpts from early-Jewish Midrashic commentary. In particular, I draw heavily from the writings of St. Augustine and the revelations of Blessed Anne Emmerich, and this is for two reasons. In the case of St. Augustine, he wrote the most extensively and in the most detail of all the Church Fathers on the topic of the book of Genesis (while his take on the six day creation cycle is a little controversial, it has little to no bearing on the scope of this piece).

In the case of Blessed Emmerich, her revelations—although not totally authoritative when it comes to history *per se*—remain a helpful glimpse into a world so distant in time from our own as to be impenetrable even by our imaginations. Where possible, writings from apocrypha—particularly the early-Christian Books of Adam, Book of the Cave of Treasures, and Book of Jubilees—are used to supplement as examples of what the ancient Christian tradition believed around the time of the

5 Augustine, *City of God*, 568-569. Emphasis mine.

6 Those interested in further reading on the problems with theistic evolution should look into the works of Stephen Meyer, John M. Wynne, and J.P. Moreland, as a start.

Incarnation and immediately afterward. It was very often the case that early Christian tradition understandably built off that of the existent Hebrew when it came to stories regarding the ancient past.

It must be made clear, however, and in no uncertain terms, that the apocrypha are not reliable sources of information. They don't agree with each other, of course, but more importantly, there are occasions where they don't even agree with Scripture—which, as we know, is inerrant. The reason for including them in this study at all is because they encapsulate some aspect of tradition, elements of which—as will be made clear—survived into the Christian tradition of the Church, despite other errors their texts may have included.

The visions of Blessed Emmerich are generally consistent with these traditions (though not usually the apocryphal texts themselves); however, whether that's because she was familiar with them herself or because they spoke to particular truths that were revealed to her is beyond my knowledge.

It must not be construed as using apocrypha authoritatively. They do not constitute any aspect of canon within Scripture, and in terms of authority, apocryphal books aren't in general even worth reading. However, as we know from Enoch, the text of which was (probably) cited briefly in the Epistle of Jude, it can't be said that all apocrypha is created equal. While the First Book of Enoch is not drawn from here, the aforementioned Books of Adam, Treasures, and Jubilees are used to illustrate what *may* have been some approximation of the history of the antediluvian patriarchs immediately after the Fall. I default at heart to St. Augustine's position on apocrypha:

*We may, however, leave aside the stories contained in those Scriptures which are called 'Apocrypha' because their origin is hidden and was not clear to the fathers from whom the authority of the true Scriptures has come down to by a most certain and known succession. There is, indeed, some truth to be found in these apocryphal Scriptures; but they have no canonical authority because of the many untruths they contain. We cannot, of course, deny that Enoch, the seventh in descent from Adam, wrote a number of things by divine inspiration, since the apostle Jude says so in a canonical epistle. But it was not for nothing that even these were excluded from the canon of the Scriptures which was preserved in the temple of the Hebrew people by the diligence of the priestly succession.*⁷

It is in the interest of putting certain specific works of apocrypha into the context of Scripture, the Fathers, and Bl. Emmerich's private revelation that I have included some of their texts in the scope of this piece. That being said, however, even this is not enough to fully trust any of the apocryphal claims.

Much can be said on this topic that, in the interests of brevity, is not worth going into in this work. The important thing to note is that, where apocrypha is used here, it is by no means used to indicate that apocryphal works are authoritative. They are, at best, possible scenarios of what could have happened, positioned and made sensible with the more authoritative writings of the Church Fathers, approved visionaries, and of course, the inerrant Sacred Scripture.

⁷ Augustine, *City of God*, 684.

I have also drawn from contemporary commentary where applicable and necessary, in particular the *Jerome Biblical Commentary* and the *Catholic Introduction to the Old Testament* by John Bergsma and Grant Pitre, among others.

A last note: this is not a commentary on Genesis. This project can be considered a look at synthesizing private mystical vision, Church teaching, and ancient mythology, using the works of Bl. Anne Emmerich, St. Augustine, and specific apocrypha as the chief representatives of each component. It's a broad, informal, and non-specific approach to discerning what is possible to elaborate upon Scripture.

I - Creation

Two events define the entirety of the first two millennia of the world: the Fall and the Flood. Events of their magnitude and significance would not occur again, in this writer's opinion, until the Incarnation.

In order to understand the Flood, the world before it must be brought into focus. This can only be done when we begin with the Fall. But the Fall, and its magnitude, can itself only be considered once we try to grasp what human nature was intended to be from the start. So we have to start with the creation of man.

This chapter attempts to provide such an overview, approaching not just abstractly, but wherever possible, some image of the world and of Adam in those earliest hours of existence, before Adam and Eve committed the first sin and found themselves naked of God's Grace.

In the Beginning, God Made Heaven and Earth

We begin not with Adam himself, but with the reason he was made. Scripture scarcely offers many clues to God's motivation, though the writings of St. Augustine offer one possibility. There is conjecture that God desired the seats left empty in the heavenly chorus by those angels who rebelled to be filled by the ranks of men. In his *Handbook on Faith, Hope, and Love*, [he writes](#):

Thus it pleased God, Creator and Governor of the universe, that since the whole multitude of the angels had not perished in this desertion of him, those who had perished would remain forever in perdition, but those who had remained loyal through the revolt should go on rejoicing in the certain knowledge of the bliss forever theirs. From the other part of the rational creation – that is, mankind – although it had perished as a whole through sins and punishments, both original and personal, God had determined that a portion of it would be restored and would fill up the loss which that diabolical disaster had caused in the angelic society. For this is the promise to the saints at the resurrection, that they shall be equal to the angels of God.

Here he references St. Luke, 20:36: "Neither can they die any more: for they are equal to the angels, and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection."

We will revisit this topic when we get to The Fall, but for now, it's worth considering that man—and perhaps creation itself, if this belief is correct—was not intended to have a particularly long-lasting

existence. And by this I don't mean necessarily his lifespan, but rather the species of man in its entirety; how many generations would have filled the emptied thrones of heaven had, sans-lapse, Adam taken full advantage of the divine blessing to be fruitful? Although we know not the number of angels that fell, it should be self evident that more generations have been made necessary as a result of the first man's transgression.

St. Gregory the Great also wrote on the subject, as did numerous theologians throughout the medieval period. The theory generally fell out of favor, however, and isn't a popular one in modern circles. St. Thomas Aquinas, while not explicitly rejecting the assertion, considered the idea wholly unnecessary. As Vojtech Novotny explains,

This thesis suggests that all elect human beings will be admitted into angelic orders, each according to their own merits: some into the higher orders and others to the lower orders; and the Virgin Mary will be above all. But whether this means that as many people will be admitted as there were angels who fell, or as many as remained, or as many as there were altogether—or more or fewer—this is something that is known only to the one who knows the number of the elect who are to be admitted into heavenly bliss.⁸

This does indicate that the elect in heaven share the breathing room of the angelic choirs, but it doesn't quite go so far as to assert what St. Augustine does—that man's purpose was, at least in part, to repopulate that host after the fall of angels. On this issue, St. Thomas is actually resistant:

Since rational creatures are unique objects of God's care and providence, God gave them power over their actions, which implies not only that they are ontologically incommutable (in the sense of the maxim quoted above: unaquaeque creatura est propter suum proprium actum et perfectionem), but also that they do not exist as a function of another creature. Rather, they exist for themselves (propter se), and thus everything else exists for them. Rational nature is thus the only nature that God requires in the universe for itself; everything else is willed only for the sake of rational nature. [...]

What Thomas is describing here can be expressed as follows: people are not a medium through which God might fulfill some kind of purpose. Even though God created them as part of the whole—its mutual immanent finalities and its constitutive transcendental finality—their participation in these relationships is personal.⁹

Whether or not this actually contradicts the general sense of what St. Augustine put forward might be a matter of some debate, but the scholarly consensus tends toward the belief that St. Augustine didn't have it quite right. Since the Magisterium has not ruled on it one way or the other, it—like so much else of the first chapters of Genesis—remains a matter heavily invested in the conscience of the beholder.

8 Novotny, Vojtech, *Cur Homo? A History of the Thesis Concerning Man as a Replacement for Fallen Angels*, trans. Pavlina and Tim Morgan (Prague: Charles University, 2014), 133.

9 Ibid, 145-146.

The First Creation Account

And he said: Let us make man to our image and likeness: and let him have dominion over the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the air, and the beasts, and the whole earth, and every creeping creature that moveth upon the earth. And God created man to his own image: to the image of God he created him: male and female he created them. And God blessed them, saying: Increase and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it, and rule over the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the air, and all living creatures that move upon the earth. And God said: Behold I have given you every herb bearing seed upon the earth, and all trees that have in themselves seed of their own kind, to be your meat: And to all beasts of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to all that move upon the earth, and wherein there is life, that they may have to feed upon. And it was so done.¹⁰

Genesis contains what at first glance is two accounts of man's creation. The first, included in the narrative describing the sixth day of creation, recounts God's words: *Let us make man to our image and likeness*; additionally, it depicts man created as both male and female at about the same time, and it includes mention of being fruitful as a blessing upon man rather than a divine command.

What sort of man, exactly, was created here? Some speculate, perhaps trying to follow St. Thomas Aquinas [on this issue](#), that it was only man's soul that was created. For this, emphasis on God's "image and likeness" is stressed:

God created man to His own image: *But man is like to God in his soul. Therefore the soul was created. The image of God, in its principal signification, namely the intellectual nature, is found both in man and in woman. Hence after the words, "To the image of God He created him," it is added, "Male and female He created them" (Genesis 1:27). Moreover it is said "them" in the plural, as Augustine (Gen. ad lit. iii, 22) remarks, lest it should be thought that both sexes were united in one individual.*

St. Augustine, in his *Literal Meaning*, suggests something a little different at face value:

So then, perhaps what was made on the sixth day was their souls, where the image of God is rightly to be understood, in the spiritual reality of their minds, so that their bodies might be formed later on? But this too is something we are not permitted by the same text of scripture to believe; first because of that completion of God's works, I do not see how these could be understood to be complete if anything was not there established in its causes which would later on be realized visibly; secondly, because the difference of sex between male and female can only be verified in bodies.¹¹

These passages are not actually in disagreement, though a first glance might imply so. While St. Thomas' emphasis is on man's rational nature, and in particular his soul, he does not preclude the issue that man's flesh had to have been made at the same time. As St. Augustine notes, the difference between the sexes is a physical difference rather than a supernatural one.

¹⁰ Gen 1:26-30.

¹¹ Augustine, *On Genesis*, 307.

The inclusion of this passage is, like the inclusion of the sixth day's entire narrative, more a matter of broader Biblical interpretation. Genesis 2 offers what is effectively a rehash of the final creative day of the creation week, with slightly altered explanations for the distribution of animals and of man's first moments. The standard (and most sensible) interpretation of this discrepancy is that the former account provides a particular expression that is then given more attention or development in the latter. Contemporary scholars John Bergsma and Brant Pitre put it rather succinctly when they explain how these two accounts "should be viewed ... as complementary scenes," comparing it to an establishing shot of a film that precedes a close-up.¹² It's a bit more than this, however, as the expressions of this creation are given slightly different emphasis, too; "Whereas the creation of Adam in Genesis 1 emphasized God's *transcendence*," they note, Genesis 2 emphasized "God's *immanence* or closeness to humanity."¹³

What they mean with this is that the first account's emphasis is on this question of image and likeness; is Genesis 2's depiction really just a closer examination of this process, or is it an examination from a different angle? The answer is effectively both; the focus of the former account depicts man's generalized nature and indicates his generalized capacity in the world—a rational creature, 'like God' in that he is imbued with agency (which entails a certain creative capacity), bi-gendered and reproductive, and granted dominion over the animals. While these are things that will be revisited in detail with Adam himself, the first creation account is more an abstraction for the purposes of brevity, with special emphasis on the important issues.

With this in mind, it's possible to suggest that the first account follows the creation of human personhood itself, *being*, even as this would have occurred concurrently with Adam being fashioned out of the mud. Personhood distinguishes us from the animals and the rest of all corporeal creation, as it is personhood that embodies this 'likeness' to God:

*Aquinas further points out that the image of God is in man not only by imitation of the divine nature, which is an intellectual and volitional nature, but also by imitation of divine personhood, which is possessed by each of the Three Persons of the Trinity. So man is an image of God as he regards both nature and personhood, which are distinct but closely related.*¹⁴

Rev. Warkulwiz here draws the direct connection between that image of God and the nature of personhood, as we know—through revelation—that God's triune character is triune in personage. He continues by expounding upon personhood, describing it as first "incommunicable"; since our experience of ourselves is relatable to others only in part and never in the completeness of its authenticity. He continues:

12 Bergsma, John, and Grant Pitre, *A Catholic Introduction to the Bible: The Old Testament* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2018), 101.

13 Ibid.

14 Rev. Warkulwiz, Victor P., *The Doctrines of Genesis 1-11: A Compendium and Defense of Traditional Catholic Theology on Origins* (Lincoln: Missionary Priests of the Blessed Sacrament, 2007), 226.

*there are other qualifiers that set off personhood. They are the following: uniqueness (there is only one Peter), unrepeatability (there never was and never could be another Peter), indivisibility (there is no half-Peter), and distinctiveness (Peter is not Paul, is not Mary...). Other characteristics associated with a person, but which proceed from the intellectual and volitional nature united with a person, are self-knowledge and freedom of choice.*¹⁵

We can understand that Adam was made only once, and that no man was made before he was. But the emphasis on man being imbued with the image of God in the first creation account indicates the importance and uniqueness of personhood in creation. It is God-like, and it carries with it a certain, albeit lesser, creative capacity, will, agency, and intelligence that are imbued figurements of God's own. Personhood is what entwines these threads together.

Without straying too much from our subject, it's worth noting that this understanding of personhood is exactly why the dignity of human beings is tantamount. Issues such as abortion, contraception, modesty, and in fact, all morality are totally sensible only with a proper understanding of what a person actually is. Contemporary moral frameworks that try to preclude this definition, that try to reduce personhood down to a material sum of parts, necessarily miss the mark in having a coherent moral framework. And it isn't just this uniqueness of personhood that makes the moral framework sustainable, either, but that there are three Divine Persons with whom this human personhood is made relevant. Morality functions not simply to define good and bad behavior; it exists in order assure us that our actions are relevant and that life has a purpose.

And so with this, we come to the second account.

His First Day

*I saw Adam created, not in Paradise, but in the region in which Jerusalem was subsequently situated. I saw him come forth glittering and white from a mound of yellow earth, as if out of a mold. The sun was shining and I thought (I was only a child when I saw it) that the sunbeams drew Adam out of the hillock. He was, as it were, born of the virgin earth. God blessed the earth, and it became his mother. He did not instantly step forth from the earth. Some time elapsed before his appearance. He lay in the hillock on his left side, his arm thrown over his head, a light vapor covering him as with a veil. I saw a figure in his right side, and I became conscious that it was Eve, and that she would be drawn from him in Paradise by God. God called him. The hillock opened, and Adam stepped gently forth.*¹⁶

[Here](#), Blessed Anne Emmerich describes the visions she'd received pertaining to the creation of the world. The literal, historical accuracy of her visions are, of course, a matter of complete speculation. As the only rational witnesses to Adam's creation were God and the hosts of incorporeal beings, we can

¹⁵ Ibid, 227.

¹⁶ Emmerich, Anne, *The Life of Our Lord Jesus Christ and Biblical Revelations*, Vol 1, trans. 'an American Nun': 1917 (Rockford, TAN Books: 2004), 7.

only take Blessed Emmerich at her word and trust in private revelation.¹⁷ It's of course extremely unlikely that it's all just made up, but neither would it be appropriate to treat it as infallible.

In any case, Genesis gets easier to interpret more literally with the second creation account. Absent from its narrative are cosmological ambiguities regarding divisions of waters or seeming hermaphroditic first men¹⁸; instead, the straight-forward imagery—albeit still difficult to make sense of—reveals Adam molded from the combination of earth and water. This is not without its figurative sense, however, we can parse from St. Augustine.

Early in his conversion, he had considered this passage in Genesis as almost entirely allegorical. Although at the time he did not altogether refute the notion that the two different creation accounts referred to the distinct creations between man's interior and exterior natures, he did refute the notion that the two accounts were completely separate. In fact, he disagreed so thoroughly with this that he believed that the two accounts depicted the same exact thing entirely, almost—but not quite—arguing that the second account was exactly just a rehash of the first:

*so if, as I am saying, we understand that in this place the man was made of body and soul, it was by no means absurd to give that mixture the name of mud. Just as water, you see, collects earth and sticks and holds it together when mud is made by mixing it in, so too the soul by animating the material of the body shapes it into a harmonious unity, and does not permit it to fall apart into its constituent elements.*¹⁹

At the time, St. Augustine considered the events of the first chapters in Genesis to be predominantly allegorical, or mythical in character. This was in his *Refutation of the Manichees*, a two-volume work completed very shortly after his entrance into the Church. In the interests of evangelism, he claimed—much later in life—to “not want them to be put off by being faced with reams of obscure discussion,” as the Manichees' position on Genesis was so erroneous that they “blaspheme by rejecting [it] outright with detestation.”²⁰

More interestingly, in that same passage, St. Augustine admits that his own view of Genesis changed afterward anyway; he had walked back his purely allegorical take, as, at the time,

*it had not yet dawned on me how everything in [Genesis] could be taken in its proper literal sense; it seemed to me rather that this was scarcely possible, if at all, and anyhow extremely difficult. So in order not to be held back, I explained with what brevity and clarity I could muster what those things, for which I was not able to find a suitable literal meaning, stood for in a figurative sense...*²¹

17 So as not to brush it aside, there were certain inaccuracies in some of Blessed Emmerich's many visions over her life, but nonetheless, the compendiums of her visions—in this case, *The Life of Our Lord Jesus Christ*, from which this creation account is taken—each carry an imprimatur and a nihil obstat from the Holy See.

18 Some of the Jewish Midrashic commentary on this is completely insane.

19 Augustine, *On Genesis*, 77.

20 Ibid, 348-349.

21 Ibid.

So the good saint recognized even at the time that the figurative sense of the passage was not its only sense. St. John Chrysostom connects the same dots, but goes further. The figurative manner of interpretation that St. Augustine warrants early in life is in no way incompatible with a literal molding of man from slime; “it did not simply say ‘earth’ but ‘dust’,” [St. Chrysostom says](#), “something more lowly and substantial even than the earth...” For St. John, the literal formulation of Adam out of the dust or slime of the earth is actually necessary for the figurative significance of Adam’s creation to make any sense. These aren’t mutually exclusive ways for Scripture to make clear its purposes; the latter demands the former. Consider his exegesis on how humble we must be before the majesty of God:

Hence, when Scripture comes back to the point it teaches us also the manner of our composition and the beginning of our creation, and whence the first human being was produced and how it was produced. After all, into what depths of madness would we not have tumbled if, despite this teaching and despite the knowledge that the human being takes the beginning of its composition from the earth as do the plants and the irrational beings (though its formation and the bodiless being of the soul has given it a marked superiority, thanks to God's loving kindness, (103c) this constituting after all the basis of its rationality and its endowment with control over all creation), if then with this knowledge this creature shaped from the earth had conjured up the notion of its equality with God owing to the serpent's deceit, and if the blessed author had been content with his first account and had not repeated himself in teaching us everything with precision, into what depths of madness would we not have tumbled?²²

Out of the soil Adam was made, and into him God breathed life. As St. John asks, how be it possible that he could have fallen for the Devil’s tricks? How could Adam believe even for a moment that dust could be like God? We’ll touch on this in greater detail when we get to the Fall.

The important takeaway from all of this is that unlike the first account of Adam’s creation, whose literal interpretation may seem clouded by an abundance of meanings, the second account gives a very clear, concrete explanation, and that this explanation’s historical importance is given more credence by its allegorical and figurative aspects.

Contemporary scholars, for various reasons, would prefer to place Adam’s creation firmly in the realm of mythology. This places Adam, his life, his Fall, and the context of Genesis 1-11 in their entirety, well beyond the reach of practical reason. Rather than learning from the lessons of real people, such as drawing from the examples of previous battles when deciding contemporary mission tactics, the mythologizing of Genesis reduces the history of Adam to a fairy tale. Are we more likely to be leery of strangers because of the witch we recall from Hansel & Gretel, or because of the countless news reports of hardened criminals preying on delusional teenagers?

Once you reach a certain age, fairy tales do little to shape practical morality; while not entirely meaningless, they serve rather as the context for a common culture and tradition. The relegation of

²² John Chrysostom, *Homilies on Genesis: Homily 12*, trans. John Litteral, 165.

Catholicism to background noise in so many instances, although not solely attributable to the modern push to mythologize Genesis, is very much tied up in this phenomenon. If Adam wasn't real, what else wasn't real? If the Fall was not an historical event, then what metaphysical significance does Our Lord's sacrifice on the Cross hold? If there was no single lineage from which all of mankind is derived, then how could Our Lord's Most Precious Blood have redeemed everyone? These questions could be brushed over with a simple non-sequitur, hand-waving matters of history away with a generalized appeal to God's mysterious will. God's capable of anything, of course, but His love for us implies that His miracles are supposed to make at least some sort of sense. Even if we can't explain the totality of them, or even necessarily why we warranted them, there's always a poetic sense of justice to be found in how God unfolds history.

The point here is that by mythologizing Adam, the attempt is made to mythologize Christ. The gods of folklore and myth can be afforded a degree of arbitrariness that cannot be attributed to God. Attempting to do so is a blasphemy whose consequences is too dire to speculate on here.

For St. John Chrysostom above, the figurement of Adam's simultaneous importance (being made in God's image) and insignificance (his composition of dust) are necessary components of understanding him. Some propose that Adam's composition of atoms and malleable genetic code corresponds to the dust of the earth, and how these atoms and code came to be in the orientation necessary to comprise Adam did not have to be more or less instantaneous as Scripture implies. While it's not impossible to square this with Scripture, such flirtations with Darwinism bring back to the forefront an almost purely allegorical interpretation. This gets us back to mythologizing and thus trivializing the prelapsarian world. But as stated earlier, it's not within the purview of this piece to dwell on arguments from theistic evolution.

Eden

Adam, we must remember, was made outside of Eden. Scripture explains Adam's formation from out of the mud in Genesis 2:7; immediately afterward is Eden established and man brought to it (Gen 2:8). Bl. Emmerich [describes](#) his being "borne up on high to a garden," following Scripture's indication that Eden occupied land on top of a raised hill or mountain. As Bergsma and Pitre explain:

Eden is described as a mountain or mountaintop—this can be deduced from the fact that all four primary rivers (from an Israelite perspective) flow out from Eden. That would make Eden the highest point of the known world, and this accords with Ezekiel's reference to Eden as "the mountain of God" (Ezek 18:14, 16)²³ and a great deal of ancient Near Eastern iconography and textual evidence for the belief in a primordial divine garden on top of the "cosmic mountain" or central mountain of the world.²⁴

The construction of Eden written in Genesis does describe it to be planted on at a raised elevation, but the degree to which it may or may not have dominated over the antediluvian landscape is never made clear. Ancient Christian tradition, which we'll look at more closely in sections pertaining to Adam's

²³ Proper citation: Ezekiel 28:16, 18.

²⁴ Bergsma & Pitre, *A Catholic Introduction to the Bible*, 102.

life after his expulsion from Paradise, usually grants the mention from Ezekiel as a very literal mountain, towering above the plains and riven with vast cave networks. Bl. Emmerich's visions are consistent with this belief, although not as emphasized. In any case, descriptions of Eden outside of Scripture, like nearly all of the antediluvian world, are matters of speculation.

Bergsma and Pitre, continuing in their explanation of Eden, remark briefly on its status as the prefiguration of a temple. They draw a comparison with ancient Near Eastern associations of "temples and the primordial cosmic mountain", in which ancient temple complexes were "built in part to represent the original 'mountain of God'." Additionally, the "presence near Eden of gold as well as precious stones, such as 'onyx' and 'bdellium' (Gen 2:12)" are indications of the construction of a sacred place; these stones were used in the "ornamentation of temples", "liturgical vessels and vestments", and were used on the Ark of the Covenant. The cherubim come to guard Eden after the expulsion of the first pair, just as "images of cherubim also protect the later Tabernacle and Temple". And the garden also faced East, just as the Temple originally did, and just as very early church construction followed.²⁵

It is no surprise then that future Doctors of the Church would draw rich comparisons between Eden, the Tree of Life, its fruits, and the water of its streams with the Church, the Cross, the Eucharist, and the even the Most Precious Blood. In Eden were prefigurations of things made necessary for man's salvation by the Fall. As an example, see St. Bonaventure:

Picture in your mind a tree whose roots are watered by an ever-flowing fountain that becomes a great and living river with four channels to water the garden of the entire Church. From the trunk of this tree, imagine that there are growing twelve branches that are adorned with leaves, flowers and fruit. [...] Imagine that there are twelve fruits, having every delight and the sweetness of every taste (Wisd. 16:20). This fruit is offered to God's servants to be tasted so that when they eat it, they may always be satisfied, yet never grow weary of its taste. This is the fruit that took its origin from the Virgin's womb and reached its savory maturity on the tree of the cross under the midday heat of the Eternal Sun, that is, the love of Christ. In the garden of the heavenly paradise—God's table—this fruit is served to those who desire it.²⁶

Although St. Bonaventure is using this image as an allegorical and spiritual illustration, such a demonstration does nothing to invalidate the historical truth of Eden's trees and the tree of life in particular. The tree of life is not given as much overt emphasis in Genesis as is the tree of knowledge, even though within the Church it is of more importance. The latter's tree was involved with a single event; the former, however, is revisited again, at the very least on every Sunday by faithful Catholics, if not daily. The Eucharistic language on plain display in St. Bonaventure's writing here makes this self-evident.

This isn't to say, of course, that the Eucharist itself was the fruit hanging from the actual tree of life in Eden. Like all things postlapsarian, the tree of life we are familiar with is a remaking of the one in the

25 Ibid, 102-103.

26 Bonaventure, *The Tree of Life*, trans. Ewert Cousins, (Mawah: Paulist Press 1978), 120-121.

Garden; it could almost be called a re-fulfillment of its image. Nonetheless, the typological significance is plain.

Bl. Emmerich's visions [depict](#) a large "crystalline rock, formed apparently of precious stones" emerging from the side of a hill next to Adam just after Eve had been made. She doesn't expand on this, although it's quite clearly connected to the precious stones of Ezekiel 28; its depiction as a single stone almost implies that it's there as an altar. It would be fitting given the context of Eden's temple-like layout.

In any case, Adam, after his creation, is brought to the garden by God. Here, in his first creative act, he names the animals. This is actually a really big deal, as prior to this, things had been given form and matter, but nothing carried the mark of identification yet. The act of naming things should be recognized as a sort of image of creation itself, in much the same way that Adam was a sort of image of God: a lesser but analogous variation. While a moral framework, meaning, and *logos* was already present in the world, imbued there by God as a consequence of its existence, Adam's act of naming indicates recognition and participation in these things—a sort of "message received" on the part of the first corporeal free agent. Adam could not have invented the language he was using, but by participating in it and using it to create new words for things—names—he was demonstrating his likeness of God in a creative capacity.

Applying a name to an animal or an object is to place it into a referential framework. It makes a thing knowable. By God's Word was the world made, by divine commands are things brought into being. As St. John Chrysostom wrote:

In the case of all the other creatures blessed Moses taught us the manner of creation, saying, "God said, Let there be light, and there was light;" [Gen 1:3] "Let the firmament be made;" [Gen 1:6] "Let the water be gathered together; [Gen 1:9] "Let the stars be made;" [Gen 1:14] (106b) "Let the earth put forth a crop of vegetation;" [Gen 1:11] "Let the waters bring forth reptiles with living souls;" [Gen 1:20] and "Let the earth bring forth a living thing." [24] Do you see how they were all created by a word?²⁷

By divine word are things commanded into being. By man's word are things ascribed their identities. These identities are not conjured out of nothingness, as their substance and organization was made by God. Man's participation in this act of creation, however, is to imitate in such a way that he augments it. By naming the animals, Adam participated in the creative exercise by establishing the vocabulary—and therefore, identifying a rational framework—by which creation could be understood. It's not that he invented this framework, just that he recognized its existence and then attached words to it.

It's worth noting, before we get to Eve, that the rivers mentioned in the garden are the following: The Phison, the Gehon, the Tigris, and the Euphrates. Josephus, following in a relatively accepted tradition among the Hebrews, [corresponded](#) the Phison to the Nile and the Gehon to the Ganges, and some early Christian writers followed in this vein. It is never considered with any certainty, however, and it's quite possible that the cataclysm of the Flood forever buried these rivers while also irrevocably changing the

²⁷ Chrysostom, *Homilies: Homily 13*, 170-171.

latter two into the shape they are today. When considering antediluvian geography, it is always important to keep in mind how alien and unrecognizable the Earth would have seemed to our eyes, even in its flora and fauna, terrain, and topography, but especially in its geography.

Eve

So we arrive finally to the formulation of Eve.

She was formed for Adam, according to Scripture, as to be “a helper like himself”²⁸, following the naming of the animals discussed above. The *Jerome Biblical Commentary* has this to say about Eve and her relationship with Adam:

*18. “A helper like himself” expresses two profound ideas: Woman complements man, a social being by nature, but she is not a mere service appendage; she “corresponds to him” i.e., has a similar nature. 19-20. In these verses, J introduces the creation of the animals to emphasize, by contrast, the true role of woman. Animals, named by man, and hence under his control (cf. 1:26b,28b), are not fit companions for his total being; they have no nature corresponding to his (and indirect polemic against bestiality?). 21-23. The “deep sleep” of man suggests the mysterious and highly significant nature of the divine activity (cf Gn 15:12). The description of woman’s formation is, like that of man’s, etiological. All the expressions—the “rib” ... “bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh” ... “woman” and “man”—indicate the unity of nature of man and wife. [...] woman, unlike animal, is the “helper like himself.” But woman’s existence, psychologically and in the social order, is dependent on man. 24. The author concludes this first part of this narrative with a general principle—a theological conviction that had prompted and conditioned the story of woman’s formation. The unit of marriage and its monogamous nature are God-willed.*²⁹

While the *Commentary* carries with it the unfortunate flaws of modern Biblical scholarship, key points of interest stick out: the necessary dependence upon man that woman was made with, her innate social subservience, and her similar nature.

What’s crucial to understand is that woman’s subservience does not imply a metaphysical, theological, or practical inferiority, but rather a complementarity of these aspects that finds its fulfillment alongside her obedience. While today’s social inclination toward egalitarian absolutism has made most of us lose sight of what a properly ordered social hierarchy even looks like, its vestiges can still be found in the ordering of the family. The father remains the head of the household; in cases where this is not obviously present, the family either ceases to be a coherent unit (divorce or separation), or the children grow up imbued with a natural tendency toward disobedience and generally lack discipline. The father remains the leader, even if he doesn’t act ‘fatherly’ or as a leader should; this is what leads to the ruin of the family.

28 Gen 2:20.

29 Brown, Raymond E., Joseph A. Fitzmyer, and Roland E. Murphy, *The Jerome Biblical Commentary* (Englewood Cliffs, Prentice-Hall, Inc.: 1968), 12.

While a father can bring ruin to a family by acting un-fatherly, a mother can likewise bring ruin by acting un-motherly or un-womanly. A woman who is not permitted to fulfill her station in life by her husband is victimized by a man who stretched his authority beyond its limits. Just as the deadbeat who abandons his family, the thug who abuses his wife obviously leads his family to ruin. On the other hand, the woman who acts with impunity, who does not listen to her husband or attend to him as the first mate of a ship does for its captain, leads the family into ruin as well. As St. Hildegard explains:

Woman was created for the sake of man, and man for the sake of woman. As she is from the man, the man is also from her, lest they dissent from each other in the unity of making their children; for they should work as one in one work, as the air and the wind intermingle in their labor. In what way? The air is moved by the wind, and the wind is mingled with the air, so that in their movement all verdant things are subject to their influence. What does this mean? The wife must cooperate with the husband and the husband with the wife in making children. Therefore the greatest crime and wickedest act is to make by fornication a division in the days of creating children, since the husband and wife cut off their own blood from its rightful place, sending it to an alien place.³⁰

Not only does the union between man and wife constitute a sacred bond, a uniting into a figurative singular flesh, which emphasizes the assignment of complementary responsibilities, it also indicates certain moral imperatives attached to the bond itself. As St. Hildegard points out, fornication attacks marriage even where it is performed between the man and wife. With the formulation of Eve, we can recognize that human sexuality is not intrinsically disordered behavior; God's blessing to be fruitful and multiply should make that clear. But sexual misbehavior within the marriage union remains gravely sinful and can trace its start back to the Fall. Just as their natures were corrupted in the Fall, so too were the means by which they would multiply.

It is even the assertion of St. Augustine that prior to the Fall, the sexual organs would have obeyed man's will as easily and readily as any other limb of his body would have:

Man himself, then, could once have received from his lower members an obedience which he lost by his own disobedience. It would not have been difficult for God to make Him in such a way that even what is now set in motion in his flesh only by lust should have been moved by his will alone.³¹

The propagation of man throughout the land, as Adam had been blessed by God to be fruitful, was foreseen and expected, but it cannot be said that this would imply Adam's Fall was necessary for this propagation to take place. The saint expresses such in one of his works specifically on Genesis; "if successors could properly be sought for those who were going to die," he explains, "with much more propriety could companions and community have been sought for those who were going to go on

30 Hildegard von Bingen, *Scivias*, trans. Columba Hart and Jane Bishop (Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1990), 78.

31 Augustine, *City of God*, 626.

living.”³² As death would not have entered the world without the Fall, it stands to reason that the procreation was doubtlessly expected and intended.

St. John Chrysostom agrees. Eve’s creation was accompanied by the words “For this reason man will leave his father and mother, and cling to his wife and the two shall become one flesh.”³³ It’s not much of an extrapolation to deduce what that implies; as he [explains](#):

*From what source did he gain knowledge of future events and the fact that the race of human beings should grow into a vast number? Whence, after all, did he come to know that there would be intercourse between man and woman? I mean, the consummation of that intercourse occurred after the Fall; up till that time they were living like angels in paradise and so they were not burning with desire, not assaulted by other passions, not subject to the needs of nature, but on the contrary were created incorruptible and immortal, and on that account at any rate they had no need to wear clothes. "They were both naked," the text says, remember, "and were not ashamed." [Gen 2:25] You see, while sin and disobedience had not yet come on the scene, they were clad in that glory from above which caused them no shame; but after the breaking of the law, then entered the scene both shame and awareness of their nakedness.*³⁴

St. Augustine also explains how the inversion of human nature (which will be addressed in the following sections in greater detail) corrupted conjugal relations. As the body’s disordered passions exert influence over the will, sometimes to the point of domination, the proper relationship between man and wife becomes harder to maintain. But this does not mean that this relationship was invented as a result of these disordered passions; rather, the relationship pre-existed these passions and they contorted the nature of that relationship. Fundamentally, the union between men and women was intentional from the start, and it was only the Fall that made this relationship so filled with strife and shame. As he explains in *City of God*:

*Now in the order of nature the soul is certainly placed higher than the body; yet the same soul governs the body more easily than it governs itself. Indeed, this lust which we are here discussing is something to be blushed at all the more because, when it arises, the soul neither has command of itself so effectively as to be entirely free from it, nor does it rule the body so completely that the shameful members are moved by the will rather than by lust. Indeed, if they are so ruled they would not be shameful.*³⁵

He expresses likewise elsewhere, adding to this sentiment the notion of God’s infinite wisdom and majesty that He can bring good even out of the greatest evils.

Now however, as the just deserts of their transgressing the commandment, they found the movement of that law fighting back against the law of the mind in the members of the body of that death they had contracted, a movement which marriage regulates,

32 Augustine, *On Genesis*, 383.

33 Gen 2:24.

34 Chrysostom, *Homilies on Genesis: Homily 15*, 202-203.

35 Augustine, *City of God*, 634.

*continence subdues and curbs, in order that just as the sin was turned into punishment, so the punishment might be turned into merit.*³⁶

It is, of course, out of a sort of brokenness that lust pervades in the flesh of men, and a brokenness that Adam would have understood at least in the abstract (certainly not experientially) prior to the Fall. However, even with the catastrophic destruction of human nature that occurred, God's perfection ensured that the fundamental design of man's being could survive in spite of death. This is what is meant by "the punishment might be turned into merit"; St. Augustine is commenting on the fact that by properly chaining your passions, guarding them, and sticking closely to those ways by which that is possible—habit, prayer, and selfless devotion to God—we end up proving to ourselves the love that God has for us. God's love is unceasing, but our engagement with Him is not. Properly and consciously regulating our behavior in order to obey God's will is not always easy, but it's an honest engagement with the punishments due to sin. By this is our "punishment might be turned into merit."

Although this concerns the Fall more than it concerns sexual behavior *per se*, it's worth engaging with here because of how immediately the proper ordering of sexuality was corrupted. Its obviousness in the present day shrouds how badly it was corrupted by the Fall, and how different the relationship between the sexes is in its proper ordering. Although efforts were made over the many centuries to mend this, the sexual revolution demolished any sensible understanding of how men and women are supposed to get along with each other.

This does, however, raise the question of whether God could have made Adam's first companion male instead of female, had procreation not been one of the main reasons for companionship. St. Augustine addresses this too in his writings on Genesis:

*If it was to till the earth together with him, there was as yet no hard toil to need such assistance; and if there had been the need, a male would have made a better help. The same can be said about companionship, should he grow tired of solitude. How much more agreeably, after all, for conviviality and conversation would two male friends live together on equal terms than man and wife? While if it was expedient that one should be in charge and the other should comply, to avoid a clash of wills disturbing the peace of the household, such an arrangement would have been ensured by one being made first, the other later, especially if the latter were created from the former, as the female was in fact created. [...] For these reasons I cannot work out what help a wife could have been made to provide the man with, if you take away the purpose of childbearing.*³⁷

He perhaps unintentionally touches on a deeper truth of creation in this meditation: family, although seemingly a byproduct made to ease Adam's loneliness, is a worldly implementation of properly-ordered love and a figurement of the Trinity. That said, it is necessary that the components of a familial bond be differentiated in purpose and in execution. What this means is that two men, even when placed in a relationship where the servitude of one is freely acknowledged and accepted, cannot fulfill the uniqueness of the familial bond that we see between man and wife. Again, sexual passion, although

³⁶ Augustine, *On Genesis*, 386.

³⁷ Augustine, *On Genesis*, 380.

an element of matrimony, is obviously not the foundation of the matrimonial relationship, but rather an element of it.

To modern ears, this can be a difficult pill to swallow—after all, the entire foundation of the gay rights narrative rests on the assumption that sexual passion is the foundation of romantic love, which leads first to the conclusion that those with disordered sexual appetites have a right to indulge them, and second that these disordered appetites, by merit of the consenting parties, form legitimate bonds equal to those of man and wife. If it is not true that sexual passion forms the foundation of matrimony, as we can recognize from Genesis and from a simple study of the natural law, then this entire narrative collapses.

Woman was created, then, not just to bear children, as St. Augustine notes, but also be a willing agent in the fulfillment of a kind of love that images the Trinity. The fullness of family as a worldly (if imperfect) image of Godliness is something only possible in the proper union between man and wife.³⁸ Man was made such that he requires some complimentary aspect; in the lay religious, this is found in marriage, wherein completion constitutes the marital bond infused by the graces of God, while in the religious life, it is found wholly and totally in the graces of chastity dedicated to God alone. In either case, man was made *wanting*; his hunger for God exists as a result of the Fall, as the Fall deprived man of a fullness he was made with, but that fullness was predicated on the graces of God in the first place. We may not ever really know where the ‘animal’ aspect of man ended and the image of God began, prior to the Fall, but we can recognize at least that the damage of the Fall affected human nature itself, changing it the way a cannonball changes a man’s body as it passes through him. This will be approached in more detail during an examination of the Fall itself.

This affects the relations between men and women today, of course, as well as the definition of femininity. Feminism, in all of its forms, resists the notion that there is any complementarity between the sexes; its staunch advocacy for independence is predicated on the individualist ideology that forms a cornerstone of modernist thought. As a result, feminism attempts to overturn the real order of both social and sexual relations.

Of specific note here is the push by feminism to, ostensibly, grant equal authority to women as there is for men in every sphere of public and private life. But authority cannot be wielded in equal measure with two faces, which is why by every practical consideration, feminism seeks rather to overturn the hierarchy as it exists by nature and implement its exact inversion. This is why feminism and all of its dressings must be avoided by Catholics, and why it can safely be shunned as a belief system without the slightest polite consideration. Although it is closely tied to modern ideologies like communism and gay rights, feminism carries within it a primordial disorder that has been familiar to humanity since antediluvian times: the replacement of authority. Authority is the sole tempering factor against the prideful indulgences that can lead even the most reasonable people into the void.

So it is with all this in mind that we come to Eve’s creation. Blessed Emmerich describes it in her [visions](#):

38 The marriage of the religious persons, including priests, to Christ is similar but slightly different and worthy of an entirely separate discussion than is merited here.

Near the tree by the water arose a hill. On it I saw Adam reclining on his left side, his left hand under his cheek. God sent a deep sleep on him and he was rapt in vision. Then from his right side, from the same place in which the side of Jesus was opened by the lance, God drew Eve. I saw her small and delicate. But she quickly increased in size until full grown. She was exquisitely beautiful. Were it not for the Fall, all would be born in the same way, in tranquil slumber.³⁹

The removal of Adam's rib prefigures the piercing into the side of Christ and His Heart, and it also prefigures the door in the side of the ark⁴⁰. Bl. Emmerich builds off of the tradition of the Church by connecting at least the former two together. She adds onto this further detail a little later on:

I have always thought that by the Wounds of Jesus there were opened anew in the human body portals closed by Adam's sin. I have been given to understand that Longinus opened in Jesus' Side the gate of regeneration to eternal life, therefore no one entered Heaven while that gate was closed.⁴¹

She describes an endowment of light and visible brilliance bestowed upon Adam, similar to the "Blessing that Abraham received from the angel," which was "of similar form, but not so luminous."⁴² This, as well as their luminosity that her visions depicted, will be examined at greater length with Adam's nature in the next chapter.

From the side of Adam was drawn the woman who would lead him, albeit by his own volition, into the first sin; this inheritance would be answered by she who would crush the head of the serpent. And she could crush that serpent only through the being of her Son, because it would be from the side of Him—lanced by a man while He slept the sleep of death—that the world be redeemed.

39 Emmerich, *Life of Our Lord Jesus Christ*, 8.

40 St. Hippolytus of Rome [mentions](#) this, referencing the door to be on the east side (starboard, or right side, same as what is traditionally accepted to be where Christ was pierced and from where Adam's rib was taken).

41 Emmerich, *Life of Our Lord Jesus Christ*, 9.

42 Ibid.

II - Fall

Human nature was initially ordered toward God. Free agency was not defined within the pathetic confines of whether or not we were to obey God's will, but formulated with a greater freedom in mind: how best to exalt the Most High whose love for us is beyond measure. And yet, most of us do not reach that sort of relationship with God while in this life.

And this is due to the Fall. We did not find our horizons broadened by the Fall. We did not get more choices or experience better things as a result of the first act of disobedience. Rather, human nature was crippled by the act, debilitated, broken, and left to suffer an existence in contradiction to itself. The justice due to the Fall warranted the extinction of mankind—at the time, admittedly, only two people. But God's mercy was such that annihilation was not so willingly entertained.

How did the Fall result in this? What of its aspects are most important to remember? We approach these and other questions here.

Adam's Nature Before the Fall

The Fall, as the word indicates, was the translation of man's nature from a higher one ordered toward God into a base one disordered toward the flesh. In order to understand what this means, it's important to first know what Adam's nature was when he was made—what Adam, and thus all of us, were intended to have been at the very beginning of everything.

Adam's prelapsarian nature is and likely always will be something of a mystery to us, as the damages from sin we inherited from the Fall, although forgiven via baptism, remain with us. Our lives are much shorter than they once were. We get sick easily, our bodies are clumsy and don't always obey our wills, injury is frequent and pain is inevitable. When it comes to understanding, our darkened intellects make it supremely difficult to comprehend what we don't already know, as anyone tasked with teaching can attest to. The passions of the flesh must first be tamed by the Light of Christ if any progress in the spiritual life is to be expected. These are all due to the Fall.

Adam's unblemished nature is not, however, utterly incomprehensible. In fact, we must glean what we can from Scripture and the teachings of the Church in order to understand the magnitude of his disobedience. Understanding this will put into perspective the nature of sin so we may be better aware of it in our own lives.

Bl. Emmerich gives a summary of Adam's nature when she [describes](#) the Fall:

*The first man was an image of God, he was like Heaven; all was one in him, all was one with him. His form was a reproduction of the Divine Prototype. He was destined to possess and to enjoy earth and all created things, but holding them from God and giving thanks for them.*⁴³

Adam's gaze was pointed always toward Heaven, toward God. All things he did, he contemplated, he named, he made or could have made, were directed with the sole purpose of glorifying and giving thanks to the Almighty. It was the perfect filial relationship between primordial, temporal, created son and heavenly, uncreated, eternal father.

We know Adam was made not just the first man, but the prototypical man—the man out of which all other men would come. What this means specifically is that in him could be found all the possibilities that would become the actual variations that we see between men today. As St. Augustine explains:

*God, Who is the author of nature, and certainly not of vices, created man righteous. Man, however, depraved by his own free will, and justly condemned, produced depraved and condemned children. For we were all in that one man, since we all were that one man who fell into sin through the woman who was made from him before they sinned. The particular form in which we were to live as individuals had not yet been created and distributed to us, but the seminal nature from which we were to be propagated already existed. And when this was vitiated by sin and bound by the chain of death and justly condemned, man could not be born of man in any other condition.*⁴⁴

“The seminal nature from which we were to be propagated already existed,” he explains. The future of the entire human race existed in Adam. This includes not just ourselves as free agents and progeny of the first man, but the differences in our blood, our physiology, our ways of life, cultures, and traditions. Language differentiation would, of course, be a different matter entirely, and would itself impact these other divergences. But it would come much later, and with a firm break rather than happening by degrees.

This makes perfect sense, as we understand Adam would have been made exactly as God had intended him—and all humans—to be. He was not an ad hoc combination of randomized genetic compost; he was formed deliberately by the Almighty in order to be, as Scripture implies, the king-priest over all of corporeal creation. Man as he was meant to be: the ideal person. St. John Damascene, Doctor of the Church, [elaborates](#):

God then made man without evil, upright, virtuous, free from pain and care, glorified with every virtue, adorned with all that is good, like a sort of second microcosm within the great world, another angel capable of worship, compound, surveying the visible creation and initiated into the mysteries of the realm of thought, king over the things of

43 Emmerich, *Life of Our Lord Jesus Christ*, 17

44 Augustine, *The City of God against the Pagans*, trans. R. W. Dyson (Cambridge University Press: 1998), 555-556.

earth, but subject to a higher king, of the earth and of the heaven, temporal and eternal, belonging to the realm of sight and to the realm of thought...

Man's intellect was already perfected in Adam prior to the Fall. Adam was subject only to one authority: God; he was not subjected to temptations of the world or the passions of the flesh. His body obeyed him in perfect congruence with his will, which was inundated with grace. The flesh was perfectly subservient to the will.

More than that, St. John Damascene's reference to Adam as king is not idle metaphor, either; we know from his naming of the animals and his call to be the attendant of Eden that Adam was in every sense of the word the first king. Eden's construction, as was pointed out before, also implied Adam was called to be the first priest, as well—although what form his priestly duties would have taken remains a mystery, since beginning with the Fall, those duties have been contextualized around appeasing the wrath of God and begging His forgiveness. Our Lord's Incarnation transformed the priesthood from top to bottom, and the institution of the Sacraments absolved the injustice of the Fall, but even still, Sacramental distribution exists to elevate man out of his sinful nature in order to better please God. There's no easy way to frame what priesthood would have looked like without the Fall. It would have entailed an eternal thanksgiving and praise the sort we expect to find in Heaven, but more than that is difficult to guess.

So we can determine Adam was the first king and the first priest, and it goes without saying that he was also the first father. These three aspects are what define manhood, again underscoring Adam's importance as the prototypical male. A father is called to be the head of his household in both a secular (kingly) and religious (priestly) sense. A priest is called to administer his flock in a sense that images God, which is to say out of familial love for them (fatherly), while leading them in proper moral instruction so they can perform their secular duties to their best abilities (kingly, although lesser so). A king is called to care for his subjects (fatherly) while also to see to the preservation of their religious life (priestly, although again, lesser so). All of these are united under the antediluvian patriarchate that begins with Adam. He was not merely king and priest under his own roof; he was both king and priest in their fullest capacities simultaneously as he was father.

In addition to being forerunner of the human race in role and potential, it stands to reason that he was forerunner physically as well. Evidence of genetic entropy has pointed to the mutation of the human genome resulting in decay and degradation rather than cumulative evolutionary progress:

...mutations are an inadequate evolutionary mechanism because they are seldom if ever beneficial, they involve a loss of useful genetic information, and because near-neutral but harmful mutations accumulate at an overwhelming rate when compared to the rare mutation that can be classified as beneficial. Geneticist Dr. John Sanford has termed this concept "genetic entropy" and it, along with the fossil record, constitute extremely strong arguments against Darwinism. The concept of genetic entropy means that genomes deteriorate over time and lose genetic information. This is far different from the story told in neo-Darwinian theory, which is that given enough time, beneficial

*mutations and added information are possible and, in fact, explain amoeba to man evolution.*⁴⁵

If this is true, and mutations to man’s genetic code indicate decay rather than neutral change, then it stands to reason that working backwards through history should eventually uncover a first human genome devoid the marks of this decay. Proponents of this theory say exactly this, and also indicate that the decay present in DNA mutation is a direct, tangible result of the Fall.⁴⁶

This piece hasn’t the space to expand on matters of genetic entropy or the problems with Darwin’s theories. Rather, this is included to illustrate that Adam’s status as the first father of mankind is, again, to be taken in its most literal sense. He is not merely *archetype* in the abstract; he is archetypal man in every sense of the word. Whatever we have in us we can trace back to him.

The Fall

The Fall is a topic whose exploration has filled libraries worth of texts, dating all the way back to the apostolic period and even into the ancient Hebraic texts of antiquity. For this reason, our survey here will obviously not be covering the Fall in any significant detail; it will limit itself to its affect on Adam and the world, though only in brief.

The story is quite familiar: after Eve’s creation, a serpent tempts her to eat from the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, whereupon she brings the fruit to Adam. This is the only plant in the garden that the two were commanded explicitly not to eat from, “*for in what day soever thou shalt eat of it, thou shalt die the death.*”⁴⁷ We will return to the tree and the fruit in a minute; first, the serpent.

“Now the serpent was more subtle than any of the beasts of the earth which the Lord God had made,”⁴⁸ Scripture tells us. With a single sentence, all we can conjure up in our imaginations is the image of a reptile wholly similar to the snakes we are familiar with today. That, however, is not necessarily the case, as the world prior to the Flood—much less that prior to the Fall—would in all likelihood have looked as alien to us as a completely different planet.

Blessed Emmerich’s visions of the earliest days reveal a depiction of the serpent unlike any other found in fiction or tradition. She [describes](#) the serpent as such:

Among the animals was one that followed Eve more closely than the others, It was a singularly gentle and winning, though artful creature. I know of none other to which I might compare it. It was slender and glossy, and it looked as if it had no bones. It walked upright on its short hind feet, its pointed tail trailing on the ground. Near the head, which was round with a face exceedingly shrewd, it had little short paws, and its wily tongue was ever in motion. The color of the neck, breast, and under part of the body was pale yellow, and down the back it was a mottled brown very much the same as an eel. It was

45 Wynne, John M., *A Catholic Assessment of Evolutionary Theory* (Restoring Truth Ministries, LLC: 2011), 433

46 [This presentation](#), as well as the rest in this series put a lot of this into perspective.

47 Gen 2:17.

48 Gen 3:1.

*about as tall as a child of ten years. It was constantly around Eve, and so coaxing and intelligent, so nimble and supple that she took great delight in it. But to me there was something horrible about it. I can see it distinctly even now. I never saw it touch either Adam or Eve.*⁴⁹

She is careful to note that she “never saw the first human beings touch” any animals, as “Before the Fall, the distance between man and the lower animals was great”.⁵⁰ This particular creature, however, the serpent, was a special case. It did not touch the first parents, but it did interact with them much more than any of the others. Also, Bl. Emmerich comments on how Eve “thought more of their actual bliss and of the things around them than of thanking for them,” mentioning that “her soul was more taken up with created things” than Adam’s was.⁵¹ This doesn’t conflict with Scripture, as we read that it was Eve who “saw that the tree was good to eat, and fair to the eyes, and delightful to behold”, rather than Adam; it was Eve who first ate of the tree, after having the suggestion given to her by the serpent and beholding the tree with her senses.⁵²

It’s worth mentioning also that Eve did not hear with her own ears, presumably, the command God had given Adam relating to the Tree of Knowledge. God’s exact command was this: “Of every tree of paradise thou shalt eat: But of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat. For in what day soever thou shalt eat of it, thou shalt die the death.”⁵³ But this was spoken to Adam alone, before Eve had been made. Therefore, as would be fitting for the hierarchy of family and leadership, it would have been Adam who informed Eve of this sole restriction. Clearly, Eve was aware of the restriction, as she responded to the serpent’s lies with “Of the fruit of the trees that are in paradise we do eat: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of paradise, God hath commanded us that we should not eat; and that we should not touch it, lest perhaps we die.”⁵⁴

And this is where the nature of the Fall begins to come into focus: it was not simply disobedience, but dereliction of duty that resulted in the Fall. Adam’s threefold social nature derived from his being a leader, but more than that, a teacher. And most specifically, as Eve’s husband, he had the obligation of both properly instructing her against eating the fruit, but also properly guarding her from eating from the tree in the first place. While his primordial innocence may account for his rapt attention in all things Godly and their relationship with this new world, his un-darkened intellect and reasoning capabilities forbid interpreting the Fall as a mere accidental mistake.

While Adam may not have had experiential knowledge of sin prior to the Fall, he most certainly had a certain abstract knowledge of disobedience to God. Innocent as he was, his agency would have meant nothing if he did not know what it meant to rebel. Experiential knowledge differing as it does from the abstract, it should go without saying that Adam would have maintained his agency even had he not engaged in the first sin. Any attempts to paint the Fall as the introduction of free will are seriously

49 Emmerich, *Life of Our Lord Jesus Christ*, 12.

50 Ibid.

51 Ibid, 13.

52 Gen 3:6.

53 Gen 2:16-17.

54 Gen 3:2-3.

deleterious to understanding what sin is, what human nature is, and what human beings are intended to be; it's one of the first benchmarks to modernism. Rather, sin deprives man of his agency, as it piles upon him restrictions to his will that come in the form of disordered vices and habits. A man in a state of mortal sin can only cry to God for help in order to overcome it.

What we can gather from Scripture and even more blatantly from Bl. Emmerich's visions is that the serpent is a sort of stand-in for temptation. This isn't merely metaphorical either, although such an interpretation is easier. Through the serpent, the Devil worked to seduce Eve's curiosity such that it would lead her and Adam into ruin. In an allegorical sense, this is a nearly daily occurrence for most of mankind today; it is why those of us trying to adhere to the narrow path must be ever vigilant in guarding against certain curiosities that we know can lead us from temptation into sin. But Scripture speaks of this serpent quite literally, and Bl. Emmerich even more so:

*I learned also at that moment what I cannot clearly repeat; namely, that the serpent was, as it were, the embodiment of Adam and Eve's will, a being by which they could do all things, could attain all things. Here it was that Satan entered.*⁵⁵

Whether Bl. Emmerich's visions are to be taken wholly allegorical or not remains up for some debate; for our purposes, we'll have to assume that they carry at least the barest of historical claims. Man's time in the garden, after all, will forever be obscured by the darkening of our intellect, the loss of records, and the mists of time. Private revelation offers the best clues we have after tradition.

In any case, the serpent's being an "embodiment of will" underscores the metaphorical interpretation mentioned above. But supposing her account is in fact a clear depiction of that most ancient of days, then it would not be unreasonable to assume that the prelapsarian days in Paradise were a time when allegory and literalism were not actually distinct aspects of meaning that overlapped one another. Rather, it's possible that reality itself was imbued with this meaning as seamlessly as Adam's nature was imbued with spirit, soul and flesh—and moreover, that he was aware of it as a result of his undarkened intellect and closeness to God. We know that our first parents' interaction with reality was unhindered by the vices that obscure truth, so is it possible that what we take to be 'allegory' was played out in reality in a way incomprehensible to modern sensibility? There will be more on this later.

Whatever the serpent was, it's clear that the Enemy could only use the serpent to affect Eve if Eve was somehow disposed toward that affectation in the first place. Other temptations, such as those that move us toward lust or gluttony, or even greed, are hard to imagine in prelapsarian man, as they are temptations that come forward out of the obvious deprivation in the flesh. In prelapsarian man, the flesh remained wholly subject to the intellect, so there would be no unruly desires that needed to be guarded against—at least, not ones that stemmed from the flesh.

Pride, however, is not so easily tracked and not so easily guarded against. In Adam (and Eve) we see singularly unique creatures among all of creation—both at the time and even in retrospect. Adam was created by God to rule over Earth as its effective worldly king. He was shaped from the dust, as if worked into being in a way that the animals were not. Eve likewise was made from his rib. As they

55 Emmerich, *Life of Our Lord Jesus Christ*, 14

possessed the full capacities of their intellects, surely they'd have recognized their uniqueness even more fully than we can. This likely played a significant role in their departure from God's plan in engaging with evil. St. Augustine even comments on an evilness of will in *The City of God*:

*For they would not have arrived at the evil act had an evil will not preceded it. Moreover, what but pride can have been the beginning of their evil will?—for 'pride is the beginning of sin'. And what is pride but an appetite for a perverse kind of elevation? For it is a perverse kind of elevation indeed to forsake the foundation upon which the mind should rest, and to become and remain, as it were, one's own foundation. This occurs when a man is too well pleased with himself; and he is too well pleased with himself when he falls away from that immutable good with which he ought rather to have been pleased than with himself. This betrayal occurs as an act of free will.*⁵⁶

The exact nature of the sin of the Fall has been known since time immemorial to have been disobedience—a form of pride. But what was the nature of that pride? Clearly, the curiosity of partaking in that which was forbidden was done, at least secondarily, to spite God's word. But did Adam and Eve partake in order to see if what the serpent said was true? How could they have, when Adam's intellect was surely developed enough to recognize the obviousness of the serpent's lies? Rather, it seems likely that knowing this was forbidden, the feat was undertaken anyway in order so that Adam could—in the interest of satisfying his curiosity—experience what he could only contemplate in the abstract.

[Alcuin of York](#) seems to agree, at least in part, with this assertion:

WHY WAS IT SAID, "THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL"? — Answer. Not because the tree itself was rational in its own nature or had knowledge of good and evil, but because man through it could experience and know the difference between the good of obedience and the evil of disobedience.

This disobedience reflected back into them as well; by disobeying God, their flesh turned against them. St. Augustine famously writes on the degree to which sexual desire was unleashed by man's Fall:

And so 'they knew that they were naked'—divested, that is, of the grace that made the nakedness of their bodies of no concern to them, so that it became a source of shame to them when the law of sin warred against their mind. Thus, they learned what they would have been happier not knowing, had they believed in God and obeyed Him, and so not committed the act which compelled them to learn by experience the harm done by infidelity and disobedience. Therefore, dismayed by the disobedience of their flesh—by punishment which bore witness, as it were, to their own disobedience—'they sewed fig-leaves together, and made themselves campestria', that is, loin-cloths...

*Thus, out of a sense of shame, modesty covered that which was moved by lust to disobey a will which had itself been condemned for the guilt of disobedience.*⁵⁷

56 Augustine, *City of God*, 608.

57 Augustine, *City of God*, 616.

Sexual desire is best indicated by involuntary movements of the body. These movements are the strongest and most conscious ones we're aware of whenever the mood strikes. What St. Augustine is commenting on here is that where there should be control, there isn't any; where we should be able to choose to engage in this or that behavior or interest, lust is capable of exerting a dominion over the body in a manner unlike most other cardinal sins. Even for those pious men who were faithfully called to the conjugal life, vigilance against the lustful appetites of the flesh is never far away. As he explains a little earlier on, "Any friend of wisdom and holy joys who lives a married life but knows how 'to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor', as the apostle admonishes—surely such a one would prefer to beget children without lust of this kind".⁵⁸

Disobeying God means turning your own person against itself. That's the short version of the story here; Adam's disobedience not only removed the supernatural graces he had been infused with at his creation, it pitted his flesh against his will. It pitted creation against the spirit. This is how it is known that "every creature groans and travails in pain" due to sin—due to the Fall.⁵⁹ As St. Thomas explains:

*this seems to fit only the rational creature. But this can be explained so that **groan** is the same as the previous expression, **not willingly**. For we groan against things repugnant to our will. Therefore, inasmuch as the defects of sensible creation are contrary to the natural desire of a particular nature, the visible creature is said to groan. When he says, **travails**, it is the same as the previous expression, **waits**. For travail is part of the process of producing offspring.*⁶⁰

He's saying that the world continues to continue, but it does so such that it works against itself. The world is not a well-oiled machine; on the contrary, it is a machine that works in spite of its great damage. Where could that damage have come from? What is that damage? God, being perfect, would probably not have made a damaged machine. We know where that damage came from; that damage is death, as it was death that entered the world with the first act of disobedience.

Death

"Wherefore as by one man sin entered into this world, and by sin death; and so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned."⁶¹ So said Saint Paul to the Romans. "For from the very beginning of our existence in this dying body," as St. Augustine writes,

there is never a moment when death is not at work in us. For throughout the whole span of this life—if, indeed, it is to be called life—its mutability leads us towards death. Certainly, there is no one who is not closer to it this year than he was last year, and tomorrow than today, and today than yesterday, and a little while hence than now, and now than a little while ago. For whatever time we live is subtracted from the whole span of our life, and what remains is becoming smaller and smaller each day. Thus, the whole

58 Ibid, 614.

59 Rom 8:22.

60 Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on the Letter of St. Paul to the Romans*, trans. F. R. Larcher, O.P., (Lander, Aquinas Institute for the Study of Sacred Scripture: 2012), 223.

61 Rom 5:12.

duration of our life is nothing but a progression towards death. During it, no one is permitted to stand still or to go a little more slowly even for a little while. Rather, all are urged onwards with the same motion and impelled with a rapidity which does not differ for anyone. [...]

Again, if every man begins to die—that is, is in death—as soon as death itself has begun to do its work in him, then surely he is in death from the very beginning of his existence in this body.⁶²

God cannot lie; His Word is the Incarnate Truth. When God informed Adam that he would “die the death” when he ate of the tree, he neither lied nor meant this in a purely abstract or spiritual manner. Before Adam sinned, he did not have death in him even in its biological sense; there was no need. Death therefore can be understood as a deprivation, a physical component to sin that draws things away from God—although, unlike sin, which is wholly concerned with morality and agency, death is not intrinsically evil. Through the death of Christ were we redeemed, and it is after our own deaths—presumably, unless we are to live to see the end of days—that we meet our maker and he deals out our final judgments. Out of this evil that was done, God brings greater goodness into world.

According to Scripture, God shortened the life of men “because he is flesh,” as God’s “spirit shall not remain in man forever.” Scripture even says that man’s “days shall be a hundred and twenty years,” as it turns out the lives of the patriarchs beginning with Joseph would approximate.⁶³ However, this decline would not occur until after the Flood; prior to it, the age of the patriarchs would average in the 900s.

There is reason to suspect the aforementioned phenomenon of genetic entropy coming into play here. An article published by the FMS Foundation [compares](#) the data of the various Biblical translations of early antiquity together with regards to the age of the earliest patriarchs.

If we plot the lifespan of Noah and his descendants, we see an abrupt change during Noah’s life, followed by an amazingly systematic decline, continuously going to shorter and shorter lifespans (Figure 3). This decline in lifespan began at the time of the Biblical Flood (see insert in Figure 3). This is seen in all three of the primary translations of the Old Testament. There are some variations in the data, depending on the translation (Masoretic, Septuagint, or Samaritan). However, these differences do not fundamentally change the shape of the downward curve.

[...]

Another way to say this is that the lifespans are declining in a very mathematically precise manner. There are only two ways this might have happened, as given below.

The first explanation would be that the mathematical nature of the decline arose because all these data points, scattered in various books of the Old Testament, were fabricated by

62 Augustine, *City of God*, 550-551.

63 Gen 6:3.

a sophisticated and scheming single author. That such an author would need to be a skilled mathematician. Moreover, he or she would need to be driven by the malevolent ambition of deceiving the world into believing that, since the time of Noah, human fitness has been undergoing a very dramatic and very specific exponential decay process.

The second explanation would be that the mathematical nature of the declining lifespans arose because the Biblical accounts are true, and are actually faithfully recording the historical unfolding of some fundamental natural degenerative process.⁶⁴

Clearly, the Flood had something to do with the decline in longevity. Some, like Rev. Warkulwiz, attribute the distinction to genetics and also to diet:

First, the variety of fruits, vegetables, cereals, seeds, and herbs were available to the antediluvians, and although they no longer had access to the tree of life, there may have been other food available that contributed to longevity. The Great Flood destroyed forever many species of plants. Perhaps some that helped provide for longevity were among those destroyed; or, if they survived, were soon lost.⁶⁵

If this is true, it is only because the Fall brought death into the world. Several of the Church Fathers, St. Augustine included, were of the opinion that man was not intended to die a natural death at all; that without the Fall, men would have been assumed into heaven as Enoch and Elias were. The death that entered the world wasn't just the loss of grace in Man, nor even the guaranteed decay of his biology; it was the decay of everything. It ensured the world's eventual collapse.

The Lapsing World

Bl. Emmerich's visions expound upon the very real, direct relationship between creation and man that the Fall draws attention to. We know that Adam's Fall brought the world down with him, but it's never directly indicated by Scripture how that is possible. Adam's disobedience caused a turning-inward⁶⁶ of the soul away from God and toward the self:

Sin was not completed by eating the forbidden fruit. But that fruit from the tree which, rooting its branches in the earth thus sent out new shoots, and which continued to do the same after the Fall, conveyed the idea of a more absolute propagation, a sensual implanting in self at the cost of separation from God. So, along with disobedience, there sprang from their indulgence that severing of the creature from God, that planting in self and through self, and those selfish passions in human nature. He that uses the fruit solely for the enjoyment it affords, must accept as the consequence of his act the subversion, the debasement of nature as well as sin and death.⁶⁷

64 Sanford, John, Jim Pamplin & Christopher Rupe, "Genetic Entropy Recorded in the Bible?" (FMS Foundation, 2014) 3-5.

65 Warkulwiz, *Doctrines of Genesis*, 354-355.

66 This isn't to be confused with a turning-inward in the sense used by the mystics such as St. John of the Cross or St. Teresa of Avila.

67 Emmerich, *Life of Our Lord Jesus Christ*, 14-15

It's been established that the rebellion against God turned our natures into contradictory ones, as persons divided internally in a war against ourselves. Our wills fight our flesh, our desires are in conflict, and our reason is too clouded to make its way unimpeded through the war zone. Bl. Emmerich illustrates this with even more clarity, and her visions extend this out into every corner of corporeal creation. It is not just man that was divided by the Fall, but all of the world. Where Adam trod, creation followed; as he Fell, creation Fell with him. She continues:

Adam and Eve before sin were very differently constituted from what we, poor, miserable creatures now are. With the reception of the forbidden fruit, they imbibed a material existence. Spirit became matter; flesh, an instrument, a vessel. At first they were one in God, they sought self in God; but afterward they stood apart from God in their own will. And this self-will is self-seeking, a lusting after sin and impurity. By eating the forbidden fruit, man turned away from his Creator. It was as if he drew creation into himself. All creative power, operations, and attributes, their commingling with one another and with all nature, became in man material things of different forms and functions.⁶⁸

When Lucifer fell, he did not drag anything with him; only those angels who chose to revolt followed, because Lucifer was not the king of anything. Adam was king over all corporeal creation; earthly creatures were to respect him, as through the line of authority, they'd be respecting God. The graces poured into the world were like a string, and woven onto that string were the beads of all earthly creatures. Adam was the highest bead. When he Fell, he cut the string above his own head and the entire line of beads fell away with him. It was only by Christ, true God and true man, that this string could be remade.

What this means is that the Fall can be understood in three parts. We know that Adam, whose un-darkened intellect could comprehend disobedience toward God abstractly, understood what he was doing before he sinned. Although he did not have experiential knowledge, he did not need that in order to recognize that disobedience would result in unimaginable horrors. Knowledge of this did not necessarily result in the temptation of gaining that experiential knowledge, however.

When Eve was tempted by the serpent, she came to Adam. Adam began to entertain disobedience. Then he disobeyed, and with him, so did Eve. This was where the Fall occurred. Disobedience is what turned Adam's attention from God toward himself. His interior gaze then became pointed not outward, toward the light of God, but inward, in which there is no light. Disobedience had extinguished the light in his soul and blinded him to the light of God. By turning against God, Adam turned against himself, also, because it is only by glorifying God is man's *telos* fulfilled. It is only by glorifying God that man's nature can harmonize like a perfectly tuned instrument.

St. John Chrysostom points out how the Fall resulted in a complete loss of dignity, as well:

Consider, after all, how much shame they were eventually seized with after eating it and thus breaking the Lord's command: "They stitched fig leaves together, and made themselves skirts." See the depths of indignity into which they fell from a condition of

⁶⁸ Ibid, 16.

*such great glory. Those who previously passed their life like angels on earth contrive covering for themselves out of fig leaves. Such is the evil that sin is: not only does it deprive us of grace from above, but it also casts us into deep shame and abjection, strips us of goods already be longing to us, and deprives us of all confidence.*⁶⁹

Taking the analogy of the tuned instrument a step further, the Fall resulted not merely in an untuned instrument, but one damaged to the point that it could not be repaired except by supernatural means. And to make matters worse, the man left with it still has to play his solo with the rest of the orchestra, humiliated and ashamed over how completely awful it sounds.

Adam and Eve, once clothed with the supernatural light of grace, with no need for clothes, had no need to feel any sense of shame before the Fall. With that grace removed, they say that they were indeed naked. It's quite obvious from Scripture that Adam and Eve were not blind prior to their transgression. But the explicit note of seeing their own nakedness indicates that something had been removed; they were deprived of supernatural grace, and this then altered how they viewed the world.

The Fall therefore can be understood with the entertainment of temptation first, and the disobedience of God's command second. This disobedience carried with it two aspects: firstly, the revolt against the order of the cosmos—as God is that *logos*—by Adam, king and high priest of all corporeal creatures, and as such, they Fell with him. This is the entrance into the world of death. The second aspect is the necessary injustice against God's law that the disobedience entailed. Because God's law and God's order are both uniquely wrapped up in creation, it's important not to confuse the two; disobedience was a crime against both, but only one has been fully remitted.

This injustice stayed with man after the Fall and was also passed on to all of us by virtue of our birth. Bl. Emmerich writes of how “Longinus opened in Jesus' Side the gate of regeneration to eternal life, therefore no one entered Heaven while that gate was closed.”⁷⁰ The reason Christ descended to the Limbo of the Fathers after His death on the Cross was because the gates of heaven were closed since the Fall; no one who died prior to the Crucifixion saw heaven until He came for them⁷¹. Even as penitential as they were, the justice due for the Fall was not fulfilled. St. Thomas writes, commenting on Paul's Letter to the Romans,

This defect is a lack of original justice divinely conferred on the first parent not only in his role as a definite person but also as the source of human nature—a justice that was to be passed along with human nature to his descendants. Consequently, the loss of this original justice through sin was passed on to his descendants. It is this loss that has the aspect of guilt in his descendants for the reason given. That is why it is said that in the progression of original sin a person infected the nature, namely, Adam sinning vitiated human nature; but later in others the vitiated nature affects the person in the sense that

69 Chrysostom, *Homilies: Homily 16*, 220.

70 Emmerich, *Life of Our Lord Jesus Christ*, 8.

71 The patriarch Enoch and the prophet Elijah, as well as the good thief, being the sole exceptions,.

*to the offspring is imputed as guilt this vitiated state of nature on account of the first parent's will, as explained above.*⁷²

It is a long-accepted and well known dogma of the Church that the 'taint' of Original Sin is washed away by the waters of baptism, but what does that really mean? After all, baptism does not make us physically healthy, it does not usually wipe away illnesses, nor does it irrevocably confer that everlasting life that it promises. Baptism, rather, remits the due justice owed by the Fall, for so great was that first sin that it can never be completely atoned for by any measure of man's efforts. Through baptism we come to be in Christ. The remission of sins means the forgiveness thereof. As we understand from the Catechism:

*To remove further all doubt on the subject, the Council of Trent, after other Councils had defined this, declared it anew, pronouncing anathema against those who should presume to think otherwise, or should declare to assert that although sin is forgiven in Baptism, it is not entirely removed or totally eradicated, but is cut away in such a manner as to leave its roots still fixed in the soul.*⁷³

And again,

*In Baptism not only is sin forgiven, but with it all the punishment due to sin is mercifully remitted by God. To communicate the efficacy of the Passion of Christ our Lord is an effect common to all the Sacraments; but of Baptism alone does the Apostle say, that by it we die and are buried together with Christ.*⁷⁴

So what St. Thomas touches on above is the last aspect of The Fall: the justice due for violating God's command. This demand for justice was inherited by subsequent generations of Adam because of the metaphysical change to human nature that had occurred as a result of that transgression. God is willing to forgive that wrongdoing, so long as the penitent is sincere, but that metaphysical change—the damage physically inflicted upon all members of creation—remains.

Indeed, all of the Sacraments exist in certain ways to fulfill what is needed for man to be pulled back up to the peak of the Holy Mount without depriving him of his agency. Baptism, of course, remits original sin (and all other sin prior to that point), but it can only be done once. For those of us (all) who fall into sin again, the Sacrament of Penance & Reconciliation was instituted for several reasons, but most relevantly to remit those sins so heinous that they merit eternal damnation. While all sin images the Fall, mortal sin in particular is as close to a replication of the Fall that every man is capable of, as mortal sin is the conscious indulgence in temptation into behavior or thoughts of grave matter. Engaging in mortal sin so blackens the soul as to render it unrecognizable. Like the Fall, it deprives man of the graces he receives purely out of God's love for him. As St. John Chrysostom [wrote](#),

72 Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on the Letter of St. Paul to the Romans*, 139.

73 *The Catechism of the Council of Trent*, trans. John McHugh, O.P. & Charles Callan, O.P., (New York: Trent Printing, 1947), 183.

74 *Ibid*, 185.

“Nothing is worse than sin,” as “it not merely fills us with shame but also robs of their senses people previously sensible and full of great intelligence.”⁷⁵

In receiving the grace of penance, we become again like Adam—not exactly like him, because the damage to ourselves cannot simply be undone, but similar to him in the sense that the God comes again to dwell within us. We were made, originally, to be vessels for His grace, so that our wills may better resonate with His at the most fundamental level of being. Absolution returns us to this state. The bottleneck of our souls is unclogged of filth, so that the blood and water that gushed forth from the side of Christ may again fill it; the bottle’s glass may be blemished and clouded by wear, and the light may not shine so well through it, but the light shines through it all the same.

Note On the Serpent

There is a lot to be said regarding the possible allegorical significance of the serpent. In the interests of brevity, we’ll forgo most of that as our interests here are more on understanding what we can of the historical events themselves. That said, the *Jerome Biblical Commentary* offers an aside regarding the serpent itself:

*The serpent was chosen by J particularly because of its role in the idolatrous fertility rites of Canaan (see F. Hvidberg, VT 10 [1960] 285-94). A polemical motif is suggested. [...] The serpent’s question, a distortion of the divine command, insinuates the possibility of an unwarranted restriction by God and provokes the reply necessary if the conversation is to be maintained. 2-3. The woman corrects the serpent’s distortion, but she adds her own (“...neither shall you touch it”). Sin begins with some distortion of the truth.*⁷⁶

As noted before, modernist flaws in contemporary commentary aside, the authors do draw a connection between the serpent in Eden and the serpent imagery of Canaanite and other near-Eastern pagan fertility cults. This is not coincidental, although as is so typical of modern scholarship, the relationship is backwards. The mythologization of the Genesis narrative forces modern scholarship to construct Biblical history in reverse, presuming what is effectively a relativist understanding of early history and using external sources to substantiate early Biblical narratives—despite the earliest Biblical narratives predating nearly all external documentation available, and (as we see in the case of the Flood narrative) often being more internally consistent and reliable than any alternatives.

What this means is that, for our purposes, we should not hesitate to use the Biblical narrative as our starting point and recognize external documentation as derivatives thereof. The narrative itself is sound; documentation that seems to substantiate it is wholly unnecessary. Rather than presume the Genesis narrative was written specifically as a polemic against regional cults in the interests of evangelization (a tenuous position anyhow, given the nature of the ancient Hebraic religion), we can instead presume that the Genesis narrative was accurate independent of any possible polemical qualities. It may indeed have been the case that there was some polemical intention, but it’s safe to

⁷⁵ Chrysostom, *Homilies: Homily 17*, 225.

⁷⁶ *Jerome Biblical Commentary*, 12-13.

assume that this would have been included such that it would not have impeded or altered the historical narrative of Genesis.

With this in mind, the serpent imagery of Canaanite fertility cults likely trace their idolatry back through to the same archetypal serpent. In this sense, the authors of the *Commentary* touch on something true: that there is a source that both Genesis and pagan rites draw their imagery back to. The difference is that the Genesis account is a narrative that follows God's people; pagans—particularly those of Canaan, as we understand from Scripture—idolized, at best, false or invented gods, or otherwise radically misinterpreted the angelic host of the True God. At worst, they were followers of the demonic.⁷⁷

The prevalence of this specific imagery among pagan cults in all likelihood draws from the demonic nature of the serpent's corruption in Eden. As the superstitions of the antediluvian peoples were wiped away with the Flood, there's very little chance of conscious knowledge and pagan rites and idolatry being passed on through Noah's lineage. The serpent imagery would have had to come from somewhere not necessarily connected to human memory—especially since we have it on Scriptural authority that everything prior to the flood was completely wiped away. The only remaining option is that demonic again tempted whole groups of men back into idolatry and, due to its archetypal significance, or do simply to the serpent's previous relationship with sin, it again took on the trappings of idolatry.

Expulsion From Eden & Life After the Fall

After their transgression, God recounts to Adam and Eve the consequences of their actions. Eve, and all women as a result, would famously bear the pains of childbirth. Adam would suffer to work the soil that had been cursed. Their marriage bond would be strained and imperfect. The serpent would be cursed to lay low to the ground.

But within this explanation, God immediately promises the coming of the redeemer, as well as the triumph of His mother. The True Man is promised to reconcile the Fall of the first man, and His mother is promised to right the wrong fruits of Eve's curiosity and temptation. God does not abandon those two who first abandoned Him; and if He would not even abandon those who committed the very first sin, the sin that was of such magnitude that it condemned the entire human race, then we can rest assured that He would never abandon those of us that follow.

Driven out of Paradise, Adam and Eve wandered near the Holy Mount for a substantial period of time. Bl. Emmerich describes them “wandering about in great distress... as if seeking something they had lost,” being “ashamed of each other”.⁷⁸ She recounts them wandering extremely far from Eden, led first to a plain, and then later “to the region of Mount Olivet”, although the antediluvian landscape rendered it unfamiliar to her eyes.⁷⁹ While this is consistent, arguably, with the book of [Jubilees](#)⁸⁰, she

77 Lev 12:29-31 (God warning the Israelites of the evil practices of regional/Canaanite pagan cults), 1 Kings 18 (Elias confronts the followers of Baal).

78 Emmerich, *Life of Jesus Christ*, 24.

79 Ibid, 26.

80 Jubilees 3:32 (Apocrypha).

departs from other ancient (though unsettled) Christian tradition; in such accounts, our first parents and the line of Seth dwelt upon the slopes and in the caves of the Holy Mount until the days of the Flood. For this, we will turn to early Christian apocrypha.

The First Book of Adam [begins](#) with an explanation of the landscape around Eden. For our purposes, most of its details are unnecessary, and they'd be impossible to verify anyway. What it does make note of, however, is the Cave of Treasures, a cavern that supposedly existed beneath Eden, within the mountain.⁸¹ The Book of [Treasures](#) and the Book of Bee allude to the same story, though rather than a case of substantiation, it seems more likely that all three of these psuedographica drew from each other or from some lost previous source. Again, earliest Christian and ancient Hebrew tradition was never settled on these issues. Treasures departs from Adam's text by expounding on the cave's purpose:

And Adam took from the skirts of the mountain of Paradise, gold, and myrrh, and frankincense, and he placed them in the cave, and he blessed the cave, and consecrated it that it might be the house of prayer for himself and his sons. And he called the cave "ME`ÂRATH GAZZÊ" (i.e. "CAVE OF TREASURES").

According to this, it was Adam himself who, acting in his priestly duty, consecrated the cave and set it up to be the location of future religious services. Bl. Emmerich notes, in recounting Noah's life, that the ancient pre-Hebrew tradition of religious sacrifice looked an awful lot like the Mass:

The ceremonies used by Noe when offering sacrifice, reminded me of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. There were alternate prayers and responses, and Noe moved from place to place at the altar and bowed reverently.⁸²

We see, later in Genesis, in the lives of Abraham and particularly with Jacob, the practice of erecting altars of stone to offer sacrifice, beginning the Hebrew tradition of sacrificial worship to the True God of Adam, Noah, Melchizedek, and the other patriarchs. This is also true of Job. But prior to their stories, little detail pertaining to the method of worship was ever offered. Based on what Bl. Emmerich claimed, we can assume that the practices of the ancient Hebrew tradition understandably grew out of the practices of the original Patriarchal religion of Noah, and likewise, that of Adam himself.

The apocryphal accounts of Treasures, Adam, and Bee all speak of similar rituals, expanding upon what's provided in Genesis but making deliberate note of stone altars, consecrations, and prayers. We can deduce from this two things: first, that the true religion whose mantle Catholicism inherited from Christ is and has always been one that includes exterior sacrifice, and second, that man's predisposition is one inclined toward worship. This was already pointed out earlier in recognizing Adam's priestly character and the similarity in design between Eden and that of the temple.

Although the Fall bound the soul to the flesh in a way unintended, outwardly, by God's design, the supernatural direction of man's gaze remained. The Book of Adam spends many chapters detailing the plight of Adam and Eve after their expulsion, as they encounter despair, the Enemy, and the torture of postlapsarian worldly hardships; prayer and penance remain the linchpins of their survival. Bl.

81 1 Adam 1:9 (Apocrypha).

82 Emmerich, *Life of Jesus Christ*, 41.

Emmerich's visions, also, note that Adam and Eve "expiat[ed] their fault upon the naked earth", or did acts of penance, upon leaving Eden.⁸³ And, as we know from Scripture, although God exiled them from Paradise, He did not abandon them—far from it, in fact, as they now required more attention than ever.

The Fallen state of Adam and Eve may have preserved some element of supernatural awareness, but it meant that they would feel hungry, be unable to fully control their passions, and would suffer death. With this in mind, we turn from Adam's postlapsarian prayer life to his daily living conditions.

We know that men started eating meat at about this time, after the expulsion from Paradise. Although Adam is not mentioned as having hunted for food, Scripture does inform us that shepherding was one of the first professions of Fallen man.⁸⁴ Prior to the Fall, the animals were subject to Adam as he was a king; today we still see some inkling of this in our relationship with most breeds of dogs. Many animals remain capable of some level of domestication; it's not unreasonable to think that this is the remnant of their prelapsarian obedience to man. What this means is that although sheep or goats, herbivores, may obey man, as well as dogs, it's obviously not the case that a lion is an appropriate target for domestication. Interestingly, Bl. Emmerich claims that flesh meat was not eaten until after Abel was murdered,⁸⁵ which would presumably indicate that the flock was raised specifically for sacrifice.

Far from the predictions of Hobbes and Rousseau, we can see in Scripture what the earliest, primitive life of man was really like: long-lived, shared in literal brotherhood, and knowledgeable—albeit tainted by the Fall. Disease and hardship assuaged early man on all sides after he left Eden, surely, but where Hobbes would have us believe that men turned against each other, and where Rousseau would have us believe that they were stupid, Scripture reveals that both conceptions of early men are wrong. That is, of course, until we get to Cain and Abel, when the separation of lineages occurs—what St. Augustine refers to as the worldly manifestation, for the first time, of the cities of man and of God.

83 Ibid, 26.

84 Gen 4:2.

85 Emmerich, *Life of Jesus Christ*, 29.

III - Generation

The expulsion from Eden marked the end of the very first period of human history, brief as it was. While some Midrashic commentary of the Jewish tradition held a belief that Adam and Eve could have spent years in Paradise, the Church Fathers are in general agreement that the Fall happened fairly quickly after Eve's creation. Most presume it to have been a mere matter of hours, taking place almost certainly on the same day.

After leaving Eden, the second period of history carries the lineage of Adam up through his death. Little is written in Scripture about this period except for the fratricide of Abel and the life of Cain. That crime, as well as Cain's life, play a big role in several apocryphal texts that we'll approach in this chapter, but the reasons for the crime itself are best discerned by a careful reading of Scripture and of the Church Fathers. The religious sacrifice, prefiguring the Mass that would be demonstrated at the Last Supper, begins to be formed with Abel's offerings.

Cain & Abel

The narrative of Cain and Abel is well-known enough that it hardly needs repeating: Abel was tasked with shepherding while Cain with farming the land, and when the two went to offer sacrifice to God, God accepted Abel's offerings ("the firstlings of his flock") while rejecting Cain's. Cain in turn chose to murder his brother, and being caught in his guilt, was given a mark so that men would know not to kill him.⁸⁶ There's a lot going on in this passage, as well as a lot that was expounded upon by the visions of Bl. Emmerich, apocryphal works, and of course, the Church Fathers. We'll consult each of these briefly in ascending order importance: first the internally-disagreeing apocryphal accounts, then Bl. Emmerich's visions, and finally, most relevantly, the Church Fathers.

Scripture only mentions three sons born to Adam and Eve by name, after which, "he begot sons and daughters."⁸⁷ Apocrypha includes Cain and Abel having both been born with twin sisters; Cain's twin sister, according to the Books of Adam and Treasures, was named Luluwa (Lebhudha in the English translations of Treasures and Bee), who was allegedly "more beautiful than her mother."⁸⁸ Abel's twin was named Akila, although Treasures and Bee both refer to her as Kelimath.⁸⁹ Bee's account, however,

86 Gen 4:2-15.

87 Gen 5:2.

88 1 Adam 74:6-8; Treasures chapter Adam's Expulsion from Paradise

89 1 Adam 75:11, Ibid Treasures

switches the position of these two sisters; Lebhudha as Abel's twin and Kelimath as Cain's. Bee's [brief account](#) only gets trickier to reconcile with the others, as it includes implications regarding animal sacrifices and diet, the authorship of books, and the pollution of the world by intermarriage with the Cainites that all in some form clash with more reliable narratives.

Jubilees gives a totally different account; according to its narrative, Cain and Abel were both born in sequence, as Scripture states, before the first daughter was born, who was named Awan.⁹⁰ No other daughters were born until after Abel's death. This already makes Jubilees suspect, as its own timeline of events indicates that only three children were born to the first parents over a span of twenty years, and then, no children were born again to them for another forty-six years. Even in a time of unimaginably long lives, such a gap in childbearing is striking, even taking into account that it was this period during which the important events of Scripture take place.

In each of these apocryphal accounts, however, it is clear that Cain and Abel were relatively young—quite young, in fact, in the Adam/Treasures narrative. Jubilees indicates that Cain murdered Abel when he was roughly in his early forties, making Abel in his late mid-to-late thirties⁹¹; the account of the murder itself and the lead-up to it resemble closely the account given in Scripture. While well into adulthood, these are still the years of relative youth by antediluvian standards.

The Adam/Treasures narrative, however, is a bit different—both in content and in presentation. According to these apocrypha, Adam had deemed it necessary to wed Cain to Abel's twin sister and Abel to Cain's, something Cain was not particularly thrilled about. In this version, the reason for Abel's murder was still jealousy over God refusing Cain's sacrifice while accepting Abel's, but there was an added dimension of a primordial *libido dominandi* at play. This comes across as distinctly unnecessary to the narrative, and although not unbelievable, it remains dubious enough to warrant relatively safe dismissal.

Bl. Emmerich's account, on the other hand, is far more consistent with both Scripture and with what many of the Church Fathers have written on the subject. She does not give a direct account of what led to Abel's murder, however; this again indicates that the jealousy found in the Adam/Treasures narrative is fictitious. Bl. Emmerich picks up the narrative after the murder, explaining that Cain had "conceived on Mount Olivet the design to murder Abel", and that afterwards, "he disputed long with God."⁹² The sacrifice, and thus the cause that prompted Cain's sin, is left out.

She does, however, mention an already-existing community of people by the time of Abel's murder; "Eve bore children at stated intervals," she claims, after which "a number of years was devoted to penance."⁹³ The apocrypha here considered—Adam, Treasures, Bee, and even Jubilees—are consistent on this note, with the Adam/Treasures narrative giving an exact seven years of penance after each birth. Note that this still is not enough to explain the gap in Jubilees' account, however.

90 Jubilees 4:1

91 Ibid, 4:7.

92 Emmerich, *Life of Jesus Christ*, 29.

93 Emmerich, *Life of Jesus Christ*, 27-28.

Returning to Bl. Emmerich, however, we see that this led soon enough to the establishment of a community:

Once I saw about twelve people: Adam, Eve, Cain, Abel, two sisters, and some young children. All were clothed in skins thrown over their shoulders like a scapular and girded at the waist. The female dress was large and full around the breast where it served as a pocket. It fell down around the limbs, and was fastened at the sides and once under the arm. The men wore shorter dresses, which had a pocket fastened to them. The skins from which their dresses were made were, from the neck to the elbow, exceedingly fine and white. They all looked very noble and beautiful in their clothing. They had huts in those days, partly sunk in the earth and covered with plants. Their household was quite well-arranged. I saw orchards of low, but tolerably vigorous fruit trees. There was grain also, such as wheat, which God had given to Adam for seed.⁹⁴

It's impossible from either Scripture or Bl. Emmerich's visions to tell if the two sisters of Cain and Abel were their twins Luluwa and Akila/Kelime as described by apocrypha. On the one hand, the apocrypha may be revealing aspects of the truth that were lost to time; on the other, more likely hand, the twins narrative was made in order to better condense the apocryphal narrative into its shorter chronology.

This makes sense in context with Scripture, when Cain pleads with God that "every one, therefore, that findeth me, shall kill me"⁹⁵ for having slain his brother. The footnotes of the Douay-Rheims Bible point out that 130 years would have passed by that point, presuming that the murder of Abel and the conception of Seth happened relatively close together, which would explain Cain's fear of his siblings and nephews. Scripture, however, places the conception of Seth after the short description of the generations of Cain, which include even his presumptive death—more will be discussed later on this point. It's hard to tell exactly when these events took place with relation to each other given the compendious nature of these early chapters.

That said, Bl. Emmerich's visions certainly agree with this presumption:

Cain responded that everywhere his fellow men would seek to kill him. There were already many people upon the earth. Cain was very old and had children. Abel also left children, and there were other brothers and sisters, the children of Adam.⁹⁶

This is consistent with words St. Augustine wrote on the subject:

But those who are disturbed [that a city should have been built by one man at a time when, it seems, there were only four men on earth] have paid too little heed to the fact that the writer of the sacred history had no need to name all the men who may then have existed, but only those required by the plan of the work which he had undertaken. For the intention of the writer, through whom the Holy Spirit was acting, was to arrive at

94 Ibid.

95 Gen 4:14.

96 Emmerich, *Life of Jesus Christ*, 29-30.

*Abraham by way of a clearly defined succession of generations descended from one man. [...] But the writer did not remain silent with respect to that other society of men which we call the earthly city; for it too was mentioned to an extent sufficient to enable the City of God to shine forth by comparison with its opposite.*⁹⁷

There were already others around whom Cain could fear because some significant time had passed between his birth and his murder of his brother. Who did he fear? Certainly not random unrelated tribes of people; such tribes could not have existed. He feared his nephews and sons—validly so, perhaps, as will be explained later regarding Lamech.

Note here also: St. Augustine frames the typological element of Cain’s sin—that it is a type for the worldliness of the city of man, a first example and also prefiguration of that tendency which binds so many of us to earthly engagements and passions—within the historical account of the Genesis narrative itself. Not only can both be true, but in fact the typological significance relies on a real historical truth in order to make any sense.

We can afford ourselves a tangent here in order to contrast it with what modern scholarship has to say about the story of Cain and Abel:

This story perhaps originally explained the origin of the Kenites. It may also have been an exaltation of the seminomadic life (Abel) in contrast to the sedentary (Cain before the crime) and the strictly nomadic (Cain after the crime). Conflicts with the sedentary Canaanites and with the wild desert tribes, such as the Midianites, could have conditioned the attitude. The story receives a more universal meaning from J; it concerns all mankind, not the eponymous ancestors of specific tribes.

*Without its proper historical roots, the story contains anachronisms. Civilization is well developed; sacrifice has been instituted; the existence of other peoples is supposed.*⁹⁸

Far from being a more enlightened view, the stunning lack of imagination and insight in modern commentary is enough to leave anyone speechless. On display, again, are the problems with trying to reverse-engineer Scripture into the product of some regional cult; what the text actually says—or doesn’t say—becomes less relevant than the modern scholar’s presuppositions about the period in which it might or might not have first been transcribed.

In case it is not clear by now, attempts to chock the line of Cain to any specific tribe by way of genealogy is nonsense, as the Genesis narrative internally makes it explicit that they were all wiped out by the Flood. In a typological sense, there is certainly truth to the moral significance of Cain, Abel and Seth—something St. Augustine expands on in great detail in *The City of God*—but there is no basis for presuming a living remnant of Cainites who survived the Flood. While their blood may have lived on due to the intermingling of theirs and the Sethite lines, all previous tribal identities were erased by the deluge. Postdiluvian man is descended only through Shem, Ham, or Japheth. More on this as we approach the generations of Cain.

97 Augustine, *City of God*, 647.

98 Jerome *Biblical Commentary*, 13.

Cain's Sacrifice

What was it about Cain's sacrifice specifically that led God to reject it? Scripture tells us this much about the sacrifice:

*And it came to pass after many days, that Cain offered, of the fruits of the earth, gifts to the Lord. Abel also offered of the firstlings of his flock, and of their fat: and the Lord had respect to Abel, and to his offerings. But to Cain and his offerings he had no respect: and Cain was exceedingly angry, and his countenance fell.*⁹⁹

There is a lot that can be gathered from this passage, though as St. Augustine notes, nothing too concrete. Based on the explicit mention of Abel offering the best of his labors, and the use of contrast between the two brothers, it can be assumed that Cain's sacrifice was rejected not because it was in itself displeasing to God, but because of what Cain chose to sacrifice—and what he chose *not* to sacrifice. Ambrosiaster [comments](#) as such:

*He was not able to discern what was worthy of God, and reserved the best fruits for his use. It is not therefore the offering he has made that God reproaches Cain, but the unworthy presents he offers him. And he is not even condemned for this fact, but because in spite of this warning he would not correct his conduct. "This offering comes to you, and you are the master of it," (Ibid., 7), that is, those gifts that I reject become your property again. He wants to teach him what to do in the future.*¹⁰⁰

So it could be taken that Cain offered the wrong things to God, which is what warranted such an explicit rejection. God even goes to Cain and asks him why he is upset over this turn of events; it should only have been expected for God to reject his sacrifice if he did not offer something worthy of it, and yet rather than foster self-reflection, the rejection fostered a deep envy of his brother. Cain offered the wrong things up for sacrifice, we can thus presume, not necessarily out of explicit disdain for God, but out of an overinflated self-interest.

In Cain, as we saw in the Fall with Adam, we see again the problem of the self versus God. Cain desired himself, whether implicitly or explicitly, more than he desired God. We don't know whether this was a conscious issue or not, as Scripture offers us no insight as to Cain's interior life. What we do know is that, in the end, it makes little difference; it still results in offering to God things that do not constitute what He wants from us—a wrong sacrifice. St. Augustine explains on this further:

When he speaks of those brothers, the apostle John says, 'Be not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.' By this, we are given to understand that God did not esteem Cain's gift because it was wrongly 'divided' in the sense that, though he gave something of his own to God, he nonetheless gave himself to himself: as do all who follow their own will and not the will of God; that is, who live with a perverse and not a righteous heart, yet who still offer gifts to God. They suppose that they are by this

⁹⁹ Gen 4:3-5.

¹⁰⁰ Ambrosiaster, *Questions on the Old and New Testaments*, Question 5, trans. John Litteral.

*means purchasing God's help, not in healing their base desires, but in fulfilling them. [...] Thus, when Cain discovered that God esteemed his brother's sacrifice but not his own, he ought surely to have changed his ways and imitated his good brother, instead of succumbing to pride and envy.*¹⁰¹

The fact that Abel (and presumably Adam) were capable of making proper sacrifices that pleased God proved that, although catastrophic, the Fall had not completely reduced Man to hopelessness. This was explicitly clear in the immediate wake of the Fall, but nonetheless, losing Eden, eternal life, the indwelling of Spirit, and introducing the ever-present entropy of death into creation would understandably make for a very bleak outlook on the world. That Adam and his progeny were capable of having even a shred of hope after the first sin is nothing less than a testament to the love all men have for God, even in their Fallen state.

As stated before, it's generally agreed that Cain and Abel were both fully-matured adults and probably over a century in age at the time of Abel's murder. It seems unlikely that Cain would have offered well-pleasing sacrifice to God before the last incident described in Genesis, as this ritual was in all probability a regular or at least semi-regular occurrence.

Death of Cain

After murdering his brother and fleeing from God, Cain's life was marked by restless wandering. Some commentators¹⁰² have questioned how Cain could have founded a city while also living as a constant transient. The *Jerome Biblical Commentary* reiterates the modern claim that the genealogy of Cain

*has been taken by J from a separate tradition. Originally, the Cain of v. 17, who founds a city, could not be Cain the wanderer [...]. The author has fused the two sources. The common element in both, which justifies the fusion, is the increase of evil in the world. In the genealogy, this evil is represented in the development of material civilization, which J and other inspired authors see as harmful to religious life.*¹⁰³

There is, of course, an element of truth to this, running along the typological grounds of Henoah being the original and first city of man, as St. Augustine points out. However, in a more rudimentary sense, the impossibility of Cain's founding a city due to his transient status is absurd. The simplest explanation is that he founded Henoah, named after his son, and left the details of administration and expansion to his tribe while he departed to continue his wanderings.

Although Bl. Emmerich doesn't remark specifically on the founding of Henoah, she does offer a brief aside as to the nature of Cain's life:

101 Augustine, *City of God*, 644.

102 Mostly among the Midrash traditions, although contemporary scholarship (perhaps understandably) continues these lines of reasoning.

103 *Jerome Biblical Commentary*, 14.

*Cain led his children and grandchildren to the region pointed out to him, and there they separated. Of Cain himself, I have never seen anything more that was sinful. His punishment appeared to consist in hard, but fruitless labor. Nothing in which he was personally engaged succeeded. I saw that he was mocked and reviled by his children and grandchildren, treated badly in every way. And yet they followed him as their leader, though as one accursed. I saw that Cain was severely punished, but not damned.*¹⁰⁴

The last remark here probably ranks among the most controversial statements of her visions, and it puts her in mild disagreement with most of the Church Fathers—although, admittedly, not quite all of them. Scripture leaves Cain’s salvation open-ended, ultimately, when we consider the mercy God showed to him and the willingness with which he took up his sentence. For moral purposes, the Church Fathers had a tendency to presume his damnation, though certainly not without sufficient reason.

St. Augustine, in meditating on Cain’s sin and his interaction with God, elucidates the matter at the heart of whether Cain was saved or not.

*Thus, when God says, ‘when it shall return unto thee’, this is to be understood as meaning ‘let it return unto thee, and then thou shalt have the mastery of it’, rather than ‘it will return, and then thou shalt have the mastery of it’: that is, as a command rather than a prediction. For a man will have the mastery of his sin if he does not place it over himself by defending it, but makes it subject to himself by repenting of it. Otherwise, he will indeed be its slave, and it will have the mastery of him, if he lends it his protection when it arises.*¹⁰⁵

The ‘it’ he’s referring to is sin—consciousness of it, rather than the acting out of it, as we can presume Cain did not murder again for the rest of his life. Repentance requires of us to own our sin, which we do inside the confessional booth by coming specifically to God with our transgressions. We must own it because we’re presenting it to God so that he may relieve us of it, and He will only take what we can first acknowledge is ours. This is true of both venial sin, which we should have a habit of confessing regularly anyway, and those most grievous mortal sins (that should be confessed as soon as possible, but should really just be avoided in the first place).

This seems to be exactly what Cain does: “*My iniquity is greater than that I may deserve pardon.*”¹⁰⁶ Cain owns his offense and confesses it to God directly. Contrast it with Judas, the man who would have been better off never having been born¹⁰⁷, who sinned greatly in his betrayal of Christ and then ran from his iniquity into the ditch of a potter’s field. Was Cain among those elect who waited for the Redeemer in Abraham’s Bosom, as we know from tradition that Adam and Eve were? It seems at least possible.

The footnotes of the Douay-Rheims holds that Cain was killed by one of his progeny, by accident, during a hunting expedition. Jubilees indicates otherwise, holding that he was killed when his own

104 Emmerich, *Life of Jesus Christ*, 31.

105 Augustine, *City of God*, 645.

106 Gen 4:13.

107 Mark 14:21.

house fell on him¹⁰⁸—unlikely, again, given his status as a transient. The accounts of the Adam/Treasures narrative maintains the tradition that built up around the lines of Genesis 4:23-24: “And Lamech said to his wives Ada and Sella: Hear my voice, ye wives of Lamech, hearken to my speech: for I have slain a man to the wounding of myself, and a stripling to my own bruising. Sevenfold vengeance shall be taken for Cain: but for Lamech seventy times sevenfold.” The Douay-Rheims offers commentary on this:

It is the tradition of the Hebrews, that Lamech in hunting slew Cain, mistaking him for a wild beast; and that having discovered what he had done, he beat so unmercifully the youth, by whom he was led into that mistake, that he died of the blows.¹⁰⁹”

This is consistent with the accounts provided in both of the Adam/Treasures narratives. The Book of Treasures [recounts](#):

And in the days of Ânôsh, in his eight hundred and twentieth year, Lamech, the blind man, killed Cain, the murderer, in the Forest of Nôdh. Now this killing took place in the following manner. As Lamech was leaning on the youth, his son [Tubal-Cain], and the youth was setting straight his father's arm in the direction in which he saw the quarry, he heard the sound of Cain moving about, backwards and forwards, in the forest. Now Cain was unable to stand still in one place and to hold his peace. And Lamech, thinking that it was a wild beast that was making a movement in the forest, raised his arm, and, having made ready, drew his bow and shot an arrow towards that spot, and the arrow smote Cain between his eyes, and he fell down and died. And Lamech, thinking that he had shot game, spake to the youth, saying, "Make haste, and let us see what game we have shot." And when they went to the spot, and the boy on whom Lamech leaned had looked, he said unto him, "O my lord, thou hast killed Cain." And Lamech moved his hands to smite them together, and as he did so he smote the youth and killed him also.¹¹⁰

The Second Book of Adam’s account is much the same in substance, but it differs on a few key details. Its narrative includes Cain coming to Lamech’s wives and asking for his whereabouts before being directed to the field. He was still killed by accident, confused for a robber, but in this version, Lamech’s son Atun is with him rather than Tubalcain, and it is Atun’s mistake that leads to Lamech murdering him with a stone.¹¹¹ The greater detail supplied by the Second Book of Adam’s account fills out some of the story but does little to service any greater purpose.

Authors Emmanouela Grypeou and Helen Spurling documented a rabbinical Hebrew tradition that refers to a similar encounter as that described in the Adam/Treasures narratives. Referring to an ancient rabbinical text called the Tan *Bereshit*, they quote:

How was Cain killed? He became the angel of death for one hundred and thirty years, and he was wandering and roaming under a curse. Lamech was the son of his son in the

108 Jubilees 4:31.

109 Douay-Rheims Catholic Bible, 9; footnote Ver. 23.

110 Treasures, The Rule of Anosh.

111 2 Adam 13: 5-13.

*seventh generation, and he went out blind to hunt, and his son was leading him by his hand. When the child saw a beast, he told him. He said to him: 'I see something like a beast'. He stretched the bow towards it and he killed Cain. The child saw from a distance that it was killed and a horn was on its forehead. He said to Lamech: 'My father, behold the likeness of a man is killed and a horn is on its forehead'. Lamech said to him: 'Woe is me, it is my ancestor'. He clapped his two hands in regret and struck the child on the head and killed him by accident, as it is said, For I have killed a man for wounding me (Gen 4:23).*¹¹²

Some Hebrew traditions held that the mark of Cain consisted of a horn that sprouted from his forehead, which may explain the remark of Cain's beastly appearance. The mark of Cain was more likely a discoloration of his skin, if it were to be anything visible at all. Bl. Emmerich notes that "his posterity gradually became colored" and attributes this mark to causing the browner hue of Ham's children.¹¹³

In any case, the similarities to Treasures can't be ignored. Notice how in Treasures, Cain is confused for a beast, while in the Hebrew commentary, he is remarked as being physically beastly. The detail that Lamech clasped his hands and struck his son is also the same, as is the exact manner and method of Cain's death. It's difficult to say whether the Tan *Bereshit* was written prior to the surging of Christian apocrypha that arose in the first three centuries after the Crucifixion, as much of the rabbinical Talmud, of which the Aggadic Midrash texts are a part, was written during and after the same period. While some of the Hebrew commentaries on Genesis predated the Incarnation, most did not.

What seems clear is that the tradition of Lamech slaying Cain by accident is a tradition attested to by more than merely a single apocryphal source; rather, it seemed to be a general consensus held at least by the Christians of antiquity. No doubt it was a carryover of some ancient Hebrew tradition; whether the Tan *Bereshit* encapsulated or merely built off of this Hebrew tradition, it's impossible to tell, but it still had to exist.

The Generations of Adam and His Last Days

Very little is written of Adam's life after the birth of Seth. Genesis, upon Seth's birth, immediately transitions into Adam's generations and into the Flood cycle. Apocrypha, by and large, is much the same. As mysterious as the first hundred and thirty years of Adam's life are to us today, the last eight hundred or so are completely obscured.

What we can deduce from Adam's life, however, is that he spent his life teaching. This may not be saying much, given that every father is called to pass along his practical knowledge to his children, but Adam was the first father who had the first children. Adam also lived for more than nine hundred years, having been able to see eight generations of his progeny multiply and expand across the face of

¹¹² I have been unable to source this anywhere except in their book; see:

Grypeou, Emmanouela and Helen Spurling, *The Book of Genesis in Late Antiquity: Encounters Between Jewish and Christian Exegesis* (Boston: Brill 2013), 115.

¹¹³ Emmerich, *Life of Jesus Christ*, 30.

the Earth. Following tribal custom, he'd have been the most respected physical elder of society for some eight hundred years; even as (or if) he grew feeble in his old age, his wisdom would have been incalculable.

Although Adam lost paradise and with it, an intellect un-darkened by the rampant passions of flesh, Adam's first memories upon leaving Eden would have been of the Lord providing clothing for him. Additionally, Adam's prelapsarian nature included being something of a gardener, or at least tender of Eden. That the sons of his mentioned in Scripture were a farmer and a husbandman are thus of no surprise.

Along similar lines, we can also see Adam's prelapsarian nature included being the first High Priest, wherein prayer, sacrifice, and worship done in thanksgiving—and later penance, also—would have been an important part of his duties. Adam surely would have been at least intellectually aware of this, even if he did not stay long enough in Paradise to exercise it. And, after he Fell, God would surely have instructed him in these duties anyway, as they took on a new character after the first sin was committed.

What all of this means is that Adam was imbued with and imparted to certain practical knowledge necessary for human survival, both before and after the Fall. Although Adam lost certain aspects of his role as king, priest, and father, there nonetheless remained the kernels of these roles after his rebellion. He was still king over creation, even if he lost certain rights and means to best govern it; he was still priest, even if his priestly duties took on penitential dressings atop those originally ordered toward thanksgiving; and he was still—especially—father. The latter perhaps became so important, given the sway that death now held over the world, that it partially eclipsed the former two aspects. Part of being a father is the instruction to future generations of his kin on survival—varying in methods and roles according to the generation.

Adam dies after nearly a millennium of life. When his wife Eve died is unknown, but apocryphal accounts believe that she died very soon afterward, having overseen his burial.

The Adam/Treasures narrative is strangely discordant with Scripture on account of when Adam died, which calls into question a lot of its reliability on the whole. According to Scripture—both to Masoretic and the Septuagint—Adam lived long enough to have seen Lamech born and grow into adulthood. This is the same Lamech who was Noah's father, and he was the eighth patriarch in succession from Adam himself, following Seth, Enosh, Kenen, Mahalalel, Jared, Enoch, and his own father Methuselah.

Where Adam/Treasures departs from this is critical, as its narrative claims Adam died sometime after the birth of Mahalalel¹¹⁴; according to Biblical chronology, Adam's lifespan here would be half of the commonly accepted 930 to something no greater than about 450. This is noteworthy for a couple of reasons: first, according to Scripture, no antediluvian patriarch lived less than nine hundred years except for Mahalalel (895) and Lamech (777, presumably killed in or immediately before the Flood). Noah lived to be 950, and Shem 600. The age of the patriarchs did not lessen to under a half-

114 2 Adam 7:9, Treasures – The Death of Adam.

millennium until Shem's progeny; the first generation born after the Flood, which was nearly seven hundred years after the death of Adam. The reason for this likely had to do with how the Earth was changed by the Flood—changes in food nutrition or levels of background radiation, for instance.

It's more confusing than that, however, as the accounts given in Adam/Treasures still [claim](#) that “the days of Adam [were] nine hundred and thirty years.”¹¹⁵ The chronology doesn't make any sense if trying to rectify it with Scripture, which means only that they have to be wrong at least in this aspect. Coupled with discrepancies between themselves, the other discrepancies with Scripture, and simple errors, it's not difficult to see why these books were considered apocrypha by the early Church. To their credit, they do seem, in a general sense, to be somewhat more believable than what constitutes much of what's available in English of the Hebrew Midrash, when it comes to assumptions or interpretations of historical narrative. But, stacking them up against the suppositions of the Church Fathers, they end up looking nonsensical at worst, and childish at best.

This is why it is interesting to note how the visions of Bl. Emmerich constitute an unexpected, otherworldly take on various pieces found in ancient tradition and apocrypha, but seem to interpret them in ways consistent with most of the Church Fathers. This can be seen in parallels between how apocryphal works discuss Eve's penances after births and Bl. Emmerich's visions detailing more or less the same practice, the brief but vivid explanations of the first True religious ceremonies, and especially in her explanations of the Nephilim that we will get to in the next chapter.

It's not so much that Bl. Emmerich is trying to reconcile the differences between these strains of Genesis interpretation—in fact, it's unlikely she was even aware of these specific apocryphal works to begin with. Rather, assuming her visions were real, in both a supernatural sense (having come from God) and an historical sense (truly depicting, with some editorializing, the periods in which she claimed, rather than something else that God wanted her to see), what we see in the apocryphal texts is the purveyance of a true historical record being distorted over the millennia. This is especially true with the hard reset of the Flood. And it makes complete sense when we consider, as both Bl. Emmerich and Scripture indicates, the rapid degeneration of the lines of Noah's children. As lifespans shortened, sins multiplied, and the peopling of the Earth began again, the true history—if it was to be preserved—would be preserved in a very limited fashion by the time anything would be written down. This is what will be explored in chapter four.

115 2 Adam 7:10, Ibid Treasures.

IV - Cataclysm

So far, our survey has taken us from the first man to the first marriage, and from the first marriage to the first family. Intertwined is the survey of evil, of agency and autonomy, of bonds, and of justice. The Fall exists like a shadow cast over all created creatures, manifesting at every turn in the penances of Adam and Eve, the alteration of their natures, and the transgressions of Cain.

Now we reach the period of human history in which civilization enters the scene. The populating of the Earth, the longevity of the first peoples, the sharp contrast between the lines of Cain and Seth: each is important to consider during the millennium and a half that transpired between the exile from Eden and the cataclysm of the Flood. It is only after the hard resent provided by the cataclysm that we begin the recorded history of mankind so familiar to us already.

To begin, we'll start with the issue of the children produced by the generations of Adam and his sons Cain and Seth.

The Sons of God & the Daughters of Men

It is often mentioned, when dealing with the antediluvian time, that there existed a race of giants who were known as the Nephilim, and it was because of their evilness that God sent the Flood. This is true, as it is attested to in Scripture, but frequently, extra-Biblical interpretation presents these creatures in ways that don't show the whole picture.

Some Midrashic traditions, drawing from earlier sources, claim that the Nephilim were the offspring of some impossible sexual union between angels and human women. This notion either originates in or is at least echoed by the ancient apocryphal text, the *Book of Enoch*. Hebrew angelology, however, was woefully incomplete, and was a field of study that would not reach its maturation until Christianity brought forth a fuller understanding of the Holy Trinity and the nature of Heaven. This explains why some Hebrews could have stuck to this belief even though, as we know now, angels can't even produce offspring with each other, much less with human beings.

On the other hand, the line in Scripture about the "sons of God seeing the daughters of men" and taking "themselves wives of all which they chose"¹¹⁶ must be accounted for. The Church Fathers were nearly unanimous in the assessment that this referred to the differences in the lineages of Seth and Cain; the

116 Gen 6:2.

Sethites having secluded themselves from the influence and intermingling of the Cainites who, for the most part, had spread across much of the Earth.

St. Augustine certainly agrees:

*It may be, therefore, that giants were born even before the sons of God, who are also called angels of God, had intercourse with the daughters of men; that is, with the daughters of those who live according to man: in other words, the sons of Seth with the daughters of Cain.*¹¹⁷

Here, St. Augustine makes the point that giants were already there, and that it's even possible that the race of men themselves were simply larger in stature than our current imagination allows for. He expands on this point:

*According to canonical Scriptures, then, both Hebrew and Christian, there is no doubt that there were many giants before the Flood, and that these were citizens of the earth-born society of men, whereas the sons of God, who were of the lineage of Seth according to the flesh, fell down into this society when they forsook righteousness. [...] And we are reminded ... by another prophet when he says, 'There were giants famous from the beginning, that were of so great a stature, and so expert in war...'*¹¹⁸

Bl. Emmerich as well notes that the “people of those early times were larger, though not out of proportion,” being “for more beautiful in the form than people of a later period”, and she compares their features to those of marble statues.¹¹⁹ Descriptions of ancient heroes in Western and Near-Eastern legends, such as those of the Greeks, Egyptians, and Mesopotamians also describe peoples of the distant past as being larger. Bl. Emmerich does note, however, that the Nephilim were larger still than these:

I saw Cain's descendants becoming more and more godless and sensual. They settled further and further up that mountain ridge where were the fallen spirits. Those spirits took possession of many of the women, ruled them completely, and taught them all sorts of seductive arts. Their children were very large.

*They possessed a quickness, an aptitude for everything, and they gave themselves up entirely to the wicked spirits as their instruments. And so arose on this mountain and spread far around, a wicked race which by violence and seduction sought to entangle Seth's posterity likewise in their own corrupt ways. Then God declared to Noe His intention to send the Deluge. During the building of the ark, Noe had to suffer terribly from those people.*¹²⁰

Notice here a synthesis of the two distinct interpretations of who the sons of God were. Bl. Emmerich very clearly ascribes an even larger physical stature to those children of women who were especially

117 Augustine, *City of God*, 682.

118 Ibid 684-685.

119 Emmerich, *Life of Jesus Christ*, 31.

120 Emmerich, *Life of Jesus Christ*, 31-32.

alluring to the Sethite men, but these women were infused with “fallen spirits”. She’s saying that they were possessed by various demons, and that through this influence, they were made more appealing to the purer lineage, so that by seduction they could corrupt it.

A [midrashic text](#) points to a similar belief in Hebrew tradition, however with certain understandable inconsistencies:

Rabbi Meir said: || The generations of Cain went about stark naked, men and women, just like the beasts, and they defiled themselves with all kinds of immorality, a man with his mother or his daughter, or the wife of his brother, or the wife of his neighbour, in public and in the streets, with evil inclination which is in the thought of their heart, as it is said, "And the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth" ([Gen. 6:5](#)).

Rabbi said: The angels who fell from their holy place in heaven saw the daughters of the generations of Cain walking about naked, with their eyes painted like harlots, and they went astray after them, and took wives from amongst them, as it is said, "And the sons of Elohim saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all that they chose" ([Gen. 6:2](#)).¹²¹

As we will see, it’s unlikely the generations of Cain “went about stark naked like beasts”, given that it was from the line of Cain that sophisticated civilization—by our modern standards, at least—likely arose. A certain disdain for modesty no doubt existed among them, however, to a degree that almost certainly resembled or surpassed modernity’s open hatred for it. It would not be a stretch of the imagination to envision an ancient Hebrew, transposed in time and place to Miami, Florida circa 2018, and see him aghast with the exact same sentiment. “These women don’t wear any clothes!”

The apocryphal Book of Treasures [attests](#) to similar debauchery, specifically of sexual vice, among the Cainites:

Meanwhile fornication reigned among the daughters of Cain, and without shame [several] women would run after one man. And one man would attack another, and they committed fornication in the presence of each other shamelessly. For all the devils were gathered together in that camp of Cain, and unclean spirits entered into the women, and took possession of them. The old women were more lascivious than the maidens, fathers and sons defiled themselves with their mothers and sisters, sons respected not even their own fathers, and fathers made no distinction between their sons [and other men]. And Satan had been made ruler (or prince) of that camp.

The apocrypha makes special note of the influence of the demonic upon music and dance, something clearly paralleled in pagan rituals and chronicled in works like *Bacchae*. The Dionysian relationship between lower, base aspects of music and fornication cannot be ignored, and obviously wasn’t by the early-Christian world:

121 *Pirkei DeRabbi Eliezer*, 22:3-4; pulled from Sefaria.com.

And when the men and women were stirred up to lascivious frenzy by the devilish playing of the reeds which emitted musical sounds, and by the harps which the men played through the operation of the power of the devils, and by the sounds of the tambourines and of the sistra which were beaten and rattled through the agency of evil spirits, the sounds of their laughter were heard in the air above them, and ascended to that holy mountain.

This account then details several hundred Sethite men descending from their living spaces on the holy mountain to put down the unrest of the Cainites, only to be overwhelmed by their own lusts for the women.

See the common thread that ties these sections together: an intermingling of the lineages of Cain and Seth, and some sort of demonic (fallen angel) influence that precipitates it. As we saw previously with the narrative of Cain and Abel, apocrypha and commentary maintained aspects of what truly happened, and Bl. Emmerich's visions help bring it all together and resolve certain contradictions. In this case, the Enochian notion of fallen angels copulating with human women—a known impossibility according to Catholic angelology and theology—we have a more reasonable understanding of who the sons of God indicate. And yet, the extent of the Cainites' wickedness was such that they embraced the demonic wholeheartedly, and this manifested in the adoption of obscene harlotry by their women.

So rather than there being an either/or interpretation of what happened, we see that it's some combination of both. The fallen angels took possession of women. *Enoch's* narrative was half-right about this, as the demonic spirits were involved, and progeny did result, but not in the manner of *Rosemary's Baby*. St. Augustine and the Church Fathers were also half-right—although, to their credit, the half they got right was far more relevant and important to world history. There was an intermingling of the Cainites with the Sethites. But only by understanding how these two competing narratives are actually describing the same events do we get a complete picture of that antediluvian time.

There is a lot more that can be written on this alone, as many relevant books have been written on the subject. Apart from some hypotheses regarding the Watchers, or *Grigori*, as being a separate order of created being entirely, different from both angels and men, most interpretations fall into either a Sethite interpretation of the “sons of God” or a purely angelic-demonic one. This last hypothesis, regarding the Watchers, draws heavily on *Enoch* and is supported largely by the demonic interpretation, but it introduces more questions than it seems to answer. We will not dwell on those here.

Antediluvian Civilization

Scripture informs us that the progeny of Cain developed complex enough forms of civilization to have advanced knowledge in music and metallurgy, though the exact degree of their advancement is left unwritten:

And Ada brought forth Jabel: who was the father of such as dwell in tents, and of herdsmen. And his brother's name was Jubal; he was the father of them that play upon

*the harp and the organs. Sella also brought forth Tubalcain, who was a hammerer and artificer in every work of brass and iron.*¹²²

The days before the Flood numbered up to about fifteen hundred years. Coupled with the long lives of the early men, it can be safely presumed that the world had reached a population comparable to what we're looking at today, if not greater. It's worth remembering, also, that the world would have looked very different then than it does now—the oceans, for instance, probably didn't exist, or if they did, they would have been many times smaller than they are now. The Flood included a deepening of valleys and a raising of mountains¹²³, which so thoroughly changed the Earth's geography as to render it utterly unrecognizable. This means that there would have been much more space for a men to populate, even though it seems like there's plenty of space presently for several billions of us already.

This is all to say that the antediluvian peoples had access to natural resources, had manpower to extract them, and—their long lives taken into account—developed and preserved knowledge of what to do with them. In addition to the fact that their language had not yet been splintered, the likelihood of their civilization becoming fairly advanced in about a millennium-and-a-half's time is high.

Bl. Emmerich's brief account of antediluvian culture makes their civilization seem as alien to us as ours would be to primitive tribesmen, though not in terms of its sophistication so much as its organization.

*These people could form all kinds of images out of stone and metal; but of the knowledge of God they had no longer a trace. They sought their gods in the creatures around them. I have seen them scratch up a stone, form it into an extravagant image, and then adore it. They worshipped also a frightful animal and all kinds of ignoble things. They knew all things, they could see all things, they were skilled in the preparing of poisons, they practiced sorcery and every species of wickedness. The women invented music. I saw them going around among the better tribes trying to seduce them to their own abominations. They had no dwelling houses, no cities, but they raised massive round towers of shining stone. Under those towers were little structures leading into great caverns wherein they carried on their horrible wickedness. From the roofs of these structures, the surrounding country could be seen, and by mounting up into the towers and looking through tubes, one could see far into the distance. But it was not like looking through tubes made to bring distant objects into view. The power of the tubes to which I here allude, was effected by satanic agency. They that looked through them could see where the other tribes were settled. Then they marched against them, overcame them, and lawlessly carried all before them. That same spirit of lawlessness they exercised everywhere. I saw them sacrificing children by burying them alive in the earth. God overthrew that mountain at the time of the Deluge.*¹²⁴

There's a lot going on here, and parallels to our own contemporary society are impossible to ignore. And as with all of Bl. Emmerich's visions, a lot of content is only touched on in the briefest of

122 Gen 4:20-22.

123 Psalms 104:5-10.

124 Emmerich, *Life of Jesus Christ*, 32-33.

overviews. It isn't difficult to imagine, however, a race of men whose technological prowess was aided not by knowledge of materials (as our is presently) but by the openly demonic, and how this would have looked to a visionary living in early-nineteenth century Germany.

She speaks of tubes that grant visions from other regions, and we can think of televisions, surveillance systems, the panopticon. She speaks of infants being buried alive in the earth and our country alone murders children at a rate of more than half-a-million a year. She speaks of their having no dwelling houses, but erecting enormous towers over extensive underground complexes, and the modern skyscraper comes to mind. She speaks of skilled makers of sophisticated poisons and sorcery, and we can remember the blight of Big Pharma on our society, of the Sackler family, of vaccine idolatry, and less obviously, of the xenoestrogens introduced into our foods, of the hormones from the Pill being so potent that they've altered the ecosystem.

Neither Scripture nor apocrypha offer us deeper glimpses into antediluvian civilization than what has been outlined above. What we can know for sure is that they were a people given over to their evil inclinations, prone to impulsiveness, violence, and sexual deviancy. They lived inordinately long lives, by today's standards, which allowed for the preservation and maturation of knowledge at rates far better than subsequent centuries, yet they turned their attention toward evil and became so corrupted that they warranted utter desolation by water.

Noah and The Flood

At last, we arrive at the Deluge.

The Flood cycle takes up a good portion of the first eleven chapters of Genesis, and it is considered by some scholars to be something of a thematic repetition of what had come before. In a certain sense, it is a second fall, as the world this time lapses from its created state—a generally homogeneous ball with mild mountains and plains and dotted with large lakes—into the familiar pitted, marred, and drowned globe riven with deep valleys and high peaks. It is, likewise, a second creation story, for the same reason. It carries in it another account of a sin immediately after this fresh start, just as it also describes the events of a secondary parentage.

For this reason, we will not be dwelling very long nor prying very deeply into the Flood account. Theories about what happened probably fill hundreds of books related to creation and creationism, to say nothing of the multitude of comparative religion studies that cross-reference the Biblical account with other near-Eastern and various other accounts of an ancient flood-related worldwide cataclysm. For those interested in pursuing lines of investigation regarding proposed geological models of what happened, I recommend using [Walt Brown's Hydroplate Theory](#) as a jumping off point.

What we're interested in here, however, are the people involved: Noah and his sons. Before we get to that, however, the general nature of the Flood has to be addressed—specifically, whether or not it was, actually, a worldwide cataclysm. This is important to address because the Flood narrative is intimately related not just to the Biblical creation account, but also to the overall anti-Darwinist, anti-Evolutionist, anti-Modernist thread of cosmology that stands in reaction to what dominates our institutions today.

It is also, as evolutionists recognize, the most difficult to counter (detailed critiques of evolutionary theory notwithstanding), as even the uneducated laymen can see for themselves the preponderance of flood imagery across nearly every major world religion and myth. Many scholars have tried to rationalize this as some sort of archetypal pattern of mythological narratives, indicating a psychological process that Jung referred to as individuation. But this, like nearly all theoretical depth psychology, is a complete shot in the dark, and it comes across as an unwillingness to believe the original narrative.

The Flood is mentioned and attested to in various parts of the Bible, and while it is not for our purposes here to address or even list them all, a few examples are appropriate. From the Old Testament, Psalms¹²⁵ and Isaiah¹²⁶ both have passages that refer to it directly, and from the New, Matthew¹²⁷ and Luke¹²⁸ record Christ Himself speaking of the days of Noah and the coming of the Deluge. Peter's epistles¹²⁹ refer to the event as well. In each case, this event is not treated by its interlocutors as a mythological event, but a real one directly related to their history. As this understanding is squared with the rest of the Biblical context, it's worth approaching what that means about the Flood itself.

Two modern trends in Biblical interpretation must be dealt with: the first is the purely mythological explanation, already mentioned, and the second is the theory of a localized, regional flood in antiquity. In a certain sense, this is even less believable than the mythological angle and harder to square with Scripture.

We know from later in Genesis that God commanded Abraham to travel virtually unheard-of distances throughout the Middle East and Levant. Moses led the Hebrews out of Egypt, around the wilderness, and to the border of Canaan. The Babylonian Captivity resulted in Israelites being extracted from their homes and taken all the way to Babylon. Examples of long journeys characterized as migrations define key parts of the Old Testament, and—at least in the former two cases—they were actively willed by God. God told Abraham to leave his home just as He told Moses to bring His people out of Egypt. And these examples are just from the Old Testament; the travels of the Apostles before their various martyrdoms took them as far west as Iberia (St. James) and as far east as India (St. Thomas).

But God didn't tell Noah to go anywhere. If a regional flood was the simplest explanation, then we're to believe that God instructed Noah to spend the better part of a century building an unimaginably large boat in order to ride out an otherwise insignificant flood event. Weirder still, that God would command him to load it full of animals, despite those animals surviving in other, neighboring, un-flooded regions. And all of this instead of just commanding Noah to move. While it's certainly true that we are not to know the full mind of God, we can also know that God does not act irrationally. This interpretation puts God's perfect reason at odds with Scriptural inerrancy, and that's presuming that the sacred author was so confused when he transcribed the Flood accounts that his intention as a writer was at odds with an historical reality.

125 Psalm 104

126 Isaiah 54:9

127 Matthew 24

128 Luke 17

129 1 Peter 2 & 3; also 2 Peter 3

It's only natural, then, to take Scripture in its plainest sense—aided, likewise, by the exactness with which it describes both the building of the Ark and the events of the Flood. The notation of dimensions occurs only three times in the Old Testament: first with the defining of the Ark, second with the Ark of the Covenant, and lastly with the building of the Temple. Each of these are figurements or types of each other, which are, of course, also prefigurements of Christ. St. Augustine, following exactly in line with the consensus of the Church Fathers, comments on this:

*Now the dimensions of the Ark, its length, height and breadth, symbolise the human body, in the reality of which Christ was prophesied to come, and did come, to men. For the length of the human body from the top of the head to the sole of the foot is six times its breadth from side to side, and ten times its depth, measured on the side from back to belly. [...] Thus, the Ark was made 300 cubits in length, and fifty in breadth, and thirty in height. And the door which was set in the side of it clearly represents the wound made in the side of the Crucified when it was pierced with a spear, which is indeed the way of entrance for those who come to Him, because from that wound there flowed the sacraments in which believers are initiated.*¹³⁰

Much more can be, and indeed has been, written tying the Ark to Christ, but it suffices our purposes here to merely touch on it.

As a result of the Fall, creation revolted against its Creator. Man lost grace and paradise, the animals lost their directions, and the chain of life that had Adam at its top fell into predatory disorder. The bare rock and soil of the world, however, did not undergo any change. It was not until the Flood that this occurred.

We speak of the Flood, but it's perhaps more fitting to speak of it as a cataclysm. The floodwaters were, of course, the most threatening and obvious part of the event, but it's important to remember that the floodwaters didn't just disappear. The water never went away; you can see it when you visit the beach. This should drive home how different the world looked and was prior to this cataclysm; valleys were indeed shallower, mountains shorter. The shape of the planet itself had to change in order to accommodate having dry land after the cataclysm. Most Flood theorists attribute the contortion of the planet during the Flood as being a direct and natural result of it, and while there's no space here to explore their various theories, this writer sees no reason not to believe that to be the case.

The Flood resulted in the wiping out of the entirety of mankind, and the reason for this that Scripture gives is severalfold: first, due to the intermingling of the children of God and men, as discussed above, and secondly, due to the great iniquities and wickedness of the race that resulted. The intermingling of the Sethites and Cainites meant that the blood of Cain would have survived into Noah's progeny—likely through one of the wives of his sons, perhaps Ham's. This explains how certain tribes of Nephilim were said to have been found in Canaan at the time of Moses: "certain monsters of the sons of Enac, of the giant kind: in comparison of whom, we seemed like locusts."¹³¹

¹³⁰ Augustine, *City of God*, 687.

¹³¹ Numbers 13:34.

After the mountains had been up-heaved and the valleys sunk, the floodwaters receded and Noah, eventually, was able to emerge from the Ark. The rise of various different flood myths occurred after the sundering of language and dispersal of peoples at the Tower of Babel, which occurred within the first two centuries after the Flood¹³². As the people drifted apart and fell out of the True Faith, their understandings of their shared origin deteriorated and mythologized. We can attribute this in part to flesh's innate frailty, by which we mean our darkened intellects, but we can also attribute this with near certainty to various demonic influences leading people astray by design. It is most often by preying on the frailty of the flesh and weakness of our will towards it that such influences are even able to work. The practice of open idolatry and the libidinous cults of pagan antiquity provided ample room for the demonic to maneuver, after all.

The Biblical Flood account, however, as a narrative, is the most accurate of these many accounts. As Rev. Warkulwiz explains,

[It] is the only complete true and authoritative account of the Great Flood. It is a sober, detailed and consistent report that was written by eye-witnesses. The postdiluvian patriarchs preserved it faithfully and passed it on to their posterity intact. Eventually it reached Moses, through whom the divine seal was put on it, certifying its accuracy.

Other peoples, not in the line of the patriarchs, drifted away from the true religion. They recalled the story of the Deluge, but because of their lack of devotion to the one true God, they corrupted it, transforming it into fantastic tales. Such tales are found in the traditions of nearly all peoples throughout the world—in those of the most advanced civilizations and the most barbarous tribes.¹³³

Warkulwiz mentions that the account “eventually reached Moses,” and this is worth a brief aside. Moses’ great-grandfather was Levi, the patriarch of his tribe. And Levi’s grandfather, Isaac, was alive for a significant part of Levi’s life. Isaac’s life, we can trace from the chronologies in Genesis, significantly overlapped the end of Shem’s. Although the time between Moses’ life and that of the Flood was in the neighborhood of a millennium, it’s very believable that the oral account of the Flood history was only filtered through three or four people between Shem and Moses himself.

As mentioned previously, the changes inflicted upon the Earth by the Flood are too numerous and speculative to dig into here. The change in the earth could be seen as something of a delayed use of making the world reflect the contorted nature of its inhabitants after the Fall; in this sense, the two are inextricable from one another. While we cannot know the exact character or depths of depravity that antediluvian man had sunk to, God’s will to utterly annihilate them informs us that they were, on the whole, accustomed to barbarity and evil with a prevalence that outstrips even what we see today. While it may seem hard to believe, living as we are after the brutality and atrociousness that characterized the twentieth century, the wickedness of the antediluvian period reminds us that there are depths of depravity we have yet to reach. The Fall can send us still further from God.

132 We can determine this because it occurred within the lifetime of Peleg.

133 Warkulwiz, *Doctrines of Genesis*, 374-375.

In this way, we can understand that period immediately before the Flood was the very nadir of human goodness in the world. It was the culmination of the worst effects of the Fall taken to their maximum extremes, as God disallowed the proliferation of that evil by force. We cannot say that the world is all that much better now, however, purely on the basis that God has not sent another Flood to reset the system. He promised us He wouldn't do such a thing, after all; and in fact, the next time we reach comparable levels of utmost depravity, He'll be turning out the lights and rolling up the carpets: "Wherever you're going, you can't stay here!"

We can also surmise that God will stave off the death of all men for as long as there remains even the smallest glimmer of possibility that they may return to Him. Prior to the Sacrifice at Calvary, we know that no one entered Heaven (Enoch & Elijah aside), but still their souls could be prepared for glory. Until that time came, they waited for the messiah in Abraham's Bosom. The willingness of God not to release the Deluge, of God to take favor of those willing to look to Him—first Noah, and then later Lot—are both types and examples of the sort of mercy and justice that God delivers unto every human soul. Death comes when the providential will of God has decided that further life will only reduce whatever glory you have: when you shine the brightest and thus will occupy the best throne for you in Heaven, or when there is no more hope of your salvation and further life would mean only greater suffering in Hell. These are judgments reserved to God alone.

Adam's Final Resting Place

Origen attributed to Hebrew tradition that Adam's skull was buried outside of where Jerusalem would be founded, at Golgotha: the place of the skull.¹³⁴ This is consistent with the Christian apocrypha, particularly of the Adam/Treasures narrative. Just prior to Adam's death, the [Treasures](#) account mentions:

*But command thy sons, and order them to embalm thy body after thy death with myrrh, cassia, and stakte. And they shall place thee in this cave, wherein I am making you to dwell this day, until the time when your expulsion shall take place from the regions of Paradise to that earth which is outside it. And whosoever shall be left in those days shall take thy body with him, and shall deposit it on the spot which I shall show him, in the centre of the earth; for in that place shall redemption be effected for thee and for all thy children." And God revealed unto Adam everything which the Son would suffer on behalf of him.*¹³⁵

This is vividly consistent with something Bl. Emmerich mentions:

I once had a vision of Mount Calvary. I saw on it a prophet, the companion of Elias. The mount was at that time full of caves and sepulchers. The prophet entered one of the caves and from a stone coffin filled with bones he took up the skull of Adam. Instantly an angel

¹³⁴ I have found attribution of this to Origen's Commentary on Matthew 27:32 in a fragmentary Catena, but have been unable to source it directly. See:

Grypeou, Emmanouela and Helen Spurling, *The Book of Genesis in Late Antiquity: Encounters Between Jewish and Christian Exegesis* (Boston: Brill 2013), 72.

¹³⁵ Treasures, chap. Adam's Stay in Paradise.

*appeared before him, saying: "That is Adam's skull," and he forbade its removal. Scattered over the skull was some thin yellow hair. From the prophet's account of what had occurred, the spot was named "The Place of Skulls" (Calvary). Christ's Cross stood in a straight line above that skull at the time of His Crucifixion. I was interiorly instructed that the spot upon which the skull rests is the middle point of the earth. I was told the distance east, south, and west in numbers, but I have forgotten them.*¹³⁶

Notice that both the apocryphal account and Bl. Emmerich's mention not only that Adam's skull was beneath the Cross, but also that this was somehow the exact "center" or "middle point" of the planet—clearly not in a geological sense, but in some sort of geographic sense. What this means isn't clear from either account, but it's striking that they both include this—despite it being extraordinarily unlikely that Bl. Emmerich had any knowledge of these apocryphal writings. It's more explicit in her *Dolores Passion*:

*I learned also that the prophet having related what had happened to him, the spot received the name of Calvary. Finally, I saw that the Cross of Jesus was placed vertically over the skull of Adam. I was informed that this spot was the exact centre of the earth; and at the same time I was shown the numbers and measures proper to every country, but I have forgotten them, individually as well as in general. Yet I have seen this centre from above, and as it were from a bird's-eye view. In that way a person sees far more clearly than on a map all the different countries, mountains, deserts, seas, rivers, towns, and even the smallest places, whether distant or near at hand.*¹³⁷

Notice again how much attention is given to the "center of the Earth" remark. We may not know exactly what the significance of this is, but it was deemed important enough to be remembered. Writers Emmanouela Grypeou and Helen Spurling attribute this notion to "exegetical speculations on Ps 74:12 (LXX 73:12): 'For God is my king of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth'."¹³⁸

Bl. Emmerich and apocrypha both speak of Noah and his sons removing some of Adam's bones from their original resting place and loading them onto the ark before the Flood. Afterward, these bones were transported by Noah, Shem, and Melchizedek to their resting place at Golgotha.

Adam's final grave site is worth a deeper look. We have to recall that the region of the Levant, where Christ Himself incarnated and spent his life on Earth, is the center world in a certain geographic sense. It sits at the junction of Europe, Asia and Africa, and for thousands of years was central to the interaction of trade, commerce, culture, and human movement. The Cross was erected a top of a geographical and social compass rose, from which in every direction—North, South, East and West—the Good News of Christ's redemption and victory over death would be spread by His apostles.

It is appropriate then to believe that Adam's skull was buried beneath the Cross and at the juncture of this other cross. It was in the Holiest Sacrifice that God remembered Adam, that God delivered to the

136 Emmerich, *Life of Jesus Christ*, 29.

137 Emmerich, Anne Catherine, *The Dolorous Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ* (London: Burns & Lambert, 1862), 308.

138 Grypeou & Spurling, *The Book of Genesis in Late Antiquity*, 74.

whole race of Adam the path to salvation and thereby opened, for the first time since that first day of his wakefulness in the Garden, the gates of Paradise. Providence unfolds with a certain poetry; Adam, who Fell from Grace, came to rest beneath the very instrument and event of the Fall's undoing. From the tree of knowledge did his transgression begin, while the remade tree of life was planted in the soil of his grave and stretched toward Heaven.

Melchizedek and the Beginning of Recorded History

The ancient Sumerians had legends of teacher-figures coming out of the water to bring advanced knowledge to early civilization. Similar myths are found in the ancient histories of the Mesoamerican civilizations. To punctuate this point, these figures—some historians refer to them by their Sumerian name, Annunaki, or Those of Royal Blood—are depicted wearing the scales of fish as clothing.

There's a lot of hokey pseudo-history surrounding the Annunaki, popularized by New Age-adjacent attempts to uncover esoteric history. This can result in the conflation of the Annunaki with conspiracies as wide-ranging as reptilian alien hybrids to at least more-reasonable hypotheses concerning advanced Atlantean or Lemurian civilizations; talk of advanced cultures that predate what modern geologists refer to as the Younger Dryas period is thrown in for good measure.

We can dispense with the outlandish speculation to focus on what the Annunaki were referring to specifically: tall men with great knowledge who lived—if they were real—at the earliest onset of recorded history. When put that way, we know exactly who they'd have been: Noah's grandchildren, if not his sons themselves. The generation born immediately after the Flood would still have possessed stature comparable to those born prior to it, as the effects of the Flood on diet and genetics¹³⁹ would probably not have led to serious alterations within the first generation. Additionally, Noah's sons themselves had living memory of antediluvian culture and civilization; knowledge their sons would doubtless have had access to.

Using Scripture as a guide, we know that the diversification and complete dispersal of humanity did not occur until after the sundering of speech at Babel's tower. This allows for several generations to have been born in the wake of the Flood, having lived and died still within the lifetime of Noah himself. Noah was still alive when Abraham was born, although he wasn't long for the world at that point. Shem's life continued long enough for it to have been very easy to believe that Abraham may have encountered him on his travels. There's even some suggestion, from certain Hebrew traditions, that Shem and Melchizedek were the same person. While this is probably not the case, all three men—Abraham, Shem, and Melchizedek—lived contemporaneously. This link alone should be enough to make pause those who ascribe a purely mythological character to the first eleven chapters of Genesis; the continuity between Shem and the Flood cycle with Abraham and “real history” is too hard to ignore, and that link is Melchizedek himself.

That such a mysterious figure should hold a remarkable place might come as some surprise. He is the priest-king of Salem (Jerusalem) and the first man mentioned in Scripture to offer up a sacrifice to God specifically of bread and wine. He is presented without genealogy or context, and for this reason

¹³⁹ See Warkulwiz, as well as hydroplate creationist theory.

compared typologically to the Messiah, both in Rabbinic literature and in the Christian tradition, prefiguring Christ in a way that even Adam does not. Melchizedek's righteousness and priestly authority prefigures Christ's ministry and, to a certain extent, institution—or re-institution—of the true priesthood. St. Augustine elaborates:

Here, indeed, is the first appearance of that sacrifice which is now offered to God by Christians all over the world, in which is fulfilled what was long afterwards said in prophecy to Christ, Who was yet to come in the flesh: "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek"—not, that is, 'after the order of Aaron'; for his order was to be abolished when the things prefigured by these shadows came into the light of day.¹⁴⁰

Over the course of the first eleven chapters of Genesis, not only is the lineage of all mankind detailed, the lineage of his spiritual tradition is as well: the Mass. Melchizedek's offering was the cumulative prefigurement of the True Sacrifice that would be offered atop Golgotha and repeated until the completion of time. It cannot be considered a coincidence that the Last Supper material was consistently identical to that of Melchizedek's offering. We will look at this with greater care in the conclusion of this work. Suffice it to say that Melchizedek stands at a point in history where recognizable civilization began to erect walls around its cities and conduct trade, practice religion, and split into tribes.

Melchizedek himself is extremely mysterious, as Scripture offers next to nothing in the way of explaining who he is, where he came from, or why or how he inherited the Patriarchal blessing from Shem. On the last point, the general data is there simply by implication: Melchizedek would have been within the direct lineage of Shem in order to receive the blessing, as that same blessing is what passed from father to son down through Abraham to Jacob. Certain Hebrew traditions, in addition to some of the Church Fathers (though not many) correlated Shem with Melchizedek as the same person. Because of the priestly authority and inheritance possessed by Melchizedek, there's good reason for such assumption, but the Scripture's ambiguity on this point makes it impossible to tell either way.

Bl. Emmerich's visions include a fair amount of things about Melchizedek, though some of it jars with the more traditional interpretations of him by Church Fathers. Her visions depict him as "a being of another nature, as an angel, as one sent by God", who she never witnessed "eating, drinking, or sleeping".¹⁴¹ She continues in explaining how active he was in the political and social dimensions of several different kingdoms in the region, "[exercising] an irresistible influence by his mere presence", so great that "even the idolaters cheerfully accepted his decisions and acted upon his advice".¹⁴² In such manner, he tasked himself "with the uniting, the separating, or the guiding of nations and families".¹⁴³

Melchizedek, Bl. Emmerich claims, was pivotal in the establishment and erection of the ancient postdiluvian world. He traveled the Near East, partitioned off land for nations, and was known by all

140 Augustine, *City of God*, 729.

141 Emmerich, *Life of Jesus Christ*, 64.

142 Ibid, 65.

143 Ibid, 70.

around as a great sage and prophet. Whether her claim of his otherworldly or angelic nature is true or not, we can certainly know that he was, at the very least, a great prophet whose priesthood prefigured that of the true Church.

This brings into our field of vision the scope of recorded history. Bl. Emmerich also had specific visions regarding the chronology of the ancient world, and Egypt in particular. According to her, the Egyptian calendar, far from being one of the more accurate ones of the region, was riddled with irreconcilable errors as a result of dynastic changes and superstitious scholarship:

But I saw that, even at the coming of Semiramis to Memphis, these people, in their pride had designedly confused their calendar. Their ambition was to take precedence of all other nations in point of time. With this end in view, they drew up a number of complicated calendars and royal genealogical tables. By this and frequent changes in their computations, order and true chronology were lost. That this confusion might be firmly established, they perpetuated every error by inscriptions and the erection of great buildings. For a long time they reckoned the ages of father and son, as if the date of the former's demise were that of the latter's birth. The kings, who waged constant war with the priests on the subject of chronology, inserted among their forefathers the names of persons that never existed. Thus the four kings of the same name who reigned simultaneously in Thebes, Heliopolis, Memphis, and Sais, were in accordance with this design, reckoned one after the other. I saw too that once they reckoned nine hundred and seventy days to a year, and again, years were computed as months. I saw a pagan priest drawing up a chronological table in which for every five hundred years, eleven hundred were set down.¹⁴⁴

This could explain why certain other sources, such as Plato's *Timaeus*, cite Egyptian records as extending back some nine thousand years or more. The other ancient and contemporaneous civilizations may also have had faulty record keeping—and even for similar reasons—but the extent of Egypt's error made it appear far older than it actually was.

Man has always had an appreciation for the old or the ancient, as the existence of things older than himself helps orient him within the flow of history. The surviving tangibles of the past remind him that things existed before he did, and they will likely exist after he dies, each thing coming into being and then disintegrating just as his flesh does. But this doesn't imply an infinite causal chain; just as he was made, born, lived and died, so too can he assume everything around him plots a similar arc. The existence of history, in a practical sense, implies the existence of a beginning. It's no surprise that civilizations might inflate the length of their records in order to appeal to a sense of legitimacy.

In *The City of God*, St. Augustine mentions varying chronology across early civilizations as well, partly verifying Bl. Emmerich's claims:

In order to make it seem less incredible that years were calculated differently in days gone by, those who think that they were adduce a great deal of evidence derived from

¹⁴⁴ Ibid, 63-64.

*historical writings which shows that the Egyptians had a year of four months, the Acarnanians of six months, and the Lavinians of thirteen months. The elder Pliny mentions [reports of various long-lived men in antiquity]. He, however, considers that all these cases arise out of ignorance of chronology. 'For some people', he says, 'used to reckon summer as one complete year and winter as another, while others treated each of the four seasons as a complete year, like the Arcadians, who had years of three months'. He adds that the Egyptians, whose short year of four months I have already mentioned, sometimes ended the year with the final phase of each moon; 'and so, he says, 'we have reports among them of individuals who lived to be a thousand years old.'*¹⁴⁵

Here, St. Augustine is referring to grasping the ages of the Patriarchs and whether the cycles of generations given in Genesis can be trusted; although he very much says that they can, he's using the imperfect chronologies of other Near-Eastern peoples as a counterargument that could suggest otherwise. For our purposes, the differences in chronology is the point—and when he's citing “a great deal of evidence from historical writings”, he's referring to the works of Censorinus, Macrobius, and Solinus, specifically.

Contemporary scholarship claims that the Egyptian year was comprised of 365 days not unlike the ancient Roman one. Exactly what this is based on is beyond the purview of this piece, as is whether the claim is even an accurate one. It should be remembered that despite Egyptology's modern sophistication, it has frequently been marred by misleading or inaccurate scholarship plagued by modern presuppositions about ancient times.

It is not unbelievable for “years” to have taken on various meanings across the greater Near-Eastern neighborhood of antiquity. Nor, as any historical study of long dynastic civilizations can show, is revisionism or obfuscation of records a particularly obscure practice among ancient cultures. The full extent that this applies to chronology is hard to tell, and perhaps at this point impossible without further data on hand, but it isn't beyond the realm of possibility.

145 Augustine, *City of God*, 655-656.

Conclusion - The Answer to Adam

“Man is born crying. When he has cried enough, he dies.”

So said Kyoami, a character from Akira Kurosawa’s film *Ran*: pagan, and perhaps unrepentant. And yet, as tends to be the case with pagans, he picked up on an obvious thread of truth.

Man is born impassioned, clung deliberately to his flesh and circumscribed to his pain. It is by pain that man recognizes his reality, understands the world. Pain, be it spiritual or physical—often both at once, for the modern soul—is the only means by which man can adequately communicate. Absent the circumcision of the heart, man’s understanding begins and ends with the flesh and the shocks it is the heir to.

What is the circumcision of the heart? St. Paul speaks of it in Romans 2:28-29:

For it is not he is a Jew, who is so outwardly; nor is that circumcision which is outwardly in the flesh:

But he is a Jew, that is one inwardly; and the circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not of men but of God.

Circumcision, remember, an outward mark of the Abrahamic Covenant: a mark of obedience. It is only an outward mark, however, and as St. Paul explains, it is not of use to those who do not keep the law already. Keeping the law inwardly, observing it and obeying it even if one hasn’t access to its external trappings, should always be the priority.

But the practice can also be taken to carry a sacrificial aspect, although not in the formalized sense, as it is was not performed in the manner of the Holy Sacrifice was. Rather, like forms of asceticism and fasting, the pain of circumcision serves a higher purpose, and this is true whether for those who willingly undertook it as well as for those who had it inflicted upon them eight days after birth. Like baptism, it wasn’t something they always had control over, but it served them in life in ways they may not always have been aware of.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁶ It’s worth pointing out that the circumcision of the ancient Hebrews differed greatly from the practice that we recognize today. There’s a lot of literature on this, but for a brief look, [see here](#). It changed into what resembles its current form sometime in the third or fourth century AD.

St. Paul's mention of "the circumcision of the heart" evokes imagery that renders this covenant and sacrifice personal. It brings it into focus as something one must actively and willfully partake in; the law written upon our hearts is not just one that we have to accept, it's one we should gladly be fulfilling and carrying out interiorly and exteriorly.

So circumcision, when shifted away from the flesh and applied to the heart, takes on a greater role. It is the extrication of the soul from the impassioned fallen nature of the flesh. As the will looks toward God, the flesh must be rendered a divorce; yet, this divorce is not an ignorance of what had come before, but a rebuke and a return to what the flesh was intended to have been at the beginning of things: subservient. The passions of the flesh are not to be the guiding principles of our beings. The flesh must be bent to the spirit. And should you need a catalogue of the passions of the flesh, a quick perusal of the cardinal sins should be enough.

This is important when we consider Adam with relation to ourselves. We can be free to blame Adam for the Fall, at least in the literal sense of attributing to him wrongdoing. But can we blame him in the more practical sense of the term? Can we judge him, as though we'd have been any better? Adam, we must remember, was made smarter, stronger, and more vigilant than any one of us. The full reckoning of his first sin, in the sense that *he* would have understood it, is beyond our grasp. Were our places reversed, were it you or I in his place, there is no doubt that we would have done the same. It's tempting to believe otherwise, as obeying God in a prelapsarian world seems such a simple enough thing; and yet a better man than we Fell first.

Adam let into the world sin and death, and rejected God's grace—if only briefly—that he merited eternal separation from God. This separation, as it stemmed from the contortion of human nature that the Fall inflicted, was passed onto all of his progeny. And yet, hope was promised as a redeemer even at that very moment. God was merciful. He did not abandon His creations at their hour of need. And if we consider God's ultimate love for the world, then we can infer that ejecting them from Paradise was both a consequence of their transgression and an act of mercy in light of their contorted natures. Staying in Paradise as creatures who so gravely mutilated themselves would have caused even greater suffering than being sent out into the world.

It is not my intention to cast Adam as a scapegoat. He should not be treated as such, for a multitude of reasons—not the least of which being that he was our foremost progenitor and the eldest of our race, formed by God Himself from the slime. That alone is enough to warrant our respect.

Recapitulation of Our Themes

Before approaching a conclusion, we should review what we've covered in this work so far.

In the first part, we briefly saw how the modern framework of cosmology is an explicit inversion of the previously-accepted Catholic tradition. We saw how inverting the beginnings of our history, of elongating it, and of suggesting hypotheses of human genesis contrary to what has been revealed to us by Scripture can lead to a distortion of morality. We saw how misrepresenting history contorts our understanding of human behavior and moral agency. We saw how Scripture has several senses to it,

that these senses are complementary, and that attempts to square contemporary scientific narratives with those of Genesis require us to dispense with certain senses of interpretation. We saw that doing so invalidates the interpretation and renders the narrative of Genesis incomprehensible. And we saw laid out a general method of our approach.

In the first chapter, we briefly saw man created as a twofold being comprised of matter and soul, and that these were intermingled similar to how water and earth form mud. We saw that man was made to fill thrones in Heaven, though whether this was to replace the Host that rebelled or simply to better exalt the Glory of God remains hidden. We saw that being made in the image of God entailed a creative aspect to agency that other corporeal creatures lacked, that this manifested as our freedom of will and as our ability to use language, and that it existed before the Fall contorted human nature. We saw that Eden was made as a prefigurement of a temple or a church, that it was a physical place, and that it existed on Earth until the time of the Deluge. And we saw that Eve was necessary to the fulfillment of the human race, that the love that binds together the family images the love found in the Trinity, and that the propagation of men was a blessing upon Adam prior to the Fall.

In the second chapter, we briefly saw what Adam's initial nature was probably like based on the flaws introduced to creation by the Fall. We saw how the Fall itself was simultaneously a lawful violation of God's will and a metaphysical alteration to man's nature, which implies a direct connection between the justice of God and nature of creation. We saw how Adam's position of authority in the world prompted all creatures to fall with him when he transgressed. We saw how the Fall deprived Adam of the good, of grace, as a result of his gaze 'turning inward', and how this darkened his intellect. We saw that the ejection from Eden was as much a lawful reprimand for having transgressed God's command as it was a real consequence of their Fallen natures being utterly incompatible with Paradise. And we saw that religious sacrifice, although presumably something that would have occurred without the Fall, took on penitential elements in addition to its innate thanksgivings.

In the third chapter, we briefly saw the effects of the Fall on the family. We saw how the Cain's conflict with Abel originated in the same self-obsession that started with the first transgression. We saw how Cain's sacrifice was not pleasing to God, and that Cain's envy prompted him to commit fratricide. We saw God's mercy manifest even here, as God protected Cain from death in response to Cain's repentance. And we saw how the lines of Cain and Seth prefigured the cities of man and God as St. Augustine illustrated.

In the fourth chapter, we briefly saw the incompatibility between these two lineages and their customs with relation to virtue and piety. We saw that unchecked vice cannot be underestimated by the virtuous, as it led even the pious men of Seth's offspring into sin. We saw the world get so corrupted by the iniquities of men—Cainite and Sethite alike—that only Noah's family warranted delivery from the cataclysm. We saw that giants probably did walk the earth in those days, that men's lives were exceptionally long, and that the shortening of our lives is a result not just of the Fall—which introduced death—but of the Flood. We saw the truncation of lifespans down to the familiar seventy or eight years happen within three to four centuries of the waters receding. And we saw that the beginning of recognizable written history occurs very soon after the sundering of languages at Babel.

Over the course of this work, we have seen the indications of a great decline. It can be found in our lifespans, our physical stature, our ability to retain knowledge, our understanding of nature, our relationship with God. The last of these, however, is a more complicated subject, as Our Lord's implementation of the Sacraments have made available a bond with Him closer than what could be accessed by nearly everyone living prior to His Incarnation.

We saw the agents of sin and their influence traversing creation like hungry wolves, seemingly unimpeded, preying upon a civilization of men who have given themselves over to abandon so thoroughly that they even managed to ensare the promised line of Seth. We saw the culmination of a world so wicked that no chronicle or stone from it can be presently be found. We saw the establishment of a civilization by the man who committed the first murder, which spread throughout the world in fifteen hundred years, which held dominion over the whole world, and which is now left as little more than a few lines in the annals of Sacred Scripture.

"Look upon my works, ye mighty, and despair," says Shelley's Ozymandias; yet even he had what was left of his own statue. Of the civilization before the Flood, so great was its evil that not even one stone was left unturned.

The Coming of Christ

God did not abandon Adam after he Fell. He did not abandon Cain after he killed his brother. He did not abandon the pious among the first man's descendants, as he took Enoch and foretold to Noah the impending cataclysm. And he did not abandon the impious, either, who forsook the goodness of the world found all around them for the debaucheries of the flesh and the fraudulent comforts of the corrupted death culture. They, on the contrary, abandoned him.

What was promised to Adam and Eve, and therefore to all of mankind, was the coming of the Redeemer. The history of the Old Testament records the preparation of the world specifically for that time; it is a chronicle of the relationship God had with the people whose blood was chosen to run through that Redeemer's veins, down the sides of His Cross, and into the chalice of His Holy Sacrifice. It is fitting that so many of the prophets speak of abusive and unfaithful wives when analogizing Israel's relationship with God, as even that nation succumbed to the same temptations that plagued antediluvian man. Yet their iniquities, too, were used to fulfill the providential end of God's promise to the first man.

The parallels between the first eleven chapters of Genesis and Christ himself are too numerous to list in this short work. Typological correlations can be found between the Garden, the Ark, even the family tree of the Patriarchs, and with Christ. This is, in fact, the very purpose of the Old Testament for Christians: the histories and prophecies could be read like blueprints in considering the construction of a building. Each prophecy was a strut, each event was a brick, all laid in the preparation for the coming of the Messiah. The building that was erected was that of our salvation: the human body of God, His Blood, the events of His Sacrifice, and the foundation of His Church.

With this in mind, it's worth briefly dwelling on the cycles present in the Fall and how they were replayed or re-imaged in the life of Christ. The Fathers of the Church have published libraries on such subjects, but, as always, we haven't the space or time to get into any detail here. A simple approach suffices.

The cycle of the Fall is repeated with Our Lord's Incarnation, but it is repeated the way a solution reviews a problem in order to solve it. The Devil, under the guise of the serpent, tempted Eve, the woman, who took fruit from the Tree of Knowledge, gave it to Adam, and from this action, death entered the world. Five and a half thousand years later, God, by His angel, spoke to Our Lady, who received Christ from Heaven and gave Him to the world, and from this action, eventually, death was overcome. The Devil and the serpent are repaired by God and His angel. Eve, who took fruit, the instrument of the Fall, is repaired by the Blessed Virgin, who was given fruit—God the Son—which was the vessel of salvation. This is a rudimentary parallel, but it suffices to introduce an even more interesting cycle: the actions of Our Lord's Passion follow the same pattern of the Fall except they're backwards, inverted. The Fall marked a descent into sin, while the Passion marked an ascent back into grace.

Where the fruit was given to Adam which prompts the Fall, instead it is Our Lady, a woman, who is given Christ to bring into the world. Adam received the object of his condemnation, and he consumed it; the Blessed Virgin is given the vessel of all redemption, and she in turn gives it to man.

Where the first sin is committed in an act of disobedience, in the removal of fruit from a tree, Christ willingly ascends to the Cross and is united to it. The Tree of Knowledge has its fruit removed; the Tree of Life is remade when God's Body is nailed to the Cross. Obedience and total submission to the divine will heals the rift carved into human nature by that first disobedient action.

Where Eve was tempted, she became the vessel that deprived all men of glory; yet the Blessed Mother serves God unambiguously as the Queen of Heaven, through whom man returns to the glory promised at creation. The serpent tempted the first woman; the foremost of women grinds the head of that serpent with her heel.

Where God cast out our first parents from Eden and shut its gates because they had brought death into the world, Christ entered the world as the true man, opened the gates of Heaven, and embraced death so that he would conquer it. Because of the Fall did the Most Precious Blood be spilled, but because it was spilled, the Fall is overcome.

And where our first parents descended from the Holy Mount after their transgression, Christ ascended Golgotha to redeem them.

These are not the empty flourishes of pleasant prose, or the empty symbolism of amusing fiction. They aren't mere literary devices present in the written word of Sacred Scripture. These are the manifestations of providential history, a working in of meaning and cycles and types that build upon each other, crafted and implemented by a divine mind. To think of God as the author of history is no empty allegory; it's a near-literal understanding of how the turning of history builds to fruition His ultimate plan.

The ancients believed that there was a *telos* to the world, that actions can be read to have meanings in the same way stories do. We could understand stories to be, in fact, creative imitations of this idea to the extent that our inferior intellects are capable of imitating providence. Modern man has forgotten how to view reality this way, seeing either the mere immediate consequences of actions, or otherwise magnifying, often superstitiously, chains of causality into the realm of hyperbole. The exercises of the former are a simplistic means of getting by in the world, while the latter tend to be exercises in abstraction that serve narratives of social conditioning. Neither gets at what it means to recognize that history is reflected as meaning, that the events of our daily lives are present within the same historical tide as those that shaped mankind.

There are many reasons that Christ undertook a public ministry, and that his death was a violent, humiliating, and excruciatingly public one. We are called to observe it so that we can not only know it, but that we can relate to it, and to know Him. We are called to imitate Him, to go to Him, to rely on Him—to commune, in fact, which is possible only by befriending Him.

So when we see a parallel between elements of our lives and that of Christ's, this is not mere coincidence. Likewise is it not coincidence that the life Christ was a fulfillment of those prefigurements chronicled in the histories of the Old Testament. History is relevant, immediate; to the extent that it is knowable, we are able to see it as a great work of God's authorship that exists for us to better come to know Him.

The Immediateness of History

Graham Hancock, popular alternative-history crank and psychedelics proponent, has famously remarked that ours is a civilization with amnesia. There's truth to that, albeit not quite in the manner which he probably intends. Rather than forgetting how very ancient we are as an intelligent race, as his hypothesis goes, we have forgotten instead how very young we are, comparatively speaking.

It is comforting to buy into the belief of an unimaginably ancient world. There is comfort to be found among the million-year-old rocks that geologists have told us preexisted even some of the heavenly bodies. There is comfort there because we can brush them with our hands and console ourselves: these have existed before even our imaginations can fathom, and they will continue to exist long afterward. Extrapolating further: our life is but an immeasurable micron in the vast timeline of a universe whose boundaries and distances cannot be fathomed. Our life, in effect, is hardly worth notice; it exists to be observed only by ourselves, and even should the Almighty find it amid the countless others, it is as insignificant as a single grain of sand is to our attention.

We can entertain, abstractly of course, notions of God's infinitude. We can recognize that the endlessness of His intellect means that our lives remain every bit as important to Him whether they're thrown into a context of trillions of years or whether it's simply a few thousand. But we should also remember that God works in ways that will be knowable to those seeking him—who, as the First Vatican Council teaches, is everyone, at least at some point in their lives.

The world was created specifically as part of a divine plan, and man was positioned to play a vital, integral part of this plan as a sort of lord of the Earth. This would imply that the world should be knowable by man, at least in the sense of how it was supposed to be his kingdom. It has context, and that context isn't a some unreachable skybox that exists as some aesthetical design feature. The context is concrete, sensible, defined. History is immediate, relevant, providential. There's no room for arbitrariness in such a world. Things don't just simply happen; they're either allowed to happen by God's permissive will, or He actively intends for such things to come to pass. There's nothing else.

The comfort found in unimaginably ancient Earths and multiple timelines is a false comfort that preys upon a strain of irresponsibility. Again, abstractly reasoning about these as philosophical exercises isn't the point; their proliferation as social narratives, default modes of thinking, presumed facts of life according to secular models: this is where such thinking is dangrous. It's a comfort that suggests that nothing really matters, that nothing really changes, and that nothing makes a difference. This comfort is slothful by its nature; it inspires no sense of responsibility and fosters instead a moral apathy. If there is a god, it suggests, that god is so remote, and the cosmos so infinite, and history so long, that there's no significance to anything that I do. The common understanding of morality between people, rather than being the binding fabric that holds us together and better completes the divine intention for the world, becomes instead a pragmatic attempt to prevent us from killing each other. This understanding, as we know from the last century, when the civilization once guided by the Church embraced various alternatives instead, has demonstrated itself to be an overwhelmingly obvious failure.

Shorten history, and the story changes. Shorten history, and it gets increasingly hard to believe that nothing matters. Shorten history enough, in fact, and it becomes impossible to argue that anything at all could be unimportant to the eye of God. Let's keep things straight here, however: I'm not making a philosophical argument. This has to do with pragmatics. Man must contextualize himself within the world, as he was created in it, and he will eventually die in it.

If he believes the world to be so massive in size and scope as to be beyond measure, as the proposed age of the Earth is by secular standards, then the size and scope cease mattering in any meaningful sense. The average mind can't attach a value to the number 4.6 billion; it can grasp that it's a number magnitudes removed from 4.6 million, but that again is a value that exists only in the abstract. Even if we were to count out all the grains of sand on a beach, eventually the number would cease making sense. The boundary between sensible and incomprehensible might be a little different for everyone, but there always comes a point at which the human calculator switches mode from knowable values to values that can't be related to.

Yet Christ pierces through this ambiguity like a nail. History is rendered knowable because it has a beginning, and since we can know that, we can believe that it most certainly has an ending. And when we recognize that, we have two points of reference by which to calculate our own moral agency. There is someplace we have come from, and there is a point to which we are going; once the material dimension is made sensible, the moral dimension becomes possible to interpret. If there is no discernible place that we have come from, then where we go remains just as ambiguous; a stunted

moral development, withered and lukewarm, naturally reflects such an ambiguous understanding of reality.

We should trust Scripture when it refers to the lives of our most ancient patriarchs. The genealogy of Christ, traced by St. Luke back to Adam, is not to be taken as somehow mythological in character. The antediluvian world, distant as it may be to our imagination, is not to be considered a fairy tale. It is partly a warning and partly a guide stone; it warns against the behavior that led to the cataclysm in the first place, and it reminds us in an historical sense that God holds real, discernible interests in creation.

And we should take comfort in that.