

Francis Schaeffer & The Historical Adam

International Society of Christian Apologetics Conference

Presented Friday April 5th, 2013

by Dan Guinn, francisschaefferstudies.org

Reviewed and supervised by Bill Roach.

While the subject of the historic Adam is one that seems to be building in intensity, my goal is not so much to engage others in debate, as it is motivated out of a desire to bring a very relevant voice from the past to the table for discussion. Thus, in my opinion, if any scholar's voice needs to be heard in this particular discussion of the historic Adam, it is Schaeffer's. As you will see, his contribution is substantial.

As we begin to explore Schaeffer's view on the historic Adam we will immediately find that it is deeply founded of course in Schaeffer's view of Biblical Inerrancy. It is not that his own view is different in substance than other Biblical scholars, but it does contain nuances and motivations that might not be found in others. Understanding these nuances and motivations, even in a cursory manner, will give one a greater perspective on Schaeffer's view of the historic Adam.

Biblical Skepticism and Conversion

It is of great importance that we first understand that Schaeffer was confronted with Biblical skepticism very early on in his Christian experience. He was raised in a church (First Presbyterian Church of Germantown) that had already compromised its positions on the Bible. During his teen years, he had accidentally received a book on Greek philosophy from a bookstore and instead of returning it, began to read it. Upon being confronted with the questions of life, and having not received any significant answers in his childhood church experience, he resolved to be Agnostic. Yet, in spite of all of this, his own conversion occurred from a desire to be honest with the Bible and give it a fair reading. He would soon find that the Bible answered the questions consistently. Thus, one might say that Schaeffer was born into the Biblical Inerrancy controversy, and it was always a part of his concerns and was central to his conversion experience. It was further a part of the theological climate in which he was converted. The year before Schaeffer came to faith, (1929), Westminster Theological Seminary was founded in the midst of the Fundamentalist/Modernist Controversies by J. Gresham Machen and others of the faculty from Princeton Seminary such as Cornelius Van Til. We should not forget that the specifically Biblical controversies were rooted in the Auburn Affirmation (1924) whose signers did not hold to the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures among other doctrinal degradations.

Two years after Schaeffer's conversion in 1932, Francis and Edith would both attend a youth meeting at Schaeffer's church where a former member, who was now a Unitarian, was presenting openly on the topic of "*How I know the Bible is not the Word of God.*" Fran and Edith, who did not yet know each other, would both stand up to give rebuttal at the meeting and immediately noted each other from across the room. It was in this climate their deep common bond with scripture and each other would be realized. Who can forget Schaeffer's asking Edith if

she had had anyone to take her home? Edith would inform Francis that she already had a date. Schaeffer, who was quite tenacious, boldly replied simply, "Break it!"

In the same year that Schaeffer was graduating from Hampden Sydney College and entering Westminster, Machen, was being tried over the founding of the The Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions (1933), an alternative to the now liberal missions organization of the PCUSA. Machen and others on the board, including Carl McIntire, a key influence on Schaeffer for a number of years, would be defrocked the following year in 1936. The Schaeffers would eventually be the first missionaries to Europe under Machen's IBPFM in 1948. The struggle for the Bible was in full scale and Schaeffer was destined to be a part of it. One could only imagine what the climate of this discussion was like in those days of Schaeffer's early faith, just prior to World War II.

Separatism and the New Modernism

The next level for Schaeffer in this struggle would come during what one might call the "Separatist years" of Schaeffer's life. After Machen's death in 1937, Schaeffer and others would leave Westminster Theological Seminary, during the church split in the newly formed Presbyterian Church of America (later renamed Orthodox Presbyterian Church), which was founded by Machen and others in the previous year, in June of 1936. As a result of the split, a new denomination was formed called the Bible Presbyterian Church by Carl McIntire and 12 other church leaders. Schaeffer would be instrumental in assisting in the founding and coordinating of classes of the denomination's new school, Faith Theological Seminary. After his graduation, Schaeffer, would maintain several pastorates over the next ten years and he and Edith would eventually found Children for Christ. In 1947, Schaeffer was sent by IPBFM (which was under McIntire's leadership since Machen's passing) on a tour of post-war Europe. Thereafter, the Schaeffers would be called to Europe as missionaries, which included spreading their now international children's work. Yet in addition to this work, Schaeffer would also be heavily involved in the newly forming International Council of Christian Churches of which Carl McIntire was now president. Schaeffer would later part ways with McIntire in the 50s, but the important thing to note, is that Schaeffer, although becoming less "separatist" after his move to Europe and his own spiritual renewal, would maintain his strong position on Biblical Inerrancy throughout his life and his objections to Barthian theology would only serve to enhance his posture.

Schaeffer would give an important address at the Second Plenary Congress of the International Council of Christian Churches on Barth and the new modernism entitled *The New Modernism and the Bible*.¹ It was later published in the Baptist Bulletin as *An Examination of the*

¹ Schaeffer, A. Francis, "The New Modernism and the Bible." (Paper presented at the International Council of Christian Churches, August, 16-23, 1950).

Note: There is a printed version. Note that the printed version added the word neo-orthodoxy to the title. Edith also references it by this title in the Tapestry p314. Schaeffer, A. Francis, The new modernism (neo-orthodoxy) and the

New Modernism.² Yet one should note that the first title indicates that the intent of the paper is to deal with the Biblical problem. Therein Schaeffer gives a youthful, and somewhat scathing review and critique of the “The New Modernism,” which he describes as directed at Barth and his followers, focusing in on the rejection of the Bible as the authoritative Word of God and replacement of it with “mental gymnastics” by way of the loss of antithesis. Herein Schaeffer makes his first observations in regard to the historic Adam in passing, but they are of no small importance.

Now, before we get to his remarks, the history behind this paper is of some importance to us. Just prior to the presentation to the I.C.C.C. in Geneva, Schaeffer and four other scholars visited with Karl Barth face to face to discuss many of the related issues. Schaeffer and the four other theologians (G. Douglas Young, J. Oliver Buswell, James E. Bennet, and Peter Stam) had a meeting with Karl Barth in August 1950. During this meeting Schaeffer asked Barth a simple question, “Did God create the world?” Barth answered, “God created the world in the first century A.D.” As Edith recalls the dialogue in her work, *The Tapestry*,³ she describes how Fran then “waved his arms out over the beauty in front of them, pointing to the tree-covered hills sweeping down to the lake” and asked, “This world?” Barth answered, “This world doesn’t matter.” These responses served to underscore what Schaeffer had already concluded and was preparing to present. Principally for us here, it meant that Barth’s concept of “religious truth” systematically analyzed, seemed to spell out a bare gnosticism which does not bode well for Eden in the New Modernism. Schaeffer admits at the end of his presentation, “In the short time we were with Barth it was not possible to explore all the facets contained in this paper, but it’s basic approach and conclusions were shown to be sound.” Schaeffer sent the paper to Barth and had hoped that Barth would pursue further dialogue, but Barth’s response was one of dissatisfaction. Although Schaeffer’s end remarks are gracious, one can speculate that Schaeffer’s youthful zeal might have played a part in Barth’s response, yet in retrospect Barth’s perspective required a stern rebuke. So although containing honest critiques, these were not necessarily grounds for discussion and it is likely that Barth took them to be purely polemic.

Nevertheless, Schaeffer’s teaching in this paper informs us of what would drive his later analysis of the problems of the New Modernism as well as our subject here of the historic Adam. Remember that Schaeffer had not yet published a book at this time. This presentation is five years before the founding of L’Abri and it is roughly fifteen years before Schaeffer’s Wheaton lectures entitled *Speaking the Historic Christian Position Into the Twentieth Century*, that would later be reshaped into *The God Who Is There*.

A Peg in Midair

Bible. 1950. 1-11.

² Schaeffer, Francis, “An Examination of the New Modernism”, Baptist Bulletin, Jan. Feb. 1951. <http://baptistbulletin.org/?p=20599> (accessed Mar. 16, 2013)

³ Schaeffer, Edith. *The Tapestry: The Life and Times of Francis and Edith Schaeffer*, Waco, Tx, Word Books. 314.

I would now like us to consider the following segment from the ICCC lecture (emphasis added):

Perhaps you have heard some of the disciples of the New Modernism say something to the effect that Karl Barth's contribution was that in the midst of the need of this century that he rang a bell. What they mean by this is that **he with one bold stroke gave them a peg in mid-air.**⁴

The issue in these men's minds is not the truth of dogmas, but the manifestation of the dogmas. For example, the Old Modernists have cast aside the realization of man's sinfulness as is in the Bible and hence they built for themselves an idealistic world that didn't exist. Men like Niebuhr on the other hand, **do believe** that man is a sinner and therefore their world seems closer to the true world than that of the old-fashioned modernist. But how did man get to be a sinner? The Bible tells us. The Bible says that man fell in the garden of Eden. Now these New Modernists say that **it does not matter if historically there ever was a garden of Eden, so that they try to lay hold of the truth that man is a sinner yet having cast away what the Bible has to say about how man became a sinner.** This is what we mean by their **hanging in mid-air**; they cast aside the historicity of the Scripture and yet try to hang on to the religious truths that the Bible teaches.⁵

In the quotes just mentioned, Schaeffer uses the expression, "a peg in mid-air." This is an illustration that Schaeffer favored and further expounded on in his later work. The fact that Schaeffer persisted in this message shows the consistency of his approach to scripture but also what he sees happening to the historicity of scripture and the notion of the historic Adam.

The following are two quotations from *The Church Before the Watching World*, which show how Schaeffer continued to use this phrase.

Some have said that Karl Barth's contribution was to sound a bell in the midst of this century's great need for authority. What he really did was give liberal theology **a peg in midair**. To put it simply, he tried the impossible feat of producing an authority while accepting the results and techniques of higher criticism. To him the Bible has mistakes in it, but a "religious word" breaks through from it. To Karl Barth and his followers, a statement in the Bible can be historically false and yet religiously true. It was a very simple step but entirely revolutionary. With it theology stepped from the solid earth of

⁴ Schaeffer, A. Francis, "The New Modernism and the Bible." (Paper presented at the International Council of Christian Churches, August, 16-23, 1950).

⁵ Schaeffer, A. Francis, "The New Modernism and the Bible." (Paper presented at the International Council of Christian Churches, August, 16-23, 1950).

rationality into a land where anything can happen.⁶

At first the new secular humanism seemed like a great hope; for even though reason leads to despair, these secular humanists thought meaning and hope could be found in the existential experience. But the existential experience, like all **pegs hung in midair**, has proved to be not a hope but a damnation.⁷

So taken collectively, Schaeffer's thought on the problem of the New Modernist was that they took specific liberty in attempting to separate revelation from history and hang it in nothingness. This notion plays itself out in their view of Adam and their skepticism of the historicity of Genesis.

A Space-Time Reality

Now much can be said at this point regarding Schaeffer's view of scripture and it can be noted quite clearly from the second volume of Schaeffer's Complete Works which has the subtitle "A Christian View of the Bible As Truth." Therein Schaeffer contends throughout for the historic Christian position on the Bible and the Bible as history in contrast to Religious Liberalism.

Yet before we go into the aforementioned volume we should consider that the notion of the Bible connected to a space-time reality and the historicity of Adam was expressed by Schaeffer early on and continued on throughout his life. In passing I mentioned the Wheaton lectures and I would like to take a moment to examine a quote from them at this time.

...man was created, called upon, by the One who is in communication with him and whom He knew, to show He loved Him with the simple command: "Don't do this." And note that even this is a motivated command, because he said "Don't do it, because the day when you eat, you shall surely die." Man in his freedom with Satan who has already revolted, revolts; and the history has changed. Man is abnormal. He is separated from his Creator who is his only sufficient reference point; he is separated from man; he is separated from nature, and he is separated from himself. Is it any wonder now (if you understand a significant history, true cause and effect, and a significant man) when I look upon man in his present cruelty, now I see, I see that this is not that which man intrinsically is. **Here is abnormality, it turns upon a historic space—time fall. Let me say again, take away the first three chapters of Genesis and there is no Christianity. Here is a historic space—time Fall. What does that mean? It means that there was a period before the Fall. It means there was a tick of the clock when it occurred. It means that if you had been able to be there you could have talked to Adam**

⁶ Schaeffer, A. Francis, *The Complete Works of Francis A. Schaeffer: Volume Four, A Christian View of the Church*, Westchester, IL, Crossway Books. 123.

⁷ Schaeffer, A. Francis, *The Complete Works of Francis A. Schaeffer: Volume Four, A Christian View of the Church*, Westchester, IL, Crossway Books. 126.

before he fell. That's what it means. As clear as this—an historic space—time revolt. Now then with this being true, all is changed. Suddenly now it is possible to understand that **there are moral absolutes**. There is a moral Law in the universe. The moral Law of the universe, is the character of God. It is not a law behind God, because the last thing back is God. It is God having a character. God is love, God is holy.⁸

So here we see not only that Schaeffer is contending very early on for the historic Adam, but the enormity of the conditions he places on the historic event. We will elaborate on this more later.

Returning to the second volume of Schaeffer's Complete Works, perhaps the most significant for this discussion is Schaeffer's book, *Genesis in Space and Time*. Yet there is a smaller work that serves to greatly enlighten us as to Schaeffer's specific methodology. This work is called *No Final Conflict* and is meant to be a companion to *Genesis in Space and Time*. Schaeffer's thesis is essentially that if one examines science and the Bible honestly, there will be no final conflict. Herein, most importantly for our purposes, Schaeffer lays out a construct that will be useful to us and aid us in our understanding of his approach.

It is my conviction that the crucial area of discussion for evangelicalism in the next years will be the Scripture. At stake is whether evangelicalism will remain evangelical. The issue is whether the Bible is God's verbalized communication to men giving propositional truth where it touches the cosmos and history, or whether it is *only* in some sense "revelational" where it touches matters of religion. The early chapters of Genesis relate to this discussion, but ultimately the question is not (and cannot be) confined to them: the whole Bible is involved.⁹

So here we see that his concern is forthright and addressing the same problems we have already developed. Thereafter he provides the aforementioned construct, which I have arranged in outline form below:

The argument for the unity of the book of Genesis falls into two parts, the internal and the external.¹⁰

Internal:

⁸ Schaeffer, A. Francis, "Speaking the Historic Christian Position Into the Twentieth Century" (Speaking at Wheaton College Sept. 27-Oct. 1 1965) 93-94.

The quotations above have been sited from an original copy (now digitized) of the Wheaton lectures owned by francisschaefferstudies.org.

⁹ Schaeffer, A. Francis, *The Complete Works of Francis A. Schaeffer: Volume Two, A Christian View of the Bible as Truth*, Westchester, IL, Crossway Books. 119.

¹⁰ Schaeffer, A. Francis, *The Complete Works of Francis A. Schaeffer: Volume Two, A Christian View of the Bible as Truth*, Westchester, IL, Crossway Books. 125.

1. **The toledoths** “these are the generations of.” - P. J. Wiseman in 1936 pointed out (and he may be correct in this) that this phrase falls at the end of the section preceding it rather than at the beginning of the section which follows. The important thing is that this phrase continues uniformly throughout the whole book of Genesis, thus indicating unity.¹¹
2. **Unique literary form** - ... a rather unique literary form that is used throughout: namely, the unimportant subjects are always dealt with first, then the important subjects carry on. The unimportant subjects are given tersely, and then the central matter flows on at length. This literary form is uniform throughout the whole book of Genesis.¹²

External:

1. **New Testament perspective** - The case may be put simply and concisely: Absolutely every place where the New Testament refers to the first half of Genesis, the New Testament assumes (and many times affirms) that Genesis is history and that it is to be read in normal fashion, with the common use of the words and syntax.¹³

Now as we consider the analysis that Schaeffer offers, this will begin to explain how Schaeffer will address the question of the historic Adam in *Genesis in Space and Time*. In this book Schaeffer says much about chapters 1 and 2 of Genesis that are helpful to the subject. His first intent is to defend the historicity of Genesis 1 and 2 using both internal and external aspects to affirm the connection of these two chapters. Likewise he is intent on showing that the Jewish notion of scripture never intended religious truth to be separated from history. Thus as it relates to Adam, Schaeffer describes in later chapters of *Genesis in Space and Time* that the internal evidence is quite strong, for Genesis speaks consistently in the language of history used throughout Genesis.

...the important thing is that Genesis is without question broken into sections signaled by these phrases. There is, first, the cosmic creation (“these are the generations of the heavens and of the earth,” Gen. 2:4); second, the period of Adam (“this is the book of the generations of Adam,” Gen.5:1);¹⁴

Yet more than this he is adamant about establishing the most profound of contrast, as we have hinted at already in the aforementioned Wheaton Lectures, to the Liberal notion of “impersonal

¹¹ Schaeffer, A. Francis, *The Complete Works of Francis A. Schaeffer: Volume Two, A Christian View of the Bible as Truth*, Westchester, IL, Crossway Books. 125.

¹² Schaeffer, A. Francis, *The Complete Works of Francis A. Schaeffer: Volume Two, A Christian View of the Bible as Truth*, Westchester, IL, Crossway Books. 125.

¹³ Schaeffer, A. Francis, *The Complete Works of Francis A. Schaeffer: Volume Two, A Christian View of the Bible as Truth*, Westchester, IL, Crossway Books. 126.

¹⁴ Schaeffer, A. Francis, *The Complete Works of Francis A. Schaeffer: Volume Two, A Christian View of the Bible as Truth*, Westchester, IL, Crossway Books. 91.

time plus chance” as God did not create in a vacuum and He is personal. One might question why he does this? Perhaps this is a given to many of us. However we should understand that this distinction stands in direct contrast to the Liberal concept of religious truth and especially the views of Barth.

...when we read, “in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth,” we are not left with something hung in a vacuum: something existed before creation and that something was personal and not static; the Father loved the Son; there was a plan; there was communication; and promises were made prior to the creation of the heavens and the earth. This whole conception is rooted in the reality of the Trinity. Without the Trinity, Christianity would not have the answers that modern man needs. As I have said elsewhere, Jean-Paul Sartre well pointed out the basic philosophic problem that faces us: the fact that something, rather than nothing, is there.¹⁵

So as one can see, Schaeffer is not evaluating the text from a purely scientific level but from a personal level. He is intent on conveying that the personal God who created man in history, space and time, has made mankind personal as He is personal.

All that is, except for God Himself who already has been, now comes into existence. Before this there was a personal existence — love and communication. Prior to the material universe (whether we think of it as mass or energy), prior to the creation of all else, there is love and communication. This means that love and communication are *intrinsic*. And hence, when modern man screams for love and communication (as he so frequently does), Christians have an answer: There is value to love and value to communication because it is rooted into what intrinsically always has been.¹⁶

So it is therefore that Schaeffer further can state the following doxology:

By your will they were created, and **have their being!**” This is the Christian cosmogony.

¹⁷

Schaeffer is talking about meaning and intrinsic value and as we will see this touches and defines the person of Adam.

A Physical Reality

¹⁵ Schaeffer, A. Francis, *The Complete Works of Francis A. Schaeffer: Volume Two, A Christian View of the Bible as Truth*, Westchester, IL, Crossway Books. 9.

¹⁶ Schaeffer, A. Francis, *The Complete Works of Francis A. Schaeffer: Volume Two, A Christian View of the Bible as Truth*, Westchester, IL, Crossway Books. 14.

¹⁷ Schaeffer, A. Francis, *The Complete Works of Francis A. Schaeffer: Volume Two, A Christian View of the Bible as Truth*, Westchester, IL, Crossway Books. 15.

Schaeffer's teaching on the historic Adam, is one based in the value and worth that Scripture assigns mankind and not something hung in mid-air. Yet Schaeffer should not be taken to be purely concerned with just a mere blind-faith perspective but provides a significant allowance that is useful regarding Adam and the creation account. At this point, let's consider a remark from him in *No Final Conflict*, which is one of his "9 possible freedoms." Note that he is not saying that this is necessarily his position, but that it is allowable.

There is a possibility that *God created a "grown-up" universe*. For example, Adam, the first night he existed, might have seen the light of the furthest stars without waiting for long light years to pass before they could be seen.

To this possibility, we must quickly add one note. This does not mean that God is capricious. And surely it does not imply, and I would totally reject, the concept Bishop Samuel Wilberforce suggested at Oxford in Darwin's time: that God created the fossils in the earth in order to fool fools. This is totally out of character with the God of the Bible.¹⁸

Here it is important to note that one of Schaeffer's key arguments for the case for the connection between chapters 1 and 2 of Genesis is to show that Jesus explicitly connects the two chapters in Matthew 19:4-5. This "external" account (external to Genesis, in Schaeffer's aforementioned terminology) shows the connection between the two chapters and the unity of scripture.

The Words of Jesus - He answered, "Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'?" (Matthew 19:4-5 ESV)

Schaeffer's Commentary - Jesus' treatment of Genesis 1 and 2 also brings to the fore the issue of the historicity of Adam and Eve. It is difficult to get away from the fact that Jesus was treating Adam and Eve as truly the first human pair in space and time. If we have any questions concerning this, surely they are resolved as we consider other New Testament passages.¹⁹

Schaeffer further takes the reader into several key familiar "external" quotations of Paul such as Romans 5:12 addressing "by one man sin entered the world" which also mentions that "death reigned from Adam to Moses" and 1 Cor. 15:21, 22 that indicates that "in Adam all die." He then includes verse 45 of that chapter. Here are his rather profound remarks:

On Rom 5:12 (emphasis added) - Adam, it is obvious, is viewed as being just as

¹⁸ Schaeffer, A. Francis, *The Complete Works of Francis A. Schaeffer: Volume Two, A Christian View of the Bible as Truth*, Westchester, IL, Crossway Books. 131.

¹⁹ Schaeffer, A. Francis, *The Complete Works of Francis A. Schaeffer: Volume Two, A Christian View of the Bible as Truth*, Westchester, IL, Crossway Books. 27.

historic as Moses. If this were not the case, **Paul's argument would be meaningless.**²⁰

On 1 Cor 15:21, 22 (emphasis added) - He is dealing with men in history when he deals with "the many," and so he makes a **triple parallelism — the historicity of Adam, the historicity of Christ, and the historicity of me.**²¹

This emphasis should move us all. This is not some far-removed event, but an historical event in time and space touching the whole of the human race including you and I, without it our very belief system is in jeopardy. However, even worse than this, without the historic Adam it would be meaningless.

On verse 45 - 1 Corinthians 15:45 continues the same thrust: "And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit." The "so it is written" alludes to Genesis 2:7. If one wishes to dispense with the historicity of Adam, certainly he must wonder at such a strong parallelism between Adam and Christ.²²

On Paul - Often it is said that this parallelism is only Pauline, but the Gospel of Luke gives us exactly the same thing. Tracing the descent of Jesus backwards, Luke lists a number of characters of history, including such people as David, Jesse, Jacob and Abraham, and ends as follows: "Which was the son of Enos, which was the son of Seth, which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God" (Luke 3:38). Thus we have another triple parallelism — a parallelism between the objective, historic existence of a whole group of people we know to be historic through the Old Testament and New Testament references, the objective, historic existence of Adam, and the objective existence of God Himself. **If we take away the historicity of Adam, we are left rather breathless! If we tamper with this ordinary way of understanding what is written in the Bible, the structure of Christianity is reduced to only an existential leap.**²³

Schaeffer knows the consequences of the loss of the historical Adam, the result is a leap into non-reason. Yet Schaeffer is convinced of another significant thing. That Adam was not alone and that Eve is also significant to the defense. As we have already indicated from Schaeffer's highlighting of the words of Jesus touching marriage. For Schaeffer, it is no small coincidence that marriage stands as the connector of Genesis 1 and 2. Schaeffer thus deals with 1 Tim 2:13,14 "For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman

²⁰ Schaeffer, A. Francis, *The Complete Works of Francis A. Schaeffer: Volume Two, A Christian View of the Bible as Truth*, Westchester, IL, Crossway Books. 28.

²¹ Schaeffer, A. Francis, *The Complete Works of Francis A. Schaeffer: Volume Two, A Christian View of the Bible as Truth*, Westchester, IL, Crossway Books. 27.

²² Schaeffer, A. Francis, *The Complete Works of Francis A. Schaeffer: Volume Two, A Christian View of the Bible as Truth*, Westchester, IL, Crossway Books. 28.

²³ Schaeffer, A. Francis, *The Complete Works of Francis A. Schaeffer: Volume Two, A Christian View of the Bible as Truth*, Westchester, IL, Crossway Books. 28-29.

being deceived was in the transgression.” then also 2 Cor. 11:3, which indicates that “the serpent beguiled Eve.” Yet here Schaeffer again brings out her historicity and the connection to us all.

On 1 Tim. 2:13,14 - Not only is Adam historic, but Eve in the midst of her rebellion is seen to be historic as well.²⁴

On 2 Cor. 11:3 - The parallel here is between Eve and myself. Paul appeals to those of us who are objectively real — who are in history — not to fall into a like situation. And without embarrassment, Paul obviously expects his readers to assume with him the historicity of Eve and the historicity of the details set forth in Genesis.²⁵

Schaeffer then maps out various other verses to the same end, none of which are insignificant. Yet most notably Schaeffer takes time to labor on Genesis 2:21-24 highlighting that verse 23 uses “**this is now...** bone of my bones...” which is language of historical emphasis. He then comes full circle to the words of Jesus in Matt. 19 again clarifying the impossibility of tampering with the text of the historic Adam and Eve.

The product of Schaeffer’s resolve on Adam is that the created personhood of Adam results in the true unity of humanity both in created oneness, but in the dignity of man being created in the image of God. God thus has placed man in a place of purpose and dominion-stewardship that makes him distinct from non-animal or the conception of man as a mere biological machine.

A Spiritual Reality

In closing, one cannot give a complete perspective on Schaeffer’s view of the historic Adam without explaining the spiritual realities connected with the events. As we mentioned earlier, Schaeffer teaches a substantial connection, a “**triple parallelism — the historicity of Adam, the historicity of Christ, and the historicity of me.**” This emphasis connects us to an historic space-time fall, but also an historic space-time spirituality that is in contrast to both a Barthian or a naturalistic view of spirituality.

It is interesting that almost **all of the results of God’s judgment** because of man’s rebellion **relate in some way to the external world.** They are not just bound up in man’s thought-life; they are not merely psychological. **Profound changes make the external, objective world abnormal.** In the phrase “for thy sake,” [referring to Gen. 3:17] God is relating these external abnormalities to what Adam has done in the Fall.²⁶

²⁴ Schaeffer, A. Francis, *The Complete Works of Francis A. Schaeffer: Volume Two, A Christian View of the Bible as Truth*, Westchester, IL, Crossway Books. 29.

²⁵ Schaeffer, A. Francis, *The Complete Works of Francis A. Schaeffer: Volume Two, A Christian View of the Bible as Truth*, Westchester, IL, Crossway Books. 29.

²⁶ Schaeffer, A. Francis, *The Complete Works of Francis A. Schaeffer: Volume Two, A Christian View of the Bible as Truth*, Westchester, IL, Crossway Books. 66.

Now the Christian's spirituality, ... does not stand alone. It is related to the unity of the Bible's view of the universe. This means that we must understand — intellectually, with the doors open — that the universe is not what our generation says it is, seeing only the naturalistic universe.²⁷

Conclusion

In a way, this next quote sums up the position of Francis Schaeffer on the historic Adam.

What sense does it make for God to give us true religious truths and at the same time place them in a book that is wrong when it touches history and the cosmos?²⁸

At its most basic understanding, it is a matter of common sense. How can we hope to relate any “true religious truths” to ourselves if the Bible does not touch history and the cosmos? Moreover, how can we be related to Adam and the “true religious truths” of the man if Adam is not historical? To clarify, Schaeffer is intent on contending for the place of revelation in history, of the supernatural in the here and now in the space-time universe which God has made. We must realize that what the prevailing naturalistic worldview has done, is an attempt to separate the supernatural God from His own universe, and Schaeffer is telling us all that this is not only absurd, it is impossible. Scripture itself will simply not allow it.

We must further gather from Schaeffer's Triple Parallelism that Schaeffer sees an unbroken line in redemptive history that cannot be broken. If Adam is insignificant, then so is Christ, and our faith is meaningless. We simply cannot give ground on this. Ever! If we hope to stay consistent with the historic Christian faith and the Bible.

Yet there should be one last observation. A further application is needed. Schaeffer is not merely contending for an historic Adam, but rather for the historic personal Adam. The story of Francis and Edith Schaeffer is one of going to all the world as missionaries and then opening their home to let the world come in. There they desired to answer honest answers to honest questions in a fallen world that had further and further embraced impersonal answers. In contrast to the impersonal, the Schaeffers employed love and hospitality. It had personal results. Many came to faith, as the Holy Spirit used the personal to impress spiritual realities on those that had rarely ever encountered people that both cared for them and valued truth in such a way. It is this contrast that is so incredibly important in our discussions. Consider these further remarks from Schaeffer's Wheaton lectures:

The Bible teaches that there are two humanities and there is one humanity. Modern man

²⁷ Schaeffer, A. Francis, *The Complete Works of Francis A. Schaeffer: Volume Three, A Christian View of Spirituality*, Westchester, IL, Crossway Books. 255.

²⁸ Schaeffer, A. Francis, *The Complete Works of Francis A. Schaeffer: Volume Two, A Christian View of the Bible as Truth*, Westchester, IL, Crossway Books. 125.

today sees one humanity or tries to find a way for one humanity. The Bible says in looking across the world——no, there are two humanities: those who are still in rebellion against God, and those who have returned to God through Jesus Christ. In this sense there are two humanities; but never let this dull you to the realization that, looking at it in another way, there is only one humanity. **We who say all men come from Adam fight for a common source; then every man I look at, I must understand emotionally as well as intellectually that he is my kind.** Then, too, when I talk to a man, I am dealing with him as a unit. I am not dealing merely with his soul in an attempt that his soul would go to heaven, but the Bible's whole emphasis is the unity of personality. As I stand before the man, and would love him, speak to him, try to communicate to him, I must be trying to communicate with him as the unit of individual man.²⁹

This is so important in the context of our discussion. The personal Adam implies a connection with mankind as persons who are each a whole unit and not just a soul to win, but a whole person. If we believe in the historic personal Adam, our first representative who fell and experienced real pain as a result, we too can come to terms with our brokenness and help others do the same. As Schaeffer indicated in the earlier segment from the Wheaton lectures, we can help them to see that there is a moral law in the universe and also to understand why the universe is abnormal. Here we have the origins of pain and suffering. Yet we also can see that this historic personal Adam received a promise in time and space from a personal God and that this God of the Bible acted in time and space to bring the second Adam, namely Christ, His Son. It is here that we know that there are spiritual realities in the here and now. How? It is because the personal God of the universe kept His promise. Thus, I can stand before the individual and speak to them.

So let us be clear, from Schaeffer's perspective, if Adam was not real, historical and personal, we have no answer. Yet if he is the historical personal Adam Schaeffer describes, the Adam of the honestly read Bible, we have hope beyond measure and answers for the watching world. I will end with perhaps the most explicit quote from Schaeffer on the subject that can be found in his position paper from the 1974 Lausanne Congress.³⁰

"The first half of Genesis is history, space-time history, the Fall is a space-time Fall, or we have no knowledge of what Jesus came to die for, and we have no way to understand that God is really a good God. Our whole answer to evil rests upon the historic, space-time Fall. "³¹

²⁹ Schaeffer, A. Francis, "Speaking the Historic Christian Position Into the Twentieth Century" (Speaking at Wheaton College Sept. 27-Oct. 1, 1965) 101.

The quotations above have been sited from an original copy (now digitized) of the Wheaton lectures, owned by francisschaefferstudies.org.

³⁰ This last sentence and quotation was added after the event.

³¹ Schaeffer, A. Francis, Two Contents Two Realities, 1974, 10.

