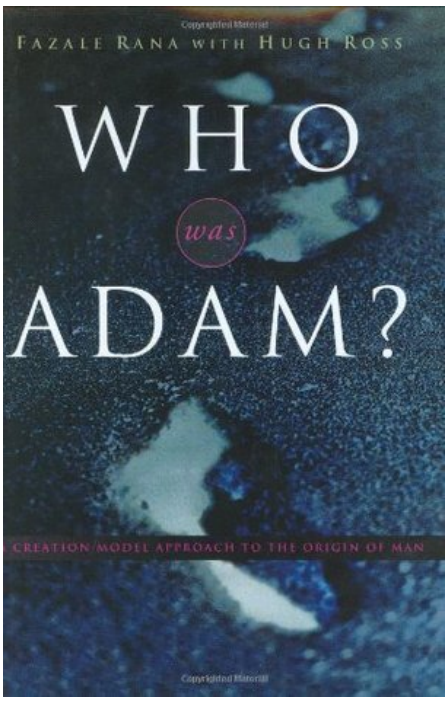

Who Was Adam?: a Creation Model Approach to the Origin of Man

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Scientists Fazale Rana and Hugh Ross introduce a testable scientific model for humanity's origin--a Biblical model--that sheds light on the latest findings on evolution and the origins of man.

Who Was Adam?: a Creation Model Approach to the Origin of Man Details

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From Reader Review Who Was Adam?: a Creation Model Approach to the Origin of Man for online ebook

Stinger says

It's a good read on human origins from Rana and Ross of Reasons to Believe.

Ron says

Expounded a testable model of who man is.

Patrik says

Fazale Rana spearheads this book with input by Hugh Ross addressing the question of who was Adam? That is Adam of Adam and Eve from the Bible. Biblically speaking, humans were created by God and in the image of God. Naturally speaking, humans are just another primate descended from some common ancestor with the great apes such as the chimpanzee or gorilla. Are humans a product of evolution or are they the product of a creating act by a loving God? This book not meant to definitively state one way or another but a presentation of the scientific model put forth by the non-profit organization 'Reasons to Believe'. Their model is built under the Biblical premise that God created life. However, typical creationism leaves many questions unanswered such as: How could humans only have been created 6,000 or so years ago when the fossil record clearly shows otherwise? How do Neanderthals and other hominids fit into the biblical story of creation? How do you explain the fact that humans and chimps share 99% identical DNA? If God created humans then why created them with junk DNA? In presenting their case for biblical creation Rana, a PhD in chemistry with emphasis on biochemistry, and Hugh Ross, a PhD in astronomy, build on their day-age model (that is that the earth/universe is as old as science says it is and that humans have been around for more than 6,000 years) and discuss in much detail why their model is better than the evolutionary model. They do so in part by expelling myths about evolution that are accepted by the general public (you and me) as scientific fact. They discuss our relationship to homo erectus and the Neanderthals as well as the myriad of other hominids and how they fit into their biblical model, they present more realistic genetic similarities with the chimp than the 99% figure that has been enshrined as clear evidence of a common evolutionary ancestor-ship as well as crucial and vital differences. They discuss how the fossil record seems to contradict the evolution model with rapid appearances of hominids and the sudden appearance of modern humans, termed the anthropological big-bang. They discuss the fact that research in the last decade or so has revealed that junk DNA is anything but junk (many of the "junk" areas have been found to be quite crucial. For example, when scientists manipulated one particular segment of junk DNA in mice the mice died. This went against the notion that junk DNA served no life vital purpose.) despite the fact that is has been written off for the last 30 years as such. Point being that many of the icons of evolution seem to be unraveling at the seems as predicted by their model. They predict that as science learns more and more about genetics that it will continue to be harder and harder to insist that humans are nothing but products of evolution. Are humans simply a product of evolution that started eons ago as a single-celled organism? Or are they a product of some more, something bigger? If you are interested in an alternative grounded in the same evidence used to argue the case for evolution, then this book is for you.

James Coats says

The science is very interesting - but - I disagree with the day-age view of Genesis 1.

Brian says

This one was really closer to 2.5 stars for me...I felt the overall narrative was one of fitting facts into their desired model and not the otherway around.

Kirsten says

heard author speak

Lyle Blosser says

Very good "catch-up" of recent science regarding human evolution and how the model proposed by Reasons to Believe (RTB) fares as a result. This was an update to the original 2005 text and covered a good sampling of what anthropologists, archaeologists, and paleontologists have discovered since then. The authors provided a very candid review of where the RTB model needed to a be adjusted as well as those areas where the model's predictions were born out. Excellent overall review for the interested layman.

Mary_Ann says

Excellent book for a non-sciencey person like me. They explain the basics of evolution and then present their model -- made perfect sense. Though I didn't get to finish it yet, I would highly recommend this one to those who see the gaps in the theory of evolution all by itself and believe or are curious about Intelligent Design.

J.D. Camorlinga says

Who Was Adam was co-authored by Dr. Fazale Rana – who wrote a majority of the contents – and Dr. Hugh Ross (15). Ross obtained an undergraduate degree in physics from the University of British Columbia and a terminal degree in astronomy from the University of Toronto. In 1986, he founded Reasons to Believe (RTB) with the goal of showing how scientific advances connect with biblical theology. Rana, who completed his PhD in Chemistry from Ohio University, worked for a number of years with Procter & Gamble as a senior scientist before joining RTB. Both men have authored a number of books and articles on the science of creation and the origin of man.

Rana and Ross are vice president and president, respectively, of RTB, a nonprofit organization that seeks to "research and communicate the harmony of God's revelation in the words of the Bible and in the facts of nature." Using their background in the sciences, the authors seek to reframe the argument for creation from the traditional religious/biblical standpoint to testable model which the scientific community would find more acceptable. Who Was Adam was written to demonstrate that creationism can be explained and evaluated using the scientific method (14).

The book is organized into two main sections. The first section gives a brief comparison of creationist and evolutionist ideas followed by a survey of the hominid fossil record and ending with an outline of RTB's predictions of human origin based on their creation model. These predictions are frequently referenced throughout the book and are listed as follows:
1. Humanity traces back to one woman (Eve) and one man (Noah).
2. Humanity's early population size was relatively small.
3. Humanity originated in a single location in or near the Middle East.
4. Humanity's origin dates back to between 10,000 and 100,000 years ago.
5. The origin of the female lineage (Eve) predates the origin of the male lineage (Noah).
6. God created humanity at the "just-right" time in Earth's history.
7. Human culture appears and expands explosively in the archaeological record since humanity's origin.
8. Humans share anatomical, physical, biochemical and genetic similarities with the extinct hominids as well as with great apes and other animals.
9. Humans are behaviorally distinct (in ways that reflect God's image) from the earlier hominids, the great apes and other animals.
10. A universal but local flood, that impacted all of humanity, shaped human history.
11. Human life spans (once longer than 900 years) became progressively shorter after the Flood.
12. Humanity spread around the world from in or near the Middle East relatively recently.
13. The seeds of human civilization and agriculture had their birth in or near the Middle East (51-52).

The second part of the book is an overview of different scientific advances that enable for the testing of the RTB predictions. Genetics, anthropology, fine-tuning, life span, migration, anatomy and human uniqueness are each examined.

The authors credibly provide solid, up-to-date scientific material to support their origin model. One of the most interesting moments is their use of mitochondrial-DNA studies (62-65) and Y-chromosomal DNA research (65-66) to support their prediction that the origin of female lineage will predate that of male lineage. Their additional use of the Flood account (67) to explain this prediction biblically is both logical and profound. This is information not widely known among lay Christians and would provide valuable insight as they discuss and ponder the topic of creation.

The authors make several other persuasive arguments in defense of their model. Specifically, they excel at addressing the issues of "junk" DNA and the genetic similarities between chimpanzees and humans, topics which are frequently brought up by proponents of evolution. The authors' use of scientific data makes good headway toward the invalidation of these two topics as a legitimate argument.

While the authors are able to support their thesis throughout the book by using scientific research, this may also prove to hinder their ultimate goal. In their quest to bring creationism into the realm of empiricism, the authors have at times appeared to force certain data into the RTB model. For example, luminescence dating is described as notoriously inaccurate, used only for approximate measurements (80-81). The authors use this inaccuracy to show that the estimates of human origin fall from 130,000 to 40,000 which is within their time margin for prediction number four (80).

Other concepts which are addressed, such as human longevity, do not have a clear relation to the debate of origin and seem to be off topic. The material provided as an explanation for decreasing lifespan (prediction 11) is valid and does tie into the RTB goal of connecting science and theology but it does not appear to add anything vital to the discussion of human origin. If there is a connection, a clearer reasoning should be given for this.

In general, the authors seem dismissive of the idea that there is debate about the credibility of the existence of hominids by referring to them as fact (27-39). Since a majority of the content is focused on anthropology and the fossil record, more time should be spent on building a case for the existence of hominids, focusing on both sides of the issue. Other concepts like day-age (43) and a geographically limited flood (51) are also taken for granted though the authors do suggest further reading for the case of day-age and a limited flood if further curiosity compels the reader.

Who Was Adam provides some common ground between the realms of science and religion. While this is the purpose of the book, it will likely be criticized by both sides. Many evolutionists will be opposed to the material in the book solely because of the nature of the disagreement in philosophies. On the other hand, creationists who are more literal in their interpretation of the biblical account may have a difficult time accepting some of the authors' assertions.

Due to the nature of the subject, some of the material presented may be difficult to follow for those unfamiliar with biology and genetics. In many of these technical topics, the authors use a number of descriptive graphics and have "bottom line" summaries, spelling out the data in a way that is easier for the layperson to understand. Given the complex nature of the material, the authors do a good job of making the information more accessible.

I would recommend this book to creationists and evolutionists alike; anyone interested in expanding their views on human origin should find this an interesting read. No matter which side of the argument a reader might fall, they will find that the concepts in this book will broaden the horizon of their understanding of this important topic. The accessibility, candor and inclusivity of the text should provide a valuable tool for those striving to make sense of human origin.

Jessi says

Best

Seth says

I thought the model presented was straightforward and with the correct attitude. God gave us the truth in the form of the Bible, and this is where we should always start when searching for the truth. Then the author tests his scientific model to prove that man was created by God. My favorite chapter was the one about junk DNA, fascinating science, and I never once bought into the notion that junk DNA was ever fact. I knew God wouldn't incorporate useless information into my genome.

Conclusions:

-The Day-Age theory makes sense to me, when presented with the data
-Man was obviously (and also life, the earth, and the universe) created by the one true God
-The genetics scream the truth that man was created by God
-The existence of hominids casts a confusing light on the issue, and I am excited to hear of God's plans involving hominids even if I have to wait till heaven.
-Praise be to the Lord for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Glory be to God.

Randy says

The fundamental question asked in this book is, what does it mean to be human? Are we the product of blind, undirected evolutionary processes that did not have us in mind, or are we carefully fashioned in the image of God, distinct from the rest of creation and thus endowed with dignity and purpose? For a century and a half, the only scientific theory on the table was Darwin's theory of evolution which, of course, taught the former. The combination of mutation, natural selection, and vast amounts of available time were claimed to be the only creative forces necessary to produce man from the lower animals. Just as the Biblical account of creation had been prior to it, evolution became the new orthodoxy and was held with a resolute zeal that was determined not to let a divine foot in the door. It was claimed that science was being objective while creationists were anything but. The truth, however, was that science, at least in the realm of origins, held a commitment to philosophical materialism (nature is a closed system of physical causes) that was no less religious than a Bible believer's commitment to the Genesis account. So Darwinism reigned supreme, and paleontologists went about their digs and examined their evidence with their evolutionary framework firmly in place. The unbroken, gradual progression of hominid evolution was presupposed, and the evolution of man from non-human hominid ancestors was confidently proclaimed a fact.

The authors suggest that a reexamination of the Biblical account might be in order. Creation is testable, they claim. It is not just a religious, unfalsifiable story of our origins. The book of Genesis makes specific claims that can be evaluated in light of scientific discoveries. They propose to examine the scientific evidence in origins research and see which model, Darwinism or a Biblical creation model, makes better sense of the evidence. The creation model consists of thirteen testable predictions, three of which are as follows:

1. Humanity's origin dates back to between 10,000 and 100,000 years ago.

2. God created humanity at the "just-right" time in earth's history.

3. Humans are behaviourly distinct (in a way that reflects God's image) from the earlier hominids, the great apes, and other animals.

The current state of paleoanthropology is examined in some detail, based especially on recent studies and discoveries. It becomes clear, at least to this reader, that the actual evidence for progressive hominid evolution does not match the picture that we have all become familiar with: that of a tree, starting with a single trunk and splitting into divergent paths as you go up., so that it is apparent where we could pinpoint our common ancestor with, say, chimpanzees. What we see instead is that "an explosive diversity of hominids occurred at the time of their first appearance in the fossil record" (p.152) which persisted

throughout their history. This looks more like a lawn than a tree. As paleontologists gather more data, however, the picture does not clarify but gets more confusing as arguments abound as to whether this or that hominid species should be reassigned to this or that genus. Relationships between the various hominids cannot be determined with any degree of certainty.

Not only that, but it appears that the characteristics of modern man, the chief two of which include bipedalism and brain size, cannot be demonstrated to have emerged gradually. Modern man, along with advanced human culture, appeared out of nowhere 50,000 years ago, "a veritable explosion of human culture - anthropology's 'big bang'" (p. 249). The authors argue that this is the special creation of man by God and we are seeing evidence of the image of God in man. There is a qualitative difference between modern man and earlier hominids, not a relationship of gradual emergence. The authors conclude that the evidence consistently favours a model of origins which takes seriously implications drawn from the book of Genesis, over against the Darwinian model.

The most difficult part of the book is the one dealing with studies in molecular biology, but for those without a science background, the authors summarize their arguments at the end of each section, in a short "bottom line" paragraph that would allow the reader to skip the technical details if necessary. They go into some detail to examine recent genetic studies because one of the most widely recognized evolutionary arguments involves the claim of a 98 percent genetic similarity between humans and chimpanzees. But it turns out that this similarity might have to be reduced to closer to 85 percent, which clearly increases the distance between humans and chimpanzees. The picture is more complicated than strict sequence similarity, however. We find that slight changes in genetic sequence can lead to vast differences in development.

It is astonishing that if one can extricate oneself from evolutionary presuppositions, all the lines of evidence presented by the authors leads to a conclusion that vindicates the creation model. Indeed "at no other time in human history has the biblical account of humanity's origin held greater credibility than it does today" (p. 250). Christians need not fear science. When we can follow the evidence where it leads, and not be shackled by a naturalistic worldview that presupposes that the physical world is all there is, we can be confident of the Biblical account that man is made in the image of God, distinct from the rest of creation.

In closing, this book makes a valuable contribution to helping us see that there is no conflict between taking both science and the Bible seriously when it comes to a discussion of human origins. The Genesis account is not myth: it makes predictions that can be tested by science. I don't think this work falls into the camp of Intelligent Design, as the authors make explicit use of the Bible in their arguments, while the I.D. movement does not do so in order to draw a design inference. But it is a work that is important for thinking Christians. Whether it counts as "science", however, is debatable, depending on whether you hold to a closed philosophy of science (methodological naturalism) or an open one (an intelligent agent can be part of a theoretical construct). I happen to hold the latter view, but this question is not addressed by the authors and is thus beyond the scope of the book.

Dawn Roberts says

Great multi-disciplinary discussion of the theory of human evolution vs. the argument for special creation. I am fascinated by the data that shows the rapid spread of humanity, our genetic derivation from DNA that originated recently in Africa or the Middle East, and the discontinuity among ancient hominids and modern humans. The chapter on the slim cosmic window allowing for life to exist on Earth at all is excellent. More biochemistry in the chapter on "Junk DNA" than I could absorb, but bottom line summaries are given for lay people, thankfully. The authors' conclusions: modern humans originated in the last 100K years, genetically traceable to an original Adam and Eve; evolutionary trees connecting us to ancient hominids have serious discontinuities; our genetic similarity to other primates is a reflection of similar intelligent design, not evidence of evolution. Worth a read if you are seriously interested in the nuts and bolts of evolutionary theory.

Jacob O'connor says

We all have expectations. They're fueled by our world-views, and it's unsettling when something unpredictable happens. Case in point, for a couple thousand years, the Biblical model for origins reigned. Adam and Eve were the first people. Depending on how you cash that out, they could have been created within days of creation itself. This makes us scratch our heads when we find hominid fossils. Were they human beings on an earlier or divergent evolutionary path? Were they something more akin to the great apes? Either way, how do they fit, if at all, into a Biblical world-view?

Ross and Rana have thrown their hat into the ring. They hold an old-earth creationist position, and they place the hominids into a separate category from humans.

What do you think? Are they right? Are hominids human? How does that affect the Biblical view?

Kraftlos says

This book was a bit dry, but I think that's necessary for this topic. The author does a good job of pointing out the disconnect between early hominids and modern humans. How the term "modern human" sometimes included earlier species and how much of evolutionary thought presumes the multi-region origins theory. If you've read some of RTB's earlier books on their origins model, this is a must read.

Daniel W Mackey says

Excellent book. I graduated college with a BA in Biology, went through 4 years of medical school, 1 year of internship, 2 years of residency, and 2 years of oncology fellowship. I am double-boarded in Internal Medicine and Medical Oncology. I love science and practice evidence-based medicine on a daily basis.

I stumbled upon this book at a local bookstore some years ago, specifically looking for a reference providing an in-depth analysis to reconcile secular scientific literature with the origin of humanity as described in the Bible. Who Was Adam?: a Creation Model Approach to the Origin of Man is well written, is concise, and

has extensive references to satisfy professionals and laypersons alike.

This book opened my eyes, proving to me that there is no need to compromise my love of science, nor any need to compromise my love of God's Word. After all, God created the universe as we see it.

Atchisson says

The overally scientific tone may lend itself to academic credibility, but it also has the unfortunate effect of putting off the casual reader, I'm sure. Interesting take on a fascinating topic.
