

# IN THE BEGINNING

## A Study of Genesis 1-4

*St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Minot, ND*



### Tips for Evolution vs. Creation Debates

When debating an evolutionist, it is important to debate fairly and wisely. For the sake of this study, we do not have the time to go into all the intricate issues and concerns with evolution; however, we Christians can ask wise and clarifying questions. For example, whenever an assertion is made by someone else, a Christian can ask 3 important questions: 1) Can you explain that in different words? 2) How did you learn that to be true? 3) Are you sure you are right; could there be another possibility?

### Study 3

#### Before & After The Fall

*Tips for Evolution vs. Creation Debates*

*7 Literal 24 Hour Days?*

*Mankind Before the Fall:  
Prelapsarian Adam*

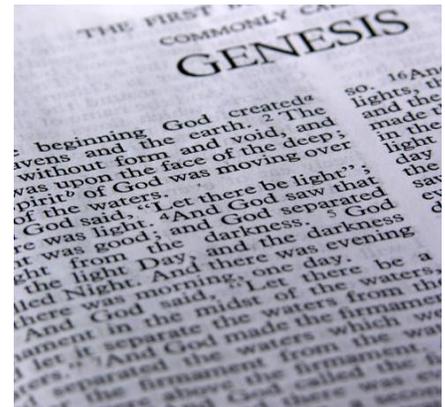
### 7 Literal 24 Hour Days?

Sometimes well-intentioned Christians attempt to blend Genesis 1 and Evolution by asserting that each day of creation is an extended period of time. While it is true that Genesis 1:1 uses the word 'bereshiyt,' which refers to an extended period of time, each day of creation, though, uses the word 'yom.' When yom is modified with the words evening/morning, it always means a

24 literal day. In other words, the use of the words 'evening' and 'morning' make it very difficult to stretch each day of Genesis 1 into extended periods of time – millions of years. If yom stood alone, maybe one could construe yom to mean a longer period of time; however, with 'evening and day' and the use of numbers (i.e., fourth day), Genesis 1 is most certainly 24 hours.

## Mankind Before the Fall: Prelapsarian Adam

“The image of God, according to which Adam was created, was something far more distinguished and excellent, since obviously no leprosy of sin adhered either to his reason or to his will. Both his inner and his outer sensations were all of the purest kind. His intellect was the clearest, his memory was the best, and his will was the most straightforward—all in the most beautiful tranquility of mind, without any fear of death and without any anxiety. To these inner qualities came also those most beautiful and superb qualities of body and of all the limbs, qualities in which he surpassed all the remaining living creatures. I am fully convinced that before Adam’s sin his eyes were so sharp and clear that they surpassed those of the lynx and eagle. He was stronger than the lions and the bears, whose strength is very great; and he handled them the way we handle puppies. Both the loveliness and the quality of the fruits he used as food were also far superior to what they are now. But after the Fall death crept like leprosy into all our perceptive powers, so that with our intellect we cannot even understand that image. Adam would not have known his Eve except in the most unembarrassed attitude toward God, with a will obedient to God, and without any evil thought. Now, after sin, we all know how great passion is in the flesh, which is not only passionate in its desire but also in its disgust after it has acquired what it wanted. Thus in both instances we see neither reason nor will unimpaired, but passion greater than that of cattle. Is this not a serious and pernicious leprosy, of which Adam was free before sin? Moreover, he had greater strength and keener senses than the rest of the living beings. To what extent is man today surpassed by the boars in their sense of hearing, by the eagles in their sense of sight, and by the lion in his strength? Therefore no one can picture in his thoughts how much better nature was then than it is now.” (Martin Luther)



*Consider the modern Marvel Movies and DC Comic Movies – are they attempting to capture the idea of a Prelapsarian Adam? Much of Hollywood and Political Ideologies reach for the bygone bliss of Eden. Do they also reach for the faded memory of human greatness apart from the effects of sin?*

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## Considering Genesis 1 vs. Genesis 3 and the Upward Fall

It is important to keep Genesis 1 and Genesis 3 separate in our minds. The Bible does not begin with Genesis 3: the Lord God does not create sin-poisoned-people. In other words, Genesis 1 begins the Bible where God creates all things and sees that “it was good.” In other words, if we begin with Genesis 3, we blaspheme creation. We make God the ‘creator’ of evil. Alas! God does not create evil!

In our Lutheran Confessions (i.e., Book of Concord), our Lutheran forefathers use the words *substantia* and *accidens*. That is, God does not create and make sin in us (*substantia*). However, it was the devil that instigated sin that entered the world (*accidens*). And so, the substance of humanity is good – we were originally created good. However, sin (as an *accidens*) has infected mankind like spiritual poison or like leprosy. The point is that we must distinguish between our nature as created and preserved by God and the sin which is indwelling. We must always distinguish between our nature (created good by God) and sin (which the devil instigated to poison our nature). If we don’t distinguish between the two, we make creation into garbage and God the creator of evil!

So, how did mankind get poisoned by this wretched sin? Simply stated, it was the result of Adam’s rebellion.

According to a 20<sup>th</sup> Century Theologian, the Fall of Adam and Eve was an ‘upward fall.’ Consider his comments here: “*Adam and Eve fell into sin. The fall is really not what the word implies at all. It is not a downward plunge to some lower level in the great chain of being, some lower rung on the ladder of morality and freedom. Rather it is an upward rebellion, an invasion of the realm of things ‘above,’ the usurping of divine prerogative. To retain traditional language, one would have to resort to an oxymoron and speak of an ‘upward fall.’ This, after all, is precisely what the temptation by the serpent in the garden implies: ‘You will not die... you will be like God, knowing good and evil’ (Genesis 3:4-5). A line had been drawn over which Adam and Eve were not to step. They were not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. There was a realm ‘above’ which they were to leave to God; if they did not, their death would result. But the tempter insinuated ‘Don’t believe it for an instant! God is only jealous of the divine preserve! God knows that if your step over the line you will not die but become gods. You have something going for you! You have divine qualities, you have an immortal soul.’ So the step is taken. It is rebellion, an upward fall.*” Alas, the devil baited Adam and Eve to believe that they too could exist as gods! Wretched Pride!