

Did Eve Really Exist?

J. A. Miller reported in the August 13, 1983, issue of *Science News* (vol. 124: 7, p. 101) that "Biologists studying DNA differences in individuals around the world, have now traced human lineage back to a common female ancestor." Allan C. Wilson of the University of California at Berkeley is quoted as claiming that "We all go back to one mother living 350,000 years ago." Another group of scientists at Stanford University claim a common ancestor appeared in history at a more recent date, ranging from 50,000 to 100,000 years ago. Luigi L. Cavalli-Sforza of Stanford states that this more recent time period is closer to those dates derived from fossil examination and other genetic approaches.

While much additional work remains to be accomplished in refining, calibrating, and reconciling DNA dating, the latest evidence from biology suggests all of us share a common mother in our distant ancestral past. The Bible calls this common female ancestor Eve. In its quest for truth, science has uncovered another signpost pointing to the Word of God.

place. Furthermore, archeologists have not discovered definite evidence that might settle the question. We can only speculate as to when Adam and Eve might have appeared in scientific history. The evidence is insufficient to resolve this mystery. However, some possibilities can be eliminated. Perhaps it will help to bracket the problem into a relatively short period of geologic time.

Let's start by reviewing what we have learned about Primates -- the biological order in which science classifies humans. The legitimacy of the discoveries identified as missing links between apes and humans has not been sustained by subsequent scientific evidence. From 1912 through the early 1950s science confidently displayed Piltown Man as the missing link between apes and man. Following the exposure of this clever forgery, paleoanthropologists promptly pushed *Ramapithecus* and the *Australopithecine* hominids into the gap. The latest evidence indicates that these creatures may be the missing links in the apes' family tree -- not man's. The missing ancestors for the orangutang, the chimpanzee, and the gorilla may have at last been found. The current evidence certainly does not justify including these fossil creatures in the ancestry of the human race.

I believe we can also dismiss *Homo habilis* and *Homo erectus* as likely candidates for Adam and Eve. For one thing science is not certain whether they led to *Homo sapiens* at all. They may have become extinct. Furthermore, the present fossil evidence does not indicate they possessed those traits that we consider uniquely human.

What about Neanderthal man? The archeological record shows indications of humanity during his period in history. We have evidence from the Shanidar cave in northern Iraq of compassion in the care of a crippled man. We have evidence of a ritual burial with flowers. These signs of humanity, together with the location of the Shanidar cave at the headwaters of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, would indicate that Neanderthal man should not be excluded in the search for modern man's ancestors.

Should we look for Adam and Eve in the mysterious appearance 40,000 years ago of Cro-Magnon man? He created the world's first great art, and anthropologists believe him to be the common ancestor of all the modern races. There are those intriguing fossil remains in the caves on Mount Carmel and near Nazareth. There is that rapid spread of the Cro-Magnon population throughout the world. The present evidence indicates that the Near East, specifically Israel, is the most likely point of origination.

Something very profound in the social and economic development