

Who was Adam in the Bible?

Adam was the first man to ever exist (Genesis 1:27; 1 Corinthians 15:45). He was created by God as the first human being and placed in the Garden of Eden designed just for him (Genesis 2:8, 10). Adam is the father of all mankind; every human being who has ever existed is a direct descendant of Adam, and it is through Adam that every human being has inherited a sinful nature (Romans 5:12).

God spoke everything else in the universe into existence (Genesis 1). But on the sixth day God did something different. He got down in the dirt and formed Adam from the clay (the name Adam is related to adamah, the Hebrew word for “ground” or “soil”). God then breathed His own breath into the man’s nostrils, “and man became a living soul” (Genesis 2:7). The breath of God is what separates human beings from the animal kingdom (Genesis 1:26-27). Beginning with Adam, every human being created since then has an immortal spirit as God has. God created a being so like Him that the man could reason, reflect, intuit, and choose his own paths.

The first woman, Eve, was made from one of Adam’s ribs (Genesis 2:21-22). God placed them in His perfect world, with only one restriction: they were not to eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil (Genesis 2:16-17). The option for Adam to disobey had to be present, because without that ability to choose, human beings would not be completely free. God created Adam and Eve as truly free beings, and He allowed them to make an entirely free choice.

Genesis 3 details the account of Adam’s choice to sin. Both Adam and Eve disobeyed God’s command and ate of the tree which the Lord had forbidden (verse 6). In that one act of disobedience, they brought sin and all of its consequences into God’s perfect world.

Through Adam, sin entered the world, and with sin came death (Genesis 3:19, 21; Romans 5:12).

We know that Adam was an actual person, not an allegory, because he is referred to as a real person throughout the rest of the Bible (Genesis 5:1; Romans 5:12-17). Luke, the great historian, traces the lineage of Jesus all the way back to this one man (Luke 3:38). In addition to his being a real person, Adam is also the prototype for all human beings to come. Prophets, priests, and kings, born with a sin nature, were all children of the first Adam. Jesus, virgin-born and sinless, is “the second Adam” (1 Corinthians 15:47). The first Adam brought sin into the world; the second brought life (John 1:4). Jesus, our second Adam, offers a new birth (John 3:3) with a new nature and new life for whoever believes (2 Corinthians 5:17; John 3:16-18). Adam lost paradise; Jesus will regain it.