



The Fall and the Ascent of Man: How Genesis Supports Darwin

Joseph Fitzpatrick

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In this groundbreaking work, Joseph Fitzpatrick challenges the traditional interpretation of chapter three of Genesis: the story of Adam and Eve in Eden. This narrative was imposed on the Christian West, but not the East, through the genius of Augustine of Hippo and came to dominate Catholic and Protestant theology. Fitzpatrick points to weaknesses in Augustine's interpretation of the Genesis story before providing a revolutionary interpretation of his own. Fitzpatrick claims that this story is about nothing less than hominisation. Far from being an account of the original sin against God, it is in fact a symbolic tale about the ascent of a hominid couple to full human consciousness.

Aided by modern anthropology, Fitzpatrick is able to enter into the mentality of the ancient Hebrews and adopt a literary approach to the biblical text by comparing it with the Babylonian *Epic of Gilgamesh*. In *The Fall and the Ascent of Man*, he clears away the clutter of centuries and lets us see the famous tale for what it is: the story of the emergence of humankind on the face of the earth, first in nature, then in history. This book provides the key for a new interpretation of the early chapters of Genesis within a new understanding of Judaeo-Christian salvation history. By offering a biblical account of human sinfulness, Fitzpatrick hopes to draw Western theology closer to that of the Orthodox East and point the way forward for Christian theology in the twenty-first century.

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