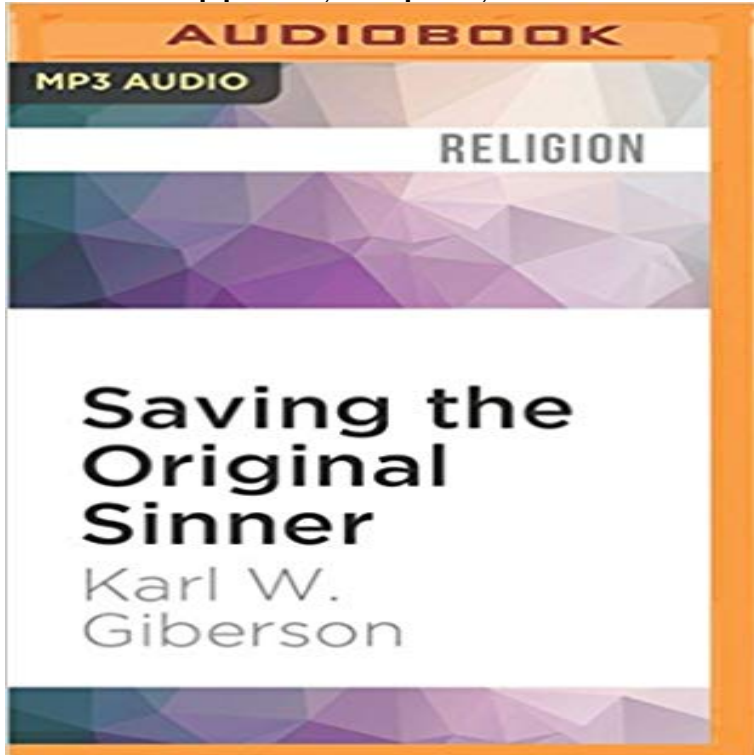


Saving the Original Sinner: How Christians Have Used the Bible's First Man to Oppress, Inspire, and Make Sense of the World



A scientist and former evangelical argues that holding on to a belief in a literal, historical Adam has forced many Christians to reject science and become intellectually isolated from the modern world. Beginning in the 17th century, discoveries in anthropology, geology, paleontology, biblical studies, and linguistics cast doubt on the familiar account of the biblical Adam and his fall into sin, the central component in the West's understanding of its origins. Christians responded by creatively reconstructing the creation story, letting Adam evolve to accommodate his changing context. But further advances both in science and biblical studies eventually made it all but impossible to reconcile a first couple with a modern, scientific understanding of the past or with an informed reading of ancient biblical texts. Many Christians rejected the offensive scholarship, veering onto a path that would place them increasingly at odds with contemporary scholarship in many fields. In *Saving the Original Sinner*, Giberson tells the story of the evolution of the idea of Adam. He explores how, over the centuries, we have created Adam in our own image to explain and justify our behavior. Giberson shows how the narrative of the fall has influenced Western ideas about sexuality, gender, and race. He argues that ongoing attempts to preserve the biblical story of creation in the face of mounting evidence to the contrary is contributing to the intellectual isolation of many Christians, particularly evangelicals - even as they continue to wield significant political power in the United States.

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