

March 16, 2021

RE: Apology for Unfair Treatment by ASA Leadership

Dear Joshua,

This letter is on behalf of the Executive Council of the American Scientific Affiliation (ASA). We want to respond to your concerns about the incidents surrounding the 2018 annual meeting workshop, Reworking the Science of Adam, and associated events extending through early 2020.

As you know, last summer an ad hoc committee reviewed and supported the substance of your concerns. You were not treated fairly throughout this entire episode.

The ASA's mission commits us to an open, robust discussion of all issues at the science-faith interface. We have a long history of engaging in difficult conversations over a wide range of topics. Our intention is to be a fair, open, and an honest broker, fully knowing that this is an especially difficult task.

In regards to your 2018 workshop, we did not live up to our mission and commitments. We relied on an oral process that incorrectly privileged the opinions and suggestions of some senior ASA members without engaging you directly. Some of the individuals that we consulted had conflicts of interest with the content of the workshop. We are truly sorry that these conflicts of interest were not appropriately managed.

In particular, we were wrong to cut you out of the decision-making process and not to inform or discuss our decision with you until the very last minute. This decision denied you the opportunity to record and reuse the 2018 workshop discussions, thus undercutting the very reason for which you had organized it, and after substantial expenses were already incurred. We regret that we did not provide you a timely opportunity to respond. The last-minute decision not to allow even an unofficial recording of the workshop was arbitrary and wrong. Moreover, the process followed earlier that year in rescinding a plenary lecture invitation to you was unprofessional.

On behalf of the Executive Council of the American Scientific Affiliation, I apologize to you for these actions and any impact on your work and on you personally. To the extent that it is possible, we also want to make this right. First, we will reimburse up to \$7,000 for the expenses that you incurred in conducting this workshop, less \$2,000 which was reimbursed to you earlier. Second, we invite you to give a plenary lecture at an upcoming ASA conference, with the precise details to be arranged later.

When you made your concerns known in 2018 and 2019, you asked about conflicts of interest in our decision-making process. Our response then unfairly delayed the resolution of these matters. Over that time, it became clear that our organization had no formal or effective

process for addressing your concerns. In this matter, we did not meet the professional standards to which we aspire in the ASA. All of this must change. The executive council is improving the policies and processes (1) governing programming for our annual conference and (2) for dispute resolution when mistakes may have been made.

Thank you for your diligence in keeping this matter in front of the ASA Executive Council. Your persistence reflects the professional standards to which we aspire and calls us to do better in all our interactions. We appreciate the opportunity to make this right, and we sincerely apologize for our actions.

Resolving conflict within the family of Christian faith is just as difficult as it is in any other avenue of life. I observe that this conflict was difficult for you too. For this reason, I respect and appreciate your continuing effort to engage your peers and the collegial and transparent way our conversations have proceeded. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to resolve this so that we might move forward together from here.

It is my personal hope, and that of the ASA Executive Council as a whole, that we can restore a positive and professional relationship with you. We see common ground and common cause in your efforts with Peaceful Science, and we hope that professional engagement might be possible going forward.

Sincerely,

John R. Wood
Interim Executive Director
American Scientific Affiliation

<https://peacefulscience.org/asa-response>