

Year One (2009)

Rated PG-13. Our ratings: V-4 L-3; S/N-3. Running Length: 1 hour 37 min.

*Whoever walks with the wise becomes wise,
but the companion of fools suffers harm.
Proverbs 13:20*

Although this film will remind you of Mel Brooks' *The History of the World*, or even at times seem like an old Testament version of *The Life of Brian*, director Harold Ramis's pseudo-epic never comes close to their entertainment level. Jack Black plays Zed, an overly-self confident prehistoric tribesman who is cast out of his tribe because he has eaten of the Forbidden Fruit of the Tree of Knowledge. Accompanied by best friend Oh (Michael Cera), he begins an itinerant life that brings him into contact with several characters from the biblical book of Genesis.

First, it is Cain and Abel, their quarrel with its violent resolution played for laughs. Then it is Abraham on the verge of sacrificing his son Isaac, with our uncouth pair standing in for the angel pointing to the ensnared ram. From there it is on to Sodom and Gomorrah, where all resemblance to the Biblical narrative ends.

In the hands of better writers (meaning those who think that

humor deals with higher things than what erupts from our asses), this might have been an amusing picture. Anyone remember Bill Cosby's series of skits (Noah") or David Steinberg's delightful comedy album "The Incredible Shrinking God" ? One of the sad things about this film was caught by the remark of a friend, "Most filmgoers know so little Bible these days that this will constitute their knowledge of it." Wait until this is available on cable or disk, lest you waste your money.