

Center for Global Ministries

Bible Doctrines

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Anthropology

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ANTHROPOLOGY

*ANTHROPOS: MAN + LOGOS: WORD,
STUDY*

The study of man from a biblical perspective is the analysis of what God has revealed about man's origin and make-up

Origin of man¹

Atheistic, humanistic or natural evolution

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- Variation depends on offspring being superior to parents
- Struggle for survival eliminates weaker, less fit
- Natural selection is the process of survival of fittest
- Through heredity better qualities from natural selection are passed on and accumulated
- New species come into existence with passage of time

Origin of man²

Theistic evolution

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- God supervised the evolutionary process
- Problems with view from a biblical perspective
 - ▣ If Adam is not a historical person, then the analogy between Christ and Adam is imagination (Rom 5:12-21)
 - ▣ Genesis must be poetical or mythical
 - ▣ Concept of man coming from non-living matter is irreconcilable with revelation of image of God

Origin of man³

Progressive evolution (Day-Age Theory)

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- Based on Psa 90:40 and 2 Peter 3:8
- Definition
 - ▣ Each day is an age of indefinite time
- Problems
 - ▣ Plants can't be ages before animals since some depend upon animals for pollination and fertilization
- Attempts to reconcile science and Bible
 - ▣ Since ages can't follow days of creation (plants before sun) don't take Gen 1 too literally
 - ▣ Demands death before Adam's fall
 - ▣ Destroys analogy between 6 days work and 1 day rest in Ex 20:10-11

Origin of man⁴

Gap Theory (between Gen 1:1 and 1:2)

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□ Teaching concepts:

- Original creation (emphasis on “repopulate”)
- Destroyed because of Lucifer’s rebellion
- Earth “became” chaotic: “*without form and void*”

□ Problems:

□ Grammatical problems

- V. 1 is an independent clause; v. 2 is connected grammatically and contains 3 circumstantial clauses describing v. 1 without a break
- “Formless and void” is not always a result of judgment (Job 26:7; Isa 45:18)
- The supposed distinction between *bara`*, “create” and *asa`*, “made” is invalid. They are used interchangeably.
- Theory is not based on exegesis but attempt to reconcile science and Bible by twisting Scripture unnecessarily

Origin of man⁵

Literal 24-hour-per-day Creation sequence

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- *Fiat* creation as described in Gen 1
 - ▣ Hold to a “young” earth
 - ▣ Appearance of age explained by flood geology
- God created matter and man directly
- God created male and female genders
- God created in 24-hour days
 - ▣ Hebrew word *yom* with a number is always 24 hour day
 - ▣ Phrase “morning and evening” imply 24-hour period
 - ▣ Ex 20:9-11 only has meaning if 24-hour days
- God created man as a unique being, not an improved animal: has moral sensibility and accountability, and is a created eternal being

Material part of Man

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- Distinction is made between body and nonmaterial part of man (soul/spirit) (2 Co 5:1; 2 Th 5:23; Gen 2:7)
- Play on words in 2:7– *adam*, “man” and *adamah*, “ground”.
 - ▣ To remind man of his origin: both have same constitution chemically: calcium, iron, potassium
 - ▣ At death, body returns to its origin (Gen 3:7; Ps 104:27)

Views of purpose of man's body

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- ❑ Prison house of the soul: Greek philosophy— soul is good and body is bad
- ❑ Body is only important part of man – Hedonism: seek to please body by what one enjoys doing. Denies existence of soul.
- ❑ Body is a partner of the soul. Is the means of glorifying God as temple of God (1 Co 6:19).
 - ❑ Not to be mastered by body in self-indulgence, nor is an enemy to be self-punished
 - ❑ Is to be presented to God for His purposes (Ro 12:1) so Christ can be glorified (evident) in our bodies (Phil 1:20)
 - ❑ Final evaluation concerns what was done in the body (2 Co 5:10)

Non-material part of man

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- Created as a PERSONALITY: self-consciousness and self-determination. Not governed by natural *instinct* as animals
- Created as a SPIRITUAL BEING: ability to reason, to sense right and wrong, to relate and to choose destiny. Our likeness to God permits a relationship
- Created with a MORAL NATURE: righteous and holiness which enabled a relationship with God, but was lost in the Fall. Later was restored in Christ (Eph 4:24; Col 3:10)

Origin of non-material part of man

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- **Theory of preexistence:** taught in Hinduism and Greek philosophy— formerly angelic beings who embodies human forms
- **Creation theory:** each individual is a created soul at conception and body alone is propagated by parents. Would require every individual to fall into sin as God creates perfect
- **Traducian theory:** Soul and body propagated by parents: How can a physical relationship transmit a soul? Christ would have participated in nature of Mary (this obligated doctrine of Immaculate conception)
 - ▣ Explains the transmission of sinful nature
 - ▣ Explains hereditary factor: intellect, personality and emotional similarity to parents (Ps 51:5)

Composition of non-material part

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□ Dichotomous view:

- ▣ Two-part being: body and soul
- ▣ Soul and spirit are same substance w/ different functions
 - Man became a living soul (Gen 2:7)
 - “Soul” and “spirit” used interchangeably (Gen 41:8 w/ Ps 42:6)
 - “Body” and “soul” constitute whole person (Matt 10:28; 1 Cor 5:3)

□ Trichotomous view:

- ▣ Three-part being: body, soul and spirit. Different in substance and function
 - Soul is seen as a lower power consisting of man’s imagination, memory, and understanding
 - Spirit is a higher power, consisting of reason, conscience, and will
 - (a) Paul seems to emphasize the three-part view in desiring the sanctification of the entire person (1 Thess. 5:23).
 - (b) Hebrews 4:12 implies a distinction between soul and spirit.
 - (c) 1 Corinthians 2:14–3:4 suggests a threefold classification: natural (fleshly), carnal (soulish), and spiritual (spiritual)

Composition of non-material part²

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□ Multi-faceted view:

- Soul and spirit commonly describe non-material part, but also 4 other terms are used:
 - “**Heart**” describes intellectual (Mat 15:19) y volitional (Rom 10:9-10; Heb 4:7) aspect
 - “**Conscience**” for moral sense, but may be seared and unreliable (1 Tim 4:2); May be weak and overreact (1 Cor 8:7,10,12)
 - “**Mind**” is depraved (Rom 1:28), blinded by Satan (2 Cor 4:4); darkened and futile (Eph 4:17-18); but can be renewed (Rom 12:2)
 - “**Will**” of unbeliever tends to follow desires of flesh (Eph 2:2-3), but the believer can will to do God’s will (Rom 6:12-13)

The Fall of Man

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- Gen 3 does not describe the origin of sin, but rather the entrance of sin into humanity
- Adam and Eve were historical people who sinned in time and space.
- Historicity is essential to understand Rom 5:12-21
- If Adam was not a real person who brought sin into humanity, there is not point in Christ redeeming mankind
- Christ's own testimony confirms Adam's historical reality (Matt 19:3-5)

The Test

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- Obedience means nothing without a command: would they believe God and obey?
- Free to eat of all trees except Tree of knowledge of Good and Evil (Gen 2:16-17)
- Disobedience brought consequences: death, guilt, and separation
- God wanted Adam to learn of sin by revelation, not by experience

The Temptation

Serpent was inspired by Satan (Rom 16:20)

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1. Satan raised doubts about God's Word and therefore His character (Gen 3:1)
 - ▣ Questioned God's goodness and fairness
 - ▣ Eve believed his lie by exaggerating the restriction
2. Satan lied by saying they would not die (Gen 3:4), that is there would be no consequences
3. Satan told a partial truth: they would be like God – did not mention the pain, suffering and death that the experience of sin would bring.
 - ▣ Test entailed three areas: lust of flesh, lust of the eyes and the pride of life (1 Jn 2:16; Matt 4:1-11)

The result of sin

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1. **Judgment on serpent (3:14):** altered in form and shape
2. **Judgment on Satan (3:15):** perpetual enmity between seed of woman and Satan.
3. **Judgment on woman (3:16):** pain in childbirth and “desire” to or over husband (4:7 is ident Hebrew)
4. **Judgment on man (3:17-19):** toil now necessary to produce food and death would now begin for all
5. **Judgment on mankind (Rom 5:12):** Adam’s consequence was passed on to mankind
6. **Judgment on creation (Gen 3:17-18; Rom 8:17-19):** everything would resist man, wild animals and weeds