



Biblical Anthropology

Handout 1

THE CREATION AND ORIGINAL CONDITION OF MAN

MAN WAS MADE IN THE IMAGE AND LIKENESS OF GOD.

- Genesis 1:26 NIV *Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."*

What is meant by the terms image and likeness? The two words are practically synonymous.

That man was made in the image and likeness of God is fundamental in God's current dealings with man

- Ephesians 4:21-24 NIV *when you heard about Christ and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus. (22) You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; (23) to be made new in the attitude of your minds; (24) and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.*
- Colossians 3:10 NIV *and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.*
- James 3:9 NIV *With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God's likeness.*

1. THE IMAGE OF GOD DOES NOT DENOTE PHYSICAL LIKENESS.

God is Spirit; He does not have parts and passions as a man. The Mormon views of God are wrong.

- Deuteronomy 4:15 NIV *You saw no form of any kind the day the LORD spoke to you at Horeb out of the fire. Therefore watch yourselves very carefully,*

2. MAN'S DOMINION OVER NATURE, AND THE CREATION

3. OTHER SCRIPTURES SHED A LIGHT ON THE IMAGE AND LIKENESS OF GOD IN MAN.

- See Ephesians 4:23-24 NIV and Colossians 3:10 above.
- It is clear from these passages that the image of God consists in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness; moral, not physical likeness.

4. THE ORIGINAL MAN WAS ENDOWED WITH INTELLECTUAL FACULTIES.

- Genesis 2:19-20 NIV *Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds in the sky. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. (20) So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds in the sky and all the wild animals. But for Adam no suitable helper was found.*
- Adam had not only the power of speech, but the power of reasoning and thought in connection with speech. He could attach words to ideas. This is not the picture, as evolution would have us believe, of an infantile savage slowly groping his way towards articulate speech by imitation of the sounds of animals.

5. THE ORIGINAL MAN POSSESSED MORAL AND SPIRITUAL FACULTIES.

- Consider the moral test in Genesis 3. Adam had power to resist or to yield to moral evil. Sin was a volitional thing. Christ, the second Adam, endured a similar test (Matt. 4). From all this it is evident that man's original state was not one of savagery. Indeed there is abundant evidence to show that man has been degraded from a very much higher stage. Both the Bible and science agree in making man the crowning work of God, and

that there will be no higher order of beings here on the earth than man. We must not forget that while man, from one side of his nature, is linked to the animal creation, he is yet supra-natural-a being of a higher order and more splendid nature; he is in the image and likeness of God. Man has developed not from the ape, but away from it.

II. THE FALL OF MAN.

The doctrine of the Fall of Man is not peculiar to Christianity; almost all religions contain an account of it.

THE SCRIPTURAL ACCOUNT OF THE FALL OF MAN

- Genesis 3; Romans 5:12-19; Romans 3:10-23; Psalms 14
- 1 Timothy 2:14 NIV *And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner.*
- Genesis 6:5 NIV *The LORD saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time.*
- Genesis 8:21 NIV *The LORD smelled the pleasing aroma and said in his heart: "Never again will I curse the ground because of humans, even though every inclination of the human heart is evil from childhood. And never again will I destroy all living creatures, as I have done.*

The purpose of the Genesis narrative is not to give an account of the manner in which sin came into the world, but how it found its advent into the human race.

The record of the fall explains the change in the condition of man and his relationship with the Creator

- Genesis 1:26 NIV *Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."*
- Genesis 3:8 NIV *Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden.*
- Genesis 6:5 NIV *The LORD saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time.*
- Read Psalm 14 again.

If the fall of man were not narrated in Genesis we should have to postulate some such event to account for the present condition in which we find man. In no part of the Scripture, save in the creation account as found in the first two chapters of Genesis, does man appear perfect and upright.

VARIOUS INTERPRETATIONS OF THE NARRATIVE OF THE FALL OF MAN - Allegory, Myth, Folklore, Literal

Literal - takes the account as it reads, in its perfectly natural sense, just as in the case of the other parts of the same chapter. There is no intimation in the account itself that it is **not** to be regarded as literal history. It certainly is part of a historical book. The geographical locations in connection with the story are historic. The curse upon the man, upon the woman, and upon the ground are certainly literal. It is a fact that death is in the world as the wages of sin. Unquestionably Christ, and the other Scripture writers regard the event as historical and literal.

- Matthew 19:4 NIV *"Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,'* Mark 10:6 NIV *"But at the beginning of creation God 'made them male and female.'*
- 2 Corinthians 11:3 NIV (3) *But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ.*
- 1 Timothy 2:13-15 NIV *For Adam was formed first, then Eve. (14) And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner. (15) But women will be saved through childbearing--if they continue in faith, love and holiness with propriety.*