



A BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW OF ANTHROPOLOGY

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Worldview definition of Anthropology: The study of humans, early hominids and primates, such as chimpanzees. Anthropologists study human language, culture, societies, biological and material remains, the biology and behavior of primates, and even our own buying habits.

God has revealed Himself to man through creation, the Sacred Scriptures, and through His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. Man’s inability to understand anything pertaining to himself, his environment, and to the Cause behind all of existence depends solely on God’s grace and His revelation through mercy.¹ As gifts, God has given man language in order to have fellowship with his Creator and to communicate with others; as well, the drawing power of the Holy Spirit pointing to the Savior of the world and to the Father who sent Him is always at work in an effort to illuminate man’s spirit to the truth surrounding him.²

Lewis Sperry Chafer has used *The New Standard Dictionary* to define theological anthropology as “that branch of theological science which treats of man, both in his original and in his fallen condition. It embraces the consideration of man’s creation, primitive condition, probation and apostasy, original sin, and actual transgressions” (1913 Edition).³ The word of God reveals that man was created in the “image” and “likeness” of God by the Creator; describes

¹ Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, (Grand Rapids, Kregel, 1976), Vol. 2, pg. 135.

² Christopher Cone, Prolegomena Course Outline, Class notes.

³ Chafer, pg. 126.

man's original state of fellowship with the Supreme Being; relates the details of his fall; explains the real reason of death in the world; tells how to be re-born; instructs as to how to live a moral life; offers hope concerning resurrection from the dead; and proclaims how to live forever.⁴ All men face these realities and will search in vain to find truth if looking for answers outside of the Sacred Scriptures.⁵

The most debated subjects on earth today are answered in a symphony of praise in Genesis 1 and 2. With "the faith of a little child", "the size of a mustard seed", man can believe that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit existed before Time was spoken into existence by the words, "Let there be . . . , and there was . . ." All was known by the Sovereign God from Alpha to Omega, the beginning to the end, before the earth was formed by His spoken word (Acts 2:23; Hebrews 11:2-3; I Peter 1:2).⁶ Hearing sound truth and receiving revelation from the inspired word of God come by using a literal, historical, grammatical hermeneutic to allow the Holy Spirit to teach the individual the master plan of God. The hungering thirsting heart will be subject to the observation of God's word, to the proper interpretation of what is read, and to the application of being willing to ask questions of himself and from sound teachers.⁷ Martin Luther emphasized that the word of God must be made accessible and that it can be understood by all who are willing to believe.⁸ By employing this approach toward knowing God's message from Genesis to Revelation, man will hold a premillennial view of God's plan revealed in Revelation 20:1-7, along with that of the early church fathers like Papias, Irenaus, Appolinarius, Victorinus, Tertullian, and Lactantius.⁹

⁴ **Ibid.** pg. 128.

⁵ **Ibid.**

⁶ **Class notes from Dr. Dave Olander on the decrees of God.**

⁷ **Roy B. Zuck, *Basic Bible Interpretation*, (Colorado Springs, Cook Communications Ministries, 1991), pg. 10.**

⁸ **Ibid.** pg. 26.

⁹ **<http://.contenderministries.org>**

The inspired word of God given to Moses through the illumination of the Holy Spirit in Genesis 1 gives a cosmical, general account of man's creation, and the ideal.¹⁰ Genesis 2 records the physiological account of the production of the first man: Adam and his wife Eve.¹¹ The two accounts of creation complement each other.¹² The Creator formed Adam from the dust of the earth in the "image" of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, as well as in Their "likeness", and breathed His eternal breath into the lifeless body (Genesis 1:26; 2:7). From Adam's rib, He formed the first woman (2:22-23). God gave Adam intelligence to know that his "suitable helper" was "bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh" and that she should be named Eve, meaning "life" (2:23).¹³ The plan of God for one man and one woman to become one flesh through the marriage union was given from the beginning of time and taught again by Christ (2:24; Matthew 19:3-9).¹⁴ God gave man prominence over all creatures, rule over them and the earth, the perfect home environment, work with meaningful responsibilities, and moral law to observe in the relationship with his Creator.¹⁵ Thus, man was created by God "immediately and directly" out of nothing existing except His own "blessed fullness of divine life".¹⁶

Adam's original state of fellowship with the Supreme Being was one of absolute blessing. All that God created, He blessed (Genesis 1:22, 28; 2:3). God talked with Adam and Eve about procreation and of His plans for them to fill the earth, subdue it, and rule over all of creation (1:28). As Chafer sums up the state of innocence, *Adam did the will of God*.¹⁷

God was visible through His special manifestation to the first couple as they walked in the cool of the garden. It is important to note that Isaiah teaches that God is not a man, does not

¹⁰ Chafer, pg. 137.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Spiros Zodhiates, *The Hebrew-Greek Key Study Bible, NAS, (Chattanooga, AMG Publishers, 1977), pg. 3.*

¹³ Zodhiates, pg. 6.

¹⁴ Ibid. pg. 5.

¹⁵ Chafer, pg. 137.

¹⁶ Ibid. pgs. 137, 138.

¹⁷ Ibid. pg. 202.

look like a man, nor does He think like a man (55:8, 9). God reveals Himself in an anthropomorphic description in order to allow man to relate to Him, though He is the supreme Spirit in reality (Isaiah 50:6-7).

Adam was the “crown of God’s creation.”¹⁸ The first man was given language, intelligence with the ability to reason and demonstrate his free will, desire, God’s presence, and all provisions divinely designed for the ideal. Both Adam and his wife were naked and felt no shame because sin had not entered the world. They had the freedom to engage in “yada,” a Hebrew word that describes the most meaningful intimate sexual relationship of knowing their mate (Genesis 4:1).¹⁹

The angels of heaven/the sons of God were created before the foundation of the earth for they all sang together when God spoke the earth into existence (Job 38:4-7). Therefore, the hosts/armies of God were in place before God enacted his plan for mankind (Genesis 2:1). Protection over man was insured by God and the hosts were at His beckon call for part of the plan would be to write Psalm 91:11-12.

God’s revelation of the fall of man is recorded in Genesis 3. God gave Adam free will in order that recognition of His Sovereignty might be hallowed from the beginning of time.²⁰ The Law of God was planted in the heart of Adam (before he was given his wife Eve) by two very visible trees the Lord God caused to grow out of the ground: the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (2:9, 16, 17). God gave Adam His first promise recorded in the scriptures: “From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die.”²¹

¹⁸ **Zodhiates, pg. 1707.**

¹⁹ **Zodhiates, pg. 7.**

²⁰ **Class notes from Dr. Dave Olander.**

²¹ **Class notes from Dr. Christopher Cone.**

Satan was created by God as the anointed cherubim considered to be the most beautiful of all creation for the purpose of serving as the one who covers on the holy mountain of God with praise to the Most High God (Ezekiel 28:11-19; Psalm 148:2). Jehovah's omniscient nature recognized unrighteousness in him (verse 15). "By the abundance of your trade you were internally filled with violence, and you sinned; therefore I have cast you as profane from the mountain of God. And I have destroyed you, O covering cherub...Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom by reason of your splendor...I cast you to the ground...by the multitude of your iniquities, in the unrighteousness of your trade, you profaned your sanctuaries" (16-18). Satan slandered God by reasoning with his gift of free will in his mind and then announcing his five I wills:

"I will ascend to heaven;
I will raise my throne above the stars of God;
I will sit on the mount of assembly...;
I will ascend above the heights of the clouds;
I will make myself like the Most High" (Isaiah 14:13-14).

Before the foundation of the world, God's decree included the destruction of Satan: man's archenemy. Satan will be bound by a chain and locked in the abyss with his ability to deceive the nations during the millennial reign of Jesus Christ upon the earth at the end of the seven years of tribulation: Daniel's 70th week (Revelation 20:1-3; Daniel 9:27). At the end of that age, Satan with his ability to deceive the nations will be released which will result in the battle of Gog and Magog (Revelation 20:7-8). Fire will come down from heaven and consume those who will be deceived and fight against Israel (20:9). Satan will be thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and false prophet will have been waiting since being thrown alive at the end of the seven years of tribulation (20:10).

During the state of innocence in the Garden of Eden where the first couple created by God was placed, Satan appeared to Eve in the form of a talking serpent to tempt her (Revelation 12:9; Genesis 3:1-24).²² It is important to note that this passage was not written allegorically but must be taken as a literal historical account as the bible reveals a continuous history of past, present, and future events.²³ Satan engages Eve in conversation and uses his tool of deceit by saying, “Indeed, has God said, ‘You shall not eat from any tree of the garden?’” Eve responds to his question and rather than quoting God’s exact words which she had the intelligence to do, she added, “From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, “You shall not eat from it *‘or touch it,’* lest you die.’” The deceiver then reveals that he is a liar by saying, “You surely shall not die!” He deceives her into thinking that God does not want her to be as He is: Elohim.²⁴ Eve ate of the fruit and gave it to Adam. From all evidence, the idea had been conceived in their minds and debated before breaking God’s one law for them by Adam exercising his free will to partake of the forbidden fruit Eve handed him to eat: from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.²⁵ Suddenly, Adam who possessed the very breath of God and Eve who was taken from the body of Adam received the penalty of death in all its forms and died spiritually.²⁶ Their eyes were opened, they were ashamed of their nakedness, and they hid themselves from God. Physical death awaited them. They were turned out of the Garden of Eden and barred from the tree of life. Spiritual death and the depravity of man have passed from generation to generation with man’s only hope being offered by the promise of God that through the seed of a woman the serpent would be bruised on the head (Genesis 3:15).

²² Chafer, pg. 205.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid. pg. 204.

²⁵ Class notes from Dr. Dave Olander.

²⁶ Chafer, pg. 204.

The fall of the first Adam explains the real reason of death in the world today and offers hope concerning resurrection from the dead. Man had one “you shall not...” from God and chose to disobey rather than humbling himself and acknowledging the Sovereignty of his Creator, then lovingly living a life in total submission to His will. Job who suffered at the request of Satan to test his faithfulness to his Creator was repentant before God and acknowledged that God can do all things and His purposes cannot be thwarted because He is truly the Sovereign God of the Universe (Job 42:1-6). Job’s honest confession pleased God and abundant blessings followed (42:10-17). Paul contrasted the first Adam with the Second Adam by saying, “For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive” (I Corinthians 15:21-22).

If man does not have a clear understanding of the Creator, doubt will cause him to look to a secular worldview of the existence of life. If not a biblical worldview of the account of the origin of man and of how sin entered the world, no understanding of the need for redemption will be seen. Ignorance of sin’s damaging effects will not be grasped if the horror of God having to give up His only begotten Son for the sin of the first man is treated lightly. God saw all men in the first man Adam who challenged Him on His first promise; therefore, the entire human race was seen as guilty in God’s eyes. Failure on man’s part to grasp the seriousness of sin will result in no basis for a sound Soteriology.²⁷

Although Adam and Eve died spiritually the moment Adam ate of the fruit of the tree of good and evil which God had said, “In the day you eat thereof, you shall surely die;” they were physically alive. People who have died, lost in their sins without believing in the pure blood covering of Jesus Christ, are dead physically yet live spiritually because the Creator made

²⁷ Chafer, pg. 223.

mankind eternal beings.²⁸ The bible clearly warns man that disregard of God's grace for his redemption through His Son's death, shed blood, burial, resurrection, and ascension will result in an unending second death.²⁹ One day, physical death, the last enemy, will be no more for God will rebuke it (Revelation 21:4; I Corinthians 15:26).³⁰

The word of God tells man how to be re-born. The Lord Jesus told Nicodemus, a Pharisee, how to be born again in John 3: 1-21. Jesus told him that, "...unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God (3:3); ...unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God; ... as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whoever believes may in Him have eternal life." Jesus acknowledges that those who come to the light of His truth have eternal life; those who prefer the darkness are judged already because their deeds are evil.

In conclusion, God offers His gift of salvation to the world. Whosoever may accept the drawing of the Holy Spirit to receive the blood-bought gift of eternal life by grace through faith by acknowledging these profound truths:

Romans 3:23 says, "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

Romans 6:23 assures man, "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Romans 9:8-10 explains, "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart..." the word of faith which we are preaching, that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved; for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation."

Romans 8:16 is the blessed assurance, "The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God."

John 3:16 speaks of God's abundant "agape" gift: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. 17. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved."

²⁸ Chafer, pg. 222.

²⁹ Ibid. pg. 223.

³⁰ Ibid.

The incalculable problems that Satan's first sin in the universe and Adam's first sin on earth have caused both in heaven and on earth can only be known by God.³¹ Its impact upon the world will result in the manifestation of the absolute depravity of man being exposed with all of the ugliness of evil. On the other hand, God's eternal holiness will be displayed to the universe for all that has breath to give him thanks and glory as "every knee bows and every tongue confesses that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Philippians 2:11).

The Word of God holds the answers for a biblical worldview of anthropology. Through a literal historical interpretation of His message, man can know of his earliest ancestors, of the sin nature inherited by the first Adam's disobedience to his Creator, and of his own fallen nature controlled by sin. The truth of God's redemptive plan unfolds in the gift of His only begotten Son coming to earth and offering the only way to be born again through His own death as our Substitute. His resurrection gives hope to all who believe. "For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord." Man can comfort one another with these words (I Thessalonians 4:16-18).

³¹ Chafer, pg. 372.

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