

The Origin of Man - Antiquity of Man Part 1

by John Murray

The biblical account of man's origin emphasizes the unique creation of man by God, with man being made in the image of God and given a unique identity and vocation.

Duration: 50:16

Scripture: Genesis 1:1, Genesis 2:7, Genesis 5:1, Genesis 11:1, Psalm 107:21-22, Psalm 145:10-12, Matthew 1:1

Topics: "Man"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the purpose of the chronological data in Genesis 5 and Genesis 11. They argue that these genealogies are condensed and not intended to provide a complete primeval chronology. The speaker points out that condensed genealogies are a common pattern in scripture, citing examples from Genesis and Matthew. They also emphasize that the resemblances between man and his environment, as well as his likeness to God, demonstrate the wisdom and goodness of God's creation.

Transcript

O Lord, our God, Thou who rulest over all, Thou hast created all. Thou hast created and all Thy works shall praise Thee, O Lord, and Thy saints shall bless Thee. They shall abundantly utter the memory of Thy great goodness, and they shall sing of Thy righteousness.

May we, O Lord, have the joy of the light of Thy countenance, the knowledge of Thy revealed will, and the joy of obedience in disposition and for His sake. Amen. I have just begun to deal with this question of man's origin to evolution, relation of man's origin to the theory of evolution, or vice versa.

And I made the first point that there is no reason why we should exclude natural process from the preparation of the material stuff out of which man was born, or from, there is no reason why we should exclude natural process from the formative action referred to in Genesis 2-7. But second, it is impossible, according to the biblical representation, to conceive of man as formed by natural process. It means communication from God of animate life.

Animate life could not be regarded as an impartation from His environment or from any other agency. Then third, to this impartation, pardon me, it is to this impartation that man owes both animations, specific identity as man, which constitutes that man did not derive his identity as man, from a lower form of animate life. No form of animal.

Antedated the importation whereby he was constituted man. Now, the first principle of the evolutionary hypothesis as applied to man is that he evolved from a non-human form of animate life. He evolved from a non-human start.

Whatever the preceding, the immediately preceding start may have been, that is the first principle. The evolutionary hypothesis as applied to man, and I submit that Genesis 2-7 is in conflict, in conflict with that of the evolutionary hypothesis. Now fourth, we must not only take into account Genesis 2-7, but we must not only take into account Genesis 2-7, but the total biblical representation.

And therefore we must take into account the cumulative effect of the various data. And this effect, this effect is to show a radical line of demarcation between man and all other forms of animate life. He never appears on the stage of history as a little higher than other forms of life, other forms of animals, but as a little lower than the angels.

And the crux of the question is, after all, the crux of the question is, whether this cleavage of man from the very beginning, biblical representation, this cleavage, came to be by the evolution of potencies resident in dependent reality, or created to the effect that this unique identity belonging to man came to be by special impartation on God's part, the kind of impartation conspicuously absent in the case of all other animate beings, conspicuously absent in the case of all other animate beings, so that you have to take into account not only the positive witness, the silence to this impartation, the silence is by the inspiration of the Almighty, which men have understood by the inspiration of the Almighty. Now, five, we found that man has affinity with his inanimate environment and also with the animate creation, over both of which he is given dominion. So, there is a congruity, a likeness between man and his total earthly environment, a congruity, a likeness.

Consequently, we can expect many resemblances between man and the lower animate beings, which are so closely related to him in the life of this world. Resemblances, I say, between him and the lower animate beings. In this, we can discover the wisdom and the goodness of God, the institution of the cosmic, which he has given man, in relation to his environment.

I say the wisdom and the goodness of God, for if there were complete disparity, complete disparity between man and his environment, it would be intolerable for man to conduct his life in this world. The relationship which man sustains to the world around him, animatedly managed, the relation which he sustains to the world around him, demands a certain affinity, demands a certain affinity, and that affinity manifests in a great many respects. There is even an affinity in respect of physical structure, as well as of physical constitution.

So, from the biblical viewpoint, there is an necessity for various kinds of likeness, and we do not need any theory of organic genetic evolution to explain these resemblances. We don't need any theory of organic genetic evolution to explain. They are clearly required by the relationship of man to stay in the goodness of God, the constitution of things, the goodness of God, the constitution, the constitution of the environment, the constitution of man himself, are in such agreement and able to live in a congenial environment and conduct his vocation, having dominion, conduct his vocation, his own concept.

But now, from another angle, according to the biblical accounts, man has likeness not only to his environment, not only is there this constitutional congruity between man and his environment, that is his total environment, but he also has likeness to God, to Him who is infinitely higher. If man is to exercise dominion, there is in man, of course, an order, superiority, and he is also like God. The order is in the

opposite direction, the order to which man belongs.

Now, I take it that Genesis 2's heaven is significant when you take into account this place and constitution of man, the place that man occupies and the constitution with which he is endowed in order to fulfill his vocation. Genesis 2's heaven informs us of the two factors, the two factors entering into the origin of man which provide for this twofold likeness, the two factors providing for this twofold likeness. 2 7 8 The Lord God formed the man dust upon the ground.

That's the first factor. The Lord God formed the man dust upon the ground. The fact of establishing affinity with his earthly environment and conferring upon him a constitution in virtue of which he can fulfill his vocation.

Then you have Genesis 2 7 B and breathed in his nostrils breath of life. There is the factor in his origin establishing affinity with him. Now when we relate this to Genesis 1 26 and appreciate the stupendous, the stupendous significance of his likeness to God, then we are able to see how no action or process such as would account for the other orders of life would be sufficient for that order to which man belongs.

In the biblical sense, no process would account for the other orders of being. In fact, there would be an incongruity. Just an incongruity.

Suppose that a process of organic evolution that is by a process of development of forces resident in dependent reality, which is resident in creative reality, would be to constitute that unique identity to belong as made in the image of God and after his life. I think it's only because we fail to take account as made in the image of God and after his life. I think it's only because we fail to take account of the meaning of man in the image of God as man's distinguishing identity to attain any sympathy with a theory of his origin that demands continuity with other orders or species of animate life in this world.

Stupendous, stupendous data. Man bothers. Interesting.

Even the angels, the angels who kept their first estate are not really spoken of as being in the image of God. We would expect our beings, rational beings, powers which exceed the powers of man, they would likewise be spoken of as in the image of God. In general principles, I would conclude that the angels would likewise have to be regarded as in the image of God and after his life.

This was the writing of the angels. In that way, why am I not able to say that in any case our attention is drawn at the very outset to the absolute uniqueness of the two respects. Namely, he's being made in the image of God therefore man has an identity and a vocation.

Identity and a vocation distinguishes him even from the angels. Do we believe in the angels? Do we believe in non-embodied spirits? Well, if we are Christians, we must. The Bible is strewn with the angels.

Did they come by evolutionary process? Because man, you see, is given an identity and a vocation in accepting the identity of being in the image of God not to angels. In the world, man will even finally judge the angels. Now that is my view with respect to evolution.

In terms of a great deal of the evidence, a great deal of the possibility as it applies to the origin of man take into account. Now, I'm going on to deal with the next topic that man has. I think I'll be dealing with that later on.

On it, I hope. Now, the antiquity of man is a topic of wonder. Two generalities in Genesis.

I want to mention a couple of articles that are very helpful. They may be mentioned by Dr. Young or Dr. Klein but I want to mention these two articles. One by W. H. Green, William Henry Green.

Know me at the end. William Henry Green. Primeval Chronology.

Primeval Chronology. In Bibliotheca Sacra. Bibliotheca Sacra.

Volume 47. Volume 47. Beginning at page 285.

A fairly long article. A very competent one. That was dated 1890.

Volume 47, page 285. And then there is an article by E. B. Warfield. Antiquity and Unity of the Human Race.

Which you will find in various places. But in at least one of his perfect volumes. Studies in theology.

Theological studies, I don't remember. But that's the Antiquity and Unity of the Human Race by E. B. Warfield. You'll find it at least in the volume Studies in Theology.

And these are very competent articles by many of the undoubted orthodoxy who believe in the human race. Now I'm not going on 11. We're not in 10.

Of the period from Adam to Eve. We're not in 10. Certain chronological details.

These chronological details are giving us a chronology of that whole period. It is a chronology to give us condensed genealogy. And the most conspicuous example of a condensed genealogy you have, of course, in Genesis.

And in Matthew 1.1. Where the whole period from Abraham to Christ approximately 2,000 years is covered. And of course you have also easily demonstrated from the Old Testament that that genealogy is condensed at certain points. Similar instances in the Old Testament itself.

Condensed genealogies can be proven by parallel collateral evidence. It can be proven that some of these genealogies are condensed by collateral evidence. So my thesis is that these genealogies of Genesis 5 and 11 are not necessarily intended to provide us with the purpose of the chronological data.

What is the purpose of the chronological data in Genesis? Now with reference to that I'm going to say four things. With reference to that question. First, these genealogies provide us, as Warfield observes, with a conspectus of individual lives.

A conspectus of individual lives. You notice that in both genealogies the time lived before the begetting of a son and the time lived after the begetting of that son is mentioned. In Genesis 5 the whole period of each man's life is given by the addition of these two periods.

The time lived after the begetting of the son could not serve any purpose as far as the chronology of the period is concerned. But, that datum is germane to the length of the time each patriarch lived. All germane.

That suggests, immediately, that the purpose of the chronological data pertains to the longevity characterizing life in these periods. The longevity characterizing life. Let's go to the second chapter, I believe, Bible should be about to read.

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