

The *Imago Dei*: The Distinctiveness of Humanity

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ABSTRACT

Arguments for humans and animals existing in the imago Dei derive from a desire to harmonize Genesis 1:26–28 and alleged scientific views derived from an evolutionary system. An accurate analysis of biblical anthropology reveals the uniqueness of humankind in the areas of distinctiveness (“of which there is only one”) and superiority (“standing alone in comparison with others, frequently by reason of superior excellence”).¹ Considering the attempts to augment the biblical concept of the imago Dei, this paper argues humanity alone resides in the distinct status of being created in the image of God. Three sections will substantiate the unique design of humanity. First, a presentation of the historical view of the imago Dei. Second, an examination of evolution’s influence on the biblical rendering of the origin of humanity, human distinctiveness, recasting anthropology, and inferior groups. Third, emphasis on biblical anthropology in Genesis 1:26–28 that culminates with the offering of the lesser for the greater through divination and sacrifice.

KEYWORDS: *imago Dei*, anthropology, evolution, created, crowned

A INTRODUCTION

Most theological writers from the first century AD to the contemporary period identify a distinction between humanity and other creatures due to the *imago Dei*. How the various commentaries and theological studies categorize humanity residing in the image of God traditionally divides into three sets of views: 1) the substantive view, 2) the relational view, and 3) the functional view (or a combination of these).² The contestation regarding God’s image in humanity raises questions about what the idea implies in the Hebrew Bible, particularly in

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¹ Andrew Davison, “Human uniqueness: Standing alone?” *The Expository Times* 127/5 (2016): 217–224.

² A substantive interpretation holds that the image of God is an individually held property that is part of our nature, most often associated with reason; the relational interpretation sees God’s image present within the relationships humans establish, while a functional interpretation considers the image of God visible in actions whereby human beings exercise dominion over the Earth Daniel Simago, “The *imago dei* (Gen 1:26–27): A history of interpretation from Philo to the present,” *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae* 42/1 (2016):172–190.

texts such as Gen 1:26, 5:2, and 9:6. Moreover, since the appearance of Darwin's theory of evolution³, the biblical account of creation has been challenged. Research on evolutionary theory through a collection of data by the Human Genome Project suggests a common ancestry between humans and animals.⁴ Between 1990 and 2003, this international research effort convened to determine the sequence of the human genome and identify the genes that it contains. The results have been used to offer a blueprint for building a person, to explore a common ancestry with primates, and to determine ancestral human population sizes.⁵ As a result of such genome research, some writers within the Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Protestant traditions appear to be convinced of the correlation between the biblical accounts of creation and evolutionary science.⁶

³ Michael J. Behe, *Darwin's black box*. (New York: Touchstone, 1996): X. According to Behe, evolution is a flexible term that can mean "change over time" or "the descent of all life forms from a common ancestor; leaving the mechanism of change unspecified." He uses evolution in a biological sense to mean "a process whereby life arose from non-living matter and subsequently developed entirely by natural means."

⁴ See <https://www.genome.gov/human-genome-project>.

⁵ Noah A. Rosenberg and Magnus Nordborg, "Genealogical Trees, coalescent theory and the analysis of genetic polymorphisms," *Nature Reviews Genetics* 3, (2002): 380–390.

⁶ Evolution Weekend celebrated its 15th annual event where it addressed the relationship between religion and science. Currently, 232 congregations representing 42 states, the District of Columbia, and six other countries participate in the event, which had its origin on February 12, 2006, in celebration of the 197th birthday of Charles Darwin. More than 10,000 Christian clergy signed a letter affirming the compatibility of religion and science. Churches from various denominations were represented: Jewish, Presbyterian, Disciples of Christ Episcopalian, Methodist, Lutheran, and Baptist. Online: http://www.theclergyletterproject.org/rel_evolution_weekend_2020.html.

John Paul II notes the historical affirmation of evolution and faith within Roman Catholicism in his letter to the Pontifical Academy of Sciences as follows: "In his encyclical *Humani Generis* (1950), my predecessor Pius XII has already affirmed that there is no conflict between evolution and the doctrine of the faith regarding man and his vocation, provided that we do not lose sight of certain fixed points." John Paul II, "Message to the pontifical academy of science." 2005. Online: https://protect.checkpoint.com/v2/_http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/2005/february/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_20050201_p-acad-sciences.html .YzJIOnVuaXNhbW9iaWxlOmM6bzowYzI2YzJiMDRkYzFIZGNhMzZjNTBiMzZjMDdiMGQ1Zjo2OjUwOTc6OGNiYWlyYTEwMzU4Y2RmMjZmNWlxZWNmZDEwZjk1ZmZkZGI1ZGM1NWM3MGJkMTE3ZWU4MzI0ZGFhMTZkNjE5MjpwOIQ.

See also, Nicozisin, G. 2020. *Creationism versus evolution*. Orthodox Research Institute. [20 February 2021]. Online:

B HISTORICAL VIEW OF *IMAGO DEI*

Historically, the scope of the discussion concerning the image of God in humanity ranges from the trichotomous view of humanity proposed by Irenaeus⁷ to the intellectual view of humanity represented by Thomas Aquinas.⁸ Explanations for the image of God are derived from assorted biblical interpretations of the Genesis accounts. More recently, Barth and Brunner's rejection of the notion of the fall of humanity significantly impacted their understanding of the image of God in humanity.⁹ Although the concept of the image of God has sparked theological and philosophical discussions, historically, most influential theologians concede a distinction between human beings and animals. Irenaeus made the distinction by noting that the fall created an "animal nature" for humanity characterized by "carnal" affections.¹⁰ This animal nature signals a diminution from the humanity, which Augustine explains as follows: "He (man) differs from all creatures of the visible world because he is made to God's image and likeness."¹¹ In Aquinas's view, humanity's pre-eminence lies in the fact that God made him in His own image by giving him an intellectual soul, which elevated humanity above the beasts of the field.¹²

Defining the image of God in humanity requires an analysis of the biblical texts on creation, and focus in this article is on four primary texts (Gen 1:26–28; 5:1–3; 9:6; Ps 8:4[5]–9[10]).¹³ Erickson asserts,

The substantive, relational, and functional interpretations of the image of God do not completely satisfy explanations. We must reach our conclusions about the image of God by making inferences from

http://www.orthodoxresearchinstitute.org/articles/dogmatics/nicozisin_creationism.html.

⁷ Irenaeus, "Against Heresies," in *The Writings of the Fathers down to A.D. 325* (ed. A. Roberts, J. Donaldson and A. C. Coxe, 1885). *Ante-Nicene Fathers* (vol. 1; Translated by A. Roberts and W. Rambaut; Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 2004), 531–532.

⁸ Thomas Aquinas, *The Summa Theologiae* (Trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province, 1981), 469-486. Online:

http://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/03d/12251274_Thomas_Aquinas_Summa_Theologiae_%5B1%5D_EN.pdf.

⁹ Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, III/1. (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1960): 200; Emil Brunner, *The Christian doctrine of creation and redemption* (Trans. O. Wyon; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1939), 105.

¹⁰ Irenaeus, "Against Heresies," 531–532.

¹¹ Augustine, *The literal meaning of Genesis* (Ancient Christian writers, nos. 41–42) Translated by J. H. Taylor. New York: Newman Press, 1982): 192–193.

¹² Aquinas, *The Summa Theologiae*, 470.

¹³ The passages receive more attention in section D below.

the biblical data. The implications of the image of God should inspire us and set the parameters for our view of all humanity.¹⁴

While scientific research garners insights for deciphering nuances in the distinctions between the species, the entire panoply of biblical data should inform and serve as the basis for comprehending biblical anthropology. Unfortunately, recent interpretations of the image of God emerge from non-biblical explanations. Evolution remains the primary catalyst for the muddled view of humanity. Select writers increasingly deny that humanity resides in a distinctive status over the created order. Some commentators contradict the uniqueness of the *imago Dei* in humankind due to their belief in evolutionary theory or sympathetic views emanating from Darwinian constructs.

C EVOLUTION’S INFLUENCE

1 Origin of Humanity: Animals to Humans

The idea that humanity evolved from animals remains one essential strand of the evolutionary belief. The current ideology regarding humans’ and animals’ distinctiveness developed over years of speculative or fanciful ideas formulated as empirical evidence. Botanist Carolus Linnaeus, the father of biological taxonomy, applied the name *Homo sapiens* (Latin: wise man) in 1758 to humans. His classification included human beings within the structure used for the rest of nature. Although Linnaeus did not believe species change and that all living things were created as they can be observed today, the inclusion of humans became the impetus for successive evolutionist ideology.¹⁵ Only one hundred and one years later (1859), Charles Darwin published *Origin of Species*, which promotes the development of humans from extinct primates known as *Hominini*. Adherents to Darwinian theory expanded, prompting the formulation of the Victorian Institute in 1865 as a form of resistance as well as a place to discuss the scientific implications of creation and evolution. Years later, the movement was reorganized as the Evolution Protest Movement in 1932.¹⁶ The core motivation of the organization occurs in the first letter circulated:

The public is conscious that the country is in a critical state and that subversive doctrines are undermining every aspect of our national

¹⁴ Millard J. Erickson, *Christian theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic Publishing, 2013): 457; cf. Noreen L. Herzfeld, “Creating in our Own Image: Artificial intelligence and the image of God,” *Zygon: Journal of Religion and Science* 37/2 (2002): 304.

¹⁵ Neil Thomas, *Taking leave of Darwin* (Seattle: Discovery Institute Press, 2021): 45. Thomas notes that Linnaeus classified species into fixed groups, which he identified with the descendants of the original forms made by the Creator. Additionally, his influence continues today because animal taxonomists continue to apply his categories.

¹⁶ Effie Munday, “The British evolution protest Movement: A brief history,” *Creation* 8/2 (1986) 41–42. Online: <https://creation.com/evolution-protest-movement>.

life. There must, therefore, be some fundamental fallacy operating in the mind of the country as a whole. We believe this fallacy to be the acceptance, as true, of the theory of Evolution and its employment as the spring of action in all spheres... We feel the public are being deceived. Evolution propaganda does not present the facts impartially; it dwells upon those which favour the theory, while suppressing those which oppose it. Such are not the methods of true, but of false, science. Few people realise that the tactics which Evolution employs would be regarded as 'special pleading' in a Court of Law; and that many scientists have declared that Evolution is both unproved and unprovable.¹⁷

The movement identified the strategy of evolution but lacked the ability to deter their influence on the culture. Evolutionists used the slightest divergence from biblical anthropology to implant the evolution of humans from animals in the intellect and vernacular of many as a form of proselytizing. Therefore, a significant consideration in this discussion is the unconscious role of faith.

A brief note on the impact of beliefs is warranted since Christianity and science embrace an epistemology that requires faith. Evolution's propaganda regarding the origin of humanity has produced a belief system that causes Christians and science to clash. Science consistently fails to notice the reality of their deeply held "faith" in Darwinian theory and fundamentalist scientific doctrines that form their paradigm for the origin of life. Van Huyssteen acknowledges that the contentious relationship between theology and science resides in the concepts of "faith and reason."¹⁸ Historically, science receives an esteemed and significantly unchallenged status as a rational and intellectual endeavour in the pursuit of truth. The vaulted status originates from the worldview that science functions as more enduring than religion because it is "empirically based on observation and repeatable experimentation... As a result, science, in many ways, has therefore become a test case for rationality."¹⁹ Yet, Christianity appears to flounder under the rubric of superstition for ignorant simpletons resolute on irrational beliefs in the supernatural. Van Huyssteen argues that rationality remains "alive and well in all the domains of our lives" and that the rationality of humanity can never adequately be housed within any one specific reasoning strategy only.²⁰ I would include faith and doctrines that they also remain alive and well in all the domains. However, the object of faith differs, which creates sorted explanations for uniqueness in the *imago Dei*.

¹⁷ Munday, "The British Evolution Protest Movement," 41–42.

¹⁸ Wentzel J. Van Huyssteen, *The Shaping of Rationality: Toward Interdisciplinarity in Theology and Science* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 2.

¹⁹ Van Huyssteen, *The Shaping of Rationality*, 17–18.

²⁰ Van Huyssteen, *The Shaping of Rationality*, 2.

2 Lack of Uniqueness and Distinction

If humans evolved from animals, the image of God lacks authentic uniqueness. God does not function as the Creator of life who rules sovereignly over the universe. Many individuals, especially in the academy, desired an alternative to the seemingly overbearing Lord who demands allegiance. Darwin's theory of natural selection provided a religion for the so-called intellectual that omitted God and His sovereign rule over humankind. What started as a theory gradually solidified as a scientific religion without empirical evidence. By the 1960s, the reluctance to support an unsubstantiated theory became a fact for some. Paleontologist George Simpson suggests,

Races of man have, or perhaps one should say 'had,' exactly the same biological significance as the subspecies of other species of mammals... We are no longer concerned with whether man evolved, because we know he did. We are still very much concerned with how he evolved, with what is most characteristically human about him and how those characteristics arose.²¹

Recently, Davison argued that it has become increasingly difficult to entertain the concept of human existence as "standing alone in comparison with others, frequently by reason of superior excellence."²² He posits that the uniqueness of humans requires careful attention in a universe that "exhibits convergent evolution" as well as a kinship through exobiology. First, he delineates the significance of understanding the nuances of the "uniqueness" in humankind. Uniqueness may occur in terms of "distinctive" ("of which there is only one") or "superior" ("standing alone in comparison with others, frequently by reason of superior excellence"). Distinctive is "flatter and more objective" and "unparalleled" as a basic fact that he labels "unique-as-distinct." Superior involves a "value judgment" that implies "unparalleled" as an ascription of praise that receives the label of "unique-as-better."²³

Second, for Davison, the concept of human superiority only exists if life does not appear beyond Earth, which is exobiology. Exobiology argues for "the emergence of life" beyond Earth from a "scientific perspective" and that "the seedbeds (for life) are profoundly numerous." If life exists in another context, humanity does not "stand-alone by reason of superior excellence."²⁴ In the final analysis, he postulates that continuity and distinction exists between humans and animals because both reside in the genus group and humans possess rationality.

²¹ George Simpson, "The biological nature of man," *Science* 152 (1966): 474-475.

²² Davison, *Human Uniqueness*, 224.

²³ Davison extends uniqueness to "continuity" (an apple, in its distinctiveness, is not an orange, but both are "kinds of fruit") and "discontinuity" ("standing apart" as something better stresses discontinuity) to clarify the relationship between human beings and other creatures.

²⁴ Davison, *Human Uniqueness*, 220.

Rationality marks the distinctiveness of humans, so humans are rational animals. However, humans are not unique or superior due to the potential for life beyond Earth.

A continuity exists between humans and animals anatomically. However, rationality, language, creativity, and the bestowal of divine authority place humans in a superior status. Furthermore, Davison's appeal to exobiology reflects a desperate attempt to substantiate the religion of science. Equally, the argument does not offer a valid or logical basis for humans not residing in a superior status.

3 Recasting Anthropology

In the view of some scientists, we live in the era of the Anthropocene Epoch considering the discoveries in zoology and evolutionary biology that identify cognition and emotional dexterities. American biologist Eugene Stoermer coined the term Anthropocene in the late 1980s. However, Dutch atmospheric chemist and Nobel laureate Paul Crutzen popularized the word in 2000, making it an environmental buzzword.²⁵ According to Stromberg, "Anthropocene" [comes] from *anthropo*, for 'man,' and *cene*, for 'new'—because humankind has caused mass extinctions of plant and animal species, polluted the oceans and altered the atmosphere, among other lasting impacts."²⁶ Considering humanity's detrimental action, some scientists with the International Union of Geological Sciences argued the Anthropocene Epoch should follow the Holocene Epoch.²⁷

Select Christian theologians argue for a theological anthropology that embraces the Anthropocene. Drummond recommends the need to shift from the dominant contemporary Western culture anthropocentric model that upholds humans as important to the virtual exclusion of everything for an Anthropocene paradigm.²⁸ She postulates:

²⁵ Joseph Stromberg, "What is the Anthropocene and are we in it?" *Smithsonian Magazine* January 2013: 1. <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/what-is-the-anthropocene-and-are-we-in-it-164801414/>.

²⁶ Stromberg, "What is the Anthropocene," 1.

²⁷ John P. Rafferty, "Anthropocene Epoch." *Encyclopedia Britannica* (28 March 2020): 1. <https://www.britannica.com/science/Anthropocene-Epoch>.

Members of the Anthropocene Working Group of the International Union of Geological Sciences voted to recommend the Anthropocene as a formal geologic epoch at the 35th International Geological Congress. Adoption by the International Union of Geological Sciences and the International Commission on Stratigraphy had to occur before the interval received an official status. See also <http://www.35igc.org/Verso/1/FINAL-CONGRESS-PROGRAMME>.

²⁸ Celia Deane-Drummond, *The Wisdom of the Liminal: Evolution and other Animals in Human Becoming* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014): 12.

We are living in a new era, the era of the Anthropocene, understood as the permeation of *Homo sapiens* into virtually every aspect of the earth's system. The Anthropocene is understood as a new geological era, one that marks a new period in the history of the earth. Anthropocene is not going to lead to disastrous results, due to the limited carrying capacity of the earth, we need to find new and imaginative ways of telling the human story.

Drummond necessitates this imaginative new era on several bases: first, the inability of centuries of textual debate to resolve the meaning of *imago Dei* in Genesis 1:26–28.²⁹ The passage in Genesis assumes something different about human beings and places them on a pedestal above other creatures with God seeming to give permission for human dominance of the world. Second, the understanding of theological anthropology derived from reason/philosophy, Christian tradition, and a biblical account. The points of contention compel Drummond to offer a theological approach that re-envision what has been traditionally counted as important in theological anthropology.

In *Creaturely Theology*, Drummond and Clough encourage theologians to engage the exegetical study of theological anthropology with a consciousness of one's creatureliness which should force a level of humility.³⁰ Since creatureliness represents a finite, fallible, and incomplete existence, awareness will usefully guard against making poorly grounded and over-confident assertions of God's preferential purpose for the species to which one belongs or its relative merit in relation to the rest of God's creation.³¹ Additionally, the pair takes issue with Bible translators' use of the term "animal," especially since "animal" remains absent from the King James Version of the Bible.³²

Drummond and Clough classify humanity under what I label as the "subservient view" of humanity, which diminishes the dignity and identity of what God created in His image. Humanity exists only in a finite and fallible state compared to God and the heavenly host. Characterizing humankind as creaturely downgrades the vaulted status granted by God. Ironically, Drummond and Clough repudiate the name "animal" used by various Bible translations because the term lacks the honour, due to creatures. But they applaud the King James Version's omission of the term "animal" for the word "beast" which suggests a more brutish and savage nature.

²⁹ Drummond, *The wisdom of the liminal*, 11–12.

³⁰ Celia Deane-Drummond and David Clough, *Creaturely Theology: On God, humans, and other animals* (London: SCM Press, 2009): 1.

³¹ Deane-Drummond and Clough, "Creaturely Theology," 1–2.

³² Deane-Drummond and Clough, "Creaturely Theology," 2.

In his article “Not a Not-Animal: The Vocation to Be a Human Animal Creature,” Clough³³ offers disparaging comments on the traditional view of the image of God in humanity on two primary accounts: first, he recommends “theological anthropology stands in need of repair” for its not-animal mode that is the result of major Christian traditions drawing on philosophers listing differences between humans and “other animals.” The command in Genesis 1:26–28 envisages a distinctive identity for human beings among God’s creatures, but it is not left for humans to discover by deduction on the basis of zoological observation. Second, Clough notes the doctrine of the image of God developed from “a vague theological warrant through loose reference to biblical text (i.e., Gn 1:26–28).” He continues to argue that without allegiance to Stoicism, it is highly implausible to interpret the image of God as rational or to consider it equivalent to any other uniquely human faculty. Clough firmly posits humanity does not occupy a unique ontological status before God.³⁴

The fundamental reason for denying the superiority of humankind by Clough and Drummond focuses on humankind’s failure to judiciously rule creation, rejection of the biblical narrative, and the need for a fresh new approach to theological anthropology. A miscarriage of leadership does not invalidate the original design and bestowal humankind received at creation.

Additional support for a diminished view of humankind and the need to reconsider the *imago Dei* emerges from various so-called Christian interpreters. Fergusson recommends a “diffused interpretation” for the biblical teaching of the *imago Dei* due to the insufficient textual support to resolve these disputes and the absence of any sustained reflection on the concept elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible.³⁵ Therefore, the need to “generate other possibilities for theological anthropology” is due to the “overdetermination” of the meaning of Genesis 1–3 in Christian Theology, which demands a “different approach that seeks to make a virtue out of a necessity.”³⁶ The desperate desire to ignore the biblical data compelled Fergusson to consider attributing Genesis 1:26–27 as an account introduced by P (Priestly source)³⁷, especially since “the opening three

³³ David Clough, “Not a Not-Animal: The vocation to be a human animal creature,” *Studies in Christian Ethics* 26/1 (2013): 4–17. Beyond his collaboration with Drummond, Clough has been credited with writing the first systematic Christian theology on the distinct role of nonhuman animals within the creation. David Clough, *On Animals: Volume 1, Systematic Theology* (London: T&T Clark Press, 2012); *On Animals: Volume 2, Theological Ethics* (London: T&T Clark Press, 2019).

³⁴ Clough, “Not a Not-Animal,” 15–16.

³⁵ David Fergusson, “Humans created according to the *imago Dei*: An alternative proposal,” *Zygon* 48/2 (2013): 445.

³⁶ Fergusson, “Humans created,” 445–448.

³⁷ The obsolete Documentary Hypothesis, known by the abbreviated form JEDP, represents Julius Wellhausen’s faulty proposition. A contemporary of Darwin, Wellhausen argued the Bible did not consist of special revelation. Rather, the book

chapters of the Bible have exercised an undue influence on the Church's theological traditions at the expense of other themes within the canon."³⁸ In the final determination, the image of God for humanity finds itself in the New Testament as "Christ is the true image of God" (cf. Col 1:15; 1 Cor 15:49; 2 Cor 4:4; with Heb 1:3 as a functional equivalent) and "our destiny is to receive that image as we are raised to new life."³⁹ Therefore, the image takes an eschatological connotation that reduces the original design of humankind. Like the rest, Fergusson identifies his authentic motivation for rejecting the superiority of humankind. He notes that since the 19th century, the tradition of theological anthropology has attracted an array of criticism with the traditional reading enduring a fragmentation. He brazenly states,

The scientific account of human origins suggests a much greater continuity of human beings with other species. The earlier notion of a separate act of creation that individuates the human person by virtue of some distinct ontological property is harder to maintain, although revisionist theories have populated the literature. At any rate, belief in a first couple created *ab initio* in a state of moral, physical, and intellectual perfection is untenable in light of the findings of the natural sciences, at least since the time of Darwin.⁴⁰

This shift from biblical anthropology by Fergusson and others allows for theoretical options drawn from scientific investigation, and these are evident in certain writings. Bentley (2017:5) slightly deviates when attempting to belittle biblical anthropology by positing that Genesis 1 is a response to the Enuma Elish.⁴¹ Humanity is not "special" in the sense of being disconnected, elevated, and superior to all other forms of life during the different evolutionary stages. Science informs us that in the evolutionary history of the world, humanity is only

naturally developed as a patchwork of sources written by anonymous authors identifiable by their use of names for God (i.e., the sources occur in J-Yahwist; E-Elohim; D-Deuteronomy; P-Priestly). Therefore, the biblical text contains mythological characters, not historical people.

³⁸ David Fergusson, *The Cosmos and the Creator: An Introduction to the Theology of Creation* (London: The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1998), 13.

³⁹ Fergusson, "Humans created," 440, 445–448. Additionally, Fergusson suggests, "The concept of the *imago Dei* is best interpreted as a signifier not of some ontological property or moral attribute that sets human animals apart from others, but as designating a complex identity that is established by a providential ordering of human life."

⁴⁰ Fergusson, "Humans created," 440–441.

⁴¹ Wessel Bentley, "Are we special? A critique of *imago Dei*," *HTS* 73/3 (2017): 1–5. Enuma Elish the title means "When on high..." and is the Akkadian title for the most complete Mesopotamian creation account that describes a cosmic conflict between the leading deities Marduk who kills Tiamat (mother goddess that personifies the primeval ocean or waters of the sea). Marduk divides Tiamat's carcass to create heaven and earth, while Tiamat's blood is used to create humankind to do the labour of the universe (Arnold & Beyer 1999:78).

a single species on a speck of cosmic dust called the Earth. Vainio suggests that the

imago Dei never became a major topic in theological debate and, for this reason, churches today have only rather speculative and vague frameworks... We need a more holistic understanding of *imago Dei*, which is able to incorporate all relevant elements without unnecessarily setting any against each other.⁴²

Smedt and Cruz recommend that paleoanthropology provides the source of inspiration for empirically informed accounts of the *imago Dei* for theologians.⁴³ Paleoanthropology has been defined as the multidisciplinary study of extinct and extant hominins. The discipline combines principles and methods from, among others, palaeontology, archaeology, primatology, ecology, and physical anthropology.

Support for paleoanthropology emerged from two professors who served on the faculty of a private Christian college: Harlow and Schneider. Harlow suggested Adam and Eve are strictly literary figures in a divinely inspired story about an imagined past that tends to teach theological, not historical, truths about God, creation, and humanity.⁴⁴ He denied that the biblical account of Genesis 1–3 was a factual account of human origins. This is due in part to the inability of molecular biology, primatology, sociobiology, and phylogenetics to trace the species *Homo sapiens* back to a single pair of individuals.⁴⁵ Additionally, Schneider recommended reformulating the fabric of Protestant theology, especially classical Protestant teaching regarding the fall, to adhere more closely to evolutionary science, particularly recent results in genomic science.⁴⁶ Once again, evolutionary science provides the basis that God did not create the primordial couple from the dust of the ground. Such proponents have grown bolder in the twenty-first century as they continue Darwin's foundational beliefs that select races are favoured while others merit disdain.

⁴² Olli-Pekka Vainio, "Imago Dei and human rationality," *Zygon* 49/1 (2014):123.

⁴³ Johan D. Smedt and Helen De Cruz "The *imago dei* as a work in progress: a perspective from paleoanthropology," *Zygon* 49/1 (2014): 135–156.

⁴⁴ Daniel C. Harlow, "After Adam: Reading Genesis in an age of evolutionary science," *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith* 62/3 (2010):179–195.

⁴⁵ Harlow, "After Adam," 179–195.

⁴⁶ John R. Schneider, "Recent genetic science and Christian theology on human origins: An aesthetic supralapsarianism," *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith* 62/3 (2010):196–212.

4 Inferior Groups

Darwin’s evolutionary theory is built on the hypothesis that selected races possess superior intellect over lesser races.⁴⁷ Darwin wrote:

I could show fight on natural selection having done and doing more for the progress of civilization than you seem inclined to admit... The more civilized so-called Caucasian races have beaten the Turkish hollow in the struggle for existence. Looking to the world at no very distant date, what an endless number of the lower races will have been eliminated by the higher civilized races throughout the world.⁴⁸

Biologist Thomas Huxley fortified Darwin’s ideology of the inferiority of select races that lies at the core of evolutionary theory when he argued that Blacks lacked the intellectual competence to compete with Caucasians:

No rational man, cognizant of the facts, believes that the average negro is the equal, still less the superior, of the white man. And if this be true, it is simply incredible that, when all his disabilities are removed, and our prognathous relative has a fair field and no favor, as well as no oppressor, he will be able to compete successfully with his bigger-brained and smaller-jawed rival, in a contest which is to be carried out by thoughts and not by bites. The highest places in the hierarchy of civilization will assuredly not be within the reach of our dusky cousins.⁴⁹

Evolutionary theory is littered with overtones of superiority (i.e., survival of the fittest). Most evolutionists during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries embraced the Darwinian sentiments regarding race.⁵⁰ These Darwinian disciples promote the theory as a settled science. Burnham made the following comments in his review of Haller’s book, *Outcasts from Evolution for Science*:

Before 1859 scientists had questioned whether blacks were of the same species as whites. After 1859, the evolutionary schema raised

⁴⁷ For more insights, see David Klinghoffer, “Why Darwinism can never separate itself from racism.” <https://evolutionnews.org/2019/05/why-darwinism-can-never-separate-itself-from-racism/.2019>. Denyse O’Leary, “In any Darwinian scheme, someone must be the subhuman, otherwise there is no beginning to human history.” <https://uncommondescent.com/intelligent-design/in-any-darwinian-scheme-someone-must-be-the-subhuman-otherwise-there-is-no-beginning-to-human-history/>. 2019.

⁴⁸ Charles Darwin, “Life and letters,” I, letter to William Graham, July 3, 1881. [cited 26 March 2022] <https://www.darwinproject.ac.uk/letter/DCP-LETT-13230.xml>.

⁴⁹ Thomas Huxley, *Lay sermons, addresses and reviews* (New York: Appleton & Company, 1871), 20–21. <https://www.questia.com/read/13552492/lay-sermons-addresses-and-reviews>.

⁵⁰ John S. Haller, Jr., 1971. *Outcasts from evolution: Scientific attitudes of racial inferiority, 1859 – 1900* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press 1971), 228.

additional questions, particularly whether or not Afro-Americans could survive competition with their white near-relations. The momentous answer was a resounding no. Racial inferiority, according to post-Civil War scientists, included marked physical defect. ... The African was inferior because he represented the "missing link" between ape and Teuton (a satisfying resolution of the polygenist-monogenist debate about the origin of races).⁵¹

Likewise, Mintz notes the same sentiment in his review: "*Ab initio*, Afro-Americans were viewed by these intellectuals as being in certain ways unredeemably, unchangeably, irrevocably inferior."⁵² Many scientists accepted the idea of Negro inferiority as an eternal truth.

In *Ontogeny and Phylogeny*, palaeontologist and evolutionary biologist Stephen J. Gould declared:

Biological arguments for racism may have been common before 1859, but they increased by orders of magnitude following the acceptance of evolutionary theory. The litany is familiar: cold, dispassionate, objective, modern science shows us that races can be ranked on a scale of superiority. If this offends Christian morality or a sentimental belief in human unity, so be it; science must be free to proclaim unpleasant truths.⁵³

Gould's recommendation that science should find comfort in ranking the races on a scale of superiority confirms the superiority of humanity to animals. However, the statement could suggest inferior races are equal to animals. He mentions "Christian morality" and "human unity" since the biblical teaching of the *imago Dei* defines humankind as descendants of Adam and Eve with a unified heritage, biology, and aptitude. Nevertheless, Gould acknowledges the diminished significance of select races from a scientific perspective which is the continuous thread of belief that defines a key aspect of evolutionary theory.

Women were equally assigned an inferior status by Darwin. Mrs. Caroline Kennard questioned him on the inferiority of women past, present, and future based on scientific principles.⁵⁴ In his correspondence with Mrs. Kennard on January 9, 1882, Darwin wrote:

⁵¹ John C. Burnham, *Science* 175/4021 (1972): 506.

<https://science.sciencemag.org/content/175/4021/506>. [cited 12 May 2021]

⁵² Sidney W. Mintz, *American Scientist* 60, (May–June 1972): 387. https://www-jstor-org.uplib.idm.oclc.org/stable/27843200?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents.

⁵³ Stephen J. Gould, *Ontogeny and Phylogeny* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press 1977), 127.

⁵⁴ For more information on the historical view of women based on scientific research, see Angela Saini, *Inferior: How Science Got Women Wrong-and the New Research that's Rewriting the Story* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2017) 13–28.

The question to which you refer is a very difficult one. I have discussed it briefly in my “Descent of Man.” I certainly think that women though generally superior to men to moral qualities are inferior intellectually; & there seems to me to be a great difficulty from the laws of inheritance (*if I understand these laws rightly*) in their becoming the intellectual equals of man.⁵⁵

Darwin’s views were unambiguously stated, and the scientific community is aware. One cannot make excuses for Darwin’s convictions or attempt to reinterpret his theory for our contemporary audience.

Rose comments on Darwin’s view of race and gender by saying,

Any attempt to separate a ‘good’ Darwin from a ‘bad’ Social Darwinist cannot be sustained against a careful reading of Darwin’s own writing. He enthusiastically endorsed his cousin Francis Galton’s view of hereditary genius transmitted down the male line, and nodded cautiously towards eugenics. During the 150 years since Darwin wrote such views on race, gender and eugenics, whilst sometimes subterranean, they have never entirely vanished; a sorry history, often told.⁵⁶

The beliefs propagated since the inception of Darwinian ideology continue in brazen and subtly forms in twenty-first century research. The essence of Darwinian evolution requires an inferior race but does not adequately explain the basis for the inferior status of a particular race.⁵⁷

Fortunately, numerous calls for reform in evolutionary biology have been made over the decades, as noted by Welch.⁵⁸ A laundry list noting discontent with the field continues to grow.⁵⁹ Of the numerous challenges to the

⁵⁵ Darwin Correspondence Project. [cited 23 March 2021] Online: <https://www.darwinproject.ac.uk/letter/DCP-LETT-13607.xml>.

⁵⁶ Steve Rose, “Darwin, race and gender,” *EMBO Reports* 10/4 (2009): 297–298. <https://doi.org/10.1038/embor.2009.40>.

⁵⁷ Hills and Nevin asked the question: should Christians embrace evolution? They answered with a resounding “no” – absolutely not due to the evolutionist’s reinterpretation of Scripture in order to harmonize it with current understandings of the evolutionary paradigm and the failure to present a theology consistent with the supremacy of Scripture. Phil Hills, P and Norman Nevin, “Conclusion: should Christians embrace evolution?” In *Should Christians embrace evolution? Biblical and scientific responses* (ed. Norman Nevin; Nottingham, England: InterVarsity Press, 2009), 210.

⁵⁸ John J. Welch, “What’s wrong with evolutionary biology?” *Biology & philosophy* 32/2 (2017): 264. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10539-016-9557-8>.

⁵⁹ Kevin Laland, Tobias Uller, Marc Feldman, Kim Sterelny, Gerd B. Müller, Armin Moczek, Eva Jablonka, John Odling-Smee, Gregory A. Wray, Hopi E. Hoekstra, Douglas J. Futuyma, Richard E. Lenski, Trudy F. C. Mackay, Dolph Schluter and Joan E. Strassmann. “Does evolutionary theory need a rethink?” *Nature* 514 (2014): 161–

evolutionary discussion, Welch identifies two that are primary. The first concerns the basic characteristics of life.⁶⁰ All life evolved from one or a few common ancestors but is now characterized by enormous abundance, variety, and complexity. This variety is the result of historical processes involving contingencies of distinct kinds,⁶¹ including one-off occurrences that were highly improbable but that had profound consequences. The vast scope of the literature allows ideas rejected in one sub-discipline to be rediscovered or restated in another, which can lead to the misappropriation of key terms. Second, the rapid rate of new data emerging in recent years from molecular biology creates the misleading impression that new conceptual frameworks are required.⁶² Welch further notes that the fact that old frameworks are so often applied to novel data follows directly from their high levels of abstraction.⁶³ Valid research programs are somehow considered out of date (leading, for example, to behavioural ecologists feeling compelled to do metabolomics). One primary reason for the incessant production of data in evolutionary research is explained by Richard Lewontin⁶⁴ as follows:

Scientists are always looking to find some theory or idea that they can push as something that nobody else ever thought of because that's the

164. Massimo Pigliucci and Gerd B. Müller, eds. *Evolution: The extended synthesis* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2010); Stephen J. Gould, “Is a new and general theory of evolution emerging?” *Paleobiology* 6 (1980): 119–130; Mae-Wan Ho and Timothy P. Saunders, eds. *Beyond neo-Darwinism: An introduction to the new evolutionary paradigm* (London: Academic Press, 1984); Paul S. Moorhead and Martin M. Kaplan, eds. *Mathematical challenges to the neo-Darwinian interpretation of evolution* (Philadelphia: Wistar Institute Press, 1966); Conrad H. Waddington, *The strategy of the genes. A discussion of some aspects of theoretical biology* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1957). [cited 18 September 2020] online: <https://archive.org/details/in.ernet.dli.2015.547782/page/n1/mode/2up>.

⁶⁰ Welch, “What Wrong with Evolutionary Biology,” 263–279. In *The Descent of Man* Darwin attributed an inability to understand the origin of life to ignorance: “It has often and confidently been asserted, that man’s origin can never be known: but ignorance more frequently begets confidence than does knowledge: it is those who know little, and not those who know much, who so positively assert that this or that problem will never be solved by science.” Charles Darwin, *The descent of man* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 1998):3.

⁶¹ Thomas Lenormand, Denis Roze, and Francois Rousset. “Stochasticity in evolution,” *Trends Ecology & Evolution* 24 (2009): 157–165. doi: 10.1016/j.tree.2008.09.014.

⁶² See Massimo Pigliucci, “Do we need an extended evolutionary synthesis?” *Evolution* 61 (2007): 2743–2749. doi: 10.1111/j.1558-5646.2007.00246.x; Michael Lynch, *The origins of genome architecture* (New York: Sinauer Associates, 2007).

⁶³ Welch, “What Wrong with Evolutionary Biology,” 263–279.

⁶⁴ Susan Maur, *The Altenberg 16: An exposé of the evolution industry* (Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books, 2010), 30.

way they get their prestige.... They have an idea which will overturn our whole view of evolution because otherwise they're just workers in the factory, so to speak. And the factory was designed by Charles Darwin.⁶⁵

In conclusion, Darwin's evolutionary theory was, in part, an attempt to establish the superiority of a particular race, whites, at the expense of what he called the "savage" race, Blacks. Acknowledging a singular pair as humanity's origin invalidates evolutionary theory; however, it eliminates the concept of a preferred race and elevates the dignity of all races. In essence, arguments for the evolution of humanity from a lower species are nullified. Most evolutionists abbreviate the title of Darwin's work, published on November 24, 1859, to *Origin of Species* to conceal the obvious racial bias in the title and theory.⁶⁶ However, the complete title is *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life*.⁶⁷ More

⁶⁵ See Octavio Mateus, Marvin Overbeeke and F. Rita, "Dinosaur frauds, hoaxes and 'Frankensteins': How to distinguish fake and genuine vertebrate fossils," *JPT* 2 (2008): 1–5; John Pickrell, "How fake fossils pervert paleontology [excerpt]," *Scientific American*. [cited 24 May 2021]. Online: <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/how-fake-fossils-pervert-paleontology-excerpt/2014>.

The concept of the nature of man acquired a new dimension when Darwin wrote the *Descent of Man*. Darwin (Darwin, *The Descent of Man*, 3) acknowledged eminent philosophers and naturalists like Lamarck, Wallace, Huxley, Lyell, Vogt, Lubbock, Büchner, Rolle, and others in recognizing "that man is the co-descendant with other species of some ancient, lower, and extinct form." The forerunners and contemporaries of Darwin allowed his writings to thrive and gain acceptance.

⁶⁶ Neo-atheist Richard Dawkins argued on BBC Radio Four's Today, "Many (Christians) of them don't go to church, don't read the Bible, and an astonishing number couldn't identify the first book in the New Testament." However, when Rev. Giles Fraser challenged Dawkins to say the full title of Darwin's seminal book, he could not remember (Steve Doughty, *So Mr. 'Atheist' Dawkins, what's the full title of your hero Darwin's seminal work? ... erm, oh God!* [cited 5 June 2021] Online: <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2101289/Richard-Dawkins-unable-remember-Charles-Darwins-seminal-work.html>).2012

⁶⁷ Charles Darwin, *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life* (London: John Murray, 1859). James Hutton formulated the uniformitarian view that "the present is the key to the past." Richard B. Alley, "The key to the past?" *Nature* 409 (2001): 289. doi-org.uplib.idm.oclc.org/10.1038/35053245.

Charles Lyell was influenced by this view, and its roots are present in geology today. The theories of deists Hutton and Lyell prepared the way for Darwin's evolutionary theory. Unquestionably, Lyell's desire to "free science from Moses," coupled with his old-age Earth theory, influenced Darwin's evolutionary theory (David Catchpoole and Tas Walker, Charles Lyell's hidden agenda: To free science "from Moses." Online: <https://creation.com/charles-lyell-free-science-from-moses>. 2009). It was the

importantly, and beyond Darwin’s belief in the inherent inferiority of Blacks, is his total contempt for God, which is the impetus for aspects of his theory. Darwin’s rejection of the Bible and Jesus Christ is noted in his correspondence with Fredrick McDermot:

Dear Sir, I am sorry to have to inform you that I do not believe in the Bible as a divine revelation, & therefore not in Jesus Christ as the son of God.⁶⁸

Evolution theorists tend to use terms such as “predict,” “implication,” “potential,” “indicate,” and “inference,” which lack certainty and definitiveness; therefore, attempts to validate Darwin’s research are equivalent to pouring wet cement on water. The theory is flawed and tenuous due to its diminished description of humanity. Nevertheless, evolutionary research continues to revise the shameful theories for the origin of humanity that belong in the genre of science fantasy. Denton fittingly described the Darwinian theory of evolution as “the great cosmogenic myth of the twentieth century.”⁶⁹ The creation account in Genesis provides an account of the origin of humanity and the catastrophic plunge into sin. Genesis establishes the superiority of humankind over animals because the male and female are created in the *imago Dei*.⁷⁰

D BIBLICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

1 Created in the image of God

Genesis 1:26 serves as the bedrock for doctrine for the *imago Dei*. The passage remains the seminal biblical text on which idea of the superiority of humankind over creation is founded. In this text, humankind is created in the בְּצַלְמֵנוּ

Principles of Geology by Lyell that Darwin read on his voyage to the Galapagos Islands aboard the H.M.S. *Beagle*. This work convinced him that the uniformitarian view of geology was correct Nora Barlow, *The autobiography of Charles Darwin, 1809–1882*. (New York: W.W. Norton, 1958). In a lecture at King’s College, London, on May 4, 1832, Lyell recommended “the physical part of Geological inquiry ought to be conducted as if the Scriptures were not in existence” Martin J. S. Rudwick, “Charles Lyell speaks in the lecture theatre,” *The British Journal for the History of Science* 9/22, (1976): 147–155. doi:10.1017/S0007087400014734.

⁶⁸ Darwin Correspondence Project. “Letter 12851,” [cited 19 February 2021] Online: <https://www.darwinproject.ac.uk/letter/DCP-LETT-12851.xml>.

⁶⁹ Michael Denton, *Evolution: A theory in crisis* (Bethesda, MD: Adler & Adler, 1985), 358.

⁷⁰ For additional consideration of the various interpretations of the *imago Dei* from a non-evangelical viewpoint, see the nine interpretive theories present in Claus Westermann’s excursus on the “History of the Exegesis of Genesis 1:26–27” in his commentary on Genesis (Claus Westermann, *Genesis 1–11* (trans. J. Scullion; Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1994), 147–161. Another article worth reviewing is David J. A. Clines, “The Image of God in Man,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 19 (1968): 53–103.

(“image”)/ כְּדְמוּתָנוּ (“likeness”) of God (Gn 1:26; cf. 5:2; 9:6) unlike any other thing within the created order.⁷¹ Various grammatical elements occur in Genesis 1 that isolate the unique creative design of humankind.

First, a series of sequential waw consecutive starting with Genesis 1:3, notes the order of creation as well as signaling that the events represent a historical account of consecutive actions. The waw consecutive in Genesis 1:26 וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים (“Then God said”) functions in a sequential pattern as God creates humanity in His final act of creation. Goldingay notes that “God said” introduces commission in the jussive, but this eighth incidence presents a cohortative.⁷² The move to a cohortative suggests a more direct involvement on God’s behalf with this final act of creation. Second, after the creation of humanity, the disjunctive waw and the jussive of command וַיִּרְדּוּ (“let them rule”) reveals God’s directive for humanity to reside in a superior position over animals (Gn 1:26). Humanity receives a divine command to exercise rule/authority over the created order which demonstrates a level of oversight or superiority. Humanity receives the final position in the created order because they are designed with the necessary features to rule in every aspect. Although animals exist in a subservient status, they receive a blessing from God and the command to “be fruitful and multiply” (Gn 1:22). Third, the noun צֶלֶם offers tremendous insight into the distinctiveness of humankind. The noun occurs forty-four times with twenty-nine references to:

- 1) God creating man in His image (Gn 1:26, 27; 9:6)⁷³;
- 2) man reproducing in his image (Gn 5:3); and

⁷¹ Slight differences between “image” and “likeness” are noted, but the words reinforce one another in Genesis 1:26 since the conjunction is absent between the terms, and they lack distinct technical expressions in the Scriptures (Derek Kidner, *Genesis: An introduction and commentary* (vol. 1; Chicago: InterVarsity Press, 2008): 55. Both the LXX and Latin Vulgate insert the coordinating conjunction καί (and), which is absent from the Masoretic Text (בְּצֶלְמֵנוּ כְּדְמוּתָנוּ). The varied occurrence of כְּדְמוּתָנוּ before and after בְּצֶלְמֵנוּ in Genesis 1:26 and 5:3, then alone in Genesis 5:1, suggests minimal distinction can be made between the two words (Horst D. Preuss, “דְּמוּת.” In *TDOT* (ed. G. J. Botterweck, H. Ringgren, J. T. Willis, D. Green and D. W. Stott; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997). The juxtaposition of *selem* and *demut* in Genesis 1:26 suggests the writer is making a statement about the dignity of humankind, which he intensifies by combining similar concepts (Preuss, “דְּמוּת,” 259).

⁷² John Goldingay, *Genesis* (ed. B. T. Arnold; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic Press, 2020), 35.

⁷³ Genesis 5:1–2 mentions God creating male and female but צֶלֶם is omitted and only דְּמוּת (“likeness”) appears.

3) the image of idols designed by humankind (Nm 33:52; 1 Sm 6:5, 11; 2 Kgs 11:18; Ez 7:20; 16:17; 23:14; Am 5:26; Dn 2:31, 32, 34, 35; 3:1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 10, 12, 14, 15, 18; 2 Chr 23:17).⁷⁴

Since God is Spirit, Genesis 1:26 בְּצַלְמֵנוּ (“in our image”) describes human life as a reflection of God’s spiritual nature, not a physical form.⁷⁵ In Deuteronomy 4:12 Moses reminds Israel, “Then the LORD spoke to you from the midst of the fire; you heard the sound of words, but you saw no form — only a voice” (cf. Jn 4:24). When God breathes the breath of life into the man (cf. Gn 1:26–28; 2:7, 22), he receives the communicated attributes of love, creativity, forgiveness, wisdom, mercy, patience, kindness, and goodness. Humanity receives characteristics identical to those possessed by God, yet God limits human capabilities in terms of incommunicable attributes. Only God possesses incommunicable attributes (timelessness, immutability, omniscience, omnipresence, omnipotence, sovereignty, immanence, and transcendence). The image of humankind comprised God's communicable attributes that parallel God's spiritual nature and not a physical representation.

Humankind and animals receive intimate treatment from God since they are the only things יָצַר “formed” from the ground (Gn 2:7, 19). The verb יָצַר (“formed”) notes the shaping, designing, or moulding of pottery by a potter. The imagery consists of a hands-on or personal touch that is imaginative, particular, and special.⁷⁶ Additionally, the exclusive act of God נָפַח (“breathing”) directly in humanity offers another tier of personal intimacy reserved for humankind alone in the creation account (Gn 2:7). The extraordinary imagery of God standing before man and “breathing” into him life displays the impartation of something superior and distinct from that which occurs with animals. God positions himself face-to-face with the man. Then He imparts a portion of Himself, which is life, to the only thing created in the *imago Dei*. Receiving the life of God face-to-face remains a unique privilege only humanity merits.

Another key aspect of the noun צֶלֶם is the spirit of the designer. Hamilton notes two texts in Psalms (39:7 and 73:20) that require a less concrete meaning

⁷⁴ In Daniel 3:19, the author uses צֶלֶם to note the “expression” on the face of King Nebuchadnezzar after Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego refused to worship the צֶלֶם “image” he set up in the plain of Dura. The use appears as a play on words after the ten occurrences in Daniel 3:1–18.

⁷⁵ For additional discussion on the use צֶלֶם (“likeness”) in relation to the physical and spiritual correlation to God, see F. J. Stendebach, F. J. 2011. “צֶלֶם.” In *TDOT* (ed. G. J. Botterweck, H. Ringgren, J. T. Willis, D. Green and D. W. Stott; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011), 386–396.

⁷⁶ B. Otzen, “יָצַר” In *TDOT* (ed. G. J. Botterweck, H. Ringgren, J. T. Willis, D. Green and D. W. Stott; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011), 265.

for *selem*.⁷⁷ In Psalm 39:6 [7] *selem* (“image”) parallels הַבֶּל (“vanity”): surely man “moves like a phantom (*selem*); the riches he piles up are not more than a vapour (*hebel*)” (NEB). Similarly, in Psalm 73:20, *selem* parallels הַלֹּזִם (“dream”): “like a dream [הַלֹּזִם] when a man rouses himself, O Lord, like images (*selem*) in sleep which are dismissed on waking” (NEB). Hamilton suggests that if *selem* in these two texts is the same word used in Genesis, then it may be used for purposes other than describing the physical imitation of something.⁷⁸ The other aspect that *selem* personifies is the spirit of the designer.

All images have a creator, and the concept for the image originates in the mind of the designer. Although images are physical, they are the embodiment of the spirit of the artisan. Since מְצֻלָּה references something tangible that is created or designed, the spirit of the designer resides in the image. A statue discovered at Tell Fakhariyeh with an ancient bilingual inscription in Aramaic and Akkadian from the ninth century BC refers to the statue of Governor Hadadyith'i as possessing his “image” and “likeness.”⁷⁹ An appointed skilful craftsperson designed the statue of a bearded male, free-standing, with clasped hands at the waist, draped in a long-wrapped garment of Assyrian type.⁸⁰ The spirit of the sculptor and governor comprise the image.

Israel and foreign nations in Mesopotamia created images of gods, but this practice was forbidden for Yahweh's covenant people (cf. Ez 7:20; 16:17). In Mesopotamia, the image of a god not only represents that god but is the living god itself.⁸¹ The deity's spirit resides in the image's design and essence.

In a similar manner, the spirit of Yahweh remains implanted in the image He created called man. It is impossible to interpret the noun מְצֻלָּה without comprehending the spiritual component.⁸² An example appears in the Canaanite deity, Baal, who is expressed as a bull in the Ugaritic mythological

⁷⁷ Victor P. Hamilton, *The book of Genesis Chapters 1–17* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 135.

⁷⁸ Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis*, 135.

⁷⁹ Randall W. Garr. “‘Image’ and ‘Likeness’ in the Inscription from Tell Fakhariyeh,” *IEJ* 50(3/4) (2000): 227–228. Online: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27926940>.

The words of the text are significant because they are cognate to Hebrew. For further insights, see W. Randall Garr. *In His Own Image and Likeness: Humanity, Divinity, and Monotheism* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 117–121.

⁸⁰ Garr, “Image and Likeness,” 227.

⁸¹ Helmer Ringgren, “The Symbolism of Mesopotamian Cult Images,” *Scripta Donneriani Aboensis* 10 (1979): 105–109; A. Leo Oppenheim, *Ancient Mesopotamia: portrait of a dead civilization* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977): 183.

⁸² See also Hermann Gunkel, *Genesis* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1977): 113–114; Stendebach, “מְצֻלָּה,” 391.

text of myths and epics. The image is not a corporeal depiction of Baal but a symbolic rendering of the power, fertility, and supremacy of Baal.⁸³ An image from Ras Shamra of "Baal of Lightning" shows an individual with a lightning bolt and club. Arslan Tash also depicts a person riding a bull with lightning bolts in his hand.⁸⁴ Here, Baal's majesty is reflected in the bull; one should not interpret the symbol as suggesting that Baal is a bull.⁸⁵ The physical body is crowned metaphorically with spiritual honor, which allows humankind to function as divinely ordained representatives of YHWH. An additional feature of humanity worth noting occurs in the physical image of humanity in an upright posture. The erect stature of humankind serves as a distinguishing mark between human beings and animals. The posture visually reflects a superior status in the relationship between the two. Clines notes that the image of God is to be understood existentially rather than ontologically: it comes to expression not in the nature of man so much as in his activity and function.⁸⁶ However, existentialism and aspects of ontology (the physical properties of humankind) reflect God's creative genius, intellect, and aptitude. Therefore, humankind's existential and ontological features display God's image in humanity.

2 עָטַר : Crowned Humanity

Vivid language is used to depict YHWH's design of humankind and communicates the penetrating and intentional approach used when creating the primordial couple as well as the bestowal of splendour and majesty upon them. The Psalmist explains how the Lord imparted the majestic standing to humanity by:

- 1) פָּקַד ("appoint/care"; Ps 8:4b);
- 2) עָטַר ("crown/surround"; Ps 8:5a);
- 3) כְּבוֹד ("glory"; Ps 8:5b); and
- 4) הִדָּר ("majesty/honor"; Ps 8:5b).

These terms invoke the imagery of inauguration, as the monarch receives a crown and the authority to rule in the designated office. The vestiges of glory and honour accompany the installation. Walton explains that in Ancient Near Eastern iconography, rays or horns on the crowns of deities symbolize power, relating to the divine glory (Akkadian, *melammu*) that emanated from the

⁸³ James B. Pritchard, *Ancient Near East* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1958): 92.

⁸⁴ Pritchard, *Ancient Near East*, 136.

⁸⁵ Pritchard, *Ancient Near East*, 140.

⁸⁶ Clines, "The Image of God in Man," 57, 101.

gods, especially from their heads or crowns.⁸⁷ An inference occurs in a text making reference to the god Enlil, “whose horns gleam like the rays of the sun”; equally, Mesopotamian kings and gods wore crowns featuring protruding or embossed horns that were stacked on one another in tiers.⁸⁸ The winged lion from Ashurnasirpal’s palace has a conical crown on its human head with three pairs of tiered horns embossed thereon. In the Bible and the Ancient Near East, the awe-inspiring power of the deity could be invested in humans, particularly the king.⁸⁹ Each word substantiates the regal nature of humankind and fortifies it into a formidable paradigm for the preeminent status of human beings.

Affirmation of humanity’s emblematic crowning and a distinguished status over the creatures is manifest literally through the word *מָשַׁל*⁹⁰ (“dominion”) (Ps 8:6–8). The *hiphil* imperfect verb *תִּמְשִׁילֶהוּ* (“rule/dominion”) suggests that God is the subject who caused human beings to rule or have dominion over “the works of his hands” (Ps 8:6a[7a]). Simple parallelism occurs between the two lines in Ps 8:6[7], and the second is an advancement upon the first by progressively emphasizing the consequential action of the first line (Ps 8:6a[7a]). The second graphically portrays the works of God’s hands placed under the feet of humanity, which signifies complete subjection (Ps 8:6b[7b]).

As in the coronation of a monarch, YHWH bestows authority and dominion upon humanity through the symbolic gesture of placing a crown upon the human being’s head, except the crowning of humanity is figurative and operates in the spiritual dimension. It is beyond question that God is superior to humanity and imparts a royal status to humankind that is superior to that of the animals and the rest of creation.

⁸⁷ John H. Walton, Victor H. Matthews, and Mark W. Chavalas. *The IVP Bible background commentary: Old Testament* (Accordance electronic ed.; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 514.

⁸⁸ Walton, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary*, 514.

⁸⁹ Walton, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary*, 514.

⁹⁰ The use of *מָשַׁל* is closely related semantically to *מָלַךְ* (“to reign over”) as seen in Genesis 37:8 when the brothers of Joseph ask, “Are you actually going to *תִּמְלֹךְ* (“reign over us”)?” Or “are you really going to *תִּמְשַׁל* (“rule over us”)?” (Gn 37:8). Contextually, the word describes the act of having control or dominance over and is not exclusively bound to kings as subject, since God gives the sun, moon, and stars the authority to “govern” *לְמִשַׁל* the *בְּיָוֶם וּבַלַּיְלָה* (“day and night”) (cf. Is 40:10; Ps 22:28–29; 2 Chr 20:6; see Philip J. Nel, “מָשַׁל.” In *A Guide to Old Testament Theology and Exegesis: The Introductory Articles from the New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis* (vol 3; ed. W. Vangemeren; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), 1130.

Prior to creating the primeval couple in his image, God created the animals in Genesis 1:24–25, which reproduce לְמִינָם (“according to their kind”).⁹¹ Futato notes the לְ denotes specification when occurring with מִין (“kind”) and a pronoun suffix as in the case with לְמִינָם.⁹² Its usage appears in the contemporary sphere of the natural sciences in reference to groups of plants or animals united by common characteristics. God designs all land animals “according to their kind” in three broad categories:

- 1) חַיֵּי הָאָרֶץ (“wild animals”);
- 2) הַבְּהֵמָה (“livestock”); and
- 3) רֶמֶשׂ הָאֲדָמָה (“creatures that move along the ground”).

By employing the מִין, the author of Genesis notes the organization of the world under sub-divided rubrics, with the varied animals and plants retaining their own “kind” corresponding to the whole.⁹³ The essence of human “unity” is to exercise dominance over the multiplicity of animals because the human mission is based on the similarity between human and divine “unity” and correspondingly on the dissimilarity between human beings and animals.⁹⁴ However, humanity’s superior status is not permission to reign with tyrannical or oppressive measures over the animals and plants. A judicial responsibility is inherent within the command to exercise dominion, which mirrors that of God, who exerts his rule over humanity.

Features of the Ancient Near Eastern suzerain-vassal political treaties are visible in the relationship between God’s sovereign rule over humanity and humanity’s dominion over the creation. Within the suzerain-vassal treaty is an agreement between unequal parties, usually a superior with an inferior, to observe specific covenant requirements.⁹⁵ Suzerains were autonomous kings or overlords who possessed military power, and they offered covenants to subordinate vassals that assured protection and provision from the external threat

⁹¹ P. Beauchamp, “מִין.” In *TDOT* (ed. G. J. Botterweck, H. Ringgren, J. T. Willis, D. Green, and D.W. Stott; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011), 290. Beauchamp notes the use of מִין means “kind” or “species” and functions as a classification term for plants or animals. The term is not applicable to human beings—neither the human being in and of itself constitutes a species or kind, nor do the multitude of human beings, races, and nations constitute a multiplicity of species or kinds.

⁹² Mark D. Futato, “מִין.” In *NIDOTTE* (ed. Willem A. Vangemeren; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), 925.

⁹³ Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 125.

⁹⁴ Beauchamp, “מִין,” 290.

⁹⁵ Ed Hindson and Gary Yates, *The Essence of the Old Testament: A survey* (Nashville: B & H Publishing Group, 2012), 113.

of foreign nations.⁹⁶ Vassals were obligated to maintain exclusive allegiance to the suzerain. Additionally, vassals were compelled to pay a form of tribute to the suzerain and adhere to the stipulations specified within the covenant ratified between the two parties.⁹⁷ Violating the covenant by either party warranted severe penalties, including death. YHWH is the suzerain who demands total allegiance from humanity, and violations of the covenant agreement are considered a transgression. Likewise, humankind does not maltreat its subjects but cares for and protects the creation and animals in a suzerain capacity (cf. Gn 9:2–6).

The biblical texts on creation do not support the idea of human oppression of the non-human. The human subduing and ruling of creation in Genesis 1–2 is not permission for humankind to engage in autonomous exploitation or violent domination.⁹⁸ However, humanity’s fall into sin in Genesis 3 tainted the image of God in humanity, but the expectation of responsible stewardship of the universe continued.⁹⁹

3 **לְבָשׁ: Clothed Humanity**

The concept of original sin (the sin of Adam transferred to humanity) has its inception in the Genesis 3 narrative. The primaeval couple capitulates to the temptation presented by the serpent, which triggers catastrophic events for the created universe. Then God sacrifices an inferior (animal) for the superior (human being) via the shedding of blood to temporarily וַיִּלְבָּשׁוּ (“clothe”) the couple’s fear, guilt, and shame (Gn 3:21).

The early heresy of Pelagianism denied the fall and original sin due to a belief in humanity’s plenary capacity to perform all that righteousness demands for salvation and perfection.¹⁰⁰ God has endowed His human creatures with a capacity or ability for action, but this is predicated on humanity appropriating those prerogatives. Crucial to the Pelagian view is that human beings possess the

⁹⁶ Andrew E. Hill and John H. Walton, *A survey of the Old Testament* (3rd ed.; Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 63.

⁹⁷ Paul R. Williamson, “Covenants,” In *DOTP* (ed. T. D. Alexander and D. W. Baker; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 138–155.

⁹⁸ Michael Horton, *The Christian faith* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011), 398.

⁹⁹ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Creation and fall: A theological exposition of Genesis 1–3* (Vol 3; ed. J. W. Grunchy; trans. D. S. Bax; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997), 66. Bonhoeffer postulated that humankind’s freedom to rule includes being bound to the creatures that are ruled—the animals and the ground constitute the world in which humanity lives. Without them, humanity ceases to exist because the world bears, nurtures, and holds the one who rules it. He states further that what binds humans to, and makes them superior over, the creatures is the authority conferred by the word of God.

¹⁰⁰ Benjamin B. Warfield, *Two studies in the history of doctrine* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2001), 6.

ability to forsake sin, unlike Augustine's prayer, which suggested "men were puppets wholly dependent upon the movement of divine grace."¹⁰¹ Pelagius considered the inability to avoid transgression by those who stand at the zenith of God's creation a diminution of the character of God. Furthermore, as Kelly observed regarding Pelagianism when God created man, he did not subject him, like other creatures, to the law of nature. God gave human beings the unique privilege of accomplishing the divine will by their own choice, setting life and death before them, bidding them select life, and allowing the final decision to come from human free will.¹⁰² The capitulation of the primaeval couple does not impugn the character of God, as Pelagianism suggests. Instead, it verifies that humanity, unlike animals, had a choice but violated the covenant.

For Adam and Eve, the Garden of Eden is the Garden of God and can be considered an archetypal temple or sanctuary.¹⁰³ The contents of the garden are present in the temple, reflecting the place where God dwells (cf. Is 51:3; Ez 28:13).¹⁰⁴ Creation was envisaged as a cosmic temple complete with God's presence and as the fertile source of all life-giving waters that flowed unceasingly to invigorate everything by granting life to the created order.¹⁰⁵ Sacrifice and the exploitation of animals emerge as a result of the fall (Gn 3:1–24). One example of the exploitation of the *imago Dei* in humanity can be seen in the pagan practice of divination and animal sacrifice.

4 Divination and Sacrifice: Lesser for the Greater

Animals are creatures of instinct and void of the intellectual capacity to offer reverence to a God. Divination and sacrifice are human activities that represent the superior offering the inferior as an act of worship or to appease a deity. In the Ancient Near Eastern practice of divination, animals served in a mediatorial role between deities and human beings. Their vital organs were exploited for the benefit of human conquest and in order to understand their gods. The inhabitants of Mesopotamia practised divination, which required the examination of animal entrails to discover hidden knowledge or meaning. The ancients believed the gods wanted to and could communicate their intentions through the organs of animals, but certain knowledge and expertise were required to decode these

¹⁰¹ J. N. D. Kelly, 1978. *Early Christian doctrines* (2nd ed.; New York: Harper and Row, 1978), 357. Pelagius formulated his doctrine according to his understanding of the character God. Pelagius became increasingly disturbed by the popularity of Augustine's influential writings, especially the prayer, "Give what you command, and then command whatever you will" Augustine. *The Confessions* (Trans. M. Boulding; New York: New York City Press, 1997), 263.

¹⁰² Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, 357–358.

¹⁰³ Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15* (Dallas: Word Book Publishers, 1998), 19.

¹⁰⁴ See John H. Walton, 2003. "Garden," In *DOTP* (ed. T. D. Alexander and D. W. Baker; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 204–205.

¹⁰⁵ Walton, "Garden," 204–205.

intentions.¹⁰⁶ No matter how bewildering or farfetched, all signs, for the Mesopotamians, could and must be explained since they were a *purussu*, a “legal decision” or “verdict.”¹⁰⁷ The divinatory arts in ancient Mesopotamia were a “scientific” form of inquiry or discourse.¹⁰⁸ Koch-Westenholz has argued that “to define Babylonian divination purely as magic seems to be overly reductionist because divination in Babylon was a major accomplishment as a result of intellectual effort sustained over many centuries.”¹⁰⁹ Through empirical observation and cause/effect analysis, trained specialist individuals sought the will of their deities.¹¹⁰

Although supernatural power is present within the occult, the Scriptures condemn divination and all superstition (Lv 19:26). Israel’s faith rests in their God, who revealed Himself through creation, signs, and wonders, not through manipulating nature to conceal meaning (Baker 2009:19).¹¹¹ According to the Hebrew Bible, humanity communes with and comprehends God through personal interaction, in distinction to God’s general care for the animals. God spoke to Adam (Gn 2:16–17); Cain (Gn 4:7–8); Noah (Gn 6:12–13); and Moses (Ex 3:4–5). In Exodus, the voice of God emanates from between the cherubim as He provides instructions for the nation of Israel (Ex 25:22). Animals were sacrificed on the altar as a gift or offering to God for His provision, not to discern God’s will (cf. Gn 4:4).

The nations surrounding Israel used divination to communicate with their gods and to discern how to proceed with difficult political or social situations.¹¹² The administration of King Ashurbanipal of Nineveh in 652–648 BC, for example, was considering war but desired knowledge regarding the expediency of such an endeavour. Insight regarding the correct approach came through a

¹⁰⁶ Scott B. Noegel, “Sign, sign, everywhere a sign,” In *Divination and Interpretation of Signs in the Ancient World* (ed. A. Annus; Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2010), 147.

¹⁰⁷ Noegel, “Sign, sign, everywhere a sign,” 147.

¹⁰⁸ Seth F. C. Richardson, “On Seeing and believing: Liver divination and the era of warring states (II).” In *Divination and Interpretation of Signs in the Ancient World* (ed. A. Annus; Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2010), 225.

¹⁰⁹ Ulla Susanne Koch-Westenholz, *Babylonian liver omens: the chapters manzāzu, padānu, and pān tākalti of the Babylonian extispicy series mainly from Aššurbanipal’s library.* (Copenhagen: Carsten Niebuhr Institute of Near Eastern Studies, University of Copenhagen, 2000): 7, 13.

¹¹⁰ Mark A. Phelps, “Divination,” In *EDB* (ed. D. N. Freedman, A. C. Myers, and A. B. Beck; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 349.

¹¹¹ David W. Baker, “Isaiah,” In *ZIBBC* (ed. J. H. Walton; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009), 19.

¹¹² Frederick H. Cryer, *Divination in Ancient Israel and its Near Eastern Environment: A Socio-Historical Investigation* (Sheffield, UK: JSOT Press, 1994), 117–122.

diviner from the entrails of a slaughtered animal.¹¹³ Divination is "a set of socially defined and structured procedures for producing (notional) knowledge in society from what are presumed to be extra-human sources."¹¹⁴ Ishtar of Arbela offered an Akkadian prophecy: "To the king's [Esarhaddon] mother because you implored me," and Ashurbanipal claims: "I asked Shamash and Adad and they gave me a firm positive answer." This text indicates that prophecies were both requested and provided.¹¹⁵

A common practice in Mesopotamia was hepatoscopy or extispicy, a direct way of questioning the gods about particular events and their intentions or decisions in specific matters, which Babylonians called their "judgments."¹¹⁶ Extispicy results were derived primarily from the entrails of a sacrificial sheep's liver since each part of the liver was thought to mirror future events and the corresponding aspects of human life. God forbade His covenant people from interpreting the liver in the following prohibition: "You shall take all the fat that covers the entrails and the lobe of the liver, and the two kidneys and the fat that is on them and offer them up in smoke on the altar" (Ex 29:13, 22; Lv 3:4, 10, 14–15).

Other forms of divination forbidden by God in the ancient context were necromancy and lecanomancy. Necromancy is the supposed art of revealing future events through communication with the dead, more generally through magic, enchantment, or conjuration,¹¹⁷ while lecanomancy is divination using a bowl of water. Esarhaddon received reports of good omens during his accession year that were signs Babylon would be restored in the form of astronomical configurations observed in the heavens:

The bright Jupiter... came close in the
month Simanu and stood in the place where
the sun appears; it was shining brightly,
and its appearance was exceedingly great.¹¹⁸

However, he employed other divinatory procedures of extispicy and lecanomancy for confirmation:

¹¹³ Koch-Westenholz, *Babylonian liver omens*, 79–473.

¹¹⁴ Cryer, *Divination in ancient Israel*, 121–122.

¹¹⁵ Simo Parpola, *Assyrian prophecies* (ed. J. Reade; Helsinki: Helsinki University Press, 1997), 4–43.

¹¹⁶ Koch-Westenholz, *Babylonian liver omens*, 13.

¹¹⁷ Robert K. Ritner, "Necromancy in ancient Egypt." In *Magic and divination in the ancient world*, edited by L. J. Ciruolo and J. L. Seidel. (Leiden: Brill/Styx, 2002): 89.

¹¹⁸ Mordechai Cogan, "Omens and ideology in the Babylon inscription of Esarhaddon." In *History, historiography, and interpretation: Studies in biblical and cuneiform literatures*, edited by H. Tadmor and M. Weinfeld. (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, Hebrew University, 1983): 78.

In the bowl of the diviners, trustworthy
 Oracles were set for me. Concerning
 The reconstruction of Babylon and the
 Restoration of the temple Esagila, he
 Wrote in a liver oracle. I trusted in
 Their true “yes.”¹¹⁹

Through divination, an animal’s life is treated with impunity. Animals become the catalyst for divine direction or communion with the deities. An animal's life is reduced to that of a talisman at best. Yet through the practice of divination, the Mesopotamian culture indirectly confirms the prominence of humankind over animals. God gave humanity animals as a resource comparable to the elements within nature (i.e., water, air, fire, etc.), intellect, and creation in general. The superior status of human beings allows them to rule over and subjugate the creation for the glory of God.

The first account of animal sacrifice in the Hebrew Bible occurred at God’s hand for the benefit of humanity. The lesser was sacrificed for the greater. God designed כְּתָנוּת עוֹר (“garments of skin”) וַיִּלְבָּשֵׁם (“then clothed them”) so the man and his wife could dwell in His presence and have physical protection. According to Wenham, the hiphil form of the verb לְבַשׁ has two main uses: either for kings’ clothing honoured subjects (e.g., Gn 41:42; 1 Sm 17:38) or for the dressing of priests in their sacred vestments provided by Moses (e.g., Ex 28:41; 29:8; 40:14; Lv 8:13).¹²⁰ The terminology for clothing in the Garden of Eden runs closely parallel to the vocabulary associated with worship in the tabernacle.¹²¹ After Adam and Eve’s sin, God’s first animal sacrifice provided covering, befitting their status. The garments concealed their physical bodies and the emotions of sin, guilt, and shame (Gn 3:21). Clothing, besides its apparent protective function, is one of the most pervasive human symbols through which a person’s position and role in society are signalled.¹²² In sum, the Old Testament, although forbidding and critical of the practice of human sacrifice, preserves the memory of former Israelites and their neighbours who indeed ritually killed their children — Jephthah (Jgs 11:34–40); Hiel (Jo 6:26; 1 Kgs 16:34); Solomon (1 Kgs 11:7) Ahaz (2 Kgs 16:3); and Manasseh (2 Kgs 21:16).¹²³ It further acknowledges the efficacious power of such a ritual, as in the sacrifice of the Moabite prince offered up by his father (2 Kgs 3:27). Unlike humans, animals kill instinctively for survival, dominance, or territory, not to worship a deity. The slaughter of animals occurred in Israel and among their

¹¹⁹ Cogan, “Omens and ideology,” 79–80.

¹²⁰ Gordon Wenham, *Genesis* (Waco: Word Books Publishers, 1987), 84–85.

¹²¹ Wenham, *Genesis*, 84–85.

¹²² Wenham, *Genesis* 84–85.

¹²³ Brian B. Schmidt, “Molech,” In *EBD* (ed. D. N. Freedman, A. C. Myers, and A. C. Beck; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 912.

surrounding Ancient Near Eastern neighbours. Thus, both groups unabashedly viewed animals as inferior beasts that required domestication to serve at their behest.

E CONCLUSION

In the Genesis 1-3 narrative design at creation indicates the primordial couple's enthronement as God's representatives, exercising dominion over the animals and creation. Interestingly, Barth is correct when he concludes that earlier theologians sought to establish of God's image in humanity by examining the human structure, disposition, capacities, and qualities instead of by analyzing the biblical text that describes a man at creation.¹²⁴ This paper argued for a biblical anthropology by centering the following themes: a) humans created in the image of God, b) crowned humanity, c) humanity clothed with shame, and d) divination and sacrifice.

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¹²⁴ Barth, *Church dogmatics*, 76–77, 195.

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