

Apologetics: Addendum to the Imago Dei

Dr. Luther Ray Smith Jr.

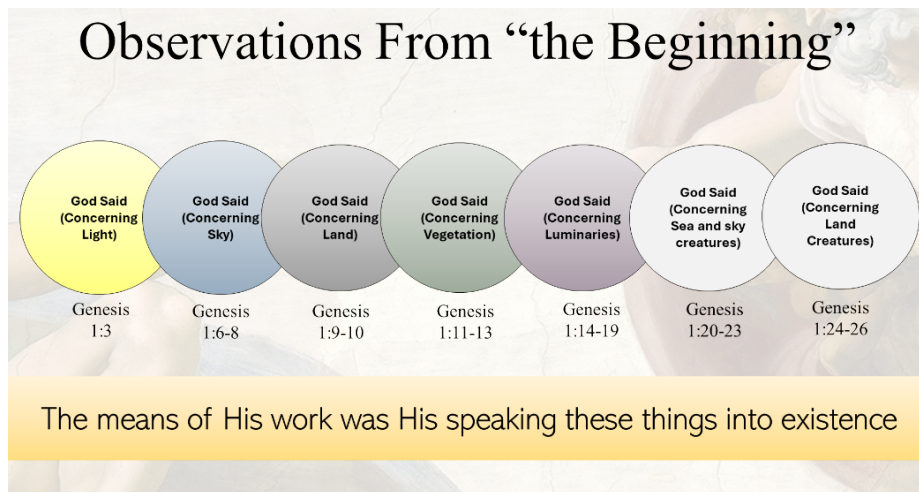
Introduction: Christian apologetics is defined as “the information that enables a believer to provide a defense for why a doctrine is believed.”

First Peter 3:15 NASB95: “...but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence...”

Concerning The Substance & Nature of Humankind: The physical (or material) nature of humankind is frequently discussed. However, there is one aspect of humankind that is overlooked.

Observations from “The Beginning”: In the book of Genesis, a pattern is observed from two words אָמַר אֱלֹהִים (*amar Elohim*) (“that is “God said”).

- This Hebrew phrase concerning God’s activity in speaking creation into existence is used **seven times**.



- This Hebrew phrase occurs concerning God’s activity in speaking of God’s intention of creating humankind **one time**.

Genesis 1:26 NASB95: “Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth...”

An Interesting Observation	
<u>Heaven & Earth</u>	<u>Humankind</u>
God <u>spoke</u> these things into existence	God <u>spoke</u> His intention, but <u>did not</u> speak male & female into existence

The change in this repetitive pattern is so radical that the creation of humanity receives its own chapter!

Genesis 2:7 NASB95: “...Then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being...”

Breath of life

- רוּחַ חַיָּה (*neshama hay*)
 - This specific phrase occurred 1 time in Hebrew Scriptures.
 - This specific phrase is not used of animals but is only used of humankind.
 - This word underscores God in a literal sense breathing on in man’s nostrils and animating male.

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Living Being:

- נפש חי (*nephesh hay*)
 - “Living being,” “living soul”
 - This Hebrew phrase is the **only** time that this occurs in the Hebrew Scriptures.
 - This phrase is **only** used of human beings and **no other created being**.

An Interesting Question: If human beings are the only creatures that are defined a *living beings* and animals are not defined as this, what makes the quality of human beings *different* or *unique* from animals?

Proverbs 20:27 NASB95: “*The spirit of man is the lamp of the LORD, searching all the innermost parts of his being.*”

- The word *spirit* is the same word that occurs in Genesis 2:7 concerning humankind (נְשָׁמָה/*neshama*).
- The word *searching* is the Hebrew word שָׁפַח/*chapas*, which is translated “to seek,” or “search out.” This Hebrew word is a verb and written in the *Qal* (active) stem.

It is the spirit of a person is the “lamp” or the “light” of the Lord, and it is the spirit seeks out innermost parts of the man.

Zechariah 12:1 NASB95: “*The burden of the word of the LORD concerning Israel. Thus declares the LORD who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him...*”

Spirit (of man)

- רוּחַ (*ruach*)
 - This specific phrase occurred 378 times in Hebrew Scriptures.
 - “Breath,” “wind,” “disposition,” “spirit,” God (“Holy Spirit”).
 - This word, much like other Hebrew words is highly contextual and the context determines how this word is used.

The Hebrew word “forms” is the Hebrew word יָצַר/*“yatsar.”* This Hebrew word is a verb and is written in the *Qal* (active) stem.

The statement of God through Zechariah and discussing his work of God within (i.e., “in the midst”) of a person.

Luke 23:42-43: [Concerning the thief on the cross] “...and he was saying, “Jesus, remember me when You come in Your kingdom!” And He said to him, “Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise.”

The thief on the cross was convinced that he is the Messiah spoke that Jesus would be in the physical kingdom.

Jesus replied in a truthful statement to this thief that “this day” (or today) the thief will be with Jesus in Paradise (this was when Jesus was being executed in His *material* body).

It is worth noting that the thief on the cross would still exist (with the usage of dative personal pronoun translated “you”) without the presence of being in his physical body.

2 Corinthians 5:10 NASB95: “Therefore, being always of good courage, and knowing that while we are **at home in the body**, we are **absent from the Lord**— for we walk by faith, not by sight— we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be **absent from the body** and to be **at home with the Lord**. Therefore, we also have as our ambition, whether **at home** or **absent**, to be pleasing to Him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

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The Greek word for “at home” is the word ἐνδημέω (*endemeo*). This comes from two words: the preposition *en* meaning “in,” “on” and “among” and *demos* meaning “people” or “assembly.”

The Greek word for “absent” is the word ἐκδημέω (*ekdemeo*). This comes from two words: preposition *ek* meaning “out of” or “from,” and *demos* meaning “people,” “assembly,” “home.”

These words are used to contrast when believers are “at home” in the body they are “absent” from the Lord. Then discussed our desire to be “absent” from our body and “at home” with the Lord.

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<u>Heaven & Earth</u>	<u>Humankind</u>
God <u>spoke</u> these things into existence	God <u>spoke</u> His intention, but <u>did not</u> speak male & female into existence
Animals do not have a spirit	Humanity has a spirit

Qualities of a Spirit (Luke 16:20-31)

Eyesight (v. 23)

Language & Speech (v.23)

Senses (v. 24)

Memory (v. 25)

Painful sensations (vs. 24, 25)

Emotive responses (vs. 24, 25)

Hearing (vs. 27-28) concerning his responses

Implied movement (v. 26)

1 Corinthians 2:10-11 NASB95: “...For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God...”

Paul in his statement makes a comparison between the Holy Spirit and humankind’s spirit. Paul in the middle of his statement wrote a rhetorical question that underscored a point, that the “thoughts” of a man comes from human’s spirit (or immaterial aspect of a person).

Some Thoughts About These Verses

- It would appear that the human body and the human spirit within the body share the same qualities, and they work together as one unit (even though they are not one unit).
- The qualities of volition, will, conscience (awareness), motivation, intentionality, understanding, memory find their origin within the spirit of human being.
- Something to consider— when the brain (*material*) is not functioning properly it does hinder the activity of the mind (*immaterial*).
- It would appear according to Scripture that the human spirit does not need the human body to be sustained (although the human body is important).

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An Incredible Difference	
<u>Animals</u>	<u>Humankind</u>
God <u>spoke</u> these things into existence	God <u>spoke</u> His intention, but <u>did not</u> speak male & female into existence
Animals <u>do not</u> have a spirit	Humanity <u>has</u> a spirit
Have physical faculties, but <u>does not</u> an immaterial nature	Has physical faculties, <u>and</u> an immaterial nature

The Importance of These Qualities: These qualities (the material and immaterial aspect of humankind) make up the *imago Dei* (or the image of God). Thus, this makes human beings unique and intrinsically valuable.

An Incredible Difference	
<u>Macroevolution</u>	<u>Biblical Outlook</u>
Humankind is just an <u>advanced animal</u> .	Humankind is a <u>unique creature</u> from the animals.
A variation of animals <u>over time</u> have developed into <i>homo erectus</i> .	Humankind was created <u>as human beings by God</u> (made in God's image).
The <u>ability</u> of reason and thinking of humankind developed over time.	The ability of reason and thinking of humankind is a <u>shared attribute</u> of God.
Humankind has <u>no</u> spirit.	Humankind <u>has</u> a spirit.
Humankind is <u>only</u> a <u>material</u> being.	Humankind is a <u>material</u> & an <u>immaterial</u> being.
Humankind is <u>not</u> special, or unique (or animals are special or unique because humankind are descendants from animals).	Humankind (because of the Creator and the manner and qualities in which humankind is made) <u>is</u> special and unique in creation.
Humankind since they are material beings' mankind destiny is <i>temporal</i> .	Humankind since we are physical and spiritual beings, humankind's destiny is <i>immortal</i> .

To Sum Up:

- Macroevolution denies the spiritual aspect of humankind.
- Macroevolution denies the uniqueness and the intrinsic value of human beings from animals.